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## Ethics & Integrity-5: Contribution of Moral Thinkers

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### Contents

Socrates .....	3
Life Profile of Socrates .....	3
Contribution of Socrates to Ethics .....	3
Human Realm .....	3
Dialogue .....	3
Virtue .....	4
Inquiry .....	4
Aspects of Socratic Method .....	4
How Socratic Method (of teaching) can be used to inculcate value ethics? .....	4
Important Quotes ascribed to Socrates .....	5
Plato and his Cardinal Virtues .....	6
Prudence .....	6
Temperance .....	7
Fortitude / Courage .....	7
What is Unity of Virtues? .....	7
Aristotle and Concept of good life .....	8
The vegetative level .....	8
The appetitive level .....	8
The Deliberative level .....	8
The contemplative level .....	9
Thomas Hobbes and Psychological Egoism .....	9
Hobbes Psychological egoism .....	9
Charity .....	9
Pity .....	9
Ayn Rand- Altruism and Ethical Egoism .....	10
Difference between the psychological egoism of Hobbes and the ethical egoism of Ayn Rand .....	11
Kohlberg: Three Levels of Morality .....	11
Level 1: Preconventional reasoning .....	11
Kohlberg's Level 2: Conventional Reasoning .....	12
Level 3: Postconventional Reasoning .....	12
Kant: Categorical Imperative .....	12
Kantianism .....	12
Kant's Categorical Imperative .....	13
Criticism .....	14
Difference between hypothetical imperative and categorical imperative .....	14
Kant's notion of good will .....	14
Kant's view on the origin and importance of moral knowledge .....	14





The Basis of Moral Knowledge .....	15
Kant's Postulates of Morality .....	15
Immortality of the Soul .....	15
Freedom of the Soul .....	16
The existence of God .....	16
Carol Gilligan: Ethics of Care .....	16
Pre-conventional level .....	16
Conventional Level .....	17
Post conventional level .....	17
Other Western Thinkers .....	17
Hobbes .....	17
Cudworth .....	17
Adam Smith .....	18
Butler .....	18
Paley .....	19
Malebranche .....	19
Contribution of Moral Thinkers – Indian Buddha and Buddhism Ethics .....	19
Four Noble Truths and Eight Fold Path .....	19
1st Truth .....	20
2nd truth .....	20
3rd truth .....	20
4th Truth .....	20
Key Elements of Buddhist Ethics .....	21
Buddhist Values .....	21
What can I learn from Buddha? .....	22
Thoughts are material .....	22
Action is what counts .....	22
Control the Thoughts .....	22
Doubt everything, find your own truth. ....	22
If there is meaning in life, there must be a meaning in suffering .....	22
Death is inevitable and we should find our own salvation .....	23
It is useless to inquire into the questions which don't get us closer to truth .....	23
Notable Buddha Quotes for Examination .....	23
Jain Ethics .....	24
Pancha Mahavratas .....	24
Three Jewels .....	24
Right Perception (Samyak Darsana) .....	25
Right knowledge (Samyak Jnana) .....	25
Right conduct (Samyak Charitrya) .....	25
What I can learn from Jainism? .....	25
Mahatma Gandhi .....	26





Gandhi's Religion .....	26
Ethical Conduct .....	27
Truth .....	27
Service to Society .....	27
Cleanliness .....	27
Ends and Means .....	27
Ahimsa .....	28
Satyagraha .....	28
Doctrine of Trusteeship .....	28
Swami Vivekananda .....	28
Ideas of Vivekananda regarding moral values and character building education .....	29
World Peace, Religion and Brotherhood .....	29
His views on Education .....	30
Education of the Masses .....	30
Vivekananda on concept of personality .....	31
The Potential Divinity of Soul .....	31
Important Quotations of Swami Vivekananda .....	32
Conclusion .....	32
Dr. B R Ambedkar .....	33
Rabindranath Tagore .....	33
Spiritual Humanism .....	33
His political ideas .....	34
His social ideas .....	34
His idea about education .....	34
Kautilya .....	34
Kautilya's Concept of Rajrishi and Its relevance today [Important] .....	36





### Contribution of Moral Thinkers from India and World

## Socrates

Socrates was the first systematic moral thinker, who led an exemplary life spending most of his time in philosophical discussion. He himself did not write anything. Instead he questioned people on philosophical issues, especially about the nature of the good life. He was charged with not respecting the gods, and with corrupting the young minds; and was sentenced to death by drinking hemlock. He was teacher of Plato and whatever knowledge we have about Socrates is based on Plato's dialogues.

### Life Profile of Socrates

Socrates lived in an era which is called Golden Age of Athens. In 480BC, Greeks had defeated the Persians at the Battle of Salamis, and this was followed by a period of peace and prosperity, and incredible artistic and cultural achievements. Socrates was born in 470BC. During his early life, he followed his father's profession and became a sculptor. He married and had three sons, though he was hardly an ideal husband or father. He used to be preoccupied with his search for wisdom and often neglected the family. Socrates was hardly an ideal husband or father; he was so preoccupied with his search for wisdom that he often neglected his family, and not concerned with supporting them.

Socrates was first a student of Anaxagoras, an elderly philosopher of Greece. Initially he studied cosmology but later abandoned it for ethics. He believed that his mission was to help people of Athens recognize their moral ignorance. However, his constant ignorance did not please everyone. While he developed a following among youth, he also incurred wrath of the wealthy and powerful. In 399 BC, he was put on trial for atheism {not believing the gods of Athens} and corrupting the youth of the city by teaching them to question everything. He was held guilty of these charges and condemned him to death by drinking of hemlock.

Though his execution was delayed for a month and he had ample time to escape, he did not do so because it would be contrary to his principles.

### Contribution of Socrates to Ethics

#### Human Realm

Before Socrates, philosophy was primarily focussed on questions of metaphysics, religion or science. Socrates was the first person who gave a practical and political focus to the philosophy and ethics. He asserted that Human realm was the proper focus of philosophical inquiry.

#### Dialogue

For investigation into defining the virtues and ethical behaviour, Socrates believed that the best way





was “dialogue” that is – meaningful conversations with people on ideas like justice, righteousness and virtue. This method of long conversations is called “dialectic” {also known as *Socratic Method*} and it replaced the solitary contemplation. It was the dialogue which influenced the students and youth of Athens and formed the basis of modern philosophy, science, ethics, social theory and other fields.

### Virtue

Socrates equated knowledge with virtue, which ultimately leads to ethical conduct. As per him, only life worth living was one that was rigorously examined. He looked for principles and actions that were worth living by, creating an ethical base upon which decisions should be made. Socrates firmly believed that knowledge and understanding of virtue, or “the good,” was sufficient for someone to be happy. To him, knowledge of the good was almost akin to an enlightened state. He believed that no person could willingly choose to do something harmful or negative if they were fully aware of the value of life.

### Inquiry

Socrates was put on trial and found guilty of “corrupting the youth” of Athens by asking them to question authority. Socrates believed deeply that people should inquire and ask questions, even about – or perhaps especially about – those things that everyone takes for granted. He did not believe that judging an action based on life and death was virtuous. Instead, Socrates taught that decisions should be made based on what was right or wrong, or good or bad, standards you can achieve through discussion and moral guidance. His belief in the process of inquiry was so strong and pure that it got him killed by being forced to drink hemlock.

### Aspects of Socratic Method

Socratic Method refers to the cooperative argumentative dialogue between individuals, based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and to draw out ideas and underlying presumptions. The Key components of Socratic Method are as follows:

- Socratic Method uses questions to examine the values, principles, and beliefs of students, so its dialectic method.
- Socratic Method focuses on moral education, on how one ought to live.

### How Socratic Method (of teaching) can be used to inculcate value ethics?

Socratic Method can be used to inculcate value ethics among children and young via education. The method was among earliest documented instances of learning through inquiry and today’s Inquiry Based Learning traces its origin from it.

Socratic Inquiry is essentially not teaching in traditional or conventional way. In fact, *it does not need a teacher* but a *leader*. The leader of Socratic Inquiry is not the peddler of knowledge, filling the minds of his students with rote learning, facts and truths. There are no lectures either and no rote





memorization. It is a shared dialogue between the leader and the students in which both are responsible for pushing the dialogue forward through questioning. The “teacher,” or leader of the dialogue, asks probing questions in an effort to expose the values and beliefs which frame and support the thoughts and statements of the participants in the inquiry. The students ask questions as well, both of the teacher and each other. The inquiry progresses interactively, and the teacher is as much a participant as a guide of the discussion. Further, this inquiry is open-ended and there is no pre-determined argument or terminus to which the teacher attempts to lead the students.

### Important Quotes ascribed to Socrates

Below are some of the important quotes of Socrates which might be useful in answer writing in your examination. Please try to link them with the Socratic Method discussed above and understand their explicit and implicit meanings.

