

# The Path of The Neohumanist

Love in Action



**Neohumanism is the spirit of benevolence.**

**To teach love one must embody it.**

**To embody love one must see all as divine.**

**To see all as divine one must contemplate the divine self within us all  
and dance with divinity as we proceed through our lives.**

# Introduction

*You must create opportunities for all people to judge everything in the light of truth. Liberate the intellect of each and every person. Human intellect is now bogged down in a marshy quagmire -- let people enjoy the sweet taste of intellectual freedom. – P.R. Sarkar*

In the years 1981-82 P.R. Sarkar set out the contours of Neohumanism, the ideology that offers the outline for creating a culture and social environment based not on selfish norms but universal values. Neohumanism aims to restore balance to our predominately materialistic society by stimulating a new way of thinking that evolves by re-examining our human identity and our place in the universe. By diverting our focus from our personal self through the cultivation of our spiritual nature (dharma) universal awareness arises. Combined with a rationalistic mentality that exposes the dogmas and cruelty of anything but this all inclusive approach, Neohumanism is a practical path for those who realize the need for a new mentality. That there is such a need is beyond doubt.

Modern society is ideologically and philosophically conflicted. On the one hand we get the sense of fairness and freedom and the dream that you can get ahead by working hard, but if you are born black, a woman, or in a different caste from the ruling class or are from a country that is looked down upon, your challenges may be insurmountable.

The modern ideology encourages us to work, get rich and that way make a better future for all, but when we do so we find we are destroying our own habitat: polluting the air, water and land, while causing the extinction of thousands of creatures endangering our own lives as well. It may take ten million years to recover the biodiversity we have depleted in the past two generations.

The current ideology encourages a consumerist life style, that preaches that 'life is good', yet mental diseases are amongst the top five health problems.

The self-contradictory nature of our society today is based on the confusing ethics that virtue is the pursuit of one's obligation towards oneself. The idea is that we make egotism and selfishness the norm, when in fact we should be transcending it. In simple language, by placing personal survival at the heart of our existence, we endanger the existence of all. This ideology is short-sighted, destructive and is obviously not working. We have to change.

Neohumanism compels us to take a new look at ourselves, our place in the universe and our relationship with others. Self-transformation is the hardest part, yet surveys have shown that eighty percent of the people are ready to change their lifestyles for a more sustainable way of living. Cooperative business practices are more and more common. Even some of the leading bankers are ready to move past the free market society as was the conclusion of

a newly released report by the US think tank Capital Institute (initiated by past JP Morgan executives) which stated that we have to move beyond capitalist and communist models as both “ systems are unsustainable, even if flawlessly executed, and that economists need to look to the “hard science of holism”.

While decision makers usually focus on finding a single ‘right’ answer, holism focuses on finding balanced answers that address seemingly contradictory goals. P.R. Sarkar calls this balanced approach ‘*prama*’ and states that solutions to economic problems, ecological disasters and social injustices have to include the re-orientation of our values and personal perception, or better said, should be centered on it. Only by integrating the honoring of the elevation of human awareness, alternative economic and technological models are going to succeed in solving all social ills.

