

## Vedic Way of Life

**Vedant** is the concluding portion of the Vedas – **Rig Ved, Yajur Ved, Sam Ved and Atharva Ved.** Vedas are the religious scriptures of Hindus, representing the cumulative philosophical wisdom of divine Saints. Vedant, also called Upanishads, deal with Life – its meaning & purpose – the View of Life as well as Way of Life. Life is nothing but continuous series of experiences. Each experience is considered as “unit of life.” The type of experience that an individual goes through determines the nature of his life. An individual gains an experience (the relationship with the subject & the object), when he (the subject) receives and responds to any stimuli (the object) from external world. Rishi’s (seers) selected the Experimenter (the subject) as their field of research for developing the inner personality of man (the subject), so that he can enjoy true bliss within, irrespective of pleasant or unpleasant external environment and happenings.

In every experience, man contacts the world through 4 constituents-Body, Mind, Intellect and Consciousness. The physical Body is grossest aspect of human personality, which contains five Organs of Perceptions (eyes, ears, nose, tongue & skin) and five Organs of Action (hands, legs, speech, genital organ, and anus). The size and shape of body differ from person to person but the essential material composing it and the functions of organs are common to all human beings.

Mind is a flow of thoughts- a seat of feelings and emotions. Continuous flow of thoughts creates the world of plurality. Generally, man acts according to whims & fancies of his mind and such actions are generally detrimental & dangerous to his welfare and prosperity. In day to day dealings with others, he reacts and does not act judiciously, resulting in confusion within, leading to dissatisfaction & discontentment in life.

Intellect is a discriminating power over the mind. Man has to develop its Intellect – the capacity to discriminate & analyze his feelings and then to act judiciously. As the experimenter is Mind & Intellect Equipment, it requires proper training. When this equipment is perfectly tuned up, man experiences harmony & rhythm. When it is out of tune and neglected, there is discord & harshness. This equipment is different in each human being. Vedantic principles help Man to keep his intellect alert and apply its faculty of discrimination to the choice of right action. For understanding the proper functioning of the composite personality of man, our Rishis, after much research, have found out the steps for improving Mind & Intellect Equipment to raise the Standard of Life of all human beings.

It is Pure Consciousness, which provides capacity to perceive to sense organs, capacity to act to action organs, capacity to feel to mind organ and capacity to think to intellect organ. Pure Consciousness is the changeless reality, which enables one to recognize the changes occurring at physical, mental & intellectual levels. Pure Consciousness is Brahman itself and common to all. The nature of it is absolute Bliss.

Absolute Happiness is the Goal of all human efforts. We have a common and firm belief that joy – happiness experienced by us lie in sense objects and we therefore strive to acquire, possess and aggrandize more & more wealth and objects of the world. However, the fact is that same objects /circumstances / situations give different degree of joy-happiness or sorrow/unhappiness to different people and at different times to same people.. Once the art of quietening the mind is learnt, man will

not find it necessary to pursue the material world and its enchanting objects for gaining peace & happiness.

The best way of establishing permanent happiness is to reduce the number of desires by directing your thoughts to all pervading Divine Reality.

If Man identifies correctly with his consciousness, which is the life- centre , around which all the activities of body, mind and intellect revolve, he is no longer victimized by sorrows of the changing phenomena of perceptions, emotions and thoughts. Vedant teaches man to focus his attention on Real Self-Supreme Bliss- a total dispassion for every thing that the material world can offer. Rare few pursue this path.

Vedant helps eliminating vasnas (desires) and reduce Rajas & Tamas and increase Satwa. Improvement is achieved through thought extinction. For thoughtlessness, detailed procedure of Meditation with Mala & Japa helps achieve moments of self- realization, when `awareness of thought becomes `pure thoughtlessness awareness.` When thoughts are completely eliminated, man achieves Bliss- Pure Consciousness.

Change in thoughts can be effected by 3 Yogas. The quantity of thoughts can be reduced by Karma Yoga-the Path of Action. The quality of thoughts can be improved by Bhakti Yoga- the Path of Devotion. The direction of thoughts can be changed from the realm of perceptions and emotions to the consciousness principle by Gnana Yoga- the Path of Knowledge. World is a projection of one's mind. Master the mind and you can master the world.

Self-control (Brahamcharya), Non-injury (Ahimsa) and Truthfulness (Satyam) are the cardinal principles of Upnishads for mastering the world and regulating the physical, mental and intellectual personalities. There are 2 paths in life- the Path of Pleasant & the Path of Good. Vedant shows the dangers of Path of Pleasant and advocates following the Path of Good. Life of Harmony is attained, when man rises above his limited egocentric view of life by recognizing the totality of the world.

Selfish actions performed with ego and egocentric desires create vasnas (desires). Vasnas are removed by study of scriptures, reflection and meditation. Selfless actions for others dedicated to higher altar exhaust existing vasnas and prevent formation of new vasnas leading to Bliss. Remembering and thanking God for whatever He has given to us, while going to bed and getting up in the morning also helps.

Vedic principles do not prescribe unintelligent, forced denial or suppression of all sensual enjoyments but enjoins the principle of sublimation- the intelligent self-control by understanding higher values of life. Upnishads clearly indicate to enjoy every thing in the world judiciously, as every thing is created by God for your enjoyment. Earn as much wealth as you can but never crave for it nor develop a sense of possessiveness and attachment.

**Some other Very Important Principles are as under:-**

- 1) Licentiousness (uncontrolled indulgence of sensual pleasures) leads to sorrow. Knowledge of higher values given by scriptures helps to check licentiousness. Renunciation of desires is the only way to happiness.
- 2) World is a mixture of Good & Bad. One who learns the art of contacting the world properly, as envisaged in scriptures, can derive maximum happiness even out of worst environment and situation.
- 3) Emotion is virtue, emotionalism is a weakness.
- 4) Happiness is a state of mind.
- 5) Standard of living & Standard of life should be balanced.
- 6) When philosophical values are lost, culture is lost. Thereafter, immorality, confusion and disintegration of Society/ Nation sets in.
- 7) Philosophy is not only a View of Life but complete Way of Life .Vedant not only clearly indicates complete View of Life but also a complete Way of Life.
- 8) World is constantly changing. The Self within is the changeless Reality.

It would be observed from above that Vedant deals with Life theoretical as well as practical and its teaching is Universal and for all time to come. These principles and practical solutions enumerated by our ancient Rishis before thousands of years were practiced in those days and thereafter from time to time till today. Whenever, these were forgotten, there was chaos in Society, Nation and World. No scientists, who have been working sincerely in the fields of economics, politics and natural resources and who have provided lot of facilities and material objects, leading to Gene & Stem replacement, Mobile phones, Computers, Internet, Discovery Van etc have been able to give us peace.

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