

You are here:

PHILOSOPHY > Gandhian Philosophy in short

VSR-105

Gandhian Philosophy in short

I know the path. It is straight and narrow. It is like the edge of a sword. I rejoice to walk on it. I weep when I slip. God's word is: 'He who strives never perishes.' I have implicit faith in that premise. Though, therefore, from my weakness I fall a thousand times, I will not lose faith, but hope that I shall see the Light when the flesh has been brought under perfect subjection, as some day it must.⁸⁴

My soul refuses to be satisfied so long as it is a helpless witness of a single wrong or a single misery. But it is not possible for me, a weak, frail, miserable being, to mend every wrong or to hold myself free of blame for all the wrong I see.

The spirit in me pulls one way, the flesh in me pulls in the opposite direction. There is freedom from the action of these two forces, but that freedom is attainable only by slow and painful stages.

I cannot attain freedom by a mechanical refusal to act, but only by intelligent action in a detached manner. This struggle resolves itself into an incessant modification of the flesh so that the spirit may become entirely free.⁸⁵

Search for Truth

I am but a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found a way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet found it. To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, i.e., to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I possess, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations.

If I was a perfect man, I own I should not feel the miseries of neighbors as I do. As a perfect man I should take note of them, prescribe a remedy, and compel adoption by the force of unchangeable Truth in me. But as yet I only see as through a glass darkly and, therefore, have to carry conviction by slow and laborious processes, and then, too, not always with success.

That being so, I would be less than human if, with all my knowledge of avoidable misery pervading the land and of the sight of mere skeletons under the very shadow of the Lord of the Universe, I did not feel with and for all the suffering but dumb millions of India.⁸⁶

Trust in God

I am in the world feeling my way to light 'amid the enduring gloom'. I often err and miscalculate... My trust is solely in God. And I trust men only because I trust God. If I had no God to rely upon, I should be like Timon, a hater of my species.⁸⁷

I will not be a traitor to God to please the whole world.⁸⁸

Whatever strange things I have done in life, I have not done prompted by reason but prompted by instinct, I would say, God.⁸⁹

I am a man of faith. My reliance is solely on God. One step is enough for me. The next step He will make clear to me when the time for it comes.⁹⁰

No Secrecy

I have no secret methods. I know no diplomacy save that of truth. I have no weapon but non-violence. I may be unconsciously led astray for a while, but not for all time.⁹¹

My life has been an open book. I have no secrets and I encourage no secrets.⁹²

I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good-wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. I admit it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next.⁹³

When I think of my littleness and my limitations on the one hand and of the expectations raised about me on the other, I become dazed for the moment, but I come to myself as soon as I realize that these expectations are a tribute not to me, a curious mixture of Jekyll and Hyde, but to the incarnation, however imperfect but comparatively great in me, of the two priceless qualities of truth and non-violence. I must, therefore, not shrink the responsibility of giving what aid I can to fellow-seekers after truth from the West.⁹⁴

Guidance

I claim to have no infallible guidance or inspiration. So far as my experience goes, the claim to infallibility on the part of a human being would be untenable, seeing that inspiration too can come only to one who is free from the action of opposites, and it will be difficult to judge on a given occasion whether the claim to freedom from pairs of opposites is justified. The claim to infallibility would thus always be a most dangerous claim to make. This, however, does not leave us without any guidance whatsoever. The sum-total of the experience of the world is available to us and would be for all time to come.

Moreover, there are not many fundamental truths, but there is only one fundamental truth which is Truth itself, otherwise known as Non-violence. Finite human being shall never know in its fulness, truth and love which is in itself infinite. But we do know enough for our guidance. We shall err, and sometimes grievously, in our application. But even in a self-governing being, and self-government necessarily includes the power as much to commit errors as to set them right as often as they are made.⁹⁵

Self-sacrifice

I am asking my countrymen in India to follow no other gospel than the gospel of self-sacrifice which precedes every battle. Whether you belong to the school of violence or non-violence, you will still have to go through the fire of sacrifice and of discipline.97

I want to dedicate to the world, although I have forfeited the regard of many friends in the West - and I must bow my head low; but even for their friendship or love, I must not suppress the voice of conscience, - the promptings of my inner basic nature today. There is something within me impelling me to cry out my agony.