1. *Understanding a question is half an answer.*
2. *“Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.”*
3. *“There is only one good, knowledge, and one evil, ignorance.”*
4. *“I cannot teach anybody anything. I can only make them think.”*
5. *“Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.”*  
[www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies](http://www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies)
6. *“Strong minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, weak minds discuss people.”*
7. *“By all means marry; if you get a good wife, you’ll become happy; if you get a bad one, you’ll become a philosopher.”*
8. *“He who is not contented with what he has, would not be contented with what he would like to have.”*
9. *“If you don’t get what you want, you suffer; if you get what you don’t want, you suffer; even when you get exactly what you want, you still suffer because you can’t hold on to it forever. Your mind is your predicament. It wants to be free of change. Free of pain, free of the obligations of life and death. But change is law and no amount of pretending will alter that reality.”*
10. *“Sometimes you put walls up not to keep people out, but to see who cares enough to break them down.”*
11. *“Wonder is the beginning of wisdom.”*
12. *“To find yourself, think for yourself.”*
13. *“The unexamined life is not worth living.”*
14. *“Know thyself.”*
15. *“Let him who would move the world first move himself.”*
16. *“The secret of happiness, you see, is not found in seeking more, but in developing the capacity to enjoy less.”*





17. "The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."
18. "I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world."
19. "Prefer knowledge to wealth, for the one is transitory, the other perpetual."
20. "The mind is everything; what you think you become."
21. "True wisdom comes to each of us when we realize how little we understand about life, ourselves, and the world around us."
22. "He is richest who is content with the least, for content is the wealth of nature."
23. "To be is to do"

### Plato and his Cardinal Virtues

According to the old Greek thinkers, there are in all seven virtues of which four are called *Cardinal Virtues* while rest three are called *Theological virtues*. The "Cardinal" ones are those which all civilised people recognise. The "Theological" are those which, as a rule, only Christians know about.

Plato identifies four "cardinal virtues" that are necessary for a happy individual and that are necessary for a good society. He also believed that the ideal state should be with people with such virtues. The four cardinal virtues are prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude {or Courage}.



Here is a brief description of these four virtues keeping in focus the public service.

#### Prudence

Prudence literally means "discretion in practical affairs". Prudence is called the charioteer of the other virtues because it guides and sets the rule and reason for the other virtues. Prudence is the footprint of Wisdom.

In public servants, the qualities like courage, perseverance, loyalty and fidelity to principles matter. But different circumstances may demand different attributes. If we have to settle on one quality above the others, it would be prudence, which encompasses *practical wisdom, insight, and knowledge*.

**Prudence is right reason in action.** Prudence plays a vital role in terms of guiding and regulating all the other virtues. For example, courage in the pursuit of a foolish policy can lead to a catastrophe. For these reasons, prudence is the charioteer of the virtues.





### Justice

Justice is the flawless order by which every human being do their own business, the right man in the right place, i.e. the class and division of citizens. Justice is a more abstract than the other virtues. He states that justice in the State means justice in the individuals who form the State. Justice states civic strengths that underlie healthy community life.

- **Teamwork:** working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group.
- **Equality:** Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice.
- **Headship:** organizing group activities and seeing that they happen.

### Temperance

Temperance is a strength that **protects against excess**; and consists self-regulation and obedience to authority. It suggests harmony among conflicting elements. The virtue of temperance is the friendship of the ruling and the subject principles, both in the State and in the individual. Temperance does not detain the reasonable pleasures that are contrary to our reason. It requires us to prepare ourselves even when we are not faced with an immediate temptation. The lack of temperance challenges prudence, i.e., being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted.

### Fortitude / Courage

Courage is bravery based on justice. It removes obstacles that come in the way of justice. It is a willingness to sacrifice one's own life for others. It enables us to face the difficulty that comes in the way of justice. Fear is the reaction that comes naturally to any threat.

A brave man acts in the face of his reasonable fear. It is the never-failing salvation of the opinions which law and education have prescribed concerning dangers. It is the emotional strengths that involve the exercise of will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition, external or internal.

- Valour: not shrinking from threat
- Determination: finishing what one starts
- Reliability: speaking the truth but presenting oneself in a genuine way
- Vigour: approaching life with excitement and energy

### What is Unity of Virtues?

There has been a longstanding ethical debate about what is called "**the unity of the virtues.**" To many of the ancient Greek philosophers, a person could not possess one of the cardinal virtues without possessing them all. These philosophers ask: *How could a person who cannot control his or her appetites (thus is intemperate) be just or prudent?* Socrates believed that virtue was a matter of understanding, and that once a person understood good and evil; he or she would naturally be prudent, temperate, courageous, and just. The example of the unity of the virtues, is that a politician





who cheats on his wife is not someone who can be trusted with the public's business either. True virtue is that where all parts of the soul are pulling in the same direction i.e. toward the good. The cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, are like the upper management of the other virtues for they regulate our practical actions or good habits in specific ways.

### Aristotle and Concept of good life

Aristotle's understanding of "ethics" has more to do with *what makes life worth living than with obedience to the moral law*. Aristotle refers to the rational activity that will make us happy as virtuous activity. *We shall be happy, he says, when we act in accordance with virtue and we shall be most happy when we act in accordance with the highest form of virtue.*

Aristotle has identified as parts of the soul the four levels of existence the fulfilment of which constitutes our happiness. They are the vegetative, the appetitive, the deliberative and the contemplative.

#### The vegetative level

- The vegetative level of our existence is what we would describe today as the biological functioning of our bodies.
- Aristotle understands the vegetative part of the soul as a mode of functioning of the person that aims at a specific goal. For him, all of the parts of the soul have a tendency or internal goal that is distinctive of them and that they seek to fulfil. I do not use my skin to protect me from infections and other hurts; the skin has this purpose and goal within itself.

#### The appetitive level

- Aristotle's positing of an "appetitive part of the soul" is based on the obvious fact that human beings desire things and strive to attain them. The appetitive aspect of our being also allows us to understand emotion and feeling.
- Aristotle suggests that the appetitive aspect of our being is the tendency of the organism to seek its own fulfilment through the excellence of its desires. Desiring the right things is as important as obtaining what is desired.

#### The Deliberative level

- The third part of the soul that Aristotle identifies is the "deliberative" or "calculative" part. He has in mind our ability to think about what we do, to plan our actions, to be strategic in our approach to our needs and to review the effectiveness of what we have done.
- Rather than being driven by instincts or habits, human beings can be rational and reflective in their approach to the exigencies of life. Being rational beings, we fulfil ourselves when we think clearly, coherently and effectively so as to increase our ability to attain our goals.





### The contemplative level

- He sees contemplation as a further aspect of our reasoning, but it is distinguished from the deliberative part in terms of what it is about: that is, in terms of its objects.
- Aristotle suggests that the contemplative aspect of our being is detached from our active lives and is fulfilled by thinking about eternal and changeless things.

Aristotle's theory becomes normative in that he regards certain behaviours, especially those that relate to pleasure, as worthy of human beings but other behaviours as not worthy. The reason that one should be virtuous is that it is honourable to be so. The goal of virtue is to be happy in Aristotle's special sense of that term. You cannot be happy without being good.

### Thomas Hobbes and Psychological Egoism

Psychological egoism is the position that we always do that act that we perceive to be in our own best self-interest. That is, we have no choice but to be selfish. We cannot be motivated by anything other than what we believe will promote our interests. I always try to promote my self-interest, and you always try to promote your self-interest; that is psychological egoism.

“Every voluntary action is a desire for one's own welfare” general-studies

This description explains of human nature; that is, it maintains that all people act only in ways that improve their own self-interest. Psychological egoism asserts that all human action is motivated by selfish-desires. It signifies that concern for another's happiness is a means to one's own happiness. Thus, it rules out the existence of noble and generous actions. It also asserts that humans are not capable of any other motive than their own self-interest.

### Hobbes Psychological egoism

Thomas Hobbes was a Psychological Egoist and had a way of systematically re-interpreting “altruistic” motives. Two examples:

#### Charity

- Acts of charity are really a demonstration of power. By helping others, we show ourselves to be more resourceful than others, because we can take care of ourselves and have plenty to spare.

#### Pity

- We pity others because we imagine ourselves in their place. Helping others out of a sense of pity is really an attempt to assuage our fear of how we might end up and help to ensure that others will help us if and when the time comes.

In no case, according to Hobbes, we act out of concern for the welfare of others. For Hobbes, human





action is predominantly motivated by self-interest. There is a drive in us to survive at all costs that is better for all of us, individually and collectively. Satisfaction is the goal.

From this interpretation, it may be inferred that we all always act in such a way as to maximize our own self-interest. He says moral codes don't work only if few obey it.

