

1. What is compassion? Why is it an important human value? Discuss.

Introduction:

Broadly defined, compassion is a sense of concern that arises when we are confronted with another's suffering and feel motivated to see that suffering relieved. At its core, compassion is a response to the inevitable reality of our human condition—our experience of pain and sorrow.

Body:

Importance of compassion as a human value:

- **Action based empathy:** Compassion offers the possibility of responding to suffering with understanding, patience, and kindness rather than, say, fear and repulsion. It is a readiness to help or to want to do something ourselves about another person's situation.
Example: Mother Theresa has often been referred to as an embodiment of compassion. Her selfless work for the poor and destitute till date is inspiring and spoken of.
- **Promotes fraternity and harmony among all:** A needy would always be happy to get help. It would not only help him face the situation but will generate a blissful feeling of being noticed and cared by others.
- **Holistic mental health:** Compassion allows oneself to have a feeling of self-satisfaction and self-contentment of helping others whether an animal, human or even a plant. Such a feeling will help reduce stress, improve mental and physical health. Thus a person would naturally feel happy and will contribute to the society efficiently with a healthy mind-set.
- **Self-actualization and societal growth:** When such a society evolves having compassion for others and helps others in need, each individual is taken care of by the society and in turn he also helps the society.
- **Strong social capital:** Strongly integrated social capital grows with a co-operative and co-existing ecosystem, resulting in reduced toxic or criminal outbreaks and instances.
Example: Popularly known as 'Collector Bro', a civil servant from Kozhikode started the 'Compassionate Kozhikode' and 'Compassionate Keralam', winning the trust and volunteer help from the locals to successfully clean ponds, feed the hungry, help and improving lives after the recent floods and involving youth in the betterment of the society.

Slight downside: Compassion sometimes is said to lead to a guilt-induced decision making. Many a times, people involved in compassionate deeds find themselves feeling negative and less hopeful of their being. However, recently scientists have

found that compassion as a virtue releases happy hormones in the brain resulting in an efficient and positive outcome.

Conclusion:

His Holiness, The Dalai Lama in his teachings said, “If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.” Rightly so, compassion almost always leads to an affirmative result and is of paramount importance to each and every one.

2. What does social apathy mean? How does it affect the social fabric? Analyze.

Introduction

Apathy is a lack of feeling, emotion, interest, or concern about something. Apathy is a state of indifference, or the suppression of emotions such as concern, excitement, motivation, or passion. Social apathy is defined as the lack of interest in bringing the changes in the society.

Body

Effect on social fabric:

- Voter turnout is very less in urban areas compared to rural areas. Lack of ignorance in choosing the people’s representative.
- Less voice against the criminalization of the politics.
- Mob lynching is heard in many places because of misconceptions against the person.
- If a person met with the road accident, people start recording the situation than hospitalizing him.
- High tolerance for corruption though it is a malpractice.
- Evading taxes to fulfil their interests, neglecting national interest.
- Parents are being thrown out by their children.
- People are cleaning their houses and dumping the garbage on road.
- Lack of emotions towards animals and their lives.
- Lack of emotional apathy to console the person beside us.
- Lack of behavioural apathy ignoring other person’s emotions and circumstances.
- Lack of apathy towards marginalized section of the society.

Reasons for social apathy:

- Gender discrimination: Women voice is being ignored or makes more controversies, so they are ignorant towards the any issue.
- Delayed process before and after complaint: Unnecessary interrogation by administrative authorities and police.

- Influence of apathy is situation specific: People worry only when it is harming them.
- Vested interests: The influence of seeing apathy depends on a person's commitment to the goal.
- Apathy as a Defense Mechanism: Apathy serves the main function of lessening future hurt and keeping them detached.
- Comfort zone: People feel comfortable being in safe zone.
- Prejudice: Pre assumption of innocent and guilty before judgment from the authorities
- Devoid of values: Lack of moral values and narrowed mindset to consider their only self-interests.

Conclusion:

Social apathy is a syndrome these days comprising of many factors. The need for the hour is to inculcate values, morals, honesty, compassion, patience among people for the welfare of the society. Children should be thought at school levels regarding the social values.

3. We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts, we make the world. Comment.

Introduction

“We are what we think” has been emphasised by Buddha in Dhammapada. The similar lines are quoted by Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda. This indicates to us just how important these words are.

Body

- It is said that our beliefs become our thoughts, our thoughts become our words, our words become our actions, our actions become our habits, our habits become our values, our values become our destiny.
- Gandhi has sown his mind with thoughts of truth and non-violence. Which became his action from there on in his life and the freedom movement.
- Whereas the Nazis belief system was conditioned to believe in racial supremacy and in turn lead to the Genocide (Action).
- We aren't what anyone else says we are; we are what you think you are. So if one thinks he/she is talented, he/she'll open the way for your talent to shine forth. If One restricts him/her with negative thoughts about yourself, they won't blossom.
- As a **child**, If the values of honesty and punctuality are inculcated then the child grows up into a law abiding citizen.