I have known humanity. I have studied something of psychology. Such a man knows exactly what it is. I do not mind how you describe it. That voice within tells me, "You have to stand against the whole world although you may have to stand alone. You have to stare in the face the whole world although the world may look at you with blood-shot eyes. Do not fear. Trust the little voice residing within your heart." It says: "Forsake friends, wife and all; but testify to that for which you have lived and for which you have to die."98

No Defeatism

Defeat cannot dishearten me. It can only chasten me.... I know that God will guide me. Truth is superior to man's wisdom.99

I have never lost my optimism. In seemingly darkest hours hope has burnt bright within me. I cannot kill the hope myself. I must say I cannot give an ocular demonstration to justify the hope. But there is no defeat in me.100

I do not want to foresee the future. I am concerned with taking care of the present. God has given me no control over the moment following..

Trust

It is true that I have often been let down. Many have deceived me and many have been found wanting. But I do not repent of my association with them. For I know how to non-co-operate, as I know how to co-operate. The most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary.101

I believe in trusting. Trust begets trust. Suspicion is foetid and only stinks. He who trusts has never yet lost in the world.102

A breach of promise shakes me to my root, especially when I am in any way connected with the author of the breach. And if it cost my life which, after all, at the age of seventy has no insurance value, I should most willingly give it in order to secure due performance of a sacred and solemn promise.103

To my knowledge, throughout my public and private career, I have never broken a promise.104

My Leadership

They say I claim to understand human nature as no one else does. I believe I am certainly right, but if I do not believe in my rightness and my methods, I would be unfit to be at the helm of affairs.105

As for my leadership, if I have it, it has not come for any seeking. It is a fruit of faithful service. A man can as little discard such leadership as he can the color of his skin. And since I have become an integral part of the nation, it has to keep me with all my faults and shortcomings, of some of which I am painfully conscious and of many others of which candid critics, thanks be to them, never fail to remind me.106

It is a bad carpenter who quarrels with his tools. It is a bad general who blames his men for faulty workmanship. I know I am not a bad general. I have wisdom enough to know my limitations. God will give me strength enough to declare my bankruptcy if such is to be my lot. He will perhaps take me away when I am no longer wanted for the work which I have been permitted to do for nearly half a century. But I do entertain the hope that there is yet work for me to do, that the darkness that seems to have enveloped me will disappear, and that, whether with another battle more brilliant than the Dandi March or without, India will come to her own demonstrably through non-violent means. I am praying for the light that will dispel the darkness. Let those who have a living faith in non-violence join me in the prayer.107

My Work

I am content with the doing of the task in front of me. I do not worry about the why and wherefore of things.. Reason helps us to see that we should not dabble in things we cannot fathom.108

My work will be falsified if I succeed in carrying conviction to the human family, that every man or woman, however weak in body, is the guardian of his or her self-respect and liberty. This defense avails, though the whole world may be against the individual resister.109

It will be time enough to pronounce a verdict upon my work after my eyes are closed and this tabernacle is consigned to the flames.110

Dr. B. R. AMBEDKAR

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, affectionately known as Babasaheb, was one of the most illustrious sons of India. He appeared on the Indian socio-political scene in early 1920s and remained in the forefront of all social, economic, political and religious efforts for upliftment of the lowest stratum of the Indian society known as untouchables. Babasaheb was a great scholar who made outstanding contributions as an economist, sociologist, legal luminary, educationalist, journalist, Parliamentarian and above all, as a social reformer and champion of human rights. Babasaheb organised, united and inspired the untouchables in India to effectively use political means towards their goal of social equality.

Born in 1891 to an untouchable school teacher in the British Army, he was highly educated – Ph.D. from Columbia University (1917), D.Sc. from London School of Economics and Bar-At-Law from Gray's Inn in London (1923). These achievements spectacular by in standard were truly incredible for an untouchable.

Dr. Ambedkar was an economist by his basic training. His career was characterised by two distinct phases : the first one up to 1921 as a professional economist contributing scholarly books and the second one as a political leader thereafter until his demise in 1956, during which he made pathbreaking contributions as a champion of human rights for the untouchables.