Hobbes ruled out the possibility of morally obligatory acts of altruism. He established a moral obligation toward maximizing our individual self-interest. Specifically to perform morally egoistic acts that lead to our individual survival. He says we act altruistically only with reasonable effort, because it follows that it is morally permissible to act entirely out of self-interest. He stated *"Do to others as you would have them do to you, "for doing good to others will help ensure that they do well to us."*

Hobbes argues that if people existed outside of any society, without laws or agreed-on morality, in a "state of nature." There are no common ways of life, only violence settles conflicts, people are unreliable and show unpredictable behaviour. Further, they are fundamentally selfish and follow their own inclinations and interests, tending to act, react and overreact in fearful and violent ways. The result of life in this state of nature is chaotic anarchy where life is *"solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short."*

To prevent violations, Hobbes proposes a strong government with powerful law enforcement and an effective system of punishment. The threat of being caught and punished should function as deterrence to crime. People must believe that offences against the law are not in their overall interest.

### Ayn Rand- Altruism and Ethical Egoism

Rand defines altruism as the view that *"Any action taken for the benefit of others is good, and any action taken for one's own benefit is evil"*. Thus, the beneficiary of an action is the only criterion of moral value—and so long as the beneficiary is anybody other than oneself, anything goes.

- The ethics of altruism prescribes that we sacrifice our interests and lives for the good of others. Therefore, the ethics of altruism is incompatible with the goal of happiness.
- Ethical egoism suggests that we seek our own pleasure completely, and as such it is reliable with the happiness goal. Therefore, ethical egoism is the correct moral theory.
- She criticises that altruism corrodes men's capacity to know their life's value and they totally become ignorant of reality.
- According to her the principle of trade is the only balanced ethical opinion for all human relationships in all ways and means. E.g.: personal, social and material etc.
- Altruism holds death as its standard and goal which leads to the reasoning that every form of





suffering, including self-destruction, is the virtue of its believers.

- She says Altruism is the “creed of corruption.” Since it lets us to sacrifice our happiness for the good of others, is contrary to our highest good and attaining ego-centred happiness is the highest goal and good in life and we have a moral duty to attempt to reach this goal. She infers that the highest value is the organism’s self-preservation.

### **Difference between the psychological egoism of Hobbes and the ethical egoism of Ayn Rand** **Hobbes’s Psychological egoism**

- Psychological Egoism states that every human action is motivated by self-interest.
- Psychological Egoism is commonly related to and motivated by selfishness.
- Psychological egoism is descriptive in that, the theory states that it makes no claim as to how one should act.
- Hobbes says Charity is the most general motive that we ascribe to people when we think they are acting from a concern for others.
- Psychological Egoism appeals to the fact that unselfish actions produce a sense of self-satisfaction in the person who does them.

### **Ayn Rand’s Ethical egoism**

- Ethical egoism states that humans ought to seek the fulfilment of their wants and desires.
- Ethical Egoism is related to selfishness, but it is more motivated by one doing what is right.
- Ethical Egoism is prescriptive in that the theory states we “ought” to pursue our own self-interest.
- For Rand, accepting the offer of Charity means they are not competent to care for themselves; and they cease to be self-reliant and become passively dependent on others.
- Ethical egoism appeals that sacrificing one’s life for the good of others does not take seriously the value of the human individual.

## **Kohlberg: Three Levels of Morality**

Lawrence Kohlberg stressed that moral development primarily involves moral reasoning and occurs in stages. A key concept in understanding progression through the levels and stages is that their morality becomes more internal or mature. That is, their reasons for their moral decisions or values begin to go beyond the external or superficial reasons they gave when they were younger.

### **Level 1: Preconventional reasoning**

The lowest level of reasoning in Kohlberg’s theory is preconventional reasoning, which consists of two stages: punishment and obedience orientation (stage 1) at this stage, moral thinking is often tied to punishment. For example, children and adolescents obey adults because adults tell them to obey





and individualism, instrumental purpose, and exchange is the stage, when individuals pursue their own interests but also let others do the same. Thus, what is right involves an equal exchange. People are nice to others so that others will be nice to them in return.

### **Kohlberg's Level 2: Conventional Reasoning**

The second, or intermediate, level in Kohlberg's theory of moral development is conventional reasoning. Individuals at this level abide by certain standards (internal), but they are the standards of others (external), such as parents or the laws of society. Conventional reasoning consists of two stages: mutual interpersonal expectations, relationships, and interpersonal conformity (stage 3) at this stage, individual's value trust, caring, and loyalty to others as a basis of moral judgments. and social systems morality (stage 4) at this stage, moral judgments is based on understanding the social order, law, justice, and duty.

### **Level 3: Postconventional Reasoning**

The third and highest level in Kohlberg's theory is postconventional reasoning. At this level, morality is more internal. The postconventional level of morality consists of two stages: social contract or utility where individuals reason that values, rights, and principles undergird or transcend the law. A person evaluates the validity of actual laws and examines social systems in terms of the degree to which they preserve and protect fundamental human rights and values and individual rights the person has developed a moral standard based on universal human rights. When faced with a conflict between law and conscience, the person will follow conscience, even though the decision might involve personal risk.

## **Kant: Categorical Imperative**

**Immanuel Kant** (1724 – 1804) was a *German philosopher* and is considered one of the central figures in modern philosophy.

### **Kantianism**

Kant believed that people's actions should to be guided by moral laws, and that these moral laws were universal. He held that in order to apply to all rational beings, any supreme principle of morality must itself be based on reason. Even if a person's is doing good should and it cause harm, the good will behind the efforts is still good. According to Kant, Our focus should be on what we ought to do. Our sense of "ought to" is called dutifulness. , what we want to do is of no significance. Kantianism is based on the premise that rational beings can use logic to explain the "why" behind their solutions to ethical problems. What matters is the motivation behind the act and not the consequences. The 4 possibilities of actions based on Kant's intention/motivation vs. consequences are





- good intentions, right act (you did the morally right thing and you get credit for it)
- good intentions, wrong act (you did the morally wrong thing but you are not to be blamed for it)
- bad intentions, right act (you did the morally right thing, but you don't get credit for it)
- bad intentions, wrong act (you did the morally wrong thing and you have to take the blame for it)

So for Kant, the blame or credit we attach to one's intentions and the rightness and wrongness of what one did are separate and independent. Kantianism aligns with the intuition of many people that the same morality ought to apply to all people for all of history. These guidelines allow us to make clear moral judgments. For example, one such judgment might be: "Sacrificing living human beings to appease the gods is wrong." It is wrong in North America in the twenty first century, and it was wrong in South America in the fifteenth century.

Kant states that "all people are created equal." because it holds that people in similar situations should be treated in similar ways, and his theory delivers a moral agenda to fight discrimination. Finally his theory is summarised as a good person is someone who always does their duty because it is their duty whether they enjoy it or not.

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### Kant's Categorical Imperative

A categorical imperative denotes an absolute, unconditional requirement that exerts its authority in all circumstances, both required and justified as an end in itself. He gives the highest honour for the categorical imperative because it became universal law that can be applied to any and every one. Kant is saying that simply willing that our moral rule become a universal law produces a logical contradiction. His categorical imperative ensures that we aren't doing these acts in mimic of others (like God), but rather in line with one universal law.

The 3 Categorical Imperatives stated by Kant are as follows:

- *Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.* It states that one should choose our 'codes of conduct' only if they serve perfect / imperfect duty and are good for all. Perfect duties are blameworthy if not met and are the basic requirements for a human being. An example of perfect duty is the avoidance of suicide.
- *Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end and never merely as a means to an end.* This states that we should not use humanity of ourselves or others as a means to an end. An example of the second maxim would be that of slavery.
- *Every rational being must so act as if he were through his maxim always a legislating member in the*





*universal kingdom of ends.* This states that we should consider ourselves to be members in the universal realm of ends. We should consider our actions to be of consequence to everyone else in that our actions affect not only ourselves but that of others.

### Criticism

- Kant's system, neglects to identify or, rather, to justify the existence of the moral law.
- It neglects the value of nature

### Difference between hypothetical imperative and categorical imperative

Imperatives are formula of a reason that determines the will of the action. Imperatives can be expressed in terms of what ought to do. All imperatives are communicated by doing an action conferring to the standard of a will that it will provide a good ending in anyway. If the end action is good, as a mean to something it is hypothetical imperative. On the other hand, if the action is good according to itself than it is considered a categorical imperative.

Kant holds that a categorical imperative is the fundamental principle of our moral duties because it is a command that exercise our wills in a particular way, not to perform some action or other. It is categorical in nature because we possess rational wills, without reference to any ends that we might or might not have.

