

Camp at AVG by Swami Viditatmananda Saraswati

From December 14 to 18, 2019

Value of Values Part 04 (Continued from May 2020)

The beginning of violence starts from the mind and when impulses like कामः (*kāmaḥ*), क्रोधः (*krodhaḥ*), लोभ (*lobha*) etc. take over, the action that follows will always be hurtful. When the discriminating person i.e. the one who enjoys free will doesn't come into play and goes into the background, the action becomes impulsive action. These impulses which started in the mind is expressed in the form of violent action. One needs to address it by प्रतिपक्षभावाना (*pratipakṣabhāvānā*); one needs to recognize what impulse arises in the mind and how to neutralize it. *Kāma* is aroused because of अविवेक (*avivēka*) – शोभनाऽध्यास (*śōbhanādhyāsa*), superimposing a value on something which doesn't have. Looking at something as a source of happiness which is not really is *śōbhanādhyāsa*, which is what creates liking for it. We need to be aware that the objects do not have happiness. If I do not watch my thought, then it becomes *kāma* - strong desire. *Kāma* is a built up of thoughts.

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते |

सङ्गात्सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ||

dhyāyatō viṣayānpuṁsaḥ saṅgastēṣūpajāyatē |

saṅgātsañjāyatē kāmaḥ kāmātkrōdhō'bhijāyatē ||

Meaning: In the person who dwells upon objects, an attachment is born with reference to them. From attachment is born desire and from desire, anger is born.

If I do not address that thought, it becomes desire. The desire develops into craving and goes out of my control. As long as desire is not intense, I have the freedom to neutralize it. *Vivēka* comes into play when I create that space for myself. It is the usefulness of the object which attracts me. Objects outside may be useful but it cannot be the source of my happiness. Whatever

created by *īśvara* has purpose to serve but nothing is the source of happiness. *Kāma* arises by seeing happiness, security and comfort which is not there in the objects. If I don't resolve it there, then unfulfilled desire brings anger. Anger is a result of frustration.

We generally want to control things. We want to have things our way. "My way of highway" as they say it in US, I must have my way. Then we make demand on things and beings. When not fulfilled, I get hurt and frustrated with my own self with a sense of helplessness. That frustration brings retaliation which is anger. Anger towards other persons started with frustration with oneself. Understand the mechanism of anger. If you do that, then there will be space to understand this - Why I cannot accept things as they are. Basically, we are demanding people. Anger is on account of unfulfilled demand. The first demand is made from myself and that translates into demand upon others. You are good to me if you oblige me. When you do not oblige me, I get angry. Give up demand and accept the thing as it is or the person as he or she is. That is accommodation (क्षमा/*kṣamā*) for neutralizing anger.

करुणा (*karuṇā*) - Compassion is a way to neutralize anger. Anger is being intolerant; compassion is better than anger. Greed is the feeling of wanting more because of strong dissatisfaction with what I have. I have to remind myself that contentment is the only antidote for greed. *Vivēka* for *kāma*, Compassion for *krōdha* and contentment for greed are the ways to overcome these three enemies. We need to constantly work on these. That is how we can neutralize those damaging tendencies. I am the first one who gets damaged in this violence. Before I affect someone else, I damage myself. It is like a match stick; it burns first before burning something else. All these damaging tendencies are the gates for *naraka*, meaning suffering. You must realize how they torture and devastate you. Therefore, you must consistently apply the *pratipakṣabhāvānā* to neutralize them. It is an ongoing thing for a Vedantic person. If that does not happen, then it will manifest in action resulting in violence. Desire, lust, anger or greed arise in the mind and the person

who can keep these impulses in check is a Yogi. He is a happy person who can keep these under check. To keep a check is the first step; neutralizing, the second step. If not done, then it results in violent action which can be at level of speech or action.

Let us look at how to control violence of speech.