Dr. Ambedkar wrote three scholarly books on economics:

- (i) Administration and Finance of the East India Company,
- (ii) The Evolution of Provincial Finance in British India, and
- (iii) The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution

The first two represent his contribution to the field of public finance: the first one evaluating finances of the East India Company during the period, 1792 through 1858 and the second one analysing the evolution of the Centre-State financial relations in British India during the period, 1833 through 1921. The third book, his *magnum opus* in economics, represents a seminal contribution to the field of monetary economics. In this book Dr. Ambedkar examined the evolution of the Indian currency as a medium of exchange covering the period, 1800 to 1893 and discussed the problem of the choice of an appropriate currency system for India in the early 1920s. On his return to

India, Dr. Ambedkar did not write any book on economics *per se*, though several of his other contributions during that period carry a distinctive imprint of the economist in him.

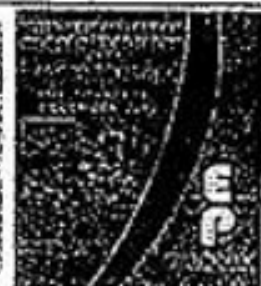
As a member of the Bombay Legislative Assembly (since 1926), Ambedkar gave effective expression to the grievances of the rural poor through his mass movements. His successful struggle against the prevailing land tenure system called *Khoti* liberated a vast majority of the rural poor from an extreme form of economic exploitation. His successful agitation against *Mahar Vatan* emancipated a large section of the rural poor from virtual serfdom. He presented a bill in the State Assembly aimed at preventing the malpractices of money-lenders hurting the poor. On the industrial front, Dr. Ambedkar founded in 1936, the Independent Labour Party. While the prevailing trade unions fought for the rights of workers, they were indifferent to the rights of untouchable workers as human beings. The new political party took up their cause. Subsequently, as the Labour Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council from 1942 to 1946, Dr. Ambedkar was instrumental in bringing about several labour reforms including establishment of employment exchanges, generally laying the foundations of industrial relations in Independent India. His ministry also included irrigation, power and other public works. He played an important role in shaping the irrigation policy, especially the Damodar Valley Project.

A distinctive feature of Dr. Ambedkar's scholarly contribution is his perceptive analysis of economic dimension of social maladies, such as, the caste system and untouchability. While Mahatma Gandhi had defended the caste system on the basis of division of labour, Ambedkar came out with a hard-hitting critique in his book '*Annihilation of Castes*' (1936), pointing out that what was implicit in the caste system was *not* merely division of labour but *also* a division of labours. Dr. Ambedkar's attack on the caste system was not merely aimed at challenging the hegemony of the upper castes but had broader connotation of economic growth and development. He argued that the caste system had reduced the mobility of labour and capital which in turn, impeded economic growth and development in India.



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Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy of education and its influence on Indian education

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ABSTRACT

Rabindranath Tagore believed that the aim of education is self-realization. He himself was a poet and a saint, who had, through his imagination and insight, realized the universal soul in himself and in nature. He believed that this realization was the goal of education. Because the universal soul is the root of our own soul, man's aim in life is to reach that universal soul of which all human beings are parts. The evolution of nature is consciously or unconsciously driving us towards the universal soul, a process that can be assisted by education. Even if it is not assisted, the progress towards the universal soul will continue, but then individuals will be deprived of self-realization. It is thus evident that Rabindranath's educational philosophy is an adjunct of his general philosophy of life. He believed that every human being is one who has potentialities of progressing towards the Super-human being, the universal soul. His conception of the universal soul bore clear imprint of the Gita and Upanishadic philosophies.

✓ Introduction

Principles of Self-Education

Self-education is based on self-realization and the process of self-realization is as permanent as that of education. What is most important in this is that the students must have faith in himself and in the universal self underlying his own individual self. All those actions, which provide a natural sense of satisfaction and

contentment, will promote the educative process. This contentment is the reaction of the soul, and hence not the same as mere satisfaction and pleasure. In following Rabindranath's concept of self-education, the students had to follow the following three principles.

