

Dharma centred Living

Justice Health Honour Nurturing Supporting Caring Self Growth
Honesty Integrity Mercy Courage Win-win thinking Creativity
Duty Equality Freedom Liberty Independence Peace Compassion
Ahimsa – no harm Mutual benefit Productivity Gravity (Non human forces)



Aarsha Vidya Foundation

Vedic wisdom for a fulfilling life

The session on 'Dharma centred living' is the last of the eight sessions of the programme – Vedic wisdom for a fulfilling life

Yogah karmasu kausalam (Bhagavad Gita 2.50)

Effectiveness or competence in action (based on dharma) is Yoga.

..Samatvam yogah uchyate (Bhagavad Gita 2.48)

- Remaining the same to success and failure this evenness of mind is Yoga.

To make these verses more clear and integral to our lives, sessions on Self awareness, Self acceptance and Self responsibility, Communication for connectedness were done

Also sessions on 'Thinking clearly and feeling deeply', Discovery of purpose and priorities in life , were done

To round off all the sessions, we turn our attention to

What is dharma? What is dharma centred living?

- "Dharma is that which upholds" or "that without which nothing can stand" or "that which maintains the stability and harmony of the universe."
- Dharma can mean anyone or more or all of these, depending upon the context - the natural, innate behavior of things, religious laws, code of conduct, duty, law, ethics, virtue, etc..
- Etymologically Dharma means principles that supports and sustains ("Dharayate iti dharma") that order which protects us if we protect it. ('Dharmo rakshati rakshitah').

- Dharma has been used interchangeably here with the word, Principles.
- Despite Dharma being common sense, - I don't want to be hurt, others don't want to be hurt, We still find it difficult to live by principles because we are centred on other things such as Work, money, partner, children, family, self, possessions, spirituality etc.
- 'Centred on' means it is the core of my life or what is most important to me, to the exclusion of other things.
- All these aspects of life are important – work, money, partner, children, family, self, possessions, spirituality.
- However if my life revolves around one or more of these centres instead of dharma/principles then the below gets affected. Depending on my centre or what is most important to me, my sense of security, guidance, wisdom and power are affected. Examples given below

Partner centredness – your life perspective is determined by what may positively or negatively influence your spouse or relationship, Family centredness – your decision making criteria are what is good for the family or what family members want primarily, Money centredness – is the lens through which life is seen and understood, creating imbalanced judgment, Work centredness – you see your life as your work, Possession centredness – you make decisions based on what will protect, increase or better display your possessions, Pleasure centredness – you see the world in terms of what is in it for you – source of consumption, Self centredness – you view the world by how decisions, events or circumstances affect you

For us to truly appreciate what it means to be principle centred, the chart given below highlights how we tend to perceive other areas of life if we have any one centre except principles:

Identifying our centre?

Centre	Security	Guidance	Wisdom	Power
Partner centred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your feelings of security are based on the way your partner treats you. - You are highly vulnerable to the moods and feelings of your partners - There is deep disappointment resulting in withdrawal or conflict when your partner disagrees with you or does not meet your expectations - Anything that may impinge on the relationship is a threat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Your direction comes from your own needs and wants and from your partner - Your decision making is limited to what you think is best for your marriage or your partner or to the preferences and opinions of your partner. 	Your life perspective includes things which may positively or negatively influence your partner or your relationship	Your power to act is limited by weaknesses in your partner and in your self.
Centre	Security	Guidance	Wisdom	Power
If you are Family centred	- Your security is based on family acceptance and fulfilling family	- Family scripting – 'what everyone should do' is your source of	Your interpret all of life situations in terms of your family creating	Your actions are limited by family models and traditions.

	<p>expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your sense of personal security is as volatile as the family - Your feelings of self worth are based on the family reputation 	<p>correct attitudes or behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Your decision making is based on 'what is good for the family or what family members want. 	<p>a partial understanding and family narcissism.</p>	
If you are Money centred	<p>Your personal worth is determined by your networth</p> <p>You are vulnerable to anything that threatens your economic security</p>	<p>Profit is your decision making criterion.</p>	<p>Money making is the lens through which life is seen and understood creating imbalanced judgement</p>	<p>You are restricted to what you can accomplish with your money and your limited vision.</p>
If you are Work centred	<p>You tend to define yourself by your work role</p> <p>You are only comfortable when you are working</p>	<p>You make your decisions based on the needs and expectations of your work</p>	<p>You tend to be limited to your work role</p> <p>You see your work as your life</p>	<p>Your actions are limited by work role models, work opportunities, your boss's perceptions and your abilities to do/not do that work.</p>
Centre	Security	Guidance	Wisdom	Power
If you are Possession centred	<p>Your security is based on your reputation, social status, or the</p>	<p>You make your decisions based on what will protect,</p>	<p>You see the world in terms of comparative economic and social</p>	<p>You function within the limits of what you can buy or the social</p>