- In a **family**, If the head of the family believes in Gender equality and treats both the boy and girl child alike, chances are that the son grows up and treat fellow women with utmost respect.
- A **society** which believes in love, has a place for everyone. Even for the transgender, outcasts, destitute etc.
- A **country** believing in Secularism and Peace like India, makes a Dignified living possible to all of its religions and thus making a happier and peaceful world

Conclusion

Our mind is a garden. our thoughts are the seeds. We can grow flowers or weeds. Because in the end, we are what we think.

4. It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are. Do you agree? Substantiate.

Introduction

Values are basic and fundamental beliefs that guide or motivate attitudes or actions. These describe the personal qualities we choose to embody to guide our actions; the sort of person we want to be; the manner in which we treat ourselves and others, and our interaction with the world around us.

Body:

Values help in decision-making:

- Resolves conflict- Based on the value system, a person can decide whether means (deontological) are important for him or the end (utilitarian). For example, whether lying is right to save a person's life can be easily decided.
- Prioritize stakeholders- As per the belief in values like compassion, empathy etc. an administrator can prioritize his work whether for poor and destitute or for commercial development.
- Emotional intelligence- Knowing one's core values helps a person being emotionally less vulnerable to the circumstances, for example a person for whom strength is important will take care of his family in times of trouble instead of being doomed by it himself.
- There are several examples of administrators, where their value system guided them to take decisions. Armstrong Pane built a road for people, Durga Shakti Nagpal and Ashok Khemka stood against corruption because of the values that guided them.

However, there might be situations where two or more of our core values are at conflict, and it is hard to take a decision in such situations. For example, for an

administrator who values rules but is also empathetic, it is a difficult situation when he has to help a needy but cannot really take action as per the rules. For instance, where a widow comes for enrolment on the last day of the deadline for a social benefit program meant for economically backward people with no primary breadwinner but she does not have necessary certificates to prove she is economically backward and also she is an illiterate.

Conclusion:

Decision-making is always a contentious task, but being aware of the core values one can minimize the internal conflicts and take a decision that best suits his interests.

5. Who is your favourite figure from the field of administration? What are his/ her virtues that appeal you the most?

Introduction:

We have amazing, brave, dedicated administrators of India who have made us all extremely proud and done extraordinary work for the country. Among them, my personal favourite is Mr Prashant Nair, who was District Magistrate of Kozhikode district. He is also known as "Collector Bro".

Body:

Prasanth Nair is an IAS (Indian Administrative Service) officer. He is well known for his experimental initiatives for poverty eradication and city administration like "Compassionate Kozhikode" and "Operation Suleimani" in Kozhikode district. He isn't always the conventional IAS officer who sits in his cushiony office chair, drowning in files and folders. He connects with people using social media platforms.

His extraordinary efforts and remarkable virtues inspire us. Some of his appealing virtues are listed below:

- **Courteous:** He is polite, respectful and considerate in manner. He directly connects with people in a humble and modest way. Sometimes he responds to his young male audience by addressing them as "Bro". People feel so connected with him that he is being addressed by people as "Collector Bro".
- **Benevolence:** His flagship initiative is 'Operation Suleimani', aimed at making the city hunger-free. It shows his desire to do good to others and charitableness.
- **Transparent:** With his Facebook page, it is easy for others to see what actions are performed. He handles the page personally. His proactive presence on social media makes him an extremely transparent collector- just what the public wants. He puts up all sorts of announcements (welfare schemes and other initiatives) on the page.

- **Openness:** He has an emphasis on transparency and free unrestricted access to knowledge and information as well as collaborative or cooperative management and decision making rather than a central authority. He took suggestions from people for solving traffic issues in Kozhikode.
- **Efficient:** His efficiency at work is a direct result of his open communication with masses.
- **Honest:** He is honest and sincere towards his work and prefers to work in his free time. On Facebook, people drop complaints and appreciation texts, and not a single query goes unanswered. He responds to people's grievance while travelling or while listening to welcome speech in any function.
- **Compassionate:** He understood a person's pain to assure people that their problems are his.
- **Selflessness:** He has little or no concern for himself, especially with regard to fame, position, money.
- **Courageous:** He took initiatives against the conventions and in spite of criticism from political lobby he kept on doing the good. He doesn't let the hands of politics suppress him.

Conclusion:

Its people like Prasanth Nair that are the hope of this country. We pay our respects to all such amazing officers who inspire us every single day and help us believe that even a few good men can change the course of a nation.