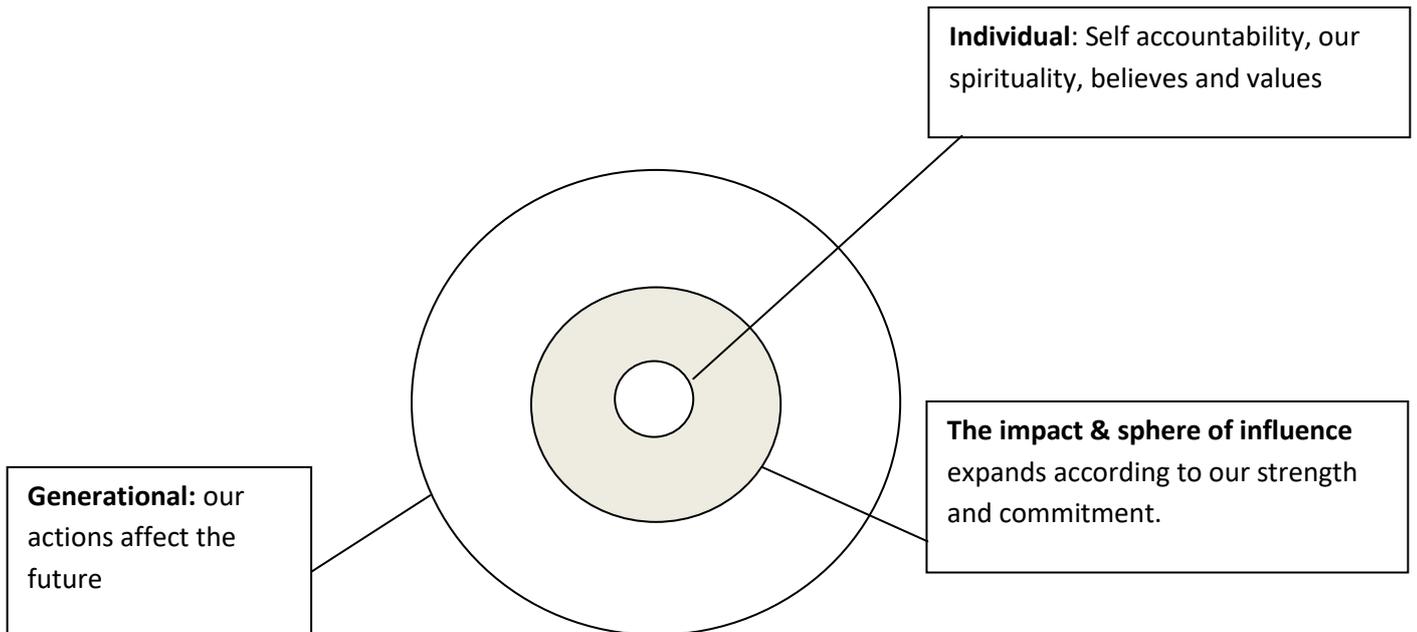
Some say that there is a conflict between spirit values and real world methods. Economics and morality seem to be two different streets. Leadership studies show however that these fields are much closer than one may think. Family, culture and the business of governing and management are all integrated. What we think, what we say and what we do all impact how we can lead and affect our environment. We live in a moral universe, a creation driven by values and meaning. And whereas modern society takes universal values as second to personal interest, Neohumanism puts these at front.

*Comparison of Neohumanist values and present social norms*

Values	Neohumanist	Present
1. Self-embedded	High	Low
2. Social Support	High	Low
3. Socially Purposeful Living	Normative	Non-normative
4. Community involvement	Every day	Rare
5. Boundaries	Companionship culture	Minimal
6. Relation with other groups	Cooperative	Competitive
7. Individual Freedom	Extensive	Free to make consumption choices
8. Relationships	Egalitarian	Hierarchical
9. Role models	Virtuous	Frequently un-cough in social media
10. Immorality	Not tolerated	Expected

11. Natural World	Partnership with nature	Detachment, control or fear of nature
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The Neohumanist philosophy inspires society to take the next step of embracing a 'devotional psychology' as a social need, not just for mental sanity, but to reset the social impetus. P.R. Sarkar stresses that with the addition of critical self-analysis and sincere inner search a sense of personal autonomy and responsibility arise that can redirect life towards a new set of values and create a truly balanced and regenerative economy.