	things you possess	increase or better display your possessions	relationships	prominence you can achieve.
If you are Pleasure centred	You feel secure only when you are on a 'pleasure high' Your security is shortlived, anesthetising, and dependent on your environment	You make your decisions on the basis of what will give you most pleasure	You see the world in terms of 'what's in it for you'	Your power is almost negligible
If you are Self centred	Your security is constantly changing and shifting	Your judgment criteria – 'what feels good'? 'What I need' 'What I want'	You view the world by how decisions, events or circumstances will affect you.	Your ability to act is limited to your own resources without the benefit of interdependency.

If your centre is	Possible ways we may tend to perceive other areas of our life					
	Partner	Children	Family	Money	Work	Possessions
Partner	The main source of need satisfaction	Reflection of partner Keeps the partner together	Good in its place, less important A common project	Necessary to properly take care of partner	Necessary to earn money to take care of partner	Means to share, impress or manipulate
Children	Provides for the children	Greatest source of fulfilment whether they are 3 or 35 yrs	Has to serve the interests of the children, Anything else less important	Necessary to take care of children	Necessary for children's education, marriage. One's own retirement less important	Comfort and happiness of children
Family	Part of the family	Integral to the togetherness of the family	Highest priority	Economic support for family	A Means to an end	Family comfort and opportunities
Money	Asset or liability in acquiring money	Discomfort with growing expenses	Economic drain	Source of security and fulfillment	Necessary to the acquisition of money	Evidence of success in life
Work	Help or hindrance in work	Help or interruption to work	Help or interruption to work	Of secondary importance Evidence of	Main source of fulfilment and satisfaction	Tools to increase work effectiveness,

			Instructs family in work ethics	hard work	Highest ethic, others ethics are sub standard and a source of frustration	Perks as a result of promotions
Possessions	Main possession Assistant in acquiring other possessions		Possession to use, exploit, dominate, control, Showcase	Key to increasing possessions, Another possession to control	Opportunity to possess status, authority, recognition	
If your centre is	Possible ways we may tend to perceive other areas of our life					
	Partner	Children	Family	Money	Work	Possessions
Pleasure	Partner is fun and pleasure or obstacle to it	Children can be an obstacle to ones pleasure	Family can be the means or an interference	Means to increase opportunities for pleasure	Means to an end Boring and routine 'Fun' work ok	Objects of fun, means to more fun.
A friend or friends	Possible friend or possible competitor Social status symbol	Treated as friends in childhood or obstacle in developing and maintaining friendships	Treated as friends or obstacle in developing and maintaining friendships, Friends part of family	Source of economic and social good	Opportunity to socialise and increase one's network and net worth	Means of buying friendship Means of entertaining or providing social pleasure

If your centre is	Possible ways we may tend to perceive other areas of our life					
	Pleasure	Friend/friends	Enemy/enemies	Spirituality	Self	Dharma/Principles
Partner	Mutual, unifying activity or pleasure is unimportant	Partner is best or only friend Only friends are 'our ' friends	Partner is my defender or common enemy Provides source of marriage definition	Activities to enjoy together Focus only on those aspects to bring partner closer to oneself	Self worth is partner based Highly vulnerable to partner attitudes, behaviours	Principles which create and maintain relationship with partner
Family	Family activities or relatively unimportant	Friends of the family or competition Threat to strong family life	Defined by family Source of family strength and unity	Source of help to keep family together	Important part but subordinate to how family values the person	Principles which keep family together Subordinate to family
Money	Economic drain or evidence of economic stress	Chosen because of economic status	Economic competitors or Threat to economic security	Giving to temple or religious causes will get me tax exemption	Self worth is determined by net worth	Ways that work in making and managing money

