

LESSON 21

INSTINCT (SANGNA)

When one does something like stealing for the very first-time, or trying alcohol or drugs for the very first-time, one's conscience will nag at self and he would think that my actions were not right and that I should not have done that. As a result heart rate will increase, palms will be sweaty. On the other hand if one saves someone's life, helps someone at an accident site, or gives books or medicine to one in need, conscience will make one feel happy and proud. This inner feeling is what your conscience truly is. It is this conscience that teaches one to stay away from doing bad deeds and encourages doing good deeds. These effects on your body and mind that your conscience creates are the changes recorded during lie detector tests.

Let us look at an example of a person who begins stealing a little more. When a child steals say a pencil for the very first-time in his life at school, he will look around to see if someone is watching, his heart rate will go up, and his palms will become sweaty and feel shaky. If he ignores his conscience and puts the pencil in his backpack he will soon feel happy about it. Later he will probably try to steal a book and then a backpack and so on. Each next time he will notice that his heart rate will not go up as much and his palms will begin to get less and less sweaty. He will eventually reach a point when he does not even feel bad about stealing and could soon become an obsessive to steal. Stealing has become a habit for this child. When a habit like this develops, it is known as an instinct or Sanskara of stealing.

The similar effects happen when one ignores conscience while drinking, gambling, taking drugs, acting on passions and doing sinful acts or even good acts. Unfortunately since instinct developed by slow ignorance of the conscience, conscience will begin responding to those instinct without any hesitations or feeling of doing anything wrong.

This kind of actions, become the source of influx of karmas called asrav and accumulations of karmas is called bondage.

Even though conscience gets overshadowed by instinct, respond to instinct can be diminished or nullified. When the conscience does not respond to instinct subsequent events like attachment or hatred depending on what kinds of actions were, that will cause stoppage of karma coming in, called samvar.

The instincts play a significant role in our life. They affect our conduct as well as the behavior. They have been illustrated in Jain canons from the karmic philosophical point of view. One of the modern disciplines of science called behavioral psychology emphasizes the original instincts in the form of natural tendencies, "modes" of living, emotions, and feelings, etc. **It collaborate the karmic explanations.**

What is an instinct?

First of all, we should understand the concept of an instinct. There are two meanings. One is an emotion, which is called an original instinct in the psychological term, and the

other is consciousness. Whatever we do something the impelling force of these special types of emotion influences it. In the other words instinct (Samjna) means particular type of tendency of consciousness in which conscious and subconscious minds are combined together. They are called emotions. Internal and external causes activate the emotions to arise. The material cause for them is karmas. Simultaneously external environment also affects their production.

TYPES OF INSTINCTS (SAMJNA)

Thanang Sutra, Jain scriptural textbooks (Agamas) describes ten types of instincts. The first eight are emotional or sentimental instincts whereas last two are concerned with a special type of thought process.

- Instinct of appetite (Ahara samjna)
- Instinct of fear (Bhaya samjna)
- Instinct of sex (Maithun samjna)
- Instinct of possession (Parigraha samjna)
- Instinct of anger (Krodh samjna)
- Instinct of pride (Mana samjna)
- Instinct of deceit (Maya samjna)
- Instinct of greed (Lobh samjna)
- Instinct of imitation (Ogha samjna)
- Instinct of worldly desires (Loka samjna)

The conduct and behavior are the outcome of Deluding Karma (Mohaniya Karma). Due to the influence of instinct man responds to his habits which may be called nature. Therefore the above stated classification may be clearly understood in the light of karmas philosophy and psychological divisions.

Outcome of deluding karmas	Original emotions
Fear	Fear
Anger	Anger
Disgust (Jugupsa)	Hatred
Feminine inclination (Strived)	Sexuality
Masculine inclination (Purus Veda)	Sexuality
Common inclination (Napumsakaved)	Sexuality
Pride	superiority complex
Greed	Ownership
Indulgence Liking (Rati)	Attachment
Dissatisfaction Disliking (Arati)	sorrow

The well-known psychologist Mac Dowell gives the similar division in psychological terms as under:

Original tendencies	Original emotions
Tendency of escapism	Fear
Tendency of struggle	Anger
Tendency of curiosity	eagerness
Tendency of search of food	Appetite
Tendency of paternity	Affection
Tendency of disgust	Hatred
Tendency of community feeling	Community feeling
Tendency of sex	sex
Tendency of prejudice	superiority
Tendency of inferiority complex	Inferiority
Tendency of Earning	Ownership
Tendency of Creation	Creativity
Tendency of begging	pity
Tendency of humor	pleasure

The above given divisions can be concised in three categories. They are:

1. In the first group: Instinct of appetite, fear, sex and possession. These exist in every creature of the world. An instinct of appetite is found in all. On account of this a creature feels hunger and searches for food. Really a big part of our life is motivated by it. A number of behaviors of a living being are activated by fear. The feeling of getting hurt creates fear. All creatures have the instinct of sex. The instinct of possessiveness exists in human beings as well as in animals. They collect their requirements and want to get more and more things due to this.
2. The second group of instincts: Anger, pride, deceit and greed. This group of instincts also exists in all living beings, but in man they are well developed and expressed.
3. The third group of instincts: Imitation and worldly desires. All living beings imitate by looking at others and also have desires.

