

Start with Meditation

It would act as an *aide memoire* if each of us were to write down for ourselves the essence of each of the concepts of Sanatan Dharma. Such a simplification would make each of them easier to recall. Here is one such effort:

One: **Dhrh** is having *Confidence* and *Patience*

Two: **Kshama** is giving consideration – putting yourself in the other person's shoes

Three: **Dama** is control over the senses and their expression

Four: **Asteya** Take only your share. More is theft

Five: **Shaucha** Is to cleanse and purify - Body, Mind and Heart. Requires a system and a teacher

Six: **Indriya Nigraha** Means to regulate the senses, not to curb them

Seven: **Dhee** Find the cause of things. Then apply where necessary

Eight: **Vidya** One has to acquire Knowledge made manifest in the scriptures

Nine: **Satya** is truth and there is only one. Others are relative

Ten: **Akrodha** Agitation leads to wrong action. Avoid it.

Pause

During the term there have been many good examples and insights into the comprehension of each of these principles. Here are some.

In the practice of meditation the Dhrh concept has been clearly understood. For in fallow periods or in times of illness when meditation has been difficult, we know now that all one needs is simple confidence and patience until everything rights itself again.

When we discussed Asteya, research showed 'in order not to keep anything more than is equally available to everyone else', that what one needs to do is give up our sense of ownership.

Subsequently, a precise example of Asteya was sent by Wendy Wilks, a member of the Pewsey Group living in New Zealand:

An anonymous American donor gave a portrait of Picasso's girlfriend, Marie-Terese Walker, to the University of Sydney last year, on condition that it would be sold and the money spent on medical research. The price fetched at the Impressionist and Modern Art Auction was 13 ½ million pounds. In a statement the donor said: 'When you own a valuable painting like this, it owns you back. For the first time in a long while, I feel free'.

Pause

Satya, the ninth concept is the key and central concept from which all other concepts seem to evolve.

It is Param-Atman – the ultimate truth, the absolute truth, and the one and only truth that has real existence. That is the Self, the consciousness of the whole universe. It is the object of meditation.
(FCR)

One long-standing member of the Pewsey group describes how absolute truth is not limited in any way:

I have been reading and re-reading the paper on Satya, and that sentence in ‘Voyage of Discovery’ (p.93) where Dr Roles says: ‘The present moment is now our only connection with the Divine Self....There is no ‘time’ for the Param Atman or the Atman’.

These sentences put me straight back into a moment when, as a student and very new to the Work, I was trying to self-remember one night, sitting on my bed, while all the others in the room I had to share were asleep.

I found myself again vividly aware and felt that this moment now was the same moment as the one I had been given all that while ago, except that was no time. It is a moment given, of experiencing no time and something that is present out of time.

It makes it very clear that ‘our connection to the Realised Man can never be broken.....the bond between master and pupil is never broken’.

Satya is given to us without words.

FME found in relation to truth it was useful to remember the Shankaracharya’s advice to ‘say what you feel and do what you say.’ To do this, she observed: *I have to be transparent in my dealings with others and to start by being honest with myself i.e. facing up to the truth about certain aspects of myself. Truthful dealing is a good exercise and has positive implications connected with the other concepts.*

RL reminded us on another occasion that: *If you get a moment of insight, you understand with all three parts and you remember it.* (Insight is Satya and the three parts refer to Body, Mind and Heart). He continues elsewhere:

What I have seen as new, is the especial place of Buddhi, and even more so the purification of Buddhi.....I feel now that Buddhi could bring more understanding by also thinking longer thoughts, as well as reduce agitation and identification.

Regarding the cleaning of Buddhi HS said: ‘When you do something you are good at with a sense of unity this can influence your being.’

Pause

TdeL sent an email saying: *During a period of much activity, including keeping informed on daughter’s progress during a weeklong trek in the Himalayas, also the entertainment of guests in the house. There were however moments to stop, to sit still, and to read through the paper on the*

10th Concept of Sanatan Dharma. Each occasion as one read a deepening feeling of peace began to envelop one, leading to a prolonged sensation of calmness and tranquility.

When a person is under stress to read material which is on a spiritual level has this effect and it is a useful way to remember the Universal Self in times of difficulty.

Interestingly, an earlier email from RS explains the value at a deeper level of this activity:

‘I came across the following from a paper of FCR (80/36) which relates to HH’s advice on purifying Buddhi with ‘good books’:

Dr R: But I want to remind you about setting our sights very high. To the true Christian Christ is born within him and lives within him and the Gospels can purify his emotional centre, especially reading the Gospel of St John with emotional energy. To the people in India from whom the meditation came, the Vedas, the scriptures perform the same function and to many, Krishna is within a person and is the embodiment of the Param-Atman.

(Dr Roles in this context recommended in particular reading the Bhagavad Gita Chap X v.17-43)

RS concluded his email by saying:

There is something more of the mind than the heart about statements like ‘I am in God and God is in me’ and ‘Brahman is Atman’, which seem to have an effect beyond understanding.

As regards the truth element of Sat-Chit-Ananda, it occurred to me that the whole nature of the Param-Atman is like a white light. For us, for the intellect the light is truth (sat), for the heart it is bliss (ananda) and for the sense of Self it is consciousness (chit).

One can see from these comments the importance of Vidya i.e. acquiring Knowledge from the Scriptures and the effort required to understand their inner meaning.

Pause

One interpretation of Sanatan Dharma is that it is there to lead us from the personal view to the Universal view and AL’s comment that in her half hour she ‘likes to think she is joining in with the meditation of the whole world’, is the expansion that the Shankaracharya wants us to aim for.