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A hypothetical imperative is a command that also applies to us in virtue of our having a rational will, but not simply in virtue of this. It requires us to exercise our wills in a certain way given we have an origin willed an end. A hypothetical imperative is thus a command in a conditional form.

### Kant's notion of good will

According to Kant, the one unconditionally good thing is a good will despite all encroachments. When we act, consequences of our actions lies beyond our control, but the will behind the action can be controlled. People with good will often accomplish good deeds, but producing beneficial outcomes is not what makes a good will good. A good will is good in and of itself. Even if a person's efforts at doing causes harm and fall short, the good will behind the efforts is still good. Since it is the only thing that is universally good, the proper function of reason is to cultivate a will that is good in itself. Kant also explains good will that, it is absolute and "to be esteemed incomparably higher than anything which could be brought about by it in favour of any inclination or even of the sum of total inclinations.

E.g. Kant stated that the kind act of the person who overcomes a natural lack of sympathy for other people out of respect for duty has moral worth, whereas the same kind act of the person who naturally takes pleasure in spreading joy does not.

### Kant's view on the origin and importance of moral knowledge

Kant laid the foundations in Critique of Pure Reason (1781) about moral of knowledge. It stated





about the moral of knowledge as one of the two things that filled his mind with new and increasing admiration, apart from the starry heaven above him. Kant tried to show that both the laws of nature and morality are grounded in human reason. He is often thought to have defined, nature and freedom, the realm of what is and that of what ought to be.

### The Basis of Moral Knowledge

- The mission of moral philosophy is to determine how we are able to arrive at principles of behavior that are binding upon all people.
- Kant did not believe that induction was a suitable method for determining these principles since that would simply tell the people to do what they do, not how they ought to behave.
- For Kant the moral judgment, “we ought to tell the truth” is arrived at in the same way as the scientific statement, “every effect has a cause.”
- These judgments are derived from reason not experience. According to him, theoretical reasoning brings the category of causality whereas, practical reason brings the “ought to be”.
- He states that in science and in moral philosophy the concepts should go beyond any particular facts like science, practical reason employs a priori judgments.
- The basis of obligation must not be sought in human nature or in the circumstances of the world but a justified argument in the concepts of reason.

### Kant's Postulates of Morality

The three postulates of morality are given by Immanuel Kant. In detail they are

#### Immortality of the Soul

Kant states in his critique, “the belief in God and another world is so interwoven with my moral sentiment.” The postulate of immortality was that the belief in immortality has to be based on the moral disposition and not one hope of future rewards. Kant bases his first argument for immortality. As ‘nothing is purposeless’ each organ into the world has its own specific claim that human life as whole is an end not in this life but in a future life. The moral arguments for the immortality of the soul as stated by Kant:

1. The highest good is a necessary object of the will.
2. Holiness, or complete fitness of intentions to the moral law, is necessary condition of the highest good.
3. Holiness cannot be found in a sensuous rational being.
4. The highest good can be made real.

Kant also makes it clear that the postulate of immortality is that which cannot be known but can only be thought and furnish us with only practical and objective truth that can give rise to action-motives worthy of achieving highest good.





### Freedom of the Soul

Freedom is one of the postulates, which is considered as logically possible and practically useful and it is the key stone of the whole architecture of the system of pure reason and even speculative reason. Freedom provides a conception of ourselves which motivates us to obey the moral law. As freedom of will can't be given empirical or theoretical evidence, Kant's thought on freedom of the will can be seen to pass the following phases.

- Human actions are those that have internal rather than external causes.
- Human actions which are not dictated by deterministic laws of nature cannot be proved.
- Human freedom's existence can be proved and thereby proving that moral law applies to us.
- The freedom of will form the undeniable fact of our religion.
- Kant says that freedom desires both itself and the freedom of others.

### The existence of God

The God postulated by Kant is not the God of religion. The postulate of God is a need or requirement of our moral consciousness or a moral necessity which is subjective and no way connected to the consciousness of our duty. The divine will is the motive to action, not ground of it. The possibility of the existence of a certain object is explained by this hypothesis explained appropriately as a faith and indeed a faith of reason.

Kant stresses that the properties of Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence can be assigned to God to play his moral role of guaranteeing the possibility of the highest good. God is not a metaphysical concept, original being, that functions in the thinking of a moral agent and exercise a real influence on his/her actions.

## Carol Gilligan: Ethics of Care

Carol Gilligan challenged Lawrence Kohlberg's stage theory of moral development. Gilligan argued that his model was male biased, and failed to include the perspectives of women, and downgraded women to the status of deviants from the norm. She proposed a stage theory of moral development for women similar to Kohlberg's moral development theory. The female approach to morality is that people have responsibilities towards others. So morality is an imperative to care for others.

It has three major divisions: Pre-conventional, conventional, and post conventional. The transitions between the stages are fuelled by changes in the sense of self rather than in changes in cognitive capability.

### Pre-conventional level

Every child falls in this level because person only cares for them in order to ensure survival .In the





transition phase the person's attitude is considered selfish, and the person sees the connection between themselves and others. *"One learns to care for oneself."*

### Conventional Level

Responsibility is goodness and more care is shown for other people. It passes a situation which carries on to ignoring needs of self. According to Gilligan, this is shown in the role of mother & wife. In this transitional phase, tensions between responsibility of caring for others and caring for self are faced. *"One internalizes norms about caring for others and tends to neglect oneself"*

### Post conventional level

Acceptance of the principle of care for self and others is shown in this stage and some people never reach this level. One becomes critical of the conventions one adopted in the conventional stage and learns to balance caring for self with caring for others. This is a progression from selfish, to social, to principled morality. *"One internalizes norms about caring for others and tends to neglect oneself."*

## Other Western Thinkers

### Hobbes

Hobbes presented one of the earliest modern theories of morals. He was deeply indebted to the stress of his time and system. According to him man are one another's enemies by nature and it's only by force or fear that they can be restrained from internecine hostility.

- It is the perception of this truth which led to the monarchical and absolute forms of government. It was only by this centralising and gathering of power which when directed against the disturber of peace that all individual members in society could hold their property safely.
- The king rules by right of human necessity and any obedience to him and to the constituted authorities is the sum of virtue.
- As per him, conscience is just another name for fear of punishment.
- It was the intimate connection of religion with civil freedom in the English Commonwealth which uprooted all religious faith in Hobbes and he maintained the duty of entire conformity to the monarch's religion.

### Cudworth

Ralph Cudworth was a represented the 17<sup>th</sup> century movement called Cambridge Platonists. He was an English philosopher and theologian.

- Three of his works namely- *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, *A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality* and *A Treatise on Freewill* comprise a complete exposition of Platonist world-view.





- Platonists have formed a natural theology which supports the concept of freewill and opposes the materialism of Thomas Hobbes. All Platonists did not consider any natural divide between philosophy and theology.
- Cudworth devoted himself to developing a model of universe which was based on a vast body of both ancient and contemporary sources. Cudworth's ontology was based on Neoplatonism and was involved in a world-soul he called as 'Plastic Nature'. As per his epistemology, all the essences that served as the standards of rationality were innate to God.
- He developed a modern-sounding psychology derived from Epictetus's Stoic psychology which attacked the concepts of materialism, voluntarism and determinism.

In his work, '*The Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*', he has stated that right exists which is independent of all authority by the nature of things in the coeternity with the Supreme Being.

### Adam Smith

- He advocated that moral distinctions completely depend on sympathy. Whatever we approve in others corresponds to our own tastes and habits.
- The sense of duty depends on putting ourselves in place of others and inquiring what they approve in us. Conscience then is both a collective and corporate faculty and is created by the prevalent opinions of the community.
- There cannot be any solitary virtue.
- The duty of any individual can never transcend the average conscience of the community. The society is described as what it actually is and not what is ought to be.

### Butler

Bishop Joseph Butler is a well-known religious philosopher of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and is still read and discussed among contemporary philosophers for arguments against some major figures in the history of philosophy just like Hobbes and Locke.

- In two of his famous works viz. '*Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel*' and '*Analogy of Religion*', Butler has argued against Hobbes egoism and Locke's memory based theory of personal identity respectively.
- His philosophy is generally defensive. He largely accepts the received systems of morality and defends them against all those who think that such systems can be refuted or disregarded.
- In his philosophy he attempts to neutralise the morality and religion by depicting them as essential components of nature and common life. He has argued that nature is a moral system to which humans have adapted via conscience.





- In addressing questions like why be moral or why be religious Butler has developed a philosophy that possesses a unity which states religion and morality are grounded in natural world order.

### Paley

All his definitions of virtue are commendable for the combination of three partial theories. As per him, virtue is doing good to the mankind as per the will of God for the attainment of everlasting happiness. The following can be deduced from his definition.