Independence

Rabindranath believed in complete freedom of every kind for the students, the freedom of intellect, decision, heart knowledge, action and worship. But in order to attain this freedom, the student had to practice equanimity, harmony and balance. Rabindranath interprets independence as normalcy or the fact of being natural. In other words, when intelligence, feeling and determination are naturally distributed, it can be said to be a state of freedom. This independence is not to be confused with the absence of control, because it is self-control, it implies acting according to one's own rational impulse. Once this level of freedom has been achieved, there is no danger of the individual straying from his path, because his senses, intelligence, emotional feelings and all other powers are directed by his ego.

Perfection

The second active principle underlying self-education is that of perfection. Perfection here implies that the students must try to develop every aspect of his personality and all the abilities and power with which he has been endowed by nature. Hence, the aim of education is not merely passing examinations, acquiring degrees and certificates of merit and ultimately achieving economic self-sufficiency through pursuing some profession. The sole aim of education is development of the child's personality, which is possible only when every aspect of the personality is given equal importance, when no part of the personality is neglected and no part is stressed undesirably.

Universality

Development of the individual remains imperfect and incomplete until he acquires

as abiding faith in the universal soul, a part of which exists inside himself. And for this, it is necessary to identify one's own soul with the universal soul. Thus, education exists not in simple development but it inheres in literally a rebirth in which the individual rises above the limitations of his individual personality and loses this individuality in the inheritance of the universal soul. One can search for this universal soul not only within oneself, but also in every element of nature and of one's environment. It is evident from the foregoing account that the aim of Rabindranath's pattern of education is independence, perfection and universality. In the process of education, the educator creates an environment in which the child's personality undergoes a free, perfect and unrestricted development.

Aims of Education

According to Rabindranath, the aim of education is self-realization. According to him, this realization by every one is the goal of education. Self-realization, according to Rabindranath, means the realization of the universal soul in one's self. Man's aim of life is to achieve this status. It is a process, which cannot be realized without education.

Integral Development

Defining the aim of education, Rabindranath says, "The fundamental purpose of education is not merely to enrich ourselves through the fullness of knowledge, but also to establish the bond of love and friendship between man and man." This is the humanistic aim of education in Tagore's philosophy. His approach to ultimate reality is integral. He believes in an inner harmony between man and Nature and God.

Socrates

An Open University in Human Form That
Brought Heavenly Philosophy Down to Earth

(470 B.C. - 399 B.C.)



If philosophy is the mother of all subjects, Socrates is the progenitor of all philosophy. We know that 'thought' leads to knowledge, wisdom and development. We are aware that 'thought' played a major role in elevating mankind from an uncivilized state to that of a civilized one. Socrates is the great philosopher who taught us how a thought should be, and vividly explained its aims and objectives; he enlightened everyone on matters such as knowledge, wisdom, morality and righteousness. All these ideas and concepts were thought, discussed and disseminated to the world through his "question and answer method." He prescribed the directional objectives for philosophy and laid a foundation for a systematic and logical way of thinking through instruction and education. The people living in 5th Century BC had practically experienced a golden age. They were surrounded by the blue waters of the sea, a cluster of islands, fertile lands, gardens of beautiful flowers and luscious fruits, a congenial climate and marble path-ways. Along with these they also lived amongst the citizens of pleasant wit, thought-provoking intellectuals, skilful sculptors, artists, attractive theatres and interesting plays. In Greece, the cities were self-

governed and independent. One such city state was Athens that shone bright with intellectual radiance, artistic splendour and metaphysical glory.

In that pioneering age of philosophy, Socrates was born in 470 B.C. His father, Sophroniscus was a sculptor and his mother, Phaenarete a midwife. The Athenian streets were the university centres for his learning. Self-study and practice made him a philosopher who continued to be an eternal seeker of truth with an insatiable quest for it. Socrates found the youth of his times quite irresponsible and going astray, so he decided to awaken them from their deep stupor and set them on the path of right direction towards seeking the truth. Socrates gave high priority to morality and law and considered it a manifestation of wisdom. Socrates was a man of equanimity as he considered sorrow and joy alike. He was not a writer of books, but stray details about him can be acquired from some contemporary sources like the dialogues of Plato, writings of Xenophon and the plays of Aristophanes.

