

Ethics portion of the CAM Forum in Mexico - Feb 2018

I began by framing ethics within our community of trainers/teachers. Ethics is not about judging between good and evil, which is the traditional view in the West. As yogis, ethics starts from the inside. This is clearly stated in Patanjali's two first limbs of yoga, which is a code of ethics established as the first step towards liberation. In the language of the Siri Guru Granth Sahib, ethics starts by taming the 5 "thieves" of pride, greed, lust, attachment and rage. These thieves are the root of suffering and pain, and liberation cannot be achieved without releasing the ties that these "thieves" have upon our higher-self/soul.

It follows that the first goal of ethics is to cease causing harm to oneself and only then can we aspire to cease harming others. It is not about an external authority that dictates the truth, it is about clearing our inner-self to let our higher-self guide our behavior.

The purpose of ethical living is to experience life through the virtues that come from our soul. Virtues are the basis for our achievements, grace, radiance, prosperity, joy and freedom. I then shared a Yogi Bhajan statement that weaves all this together:

Yogi Bhajan said: "Dharma means only one thing: when your karma is according to your consciousness, not according to your emotions, feelings and desires. It's a duty prescribed called the Law of Ethics. The Law of Living and Let Living. Rulership, Raj Jog, must have the dharma of the resurrected self and conscious acts decide our resurrected personality. Rulership under dharma is union..." and he goes on to say "Where there is Raj Yog there is prosperity, beauty and bliss".

I went on to discuss what ethical living means beyond the individual experience, in the realm of our collective/group experience as KRI trainers.

First, it is important to consider that there are unique challenges when one addresses ethical challenges within a group, because it is easy to feel judged when we are being confronted for our ethical lapses. Because of this, the Office of EPS always puts together a sort of "panch" as an advisory board to support the process and gain greater group clarity about the issues at hand.

Second, that the Office of EPS strives to carry-out this process following two guiding principles: with consciousness and compassion in the service of protecting those who would be harmed.

Third, that all complaints taken seriously and complainants are treated with the utmost respect, meaning that their allegations are taken seriously.

Fourth, that the Office of EPS has processes and steps to protect complainants, to be fair with the "accused" and it has established different pathways to reach a satisfactory resolution. It does all this with the advice of legal counsel. (Amrit Singh had earlier explained the levels of "sanctions" that could result from a complaint.

Finally, I talked about the "me too" movement, as Guruka Kaur had done in Chile, to bring greater awareness to how sensibilities have changed over time. I provided examples of how

teachers can be misunderstood and that part of our work is to be highly aware when this happens so we can address it as soon as possible.

We then went into small groups and did most of the exercises provided by Guruka Kaur in groups of 4. These exercises created a many lively and enlightening conversations. Judging from the feedback I received, they were very well received and a highlight of the forum.

Sat Nam,

Gurudev Singh