- Being good to mankind is definitely a virtue but it is not the complete virtue.
- Obedience to God is our bound duty but his will must be according to what is fitting and right.
- The everlasting happiness is the result of virtue and not the basic reason for it.

Paley was a sincere believer in the Christian revelation and has immense contribution towards defending Christianity and the illustration of its records. The primary merit of Paley's treatise on Moral Philosophy is that it explicitly recognised the Divine authority of the moral teachings of the

### New Testament.

### Malebranche

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Malebranche who belongs to the previous century resolves virtue into love of universal order and conformity to it in conduct. This requires that all beings should be equally valued and loved as per their relative worth and one should recognize this worth in our rules and habits of life.

- This translates into the view that man is to be more valued and more zealously served as compared to other animals because his worth is more.
- Likewise God is to be indefinitely loved more than man and all the creatures that derive their existence from him.
- Malebranche ascribes to the Supreme Being true recognition of His government of the world which is the sole law the man follows.

## Contribution of Moral Thinkers – Indian Buddha and Buddhism Ethics

Ethics in Buddhism are based on the enlightened perspective of the Buddha. Morality is woven into the fabric of Buddhism; and all major Buddhist schools emphasize the importance of the moral life.

### Four Noble Truths and Eight Fold Path

Buddha laid out guidelines for each of Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path which *serve as basic pillars of Buddhist Ethics*. *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* is the Buddha's teaching on the Four Noble





Truths. The Four Noble Truths are – there is suffering; there is a cause or origin of suffering; there is an end of suffering; and there is path out of suffering which is the Eightfold Path. Each of these Truths has three aspects so all together there are twelve insights. In these simple words Buddha teaches us to shine our light, and find peace.

### 1st Truth

The first of the four noble truths that constitute his central message identifies the pervasiveness of suffering in human life. it also applies to everything that you can possibly experience or do or think concerning the past, the present or the future. All things must arise and pass away. Whenever you feel suffering, first make the recognition: 'There is suffering', then: 'It should be understood', and finally: 'It has been understood'. This process of insight is the first noble truth.

### 2nd truth

The Second Noble Truth identifies the cause of suffering in a kind of desire that people universally have. They are afflicted by craving for sensual desires, craving for being, craving for non-being are the causes of suffering. Our suffering comes from the attachment that we have to ideals, and the complexities we create about the way things are. One should learn to let go of the desire by actual practice and understanding to have the insight of second noble truth.

### 3rd truth

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The Buddha taught that the way to extinguish desire, which causes suffering, is to liberate oneself from attachment. When something arises, we grasp it and proliferate around it; and this complicates everything. We can be released from the narrow limits of self-interest into the vast expanse of universal life; to cease suffering, people have to bring about the cessation of this kind of desire. This truth explains the possibility of liberation.

### 4th Truth

The Fourth outlines the way to bring this cessation about; it requires rectifying eight aspects of one's life: 'the Eightfold Noble Path' that is,

- Wisdom (pañña)
  1. Right Understanding (samma ditthi)
  2. Right Aspiration (samma sankappa)
- Morality (sila)
  1. Right Speech (samma vaca)
  2. Right Action (samma kammanta)
  3. Right Livelihood (samma ajiva)
- Concentration (samadhi)
  1. Right Effort (samma vayama)





2. Right Mindfulness (samma sati)
3. Right Concentration (samma samadhi)

The *Right Understanding* and *Right Aspiration* emanates from **Right Intention**. Further, the **Right Speech** teaches us to not lying, not slandering, not using harsh words and not participating in idle chatter. **Right Action** teaches us to not killing or hurting other living creatures, not stealing, and non acting with sensual misconduct including desires like drugs, sex, over eating which distract us from the goal of Nirvana. The guidelines to **Right Livelihood** include not being a butcher, selling intoxicants and poisons, selling humans etc.

Apart from bodily and verbal actions, Buddhist ethics emphasizes a variety of **mental actions** including thoughts, motivations, emotions, perspectives etc. In effect, the core ethics in Buddhism emanates from the mental actions rather than bodily actions.

### Key Elements of Buddhist Ethics

The precepts in both traditions Theravada as well as in Mahayana are essentially identical and are commitments to abstain from no killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, or intoxicants.

#### Not killing or causing harm to other living beings

Fundamental ethical principle for Buddhism and it implies acting non-violently wherever possible and its matching part is percept of love.

#### Not taking the not-given

Taking advantage of people, exploiting or manipulating them is wrong. All these are ways of taking that is not given well known as stealing. The positive counterpart is generosity.

#### Avoiding sexual misconduct

Essentially it means not causing harm to others or oneself in the area of sexual activity. It also includes avoiding breaking commitments and avoiding encouraging others to do the same. The precept of contentment is its matching part.

#### Avoiding false speech

Speech is the vital component in any relationship with others, and language is a dicey medium, and we often deceive others without even realising what we are doing. Truthfulness is therefore essential in an ethical life. But it is not enough, others should enjoin that our speech should be kindly, helpful, and harmonious.

#### Abstaining from drink and drugs that cloud the mind

Being in the state of mindfulness, or awareness. Mindfulness is a central value to be established in one's life to live harmoniously and ethically. Following the Buddha's path and experience shows that taking intoxicating drink or drugs tends to route straight counter to this percept.

### Buddhist Values

Buddhist values are rooted in overcoming greed/attachment, hatred and delusion, which are seen as





the roots of unwholesome actions and the key causes of suffering. Greed is to be overcome by generosity and sharing, combined with restraint from theft and cheating, with subtler forms of attachment overcome by monastic training and meditative training. Hatred and anger are to be dealt with by restraint from behaviour harming others, cultivation of loving kindness and compassion, and insight into the distorted vision that makes hatred possible.

Delusion is to be overcome by avoiding intoxication, and cultivating the mental clarity that allows one to see things directly as they really are. This project begins with moral virtue, but also entails the other aspects of the Buddhist path: meditative development and the cultivation of insight. It has implications for individual conduct as well as inter-personal relationships and social ethics.

### What can I learn from Buddha?

Following are the key life lessons that one can learn from Buddha and Buddhist Ethics.

#### Thoughts are material

Buddha says: *"The mind is everything. What you think you become"*. In order to live properly, we should keep our mind occupied with right thoughts. Our thinking determines actions, our action determines result. Right thinking can help us to get everything we want. Wrong thinking can damage and destroy us. Thus, by changing our mind, we can change our life.

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#### Action is what counts

Words are worthless if they are not translated into action. Success comes to those who work / act constantly. Buddha says: *"I do not believe in a fate that falls on men however they act, but I do believe in a fate that falls on them unless they act."* I am responsible for my own life, the future, the kind of work I do & the life I live, all depends on just myself.

#### Control the Thoughts

Stronger than anyone is the one who wins himself / herself. In order to win over ourselves, we need to control our thoughts and get rid of thoughts that are not compatible to principles which we follow.

#### Doubt everything, find your own truth.

One should not believe in something just because it is written in some holy book or just because someone in our family is following. I must put my own mind to it and put it to test. I should use my own life experiences and if I feel that it would help human life move forward, I should accept it; otherwise reject it. Buddha asked his followers to test even him.

#### If there is meaning in life, there must be a meaning in suffering

Each of us likes happiness and each of us believes that pain is not for us. But this is not correct. Each one of us has his own share of Dukkha or pain and we understand the truth only when reality hits us in the form of either death of a loved one or some other loss. Thus, pains, sufferings, discomfort are unavoidable and we need to accept it and make peace with them.





### Death is inevitable and we should find our own salvation

No matter what we do, we will end up aging, getting ill and would eventually die. This truth makes every minute of our life precious. This truth should be in mind so that we can live our life with diligence.

### It is useless to inquire into the questions which don't get us closer to truth

When someone shoots an arrow in your heart, it's useless to stand there and ask, who shot the arrow, what was that person's cast, was he a black or white man, what bow did he use to shoot me, how far was the arrow shot from. It's better we understand the arrow has to be removed from our heart now to help us live more. So, some of the questions like existence of god, life after birth, life before birth were never answered by the Buddha because he knew they never lead us to truth. No matter what the answers for those questions are, the truth is, we all have anger, hatred, jealousy, lust which won't let us stay at peace. These are the things most important to solve.