Socrates received his education from his mentor, Arkelas, in early life, and assimilated the philosophical doctrines of the earlier thinkers. He was attracted to the philosophical and scientific postulations of Anaxagoras, a philosopher and physicist of antiquity. For some time, Socrates conducted research on the matters of science and its technical importance. Then, his keen mind turned to scan human nature, its characteristic features, individuality, and the forms of wisdom. Socrates earned a good name while serving as a soldier in the protracted Peloponnesian war and showed his valour in the battles of Delium and Amphipotes. He married Xanthippe who bore him three sons. He did not take care of his family. In his conversations with his disciples some witty things surfaced and Socrates displayed a natural humour. One of his disciples asked him if one should marry or not. Socrates said either way one would suffer. He added — "if you get good wife you will be happy, if not you can become a philosopher." "This" suggests that Socrates did not have good relations with his wife who appeared to be a shrew.

Plato

The Father of Political Science,
Philosopher of Intellectual Age

(427 B.C. - 347 B.C.)



During the span of 80 years from 427 B.C. to 347 B.C., the land of Greece was illumined by the brilliant sense of empiricism, thoughtfulness and philosophical reflection of Plato. He made philosophy a way of life and always involved himself in the intellectual churning with a high sense of down-to-earth practicability and accessibility. Plato who appears to be a true replica and an apostle of the Indian theistic philosophical trends was a thinker par excellence. His philosophy was mostly concerned with mundane affairs and regular facets of human activity and behaviour. In his works, he discussed world politics, different systems of government, and behavioural and ethical values of the rulers. He held an esteemed opinion of the educational system. According to him, education was not simply the duty of parents. The pupils must be taught by society itself. Plato was a great thinker who ascribed universality to education. His Magnum opus 'Republic' still appears fresh, and time cannot wither it. The views expressed in it transcend narrow lines irrespective of age, region and creed.

Plato was born in Athens, a city state in Greece in 427 B.C. into a rich and noble family. The period in which Plato lived was described by historians as the Age of Synthesis. In that distinguished age, all the philosophers were considered intellectuals and vice versa. After the death of his father, Plato's mother married again. Though relatives on the maternal side provided Plato with an opportunity to join the government of Athens, Plato refused and along with his two brothers became the disciple of Socrates. Socrates was considered the greatest of the philosophers in his times. He imparted good education to the men and women of Athens free of cost. Being a genuine thinker, Plato became an important and favourite student of Socrates. In ancient Greece, every city had its own government and a lot of literature on governance and political sagacity was produced.

After the death of Socrates in 399 B.C., the 28 year old Plato visited Italy and Egypt. During his sojourn he met the disciples of the great master Pythagoras. Returning to Athens, Plato founded a school of philosophy in the garden of the Academy. He imparted knowledge to the students in the 'Socratic method'. He taught Mathematics, Trigonometry and Philosophy to the students. Researchers consider 387 B.C. as the year of the foundation of the school of Plato. Some 2500 years back, Plato gave a phenomenal and crystal-clear analysis of democratic governments. He said that democracy had appeared to create equality and equal rights to all, but in practice it had presented an unrestrained anarchy in which the welfare of a few would become cardinal instead of the whole community. He further said that personal desires, possessiveness and thirst for wealth would mar the vitality of the whole society. Plato made an in-depth study of the nature of governments, their working systems, infrastructure, requirements and responsibilities. The standard of his opinions or observations were so high that he was recognized as one of the greatest political thinkers of early times. Plato discussed many issues regarding monarchy, dictatorship, democracy and anarchy deeply. By the term anarchy, he meant governance without a government. Plato's greatest treatise "Republic" still holds esteem among the academic circles of high learning. Plato opined that the rulers in the regime of aristocracy could turn to grant the rational and benign

Aristotle

The Walking Encyclopaedia and the First Scientific Philosopher

(384 B.C. - 322 B.C.)



In India when six schools of philosophy were blossoming in the later Vedic period, the intellectual horizon of Greece was being brightened by luminous philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Their quest for knowledge contributed a lot to thinking and philosophical reflection while in India the six schools of philosophy led to the emergence of three religions. The Greek philosophers laid the foundation of epistemology and tried to discuss the human behaviour and the primordial causes of the creation. Among the Greek trinity, Aristotle, the mentor of Alexander the Great was highly talented. Being the disciple of Plato, he is considered to be a veritable wonder of creation for his brilliant insights and probing spirit. His knowledge is vast and multifarious and scarcely is there a subject left untouched by him.

