

Start with Meditation

The Shankaracharyatells us:

*There is a Sanskrit shloka which says that if one learns to understand that one is part of this universe and one has equal status with everyone else, then give to others what you would like given to you – what pleases you should be made available for the pleasure of others – or 'do as you would be done by'. This sums up the concept of Sanatan Dharma which is not a religion but a concept for humanity.*

**The second concept is Kshama**

Kshama means having consideration and giving pardon and being tolerant of all the difficulties and awkwardness and faults of others, so that you provide them with space and in due course when they see there is no reaction they may learn something which you hold dear to yourself.

To adhere to this concept we are told to think differently. Not to think in terms of duality 'You and I' or 'Them and Us' but to think in terms of Unity. We are all one and part of a whole universe. That is the Reality. Everything is in us and we are in everything. That, we know is how conscious man sees things.

The other aspect, the emotional aspect of consciousness is conscience. Doctor Roles points out: *Consciousness knows everything all at once, by a mental process. Conscience knows everything all at once through the heart by an emotional process which leads to the faculty of intuition.*

The Doctor goes on to say:

*Conscience applies only to the moral sphere about right or wrong and the relation with the Atman. It works in relation to people as to what is fair and what is right or wrong.*

One might guess that conscience is often active in children, who are always saying 'that's not fair'. Later in life we are often not as sensitive to behaviour that is not fair.

Pause for discussion

The role of Meditation is vastly important in the awakening of conscience, as described in 'Voyage of Discovery' (p88):

*The emotional part(that is the positive emotion reaching us from the Atman, which cannot turn negative) is the seat of conscience, which is the emotional realization of truth. That's one aspect of it. There is another aspect, which is appreciating and understanding other people's needs. This is a marvellous way toward Self-Realization and a proper use of meditation. It's all too easy for people using our method of meditation to get into a sort of ivory tower and not care about other people. This is what puts meditation very often in bad repute. So the same apparatus which sets up the idea of right and wrong in relation to oneself also enables us to see what is needed in regard to somebody else who comes to one for help.....The idea is a universal compassion which we have seen in the Realized Man because it is always operating in him. Maybe this is something*

*which is missing in the meditation of some people who are finding it difficult because they are thinking only of themselves.*

The Doctor goes on to say:

*What is needed greatly today is sympathy and compassion, and it certainly counts for more with anybody who is suffering, than words. Meditation should be making people more sensitive – more and more sensitive and able to feel with somebody – not more and more detached from everybody.*

So it is clear that we must understand this word 'detachment' in the right way. It does not mean 'coldness', for our way is through the heart as well as the mind.

Mr Ouspensky used to say that the real purpose of a school of the Fourth Way is to develop the influence of conscience in the individual.

Conscience leads to the emotional realization of truth and for him emotions were a means of cognition.

This helps us to understand the way of the householder.

Kshama requires one to be tolerant of all the difficulties and awkwardnesses and faults of others. Through observation we see that these exact same difficulties and awkwardnesses and faults that exist in others also exist in oneself to a greater or lesser degree.

One advantage that others may see and which 'you hold dear to yourself' is that we are on the way to liberation, thanks to all the disciplines, knowledge and methods that we have learned from the Realized Man Shankaracharya Santanand Saraswati, Mr Ouspensky, Dr Roles and Mr Resuhi.

Applying the wisdom given to us in our oral tradition will lead, without doubt, to the 'universal compassion' which we have seen in the Realized Man.