### Notable Buddha Quotes for Examination

1. *"Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love; this is the eternal rule."* ~ Buddha
2. It's not what you say but what you do that defines you.
3. *"A man is not called wise because he talks and talks again; but if he is peaceful, loving and fearless then he is in truth called wise."* ~ Buddha
4. *"A dog is not considered a good dog because he is a good barker. A man is not considered a good man because he is a good talker."*
5. *"Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment."* ~ Buddha
6. *"The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, nor to worry about the future, but to live the present moment wisely and earnestly."*
7. *"Who looks inside awakens."*
8. *"The way is not in the sky. The way is in the heart."* ~ Buddha
9. *"Words have the power to both destroy and heal. When words are both true and kind, they can change our world."* ~ Buddha
10. *"No one saves us but ourselves. No one can and no one may. We ourselves must walk the path."* ~ Buddha
11. *"Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared."*
12. *"Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant with the weak and wrong. Sometime in your life, you will have been all of these."* ~ Buddha





13. "Have compassion for all beings, rich and poor alike; each has their suffering. Some suffer too much, others too little."
14. Don't believe everything you are told to believe.
15. "The whole secret of existence is to have no fear. Never fear what will become of you, depend on no one. Only the moment you reject all help are you freed."
16. The truth has a way of always leaking out.
17. "Three things cannot be long hidden: the sun, the moon, and the truth."
18. "It is a man's own mind, not his enemy or foe, that lures him to evil ways."
19. "There is nothing more dreadful than the habit of doubt. Doubt separates people. It is a poison that disintegrates friendships and breaks up pleasant relations. It is a thorn that irritates and hurts; it is a sword that kills."
20. "Just as a candle cannot burn without fire, men cannot live without a spiritual life."
21. "Do not be jealous of others' good qualities, but out of admiration adopt them yourself."
22. "Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without."
23. "To live a pure unselfish life, one must count nothing as one's own in the midst of abundance."
24. "There is no path to happiness: happiness is the path."
25. "In the sky, there is no distinction of east and west; people create distinctions out of their own minds and then believe them to be true."

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### Jain Ethics

Jain ethical philosophy revolves around three jewels of Jainism {Triratna}, five great vows (Panch mahavratas), seven vows (vratas) for the laity, 11 vows for advanced laity, right penance, right contemplation (dhyana) and 12 reflections (bhavanas).

#### Pancha Mahavratas

These refer to the five moral principles or vows {Panch Mahavratas} to be followed by every member of Jain religion. These are – Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truth), Astheya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (chastity), and Aparigraha (non-possession).

Out of them, Ahimsa is most important and is a virtue based upon universal love and mercy towards all living beings. Further, the meaning of Ahimsa in Jainism is broad and includes non-violence by thought, word and deed (Mana Vachana and Kaya). Jainism considers that mere thought of killing is as much moral evil as actually killing. The desire to kill is also deemed to be actual killing.

#### Three Jewels

Three Jewels or three gems or three refuges of Jainism include Right Perception (Samyak Darsana),





Right knowledge (Samyak Jnana) and Right conduct (Samyak Charitrya). They constitute the core practice of Jainism for both the ascetics and householders.

### Right Perception (Samyak Darsana)

Right Perception (Samyak Darsana) or right view is not merely a physical act but also the mental process behind it influenced by attitude and background of the preceptor. It comes with the ability to discriminate correctly between right and wrong, good and bad, right belief and wrong belief, right knowledge and wrong knowledge, and between truth and untruth. Right perception leads to contentment (prasanna), detachment (nirveda), spiritual yearning for liberating, (samvega), kindness (anukampa) and faith in the path (astikaya). It also results in freedom from *eight kinds of pride* viz. pride in family, physical strength, beauty, knowledge, wealth, authority, relationships and spiritual progress.

### How to cultivate Right Perception

Cultivation of right perception requires a great deal of inner discipline and assiduous practice which demands the following requirements.

- Faith without doubts,
- Complete renunciation of desire for worldly comforts,
- Respect for believers on the path,
- Absence of likes and dislikes,
- Disinterest in wrong paths,
- Bringing non-believers to the path,
- Cultivation of right faith, and
- Spreading the knowledge Jainism

### Right knowledge (Samyak Jnana)

Right knowledge (Samyak Jnana) comes with right perception, right understanding, right discrimination and by knowing the true doctrine. Jainism believes that the knowledge coming from external agencies is liable to error while knowledge gained directly through the *faculties of the soul* cannot be wrong. Right knowledge is useful and reliable because it is a true representation of what is. The Right Knowledge has five components viz. Mati (Mental Knowledge), Sruti (Acquired Knowledge), Avadhi (Distant Knowledge), Manahparaya (Paranormal Knowledge), Kevalya (Absolute Knowledge).

### Right conduct (Samyak Charitrya)

Right conduct comes from the awareness of what is right and what is wrong and by doing what is right. Thus, Right perception and Right Knowledge are prerequisites for Right Conduct.

### What I can learn from Jainism?





Some of the essential features of Jainism are useful for our life even if we are not followers of that religion. The Religious tolerance, mercy upon other animals and humans, Ethical purity, Harmony between self and environment, spiritual contentment are some of them. Further, the three jewels of Jainism are universal values and applicable to each one of us.

### Mahatma Gandhi

The ideals and ideas of Mahatma Gandhi emanated partly from four major sources as follows:

- His inner religious convictions including ethical principles embedded in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Christianity
- From the exigencies of his struggle against apartheid in South Africa and the mass political movements during India's freedom struggle.
- Influence of Tolstoy, Carlyle, and Thoreau etc.

In fact, ethics provides underpinning to Gandhian Thought and is so deep rooted in it that it is almost impossible to segregate the two. The key aspects of Gandhian Ethics are discussed here:

#### Gandhi's Religion

Gandhi was born in a Hindu family and was a devout Hindu throughout his life. However, he was strongly influenced by the ideas of other religions and had deep interest in comparative religion. He was raised in a Hindu family deeply influenced by Jain religious ideas (particularly Ahimsa). When he visited England to study law, he was inspired by Theosophists to learn more about our ancient texts such as Bhagvad Gita. He spent 20 years in South Africa working for civil rights over there and devoted himself to study variety of religious literature. On his return to India, he established Ashram for his family and followers. Despite of having religious fervour, the Ashrams did not follow any particular orthodoxy. His religious virtues can be discussed summarily as follows:

Although Gandhi was fond of Lord Rama, yet his concept of Rama and Krishna was not that of historical / epic age Gods Rama & Krishna. He said: *"My Krishna is not the historical Krishna. I believe in the Krishna of my imagination as a perfect incarnation, spotless in every sense of the word, the inspirer of the Gita, and the inspirer of the lives of millions of human beings."* Further, he believed in oneness of God. He said: *"one God is the cornerstone of all religions. But I do not foresee a time when there would be only one religion on earth in practice. In theory, since there is one God, there can be only one religion."* His view on Hinduism is also clear, as he said: *Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his own Faith or Dharma and so it lives at peace with all the religions.* He considered Buddha and Jesus Christ as great moral teachers of humanity. About Bible he said: *'Make this world the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness and everything will be added unto you'.* On Islam he said: *"Islam's distinctive contribution to India's National Culture is its unadulterated belief in the Oneness of God and a practical*





application of the truth of the Brotherhood of Man for those who are nominally within its fold.”

As per Gandhi, religion is not sectarianism. It is a belief in moral government of the universe. Religion harmonises the religions and gives them reality.

Regarding Bhagwadgita, Gandhi said that it has been *his light and hope*. He said that: “...when doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me and when I see no one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagawad Gita and find a verse to comfort me and immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow.”

### Ethical Conduct

Gandhi believed that as human beings, men can never reach the perfection of divine virtues. Still, they should strive with all their strength to follow the virtues of truth, love, nonviolence, tolerance, fearlessness, charity and service to mankind. Men have to uphold the right, regardless of the personal consequences they may face. He urged Satyagrahis to adopt to these Virtues.

### Truth

Gandhi equated God with truth and designated his religion as religion of truth. He used to say God is Truth, which he later changed to “Truth is God”. However, his idea of truth was not taken from epistemology or theory of knowledge. Rather, he viewed truth in the form of an ideal of human conduct. He regarded that Indian struggle for freedom stands for truth and represents a just struggle for national and individual autonomy.

### Service to Society

Service to the Society was another way in which Gandhi’s concept underpins his practical actions. He believed that “only way to see God is to see him through his creations and identify oneself with it”. This is possible through service to humanity. He maintained that there is no escape from social service to those in search of God.

He believed that as a part of God’s creation, all men share the same life and there is no real difference between them. This principle of unity of life explains is concepts of secularism, religious toleration, human equality. It also underpins his long battle against untouchability and social backwardness.

### Cleanliness

Gandhi emphasised on internal (mental) and external (physical) cleanliness. There was no litter or dirt or filth in his Ashrams and surroundings. He said: “*Cleanliness is next to Godliness*“. He advocated moral self-purification.

### Ends and Means

Gandhi believed that Men should adopt only good means to attain noble objectives. As per him: “*No good can follow from bad deeds, even if they are well intentioned.*” He believed that the path to hell is paved with good intentions; thus leading to so called “*ends and means*” debate. It is contrary to the





view that bad means can be used to achieve good ends, and what matters is the end.