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।

स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥

anudvēgakaram vākyaṁ satyaṁ priyahitaṁ ca yat ।

svādhyāyābhyasanam caiva vāṅmayam tapa ucyatē ॥

Meaning: Speech which does not cause agitation, which is true, pleasing and beneficial, and daily repetition of one's own Veda are collectively called discipline of speech.

Lord Krishna gives basic criteria to observe before we utter a word. Your words should not perturb others. Before I utter, I should ask myself - whether my word would cause any hurt? All these *ahimsā* calls for respect for other person and their feelings, sensitivities and sentiments. Give them respect and freedom to have those feelings. Sensitivity in every action is a tall order. Unless I am sensitive to other people, it is difficult not hurting them. So, at the level of speech, I make sure they do not get hurt. If I choose to speak, I must ensure that I speak the truth. You have choice not to speak. Speaking truth is obligatory and it has to be *priyam* - has to be pleasant. Speaking truth has to be in a pleasant manner. Truth is not bitter; our mind is bitter and I make truth as an occasion to express my bitterness.

If we are accustomed to observing this austerity of speech, control of speech will also bring about control of mind. That makes the person an organized person, a person of self-control. Control of speech is very important for non-violence. One should be watchful of words used. Sometimes, in the name of humor, you make fun of people; you humiliate them. To get some cheap entertainment at the cost of someone else is violence. It hurts the other person. No one wants to be treated that way. Making fun in front of other people brings out someone's shortcomings. To embarrass somebody is also vio-

lence. They say that *mahābhārata* battle was because of the words of Draupadi, and *duryōdhana* decided to take revenge. There was another similar revenge story between *Drupada* and *Drōṇācārya*. When both were studying together in Gurukulam as children, Drupada promised to give Drona half of his kingdom when he becomes the king. When poor Drona could not afford to give milk to his son *Aśvatthāmā*, he went to Drupada and reminded the promise. But he was turned away in a humiliating way and the revenge story starts. The whole revenge lineage goes on.

Violence feeds violence. *Ahiṃsā* at the level of speech is very important, at least at the level of body. We can never practice non-violence at the physical level completely. *Pañcamahāyajña* (पञ्चमहायज्ञ) is an act of atonement to avoid five kinds of sins that we commit as householder. Pounding, grinding, fetching water, sweeping the floor and lighting the fire - all of these involve violence. During all these actions, some insects are killed. That is why *pañcamahāyajña* is prescribed for householders. We can minimize *hiṃsā* but cannot avoid it. Consumption itself is violence. When I consume, I deprive some other needy person. If I consume more than required, I damage myself also. It is unfortunate that modern economies are dependent on consumption. All based on waste. Most prosperous societies are most wasteful. We think that more we consume, happier we are. But the fact is more I hold, more I deprive the needy people. So even holding and consuming more than what we need is violence. Wasting food is violence; eating more chapatis than my need is violence. Food is a big debatable issue, being a vegetarian or non-vegetarian. When it is a choice, let us choose less evolved to consume like vegetarian diets. In ancient time, they used to consume meat because agriculture was not developed. One should not follow any law that is not compatible to the existing situation, says *manusmṛti*. No justification to follow now something which were practiced five thousand years. Meat consumption is absolutely unjustifiable even scientifically. Vegetarianism is less violence.

The basic violence is spiritual violence. Ignorance is the first violence. Ignorance creates in me the identification with body-mind-sense complex and I

take them as *ātmā*. Their cravings and requirements becomes my mine. This is how fascination for objects arises. *Ātmā* is of the nature of happiness and wellness but I am towards objects. That is an insult to *ātmā*. Everything lies within and you are begging outside. I seek happiness and security where it is not. Overlooking and ignoring, even insulting where it is. *Saccidānanda ātmā* is right there and we go out begging, which itself is a violence carried out due to ignorance. Only wise person can be really non-violent.