The instincts are the precursor of our behaviors and one instinct may activate another instincts. For example when a person gets hungry and if the hunger is not satisfies he becomes angry. To earn money people use deceptive methods. Once you start earning greed sets and it may become the cause of violence, and corruptions, etc. In this way it can be said that the former group of instincts activate the later or both are correlated with each other.

Origin of instincts:

Now the question arises what is responsible of outpouring of instincts? In this respect we

illustrate internal and external causes.

Instincts	Internal cause	External causes
Instinct of appetite	deluding karmas	Due to emptiness of stomach, seeing food, thinking about food and smelling the flavor
Instinct of fear	deluding karmas	Inferiority complex, visualizing fearful events, continuous thinking about fear.
Instinct of sex	deluding karmas	Strengthening of muscles and organs of the body, listening or reading the sex connected material and constant thinking about sex.
Instinct of possession	deluding karmas	Having possession already, to listen or think about more possession.

In this way instincts are outpoured by deluding karmas and also activated by external situations.

Instincts are not only connected with our feelings but with physical and mental functioning also. They influence the external as well as internal functioning of the body.

We can see those:

External changes by way of:

Facial expressions

Vocal expressions

Physical posture and gesture

Internal changes by way of:

States of the mind

Feelings

Psychological responses

Nervous system

Secretion of glands

Chemistry of blood

The scientific approach:

For a long time it was believed that the brain was the source of energy and the seat of impulses of man. Significant progresses in Endocrinology in the recent years, has established that the passions and expressions affect the endocrine system.

The Endocrine system is the basis of the habit formation in a person. The habits manifest themselves in the Nervous system and that becomes behavioral pattern. Thus manifestation and behavior are the function of the nervous system, but the birthplace, the production center of the instincts is the endocrine system. The endocrine glands control instincts through chemical regulators called hormones. The hormones regulate the body functions. These chemical messengers exert profound influence on the mental states, emotions and behavioral patterns of an individual. They are the primary movers which generate the powerful forces of urges, passions and emotions in the man. These, in turn, generate feelings and result into actions that satisfy the needs of love, hate, fear etc. Therefore even though it look as if endocrine system is the basis of the instincts from the

gross point of view but from above discussion passions like anger ego, deceit and greed result of Deluding karmas are responsible to bring out even the endocrine respond and ultimately the instincts.

So how can we change or control the instinct?

Let us look at an example how one behaves under the influence of instinct. The person sees an object and he likes it. He wants to get it but have no capacity to buy it. Then he thinks of stealing it and ultimately steals it. He rationalizes that it is unfair that only those who have money could have such things so he does not think as if he has done anything wrong in stealing it. So first thing to do is, to make him aware that people do not take anything that belongs to someone else. The process to control instinct has started by this awareness. Secondly even though internally he may be aware that stealing is a wrong thing to do, just simple reminder to stop such action usually does not work and he will fall back to stealing and become a pray of instinct again. Therefore, it is important to reinforce on to him that stealing is a wrong thing to do. As that enters in his mind he will stop justifying his actions and major hurdle (justification of his action) for him to control his instinct is out the window. Now it will be a rollercoaster game between his temptations and aware self and a matter of practice to unwind the habit. It may happen that next few times thoughts to steal or even steps in that direction may happen but he will stop before actual stealing. And as he continues to control his temptations his self (conscious) will become more powerful and ultimately will win over the instinct. Similarly we have to work with other instincts too. It is not easy but if determined to stop instincts then it is possible to do so.

The following are conclusive principals that can be drawn from the above example for reviving once conscience:

- 1) Accept that there is a problem
- 2) Feel the existence of problem within
- 3) Desire to break the habit (instinct)
- 4) With the help of others, accept and realize that he was doing wrong
- 5) Become self aware when next time impulse of instinct come up
- 6) Stop impulse (self-restraint) before acting upon it
- 7) Build confidence that he can stop impulse of instinct
- 8) Stop the impulse of instinct right when it starts in the mind
- 9) No more impulses and therefore no more awakening of instinct (means control of instinct)

As for anything else, there are good and bad instincts. Once bad instincts are gone the time is left to act on good instincts like being compassion, kind, tolerant, giving and sharing, reading or listening to spiritual materials and performing penance and meditation, etc.

CONCLUSION

Instincts are habitual tendencies, both good and bad. Once self awakening begins bad instincts go away and time for spiritual progress starts.