### Ahimsa

Gandhi's Ahimsa was not only refraining from killing but also show love for the whole mankind and all living beings. He believed that Man can only realize God by pursuing Ahimsa. He also maintained that truth and non-violence are inseparable and truthfulness and fearlessness is prerequisite for a pursuit of Ahimsa.

### Satyagraha

Gandhi's later work rested largely on a spiritual principle of satyagraha that he developed while working in South Africa. For Gandhi, Satyagrahi was the foot soldier of Passive Resistance Movement. One has to adopt the virtues of truth and violence to be a Satyagrahi. He/ She should be honest and eschew material possessions and sexual desires. Gandhi prescribed a severe code for the, Satyagrahi which includes harsh moral discipline, control of Senses and ascetic self-denial.

### Doctrine of Trusteeship

Gandhi regarded Rich as trustees of wealth. He said that ultimately all property belongs to God, the excess or superfluous wealth which the rich possess belongs to society and should be used for supporting the poor. Wealthy people have no moral right to what is more than their proportionate share in national wealth. They simply become trustees for the disproportionate share of God's property they hold. They have to use it for helping the poor.

## Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda was born in 1863 in Calcutta in an affluent family. While studying in Calcutta University, he acquired deep interest and mastery in Western Philosophy and History. For some time, he was associated with Brahmo Movement. Since early years, he suffered spiritual crisis and had doubts about existence of God. He met Ramakrishna at the Kali temple in Dakshineswar, and straightway asked him if he has seen God. Although the same question he had asked from many others but did not get a satisfactory answer. Ramakrishna replied "Yes. I have. I see him as clearly as I see you". This was beginning of a Guru-Disciple relationship between the two.

Under Ramakrishna's guidance, Vivekananda made rapid spiritual progress. After demise of Ramakrishna, he formed a monastic brotherhood with other disciples of the Guru and started upon the mission of spreading gospel of his master. In 1890, he set out on a long journey of exploration and discovery of India. During his long travels, he was deeply moved by the appalling poverty and backwards of the public. He was first religious leader to understand and openly declare that real cause of India's downfall was neglect of India's masses. He said that there was an immediate need to





provide food and other basic necessities of life to them by spreading knowledge of improved methods of farming, promotion of village industries and other such activities.

Vivekananda believed that due to centuries of oppression, the downtrodden masses had lost self confidence. This could be restored through a life giving inspiring message. This message was found by him in the principle of Atma i.e. the doctrine of potential divinity of soul, as taught in Vedanta. Thus, for him, apart Vedanta could teach the masses life giving message. Further, the people also needed worldly knowledge to improve their economic condition. As per him, education is the means of providing both forms of knowledge viz. spiritual and worldly.

While travelling, he heard about the World Parliament of Religions to be held in Chicago in 1893. He attended that parliament and his speech over there made him famous as an *orator of divine rights* and a *messenger of Indian wisdom* to the Western world. He spent nearly four years in America and then returned to India in 1897. He delivered a series of lectures in different part of the country and attempted to arouse the religious consciousness and pride in heritage among Indians. He also aimed to bring about unification of Hinduism by pointing out the common elements of various sects.

In 1897, he founded Ramakrishna Mission to enable monks and lay people to jointly undertake his mission of propagation of practical aspects of Vedanta. www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

### **Ideas of Vivekananda regarding moral values and character building education**

#### **World Peace, Religion and Brotherhood**

Following the footsteps of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda believed in the unity and equality of all religions. Swami Vivekananda loved humanity and wanted the world leaders to promote peace which is vital for the humanity. Each race has a part to play in this divine harmony of nations. Each race has its mission to perform its duty to fulfil. The sum total is the great harmony.

- No civilisation can grow unless fanaticism, bloodshed, and brutality stop.
- No civilisation can begin to lift up its head until we look charitably upon one another; and the first step towards that much-needed charity is to look charitably upon the religious convictions of others.
- Even more, to understand that not only should we be charitable, but positively helpful to each other, however different our religious ideas and convictions may be.

To him, a Universal religion must balance the aspects of religion. He elaborates as “And this religion is attained by what we, in India, call Yoga, a union.

- To the worker, it is union between men and the whole of humanity,
- To the mystic, between his lower and Higher Self,
- To the lover, union between himself and the God of Love,
- To the philosopher, it is the union of all existence.





This is what is meant by Yoga, and the aim of yoga is union, realisation of oneness. Therefore, there was no room for so-called conversion from one religion to another. *“If you are born a Muslim, be a good Muslim and if you are born a Hindu, be a good Hindu”*. Islam, according to him, had gone further than any other religion in translating the Vedanta concept of unity of Mankind. Once anyone became a believer in Islam, he was socially equal to even the Caliph of Turkey. In a letter to his friend, Sarfaraz Khan, Vivekananda wrote: *“How I wish to have in my India an Islamic body with a Vedantic head”*.

Vivekananda gave spiritual relevance and social relevance to monasticism to the life of a normal householder. Sanyasis led a secluded life to get salvation. It was Vivekananda who made monk's mission to alleviate the sufferings of fellow human beings. He was a great opponent of ritualism and priestly tyranny. In his opinion, the so-called Hindu religion had degenerated into empty rituals centring on what he called “don't touchism or religion of the kitchen”. Referring to the Upanishads he said that for so many centuries, we had the fountain of Amrita at our back and yet we ignored it and gave ditch water to the people as religion.

### His views on Education

Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and run riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character building assimilations of life. The education that does not help the common masses to and that doesn't bring out strength of character, and the courage of a lion—is not worth the name.

The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow; The training, by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful, is called education.

What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face.

He adds that “We want that Education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's feet.

### Education of the Masses

He said that his heart aches to think of the condition of the poor and low in India. They sink lower and lower every day. Our great national sin is the neglect of the masses and that is the cause of our downfall. A nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spread among the masses. If we are to rise again, we shall have to do it by spreading education among the masses. He also said





that the only service to be done for our lower classes is to live them education to develop their individuality. They are to be given ideas. Their eyes are to be opened to what is going on in die world around them, and then they will work out their own salvation.

### Vivekananda on concept of personality

To quote swami Vivekananda, The science of Yoga claims that it has discovered the laws which develop this *personality* and by proper attention to those laws and methods, each one can grow and strengthen his personality. Yoga is a holistic approach to life. Yoga in *administration can bring* perfection and responsiveness. This is one of the great practical things and *this is* the secret of all education. This has a universal application in the life of the householder, in the life of the poor, the rich, the man of business. Swami Vivekananda says that they are laws, very fine, which are behind the physical laws, That is to say, there are no such realities as a physical world, a menial world, a spiritual world. Whatever is, is one. It is a soil of tapering existence, the thickest pad is here, it tapers and becomes; liner and finer; the lines is what we call spirit; the grossest, the body. And just as it is here, in the microcosm, it is exactly the same in the macrocosm. This universe of ours is exactly like that; it is the gross external thickness, and it tapers into something finer and finer until it becomes God.

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Swami Vivekananda harmonised the conflict among the different attitudes. So says he: “Every man must develop according to his own nature. As every science has its methods so has every religion. The methods of attaining the end of religion are called Yoga by us and the different forms of Yoga we teach, are adapted to the different natures and temperaments of man. We classify them in the following way, under four heads:

- *Karma yoga*: The manner in which a man realises his own divinity through works and duty.
- *Bhakti-yoga*: The realisation of the divinity through devotion to, and love of, a Personal God.
- *Raja-Yoga*: The realisation of the divinity through the control of mind.
- *Jnana-Yoga*: The realisation of a man’s own divinity through knowledge.

### The Potential Divinity of Soul

One of the novel and unique ideas of Vivekananda was the concept of ‘*potential divinity of the soul*’ and it is relevant still today. In the present age of humanism, scientific progress has greatly improved human material wellbeing. The communications revolution made the world a ‘global village’. But there has also been moral decay as evidenced in the great increase in broken homes, immorality, violence and crime. Vivekananda’s concept of potential divinity of the soul prevents this degradation, divinizes human relationships, and makes life meaningful and worth living. He is thus, also known as founder of ‘spiritual humanism’.