Work	Waste of time Interferes with work	Primarily from friends at work or shared interest Basically unnecessary	Obstacles to work productivity	Important to corporate image or Imposition on your time Opportunity to network in profession	Defined by job role Self worth linked to satisfaction in job	Ideas that contribute to success at work Need to adapt to work conditions
If your centre is	Possible ways we may tend to perceive other areas of our life					
	Pleasure	Friend/friends	Enemy/ enemies	Spirituality	Self	Dharma/ Principles
Possessions	Buying, shopping, joining clubs	Personal objects Usable and jealousy w.r.t other friends of friends	Takers, thieves Others with more possessions ore recognition	Important to get me the things I want – artha, kaama	Defined by the things I own Defined by social status, recognition	Ideas that enable you to acquire, enhance and retain possessions – yogah kshema
Pleasure	Supreme end in life Main source of satisfaction	Companions in pleasure and fun	Take life too seriously Guilt trippers, destroyers	Inconvenient obstacle to recreation and fun activities Guilt trip Tendency to	Instrument for pleasure	Natural drives and instincts to be satisfied

				avoid self reflection		
If your centre is	Possible ways we may tend to perceive other areas of our life					
	Pleasure	Friend/friends	Enemy/enemies	Spirituality	Self	Dharma/Principles
Friend/friends	Always enjoyed with friends, Primarily social events	Critical to personal happiness, Belonging, acceptance, popularity on social media is crucial	Outside the social circle, Common enemies provide unity or definition for friendship	Place for social gathering	Socially defined Petrified of embarrassment or social rejection	Basic principles which help you get along with others
Spirituality	Meeting with other people Pleasure to be denied	Other members of satsanga	Whose lives are opposed to spirituality	Highest source of guidance	Self worth determined by progress on one's path, participation in religious/spiritual activities	Taught by spirituality/religion

If your centre is	Possible ways we may tend to perceive other areas of our life					
	Partner	Children	Family	Money	Work	Possessions
Self	Possessiveness Satisfier and pleaser	Possession, Need satisfier, Make me look good	Possession, Need satisfier, Make me look good	Source of need satisfaction	Opportunity to 'do my own thing'	Source of self definition, protection, enhancement
Dharma or Principles	Equal partner in a mutually beneficial and interdependent relationship	Opportunity for caring, contribution and fulfilment, Opportunity for intergenerational rescripting and change	Necessary for healthy functioning of society, Opportunity for caring, contribution and fulfilment,	Enabling resource in the accomplishment of important priorities and goals	Opportunity to use talents and abilities in a meaningful way. Means to provide economic resource Time investment to be kept in balance with other time investments and in harmony with priorities and values in life	Enabling resources, Responsibilities to be properly cared for, Secondary to people in importance.

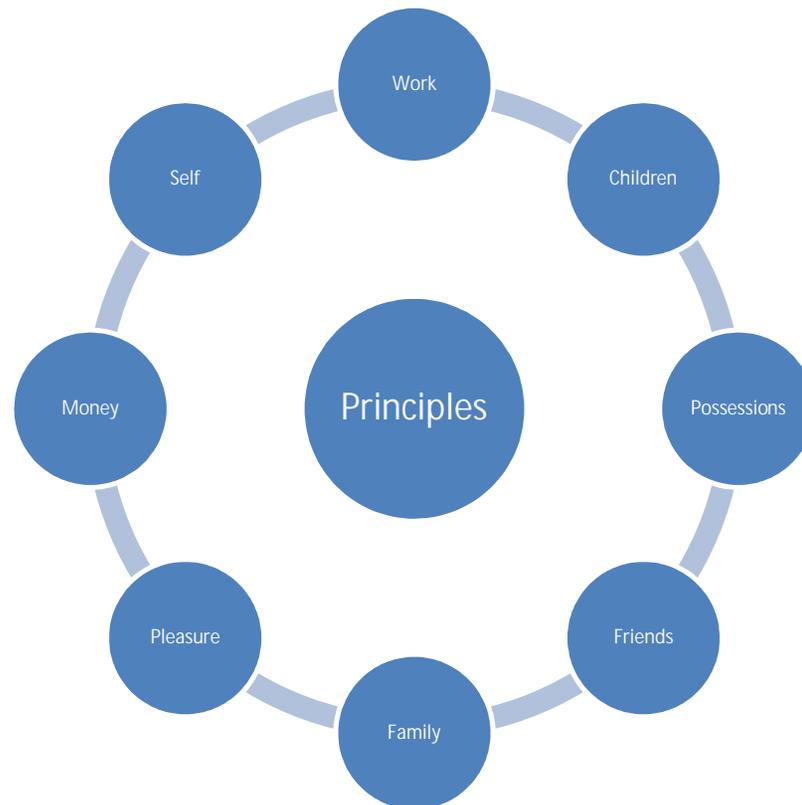
If your centre is	Pleasure	Friend/friends	Enemy/enemies	Spirituality	Self	Dharma/principles
Self	Deserved satisfaction, 'My rights' 'My needs'	Supporter, Provider for 'me'	Source of self justification for anger and righteousness	Vehicle to serve self interests	Better, smarter, more right Justified in focusing all resources on personal gratification	Source of justification, Only those ideas that serve my best interests can be adapted to need
Dharma or Principles	Joy that comes from any activity in a focused and purposeful life of priorities True re-creation as an important part of a balanced and integrated life style	Companions in interdependent living Confidants – those to share with, help and support	No real or perceived enemies, just people with different paradigms and agendas to be understood and cared about	Vehicle for true principles and discovering the basis of dharma going all the way to understanding of moksha. Not satisfied with 'feel good' measures in spirituality Opportunity for service and contribution	One unique, talented, blessed, creative individual in the midst of many who working independently and interdependently can accomplish many great things	Immutable, natural principles which cannot be violated with carelessness When honoured, preserve integrity and lead to true growth and happiness.