Aristotle was born at Stagira, a place not far from Mount Athos in Thrace in 384 or 385 B.C. His father was a physician and hence the blood of experimentalists and positive scientists flowed in his veins. As he lost his father early, he was brought up by Proxenus. He joined the Academy

of Plato when he was 18 and had a brilliant academic career as a student. After the death of Plato in 348 B.C he went to Asia Minor along with Xenocrates, his favourite disciple.

Having been a disciple of Plato for 20 years, Aristotle was drawn to every subject under the sun. The writings attributed to Aristotle deal with almost all the sciences known to antiquity. He was acquainted with theoretical sciences, practical sciences and political sciences. In short, he had great mastery in subjects like Geography, Biology, Astronomy, Logic, Philosophy and Economics. In the Grecian intellectual circles of the times, he was admired as the most talented seeker of knowledge.

When he was in Asia Minor, he married a girl related to Hermias, the local ruler. He also taught in a college near Assos. He was said to have carried out some experiments in Biology at Mytilene in Lesbos. His inquisitive intellect and experimental curiosity, won him laurels and his reputation spread far and wide in Greece and the territories surrounding Asia Minor. His fame also reached the ears of Philip of Macedonia. Philip invited Aristotle to his court and Aristotle accepted. It was learnt that during 343 B.C. to 340 B.C. he was tutor to Alexander. Later, perhaps, he might have helped Alexander as an adviser, who was sharing the administrative duties of his father as a representative. In 336 B.C., that is, one year after the death of Philip, Aristotle left Macedonia and reached his motherland, Greece.

After reaching Athens, the probing mind of Aristotle became more poignant and his enquiry became even deeper. For a period of 12 years he deeply focused on research, the study of nature and the reforms required in politics and the economy of the times. He had varied interests. He started an academy in Lyceum in Athens to disseminate knowledge. Soon, it was replete with a number of research scholars. Lyceum also received a fabulous royal patronage from Alexander. The sudden and untimely death of Alexander in Babylon in 323 B.C. turned out to be a great disaster for the Lyceum. The hidden animosity between Athens and Macedonia strongly surfaced. After the death of Alexander the Great, Aristotle was subjected

Alexander the Great

The Great Unifying Hero of the
East and West

(356 B.C – 323 B. C)



From the very day of his becoming the Emperor till the day he died, Alexander had a burning desire to establish a World Empire. So he made incessant wars and occupied a number of countries both in the East and the West. He deserves to be called Alexander the Great. When he was born it was found that one of his eyes was dark black in colour while the other was sky blue. This queer difference indicated that he was born to conquer both heaven (blue sky) and earth (dark earth). Both his mother and father had dreamt about the birth of their son. His mother Olympia of Epirus felt as if some divine force had entered into her womb with a sound. The scene delighted the mother in her dreams. Alexander was born in the month of July in 356 BC in Macedonia. His father was Philip of Macedonia.

The Balkan Peninsula in South East Europe consisted of important countries like Macedonia, Bulgaria and Greece. On the Aegean Sea, in the territory of Greece, there was a cluster of islands with a number of cities. King Philip of Macedonia was also ruling over the Greek city states at the time of the birth of Alexander. From his childhood, Alexander was fearless

and was brought up like a soldier. When he was ten years old, a horse trader brought a horse to Philip and prepared to sell it for thirteen talents. But the horse did not allow anybody to mount it, so Philip asked the trader to take it back. However, it was only little Alexander who realized that the horse was afraid of its own shadow and hence becoming panicky. Alexander turned the direction of the horse and tamed it. This incident made Philip very happy. Philip embarked upon the career of aggrandizement of his kingdom, and began to conquer many Greek states. Alexander remarked that his father would not spare any territory for him to conquer when he became the king.