### Important Quotations of Swami Vivekananda

- *"So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who having been educated at their expense pays not the least heed to them."*
- *Whatever you think, that you will be. If you think yourselves weak, weak you will be; if you think yourselves strong, strong you will be.*
- *If you have faith in all the three hundred and thirty millions of your mythological gods.....and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you. Have faith in yourselves, and stand up on that faith and be strong; that is what we need.*
- Arise! Awake! and stop not until the goal is reached.
- You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own soul.
- In a conflict between the heart and the brain, follow your heart.
- "Neither seek nor avoid, take what comes."
- "Comfort is no test of truth. Truth is often far from being comfortable.
- "The fire that warms us can also consume us; it is not the fault of the fire."
- "Ask nothing; want nothing in return. Give what you have to give; it will come back to you, but do not think of that now."  
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- "Do one thing at a Time, and while doing it put your whole Soul into it to the exclusion of all else."
- The older I grow, the more everything seems to me to lie in manliness. This is my new Gospel.
- Purity, patience, and perseverance are the three essentials to success, and above all, love.
- Religion is realization; not talk, not doctrine, nor theories, however beautiful they may be. It is being and becoming, not hearing or acknowledging; it is the whole soul becoming changed into what it believes.
- Religion is the manifestation of the Divinity already in man.
- Teach yourselves, teach everyone his real nature, call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity.
- They alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive.
- This is the gist of all worship – to be pure and to do good to others. ,

### Conclusion

Vivekananda is among the greatest Hindu saints. He fused Hindu Vedantic ideals with Western





scientific and humanistic thought. He worked against the tendency of Hindus to devote themselves to exclusive sects and doctrines. He reminded Indians of their glorious traditions. He popularized Vedanta philosophy in the West. Above all, he reminded people of the need to help the masses submerged in poverty and ignorance.

### Dr. B R Ambedkar

Dr Ambedkar was a learned scholar, revolutionary and jurist who fought against untouchability and casteism. He upheld the rights of the Dalits and other socially backward classes throughout his life. He intended to integrate untouchables by providing education and exercise legal and political rights, into Indian society in modern ways. His movement provided an all-India organisation for rejection and bondage imposed upon the Dalits. He is also known as\_\_:

- Conducted mass campaigns, to a demand for separate electorates
- The burning of the Manusmriti.
- The breaking of caste restrictions like use of temples
- Wearing of prohibited colour like red.

A major untouchability movement was launched by Ambedkar in the 1920s in Maharashtra, which had acquired an all-India character. In 1930s Ambedkar had concluded that the only way of improving the status of the untouchables was to renounce the Hindu religion. He gave the slogan *"You have nothing to lose except your religion"* and later he embraced Buddhism. He founded the Depressed Classes Institute (Bahishkat Hitkarini Sabha) in Bombay. He propagated social equality between caste Hindus and untouchables. Ambedkar as the major leader of the depressed classes organised the **Independent Labour Party** for protecting the interest of the labour classes.

### Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore had vast knowledge and there was perhaps no aspect of Indian life which escaped his searching eyes. He was a novelist, dramatist, educationist, penetrating social reformer and politician and gave his views about all that which concerned India. Some of his significant ideas are as under:

#### Spiritual Humanism

The centre of Tagore's philosophy was man of god. Even his concept of God was influenced by the humanism inherent in his outlook. The supreme reality thus according to Tagore, essentially human and could be realised only through love of man. Love of God was thus translated into love of human. Tagore in fact sought the origin of spiritual aspirations and the concept of god in the spirit of the unity expressed by the primitive man. In a discussion with Einstein, Tagore said, if there is any truth





absolutely unrelated to humanity then for us it is absolutely non-existing. Tagore thus firmly believed that truth could be realised only in human society.

### His political ideas

Politically Tagore believed that each nation and individual must have certain rights and through those rights he should be in a position to 'his personality. At the same time he stressed people should have power and strength enough to realise their rights as without that strength it was impossible to retain rights even if extended by the rulers. He also stood for the individuals saying that States existed for the individual and its activities should aim at giving maximum freedom for attaining that liberty. He couldn't reconcile himself with the then prevailing trend of british rule which was impersonal in character and which denied freedom, spiritual, economic and political, to the vast majority of the Indians. According to him freedom could be possible by adopting the policy of decentralisation of authority and giving, more powers to local self-government institutions.

### His social ideas

Socially, Tagore believed that Indian society has very much degenerated mostly because of the policy of our social rulers who didn't care to preserve our social institutions and allowed them to degenerate. He felt that social and political institutions should go side by side. He had faith in social solidarity and belief in ancient Indian culture and civilization. According to him political life was only a specialised aspect of social life and both could not be separated from each other. He quoted from Indian history that India always represented the synthesis of various philosophies and was very much broad-based. Therefore he believed that constructive efforts should be made to revive our ancient Indian culture.

### His idea about education

He was educationally a revolutionary and strongly believed that there should be a system of education suited to India. It should be the system in which the cultures of east and the west should unite and where there should be a platform for understanding each other. In the words of G. Ramchandran, "Gurudev never accepted that the object of education was simply the accumulation of knowledge. He unhesitatingly proclaimed that education should give alround human personality in which the physical, the intellectual, the aesthetic and spiritual growth would be harmonised into one integral process. He, therefore, emphasised freedom and joy as of basic importance in the education of boys and girls. This meant elimination of physical punishment, examination and therefore of fear and everything humiliating restriction from Shanti Niketan system rather pattern of education".

## Kautilya

Kautilya was the shrewdest minister in the court of Chandragupta Maurya during 317-293 BC.





He has expressed his views on state, war, social structures, diplomacy, ethics, politics and statecraft in his work Arthashastra. Kautilya was known for his sharp opinion on each of the four dimension framework of: war and peace, human rights, international economic justice and world order. The work is said to be based on political realism where the state is considered paramount and the king is bound to carry out all his duties to preserve the state. He justifies gory and brutal means to be adopted by a king to stay in power.

- He proposed welfare state but encouraged war for preserving the power of the state. He strongly believed that a king should constantly struggle to augment his power. This coincides with Weber's view that international politics has no morals and states must be at war at all times.
- He also advocated that science is a great source of power. He further believed that 'power is strength and it is the strength which changes the mind. This view has its parallels with Thomas Hobbes viewpoints. He is thus a realist and stresses on ethics of responsibility. He strongly believes that for any king to have power he should focus on creation of wealth, have sound armies and should be able to conquer more kingdoms to enlarge the size of his state.
- In a war-like situation both Kautilya and Machiavelli share the same reasoning. Both propagate that a king should be closely involved in the science of war. Kautilya has proposed three types of war:
  - Open war: War fought between states
  - Concealed war: It is fought on the lines of guerrilla warfare
  - Silent war: It is fought continuously inside the kingdom itself so that the king's power does not get diluted.

However, Kautilya was quite harsh in his detailed narrations of war and he also considered women as weapons of war. Kautilya was also a strong advocate of social structure. He had strong belief in caste system and the relative position of man and woman in a caste. He defends the state under all stances and advocates that religion and morals are supposed to serve the state. There was no place of chivalry in the war.

Kautilya was very clear about his ideals about prosperity and control of state. He stood for a just and realistic rule of law.

- He gave great importance to property rights and protection of wealth. He advocated that one could get rid of corporeal punishment by paying off fines. He puts great stress on human rights and on how the invaded ruler and his ministers should be treated.
- He emphasizes criminal justice and war justice. Contrastingly, for a man of his nature who





was both harsh and realist, he showed mercy towards people who were defeated in war. He instead advocated that the defeated king should be treated with respect and be made an ally.

- In regards of punishments he believed that punishment is a means to an end and needs to prevent the commission of the crime. He was greatly devoted to social structure and believed that Brahmins should be given less severe punishment and should not be inflicted any torture. Thus, *dandaniti* was very dear to him which included protecting property, acquiring property, augmenting and distributing the same.
- His view on crime and justice is very elaborate and he advocates different punishments depending upon if the crimes were committed while in public office, civil crimes, sexual crimes or religious crimes.

In terms of diplomacy he was clear that nations always acted in their political, economic and military self-interest. He strongly said that all foreign policy and diplomacy will be practiced as long as the self-interest of the state is served. He stood for the belief that diplomacy is a series of actions taken by a kingdom such that it gains apparent strength and is able to conquer the nation with which diplomatic ties were created.

### **Kautilya's Concept of Rajrishi and Its relevance today [Important]**

The concept of Rajrishi envisaged by Kautilya is very important for a good King. This concept is very close to the concept of "Philosopher King" by Plato. In this concept, Kautilya has identified indicators of good governance. These indicators are as follows:

- An ideal king must merge his individuality with duties
- An administrator must guide properly.
- An ideal king must avoid extremes without missing the goal.
- The king and public servants must get fixed salaries and allowances.
- The main duty of the king and servants is to maintain law and order. The losses due to theft and corruption should be made good from kings' and his servant's salary.
- An important duty of king is to carry out preventive and punitive measures against corrupt officials.
- Another important duty of king is to find replacement of ministers by good ones.
- Disciplined life with a code of conduct for king and ministers
- Kautilya also lays great stress on appointment of Amatyas who were the highest in status.

They were selected on merit with great care

Emulation of administrative qualities like uniformity in administrative practice, 'competent ministers the king possessing qualities of leadership, intelligent, good moral conduct and physical





powers.

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