Value: 4 - क्षान्तिः (*kṣāntih*)

Kṣamā - means Endurance, forbearance. Forbearance is not just restraining from retaliation. When I do not react outwardly but within my mind there is reaction, then I am hurting myself. I am hurt and angry. This cannot be called *Kṣamā*. So, अविकार्यम् (*avikāryam*) - having no *vikāra* - reactions in mind is called *Kṣamā*. Accommodating or accepting gracefully and cheerfully what I do not like - what I cannot change, is *Kṣamā*. It is a tall order. If a child abuses you, you smile. If you can extend the same advantage to an entity that is older in body but child in mind and emotionally immature, it is *Kṣamā*. Insult, jealousy, retaliation, greedy - these are due to emotional immaturity. All the retaliating ones are not matured ones and they behave like a child. We did that as a child and it was necessary at that time. But now after becoming an adult, if someone throws tantrum, it means that there is a mind of 5 years old in a body of 50 years old. This is not to brand others but for neutralizing my reaction to the person. I am not responding to 50 years old person but to 5 years old child in him. Therefore, respond to the person behind the behavior. Only a person in pain can cause pain to someone else. A happy person can never be angry. You are always generous when you are happy. It is pain and insecurity that makes you behave in a manner causing pain for others. Painful behavior is the result of pain within. Therefore, we need a two step response. Responding to behavior of the person is one step response whereas the responding to the person behind the behavior is a two step response. The person who is aggressive outside is very insecure inside and therefore, aggressiveness comes from inner fear. All aggressions are act of insecurity and therefore, the person is un-

happy. He is a happy person who has no accounts to settle.

Human beings are always unhappy, miserable and in pain. Therefore, responding to the person behind the behavior is a two step response. You may not have caused that pain; it could be anybody. But pain makes me behave in a hurtful manner. It is like vomiting. I cannot control my emotions and I vomit it out. When anybody behaves in a hurtful manner and you happen to be there, it is your *prārabdha-karma*. Having seen the person behind the behavior and responding to that, the next step is to understand that I have to face this because of my own karma. This would resolve all the possible reactions within us. This is called respecting and accepting the person. It is *kṣamā*, accommodation. *Kṣamā* means no hurt, no anger, no retaliation. In every relationship, something always happens. There cannot be any perfect relationship. We are not perfect. I have my own shortcomings. If we look at our own self, we appreciate other people.

What Vedanta teaches is much more than psychology. Psychology says your desire is real; Vedanta says they are not real. Therefore, not storing any hurt and cheerful accommodation of the shortcomings of others is what Vedanta teaches. What is your reaction to mosquito, barking dogs, and mad people on the street? Do you fight with them? No; in the same way, accommodate others. I should give benefit to all my fellow beings in the world. The one who is closely related to me is the one who causes me the most pain. Why? Because relationship means expectations. The more the expectations, the more the chance of not being fulfilled. That's why there are also talks about spouses and all the jokes about their behavior with each other. Accepting the person as he/she is not making demand on him/her. Behind all expectations, there is one demand that you should change for myself. World should change to make me comfortable. What is love to me is that when you do what I want you to do. This definition needs to change. It is so important. This is the most important value as far as the relationship is concerned. *Ahiṃsā* and *kṣānti* go together. I don't cause hurt to other. It is *ahiṃsā*. When someone causes me hurt, I accommodate them. It is *kṣānti*. Relationship required these two values. *Ahiṃsā* and *kṣānti* can make a per-

son to a saintly person. People are comfortable with non-violent person who is non-demanding. You become more accommodating when you are non-demanding. *Kṣamā* requires you to be a non-demanding person and graceful acceptance of what comes.

.....To be continued

Transcribed by Sri Manoj Kitta , Edited by Sharanji



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The Programme for the day will be as follows:

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| Guru Puja | — | 10-30 AM |
| Anugraha Bhashaṇam | — | 11-30 AM |
| Maha Prasadam | — | 12-30 PM |

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