
Ahsiam as a State of Being: An Introduction to Indian Culture

Ahimsa is a state of being that has existed in Indian culture for many centuries. The basic doctrine of Ahimsa is to not inflict pain on any living being physically, mentally or verbally. The goal of Ahimsa is to eliminate the aggressive and cruel natures of humans by replacing them with love, peace and forgiveness. Ahimsa advocates the use of intelligence instead of violence to achieve wanted goals. Ahimsa is not just part of Hindu religion, it is a state of truly divine existence through higher consciousness. The guidelines of Ahimsa are very rigid, for example if a man expresses an aggressive tone of voice or a displeased facial expression he is exhibiting Himsa (violence). Ahimsa encourages acceptance and condemns behaviours that belittle other beings.

The practice of Ahimsa is predominant in Hindu religion because of their belief of dharma, karma and reincarnation. Hindu gurus teach that it is a Hindu dharma or duty to be kind and welcoming to all of his brothers and sisters, or the universal community. By performing ones daily duties the Hindu can attain moksha or living in peaceful bliss because of karma; if a person causes no harm, they will receive no harm. As a result, if the person has lived their life in a constant state of Ahimsa, when they die they will be reincarnated into a superior being. Mahavira a revered Jain contemporary revealed the concept of karma and reincarnation in his quote Non-Violence and kindness to living beings is kindness to oneself. For thereby ones own self is saved from various kinds of sins and resultant sufferings and is able to secure his own welfare.

It is obvious that a state of mind similar to Ahimsa does not exist in North American society as a whole. A person must exhibit great willpower and sacrifice a great deal when trying to exist in Ahimsa, this is most likely why North Americans do not embrace Ahimsa; our society lives in such luxury that when we do without, disorder exists. Within Western societys music, choice of cuisine and media there subsists a form of Himsa. Many of the lyrics that we listen to in our music are aggressive and full of hatred; the food that we eat is obtained by means of brutalizing animals in slaughterhouses; and daily, our media shows the anarchy that occurs in our communities and in the world. The North American community exists in a state of Himsa where hatred is accepted and peace suppressed.

If North Americans aspired to achieve Ahimsa, they would have to start in their own communities and concentrate their efforts on their families. Firstly, Parents would be encouraged to promote peacefulness within their own homes by settling all arguments before going to bed and if this argument is not resolved then they should stay up until there is a solution showing their determination. The achieving of Ahimsa is not easy and requires a great deal of willpower and tenderness. Also, Parents would be responsible for setting an example for their children ensuring the creation of peacemakers for the future. By providing children with an open mind on life where human diversity and differences are not a threat, children grow up with tranquillity in their hearts and will show no contempt for anyone because they simply do not know how. Ensuring the proper upbringing of the young raises the level of global consciousness.

In my practice of Ahimsa, I experienced great difficulties because my mind is not conditioned of being tolerant of everything that displeases me. I found myself suppressing my opinions because I did not want to say anything that might offend others around me. Although I had thoughts that would be considered Himsa, I recognized that these thoughts were damaging and analyzed why I was thinking this way and changed my opinion. I think a full state of mind of Ahimsa is not a realistic goal to attain, but applying the aspect of acceptance would prove to be effective in improving life. For instance, a great deal of arguments could be avoided through accepting the fact that most conflicts are trivial and not beneficial to our well being in any way. I think the key to achieving Ahimsa is through acceptance of all that is different and frightening to us. Once humans learn to accept, they can learn to truly love.

eduzaurus.com