

Yoga and Positive Psychology for Managing Career and Life
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Yogic Perspective of Positive Events and Positive Institutions
Lecture - 24
Family - A Positive Institution

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Positive Institution: Family



Of all the Ashramas, this is considered the most important, because it supports all the other ashramas. It is said that, just like all creatures live supported by the air, the other ashramas exist supported by the grhastha; like all streams and rivers flow to rest in the ocean, all the ashramas flow to rest in the grhastha.

ब्रह्मचारी गृहस्थश्च वानप्रस्थो यतिस्तथा । एते गृहस्थप्रभवाश्चत्वारः पृथगाश्रमाः । ।
६.८७ । ।

सर्वेषां अपि चैतेषां वेदस्मृतिविधानतः । गृहस्थ उच्यते श्रेष्ठः स त्रीनेतान्बिभर्ति हि । ।
६.८९ ।

यथा वायुं समाश्रित्य वर्तन्ते सर्वजैन्तवः । तथा गृहस्थं आश्रित्य वर्तन्ते सर्व आश्रमाः । ।
३.७७[६७]^५

यथा नदीनदाः सर्वे सागरे यान्ति संस्थितिम् । तथैवाश्रमिणः सर्वे गृहस्थे यान्ति
संस्थितिम् । । ६.९० ।

Greatness of the Grhasthashrama is described in the conversation between Uma and Shankara occurring in the Anushasana Parva of the Mahabharata. And Shankara begins his answer to Uma's queries with the unequivocal assertion that of the four ashramas, grhasthashrama is indeed the foremost.

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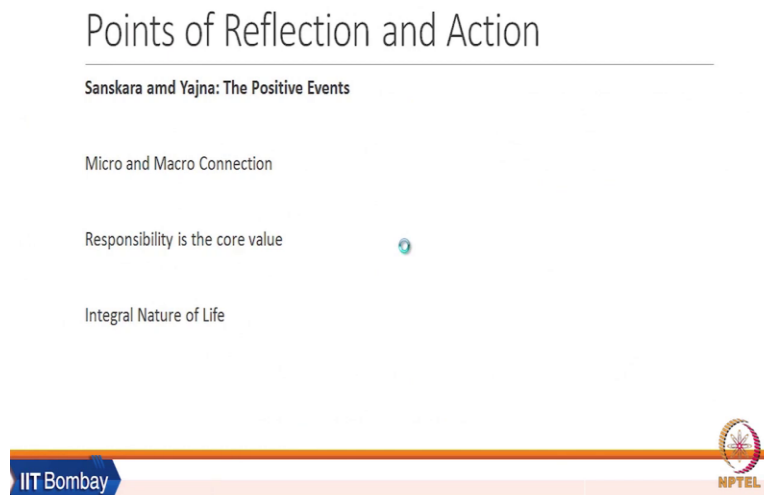
Now, we will look at both of these institutions in little more detail. First let us look at Family. Of all the ashram, this is considered the most important because it supports all the other ashrams. It is said that like all creatures live supported by the air the other ashrams exist supported by the grhastha; like all the streams and rivers flow to rest in the ocean, all the ashrams flow to rest in the grhastha and these shlokas are uttered by shiva himself in one of the text.

If you want to know more about it you can visit this website which is which contains all the references which are being quoted here [FL]. So, it conveys this idea of grhastha being the source and the foundation and the support system of all other ashram, it also says [FL] as air take cares of all the creatures [FL] in this way grhasthashram takes care of all the ashrams.

So, greatness of grhasthashram is described in the conversation between Uma and Shankara himself occurring in the Anushasana Parva of Mahabharata and Shankara begins his answer to Uma queries with the unequivocal assertion that of all the ashramas this is the state of grhasthashram.

So, this is reflected this is conveyed in this picture of fractal family is the unit of society, family takes care of the society, society and family are not in struggle with each other, family is constituting unit of society and in so many Sanskars including in all the Sanskars, sorry, and all the Sanskars the role of family is established and that ensures harmony in the family and responsible behavior of family to take care of the society.

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So, towards the end of this session what are the points of reflection and action? We looked at in this session Sanskara and Yajnas as the positive events. We look at in the form of both of these events that there is a great recognition of the connection or integration of micro and macro; macro is sustained by a micro like family is sustained by a society and micro is constituent of macro.

So, there is a mutuality in all social and human life forms that recognition is there. Arising from this recognition is the value of responsibility; responsibility is a very important value because that

is the basis on which we ensure that different members of the community and even whole ecosystem contribute to each others growth.

So, value of responsibility and Yajnas and Sanskaras are ways of developing a more integral consciousness and that integral consciousness naturally result into responsible behavior.

And third point of reflection is that different life events can be integral in nature there are ways to create positive events which takes care of all major objectives of life which are related to materialistic objective or hedonistic objective, hedonistic pleasure eudaimonic pleasure as well as transcendental or spiritual pleasure. So, all three aspects of happiness and all three aspects of self can be integrated in the positive events and these kind of positive events are described in great detail in the yogic tradition.