Alexander was extremely fond of Homer's poetry. He read Homer's "Iliad" many a time and used to keep that book at his pillow while sleeping. Phillip appointed special teachers to teach Alexander. One of them was Leonidas, who taught Alexander how to lead a simple life. As per his instructions, Alexander ate with common soldiers and slept along with them. When Alexander ravaged Persia and defeated Darius, its Emperor, he saw a luxurious royal palace provided with a golden bath tub, and gem studded silk carpets. Alexander was really taken aback at the inestimable exorbitance of the Persian Emperor. The most illustrious teacher of Alexander was Aristotle, described as the scholar of many subjects and a veritable fountain of knowledge. In 343 BC at the request of King Philip, Aristotle came to Pella to teach Alexander. Between the ages of 13 and 16, Alexander learnt all subjects, including sciences and social sciences, and Aristotle also trained his pupil in the different arts.

In 340 BC when Philip went to participate in wars against Byzantine, Alexander was appointed as the Viceroy and the prince on behalf of his father. Greek cities joined into a holy alliance to scuttle the ambition of Philip. The alliance was called the 'Thebes Holy Alliance'. At that time Alexander was only 18 years old. Consequently, Philip conquered all the Greek states except Sparta. Philip fell in love with Cleopatra Eurydice. His father's new marriage made Alexander's position as heir to the Macedonian kingdom less secure. This created a gulf between the father and the son. On some occasion Philip, in a drunken condition, drew his sword and

Essay on Ideal Teacher

A teacher's profession is an ideal profession. Yet all teachers are not ideal. There are many who are angry, beat students, scold them right and left, do not look neat in appearance, have no affection for students, are interested only in increasing their income, keep no touch with books, and are too much inclined to politics. With the society going to the dogs, such teachers are ever on the increase.

Certainly they have no right to be treated as ideal teachers for no students, except the worst, would like to build their lives of them.

This shows that very few teachers can rightly claim to be accepted as ideal ones. There are some who possess many qualities that make them to be likely claimants to this honorable position but a few shortcomings shatter their hopes to pieces. This shows that an ideal teacher is not someone to be found here, there and everywhere. He is really a rare object, and very few schools can boast to have such a teacher in their staff-list. If we are to describe an ideal teacher in a few words, we must say that he should have the ability to serve as a model before his students.

Qualities of an Ideal Teacher

An ideal teacher, above all, should be a good teacher. His teaching ability should be such so as to attract the attention of the students easily. He should teach in a way so that any topic, however hard it may be, can be easily understood by the students.

In order to teach well, the teacher himself should have vast and deep knowledge.

He must be Able to clear away students' fear of studies and to turn them into store-houses of knowledge without which a refined and higher life cannot be lived.

An ideal teacher should have unbounded love and affection for his students.

He should be one who can be easily approached by them, for he should truly be their friend, philosopher, and guide.

If a student does something wrong and regrets it sincerely, the teacher, instead of punishing him, should deal so tactfully with him that the wrong-dear will ever refrain from doing such things in future.

However, if the fault is genuine and there is no regret for it, the teacher will not hesitates to take stern measures against such an action. He will not allow discipline to be given the good-bye for the sake of showing love to a student.

He should be able to inculcate certain virtues among students, such as regular studies, punctuality, care of health, equal emphasis on reading and writing, perseverance, Kindheartedness, and the like.

Navigation

[Home](#)
[Location](#)
[School](#)
[Admissions](#)
[Know Your Child](#)
[Workshop](#)
[Vacancies](#)
[SSRVM Videos](#)
[Photos](#)
[Volunteer](#)
[Articles](#)
[Useful Links](#)
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Human values in the classroom

A Talk to Teachers by Sri Sri Ravishankar

The teaching profession is one of the best professions. It is also a very big responsibility. As a teacher you have to set an example because the children watch you carefully. Children's values are only half learned from their parents, the rest comes from their teachers. Children observe much more than adults. They observe everything that you do and they pick up on it. When you are calm and when you're composed, then they observe that, if you are tense or if you are not smiling, then they watch and imitate you.

You may have noticed how children imitate their mothers. If the mother has a serious face, they look very serious. If the mothers are smiling, the children start smiling. Their own behavior patterns to a great extent depend on the parents and to the same extent on the teachers also.

Parents may have to deal with only one or two children but teachers have a couple of dozen in the classroom. The situation is more testing and stressful. To handle that you need to center yourself a few times every day. Just before lunch, sit and calm yourself and have a deep trust that everything is being taken care of, or will be taken care of.

