

Harmlessness
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Hello everyone. Today, I'd like to share a few thoughts on the theme of harmlessness.

Harmlessness is a virtue which is common to many religions, yet it is often misunderstood. It is much more than just a negative state of refraining from harming others. Beyond that, it also requires the formulation of a positive intention to do good, and the will to act and carry out that intention no matter what. Harmlessness therefore requires discernment to know how to act, dispassion to act free from glamour, and the cultivation of self-effacement to stand free from the selfish tendencies inherent in one's lower nature.

True harmlessness, however, is more than just right action; it is the attaining to a state of consciousness from which right action must necessarily follow. Right action springs forth naturally when the motive lying behind all activity is goodwill. Though right action may be disagreeable and evoke an outer sense of conflict, pure intent will inevitably bring all things towards a beneficent end. All inner forces, once set in motion by an act of will, must inevitably work out into physical manifestation. This is expressed in the occult truism that "energy follows thought".

Patanjali in his Yogi Sutras gives 5 commandments which, if practiced, are said to make one perfect in their relationships with others, and with the subhuman and superhuman kingdoms as well. The first of these is harmlessness, but really harmlessness summarizes all of them, for harmlessness is key to establishing right relationship. The remaining four are: truth to all beings, abstention from theft, from incontinence, and from avarice.

A deeper study of these commandments shows that they span all three aspects of the personality—the triple vehicle of the soul. The first concerns the right use of force in all one's physical plane activities wherein one's physical actions are controlled, and no action is carried out which harms another. "Truth to all beings" concerns the right use of speech which is the medium through which inner truths becomes externalized. "Abstention from theft" refers not just to physical theft but to never appropriating as one's own that which one has no right to claim. This includes the possession of ideas as well as objects. Following this commandment leads ultimately to a freedom selfish possession. "Abstention from incontinence" refers to indulgence in any practice which feeds and placates the desire nature. It requires the right practice of dispassion and this eventually leads to freedom from those desires which keep the aspirant bound to form life. "Abstention from avarice" is in one sense an injunction to simply be content in whatever state one finds oneself. This brings about a state of mental quietude whereby the soul can then impress the lower mind; the pure intent of the soul then conditions the little will of the personality.

In alignment with these 5 commandments, the Tibetan states that "[harmlessness] is (if truly carried out) the destroyer of all limitation." All harmfulness is based on selfishness and is a demonstration of the forces of separation. Likewise, harmlessness is a demonstration of the qualities of the soul whose

nature is love and who recognizes that all forms, though imperfect, exist for the same purpose: to veil and hide the light of one Infinite Being.

Harmlessness, in its highest expression, is pure intention; it is a state of consciousness closely allied with the Will of God. This Will is active rather than passive, for it is both divine potential, the complete prototype, and also that creative law that actualizes potentiality and makes it manifest. Through the practice of harmlessness, we ally ourselves with this process and become intermediaries in this great creative act. It is humanity's destiny to one day, as a group, become a planetary intermediary between the kingdom of souls and the manifested worlds of human living. Only then can the original intent which lay behind the creation of our planet be fulfilled. This expressed intent of our planetary life is the redemption of matter and the raising of all lesser lives onwards towards the greater light of divinity.

As individuals we take part in this work through a process of elimination, wherein all that which impedes the full expression of life itself is gradually removed from our lower natures. We then begin to attract to ourselves only that which is beneficent. As the process proceeds, one increasingly gives and in giving gains greater capacity to love and to serve with discernment and wisdom. Eventually, at later stages upon the path, one can even consciously take evil from one's environment into one's own nature, transmute it, break it down into its component parts, and return it from whence it came. This requires a complete freedom from all separateness inherent in form life. Holding the ideal of harmlessness firmly within our minds as the expressed intent of our life direction will lead us eventually to this state of freedom.

The practice of harmlessness is also a way of cooperating with a great spiritual law called the Law of Service. As we approach the advent of the Aquarian Age, this law is growing in influence. And today, it is affecting all humanity, but particularly those who have chosen to tread a spiritual path, either consciously or unconsciously in a previous life. In aspirants and disciples, its influence is awakening the heart center and bringing it into a more vibrant activity. In emotionally polarized humanity, it is aiding them to focus intelligently in the mind. The awakening of the mind always precedes the true awakening of the heart, for the mind is the lowest correspondence of the will, and right action always follows from right intention.

The Tibetan clearly had the Law of Service in mind when he wrote that one of the preeminent characteristics of the true server is harmlessness. This harmlessness must extend not just to individuals but also to one's group. Group harmlessness follows when one begins to think in terms of group relationship and not just individual relationship. This requires the recognition that groups embody energies and purposes which could never work out through any one individual alone. Right group relationship, requires a right sense of proportion and often the subordination of one's personal interests (even of a spiritual nature) to the good of the group.

All group work is difficult. There are many diverse ways of thinking about and seeing the world and who is to say which is more correct than any other? Maintaining group integrity requires a great deal of detachment, otherwise a singular group organism capable of carrying out some specific work will never emerge.

One of the greatest barriers to right group relationship is the right direction of astral energy. Astral energy necessarily clothes all created thoughtforms, and it also conditions the sentient response to human relationships.

The Tibetan gives three rules for the right direction of astral energy which, briefly summarized are:

Rule I. Enter thy brother's heart and see his woe. Then speak. Let the words spoken convey to him the potent force he needs to loose his chains. Yet loose them not thyself...

Rule II. Enter thy brother's mind and read his thoughts, but only when thy thoughts are pure. Then think. Let the thoughts thus created enter thy brother's mind and blend with his...

Rule III. Blend with thy brother's soul and know him as he is. Only upon the plane of soul can this be done. Elsewhere the blending feeds the fuel of his lower life...

The Triangles work has a definite role to play in establishing a culture of harmlessness. Our work encourages the raising of the consciousness to the mind whereon the soul can be contacted. This leads naturally to the purification of a mentally formulated intention to bring about goodwill and right human relations. We can imagine that our Triangles work is an expression of the pure intent of the soul on its own plane, for the soul seeks ever to bring about right thought, right action, and right relationship and to mediate spiritual potentiality into right relationship in the manifested world.