- Generally a person's centre is some combination of these and /or other centres.
- Depending on external or internal conditions one particular centre may be activated until the underlying needs are satisfied. Then another centre becomes the compelling force.
- As a person fluctuates from one centre to another the resulting relativism is like roller coasting through life. One moment you are high, the next moment you are low, making efforts to compensate for one weakness by borrowing strength from another weakness.
- There is no consistent sense of direction, no persistent wisdom, no steady power supply or sense of personal worth.
- The ideal is to create one clear centre from which we consistently derive a high degree of security, guidance, wisdom and power, becoming more proactive and being more in harmony with every part of your life.

PRINCIPLE CENTRE

- ✓ By centering your life on universal principles – you create a solid foundation for life.
- ✓ Security comes from knowing that unlike other centres based on people or things subject to change, universal principles do not change. We can depend on them
- ✓ Principles don't react to anything. They don't get angry and treat us differently. They are not out to get us. They cannot pave our way for shortcuts or quick fixes.
- ✓ Principles do not die. They are not here one day and gone the next, cannot be destroyed by earthquakes or theft.
- ✓ Even in the midst of people or circumstances that seem to ignore the principles, we can be secure in the knowledge that principles are bigger than people or circumstances and that thousands of years of history have seen them triumph, time and time again.

- ✓ Principles always have natural consequences attached to them. There are positive consequences when we live in harmony with them. There are negative consequences when we ignore them. Because these principles apply to everyone, whether or not they are aware, this limitation is universal.
- ✓ By centering our lives on timeless, unchanging principles, we create the basis for effective living.
- ✓ Principle centred living is the centre that puts all other centers in perspective.



Vedic wisdom for a fulfilling life

Centre	Security	Guidance	Wisdom	Power
If you are Principle centred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Your security is based on correct principles that do not change, regardless of external conditions ✓ You know that true principles can be validated in your own life through your own experiences, ✓ Correct principles help you understand your own development, endowing you with the confidence to learn more, increasing your knowledge and understanding. ✓ Your source of security provides you with an immovable, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ You are guided by a compass which enables you to see where you want to go and how you will get there ✓ You use accurate data which makes your decisions both do-able and meaningful. ✓ You can be objective about life situations and emotions, and look at the balanced whole. ✓ Your decisions and actions reflect both short term and long term considerations and implications. ✓ In every situation, you consciously, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Your judgment encompasses a broad range of long term consequences and reflects a wise balance and quiet assurance. ✓ You see things differently and thus you think and act differently from the largely reactive world. ✓ You see the world as a field of effective action and what you can do for the world and its people ✓ You adopt a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Your power is limited only by your understanding and observance of natural laws, principles and consequences of following the principles themselves. ✓ You become a self aware, knowledgeable, proactive individual largely unrestricted by the attitudes, behaviours and actions of others. ✓ Your ability to act reaches far beyond your own resources and is based on interdependency ✓ Your decisions and

	<p>unchanging, failing core enabling you to see change as an exciting adventure and opportunity to make significant contributions.</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>proactively determine the best alternative, basing decisions on principles.</p>	<p>proactive lifestyle</p> <p>✓ You interpret all of life's experiences in terms of opportunities for learning and contribution.</p>	<p>actions are not driven by current financial or circumstantial limitations.</p>
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