You have been assigned a job that you can handle. First of all you need to have trust in yourself. If you think you have a very big task that you cannot handle, then you will really not be able to handle it. You need to know that task you have is appropriate for you and that you will handle it the best you can. A lot of patience is necessary. It would be good to sit and relax and just be with nature a short time every day. Start meditating regularly to increase energy. A few deep breaths here and there will also help.

Basic human values need to be encouraged in the classroom. Basically a child is born with these values? Compassion, cooperation, friendliness, smiling, laughter, lightness, wanting to help, sense of belongingness, caring for each other, all of these qualities are there and they need to be nourished and brought out. Often teachers need to de-program some of the programming, or behaviors that children have learned at home. Sometimes in the school itself children start exchanging their programming. This we need to attend to.

Teachers need to know that the human physiology or human nature is very similar to the atomic structure. Like in an atom, the central part of the atom is positive – a proton. The electrons, or negative charge, is on the periphery. Any negativity you find in a child is really only on the periphery. Negativity is not the real nature of the child. With loving attention and care you can bring out the positive human values in the child.

This is true even with a rebellious child. A rebellious child needs more physical contact. In a sense, a rebellious child needs more encouragement, more pats on the back. Make the child feel that they are loved, that they belong, that you really care for them. On the other hand, children who are very timid and shy can use a little firmness to help make them stand up and speak out. You can be a little strong with them, but it is very delicate how a teacher should handle them. With love and at the same time with some firmness would be good.

Often we see people do the reverse. With the rebellious child we are strict and with the shy child we pat them more. Because they are used to being treated that way, they remain that way. The shy child is being patted too much, so he needs a little stiffness, firmness whereas a rebellious child needs a more soft hand.

Involving children in active games is helpful. Restless children especially need a lot of exercise. In ayurvedic medicine there are three types of personalities. The first type is called vata. Vata type children tend to be thin and very restless. They are quick to learn and also quick to forget. They need a lot of exercise to reduce the vata tendencies.

The second type is called pitta. Pitta type children have a medium build, are steady and sharp in learning, they remember well, but they have a hot temper.

The third type, kapha children, tend to be physically bulky, they are slow in learning, but they don't forget what they learn. Each type needs a different kind of attention. Usually you can look at the body structure and see what is their appropriate type.

Food plays a big role in a child's development. Often children eat heavy, hard to digest food, and when they come and sit in the classroom their attention and retention capacity is very low. Their attention and retention capacity is very low. Their attention is not in the classroom and they cannot retain what they learn. When designing classes, it is better to not have something like a history class in the afternoon session immediately after lunch. After lunch it would be good for them to do some work where they are not just listening. After a big meal their listening capacity goes down and if they are asked to sit and listen, they would rather sleep. If you have a craft session immediately after lunch they will be busy doing something and they won't fall asleep. The mathematics or science subjects which need their full attention and listening would be best held in the morning sessions before lunch. Also it would be good if you advise the parents to give them a lighter breakfast in the morning.

Educating a child should be holistic, not just a process of stuffing their head with information. Just coming to the class and learning a few lessons is not really bringing up a child. We have to see the needs for complete development because body and mind are linked. The body and mind are so linked that what we put in the body reflects in the body. Violence in the mind reflects in the body and in their actions. Human values need to be cultured for the sake of the mind and the body. These principles are the basics on which you can start building your idea of human values.

The other day I was happy to see that there is an award for being very friendly which is given to children in Canadian schools. That is very nice. The child who is the most friendly in the classroom gets an award. I think this is the first country that has instituted such an award. This would be a very good program for school all over the world. The children are encouraged to be friendly with all the other children in the classroom. I usually ask a child, how many friends do you have in the class? They usually say, 4, 5, 3, or 2. I tell them to make one new friend every day.

Usually children have their place and they sit in the same place every day. This is very bad I think because they sit in the same place and they get so attached to that place. Some other kid comes and sit in that place and they fight for it. They think of their seat as "my place". They don't feel they own every seat in the classroom, they own just their own chair and they become so possessive about the chair.

You can tell them to sit in different places every day and with different children next to them every day. Very young children do this. They don't want to sit in