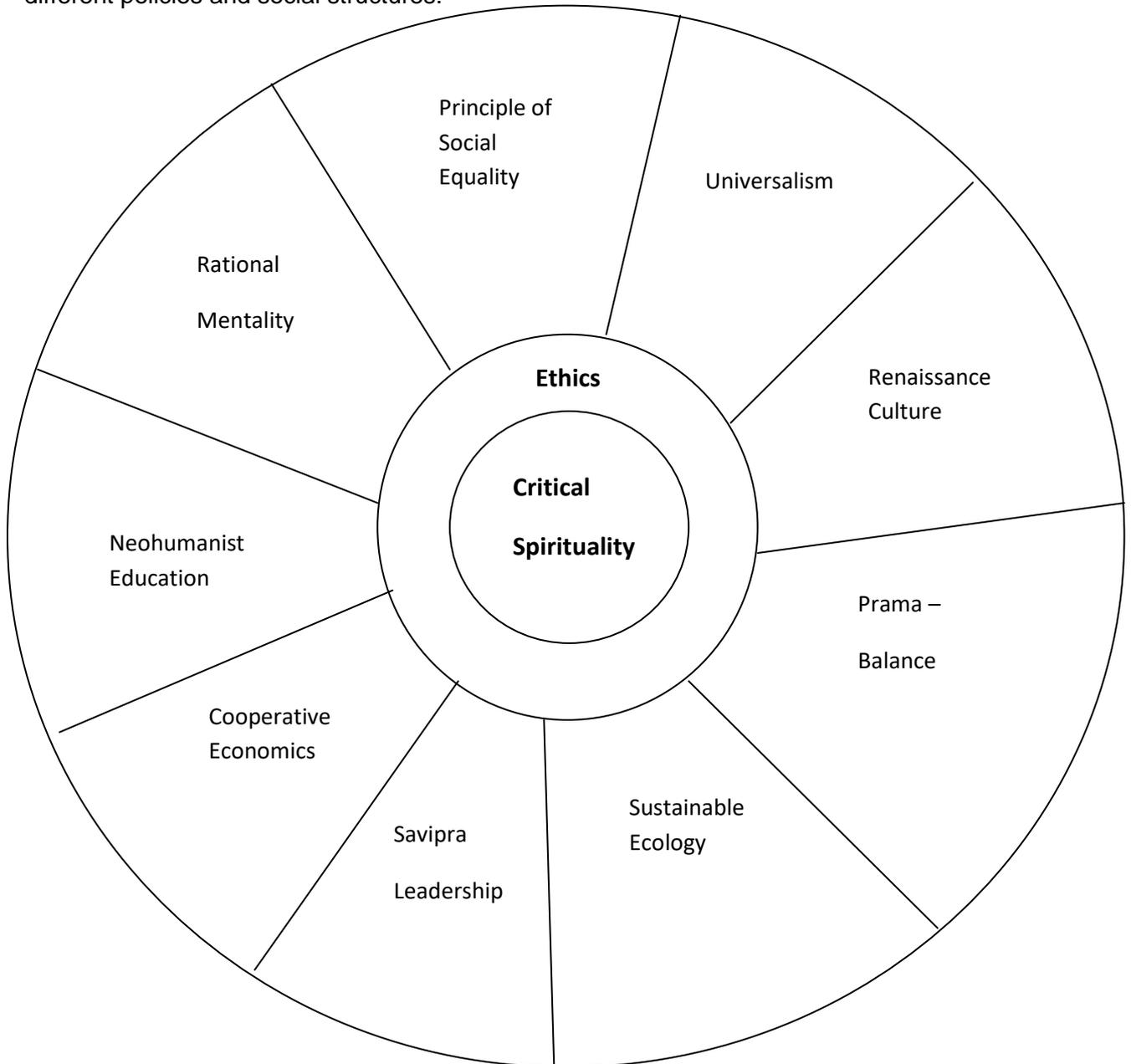
To give all those people who suffer due to hateful sentiments, who are exploited and abused, to all those creatures facing extinction due to ecological mismanagement, the implementation of a universal ideology based on critical spirituality can bring balance, fairness and real hope.

*"I used to think the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change. I thought that with 30 years of good science we could address those problems. But I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy... and to deal with those we need to change and expand our minds, align ourselves with the force of the universe and develop our deeper human qualities."*

*Gus Speth, scientist*

## Overview of the Main aspects of Neohumanism

Neohumanism is fundamentally spiritual in nature – not because it subscribes to any religious view, but because it acknowledges the inherent unity in all life and the spiritual essence at the core of all beings. To protect this valuable essence, Neohumanism proposes different policies and social structures:



# Critical Spirituality: A Personal Practice of Increasing Harmony

By ourselves is evil done;  
by ourselves we pain endure.  
By ourselves we cease from ill;  
by ourselves  
we become pure. - *Dharmapada*

A spirit centered society is nothing new. When you look at the native societies of the past you see that their lives were centered on a transcendental essence. For the Pygmies, it was the Forest, for the seafaring Pacific island communities it was the goddess of the Sea. For the Native Americans, it was the Spirit.

The Spirit was considered universal and interacted with their lives, governed their thinking and was honored and respected. For them everything was Spirit. It was how people grew up. People might give up to strive for profit but did not forget other things such as our roots, gratitude, justice and experience. The physical appearance in these traditions was temporary. Spirit was one, connecting all of life and the universe.

Today our lives are very different. We have abandoned a transcendental entity and with that denied our self. Our lives seem disconnected, disjointed, and we feel lost. Globally, depression and mental diseases top the list of ills in society. P.R. Sarkar gave a philosophy of bringing spirit values back into the center of society, not unlike the Indian Americans, or any of the nature based societies around the globe. Neohumanism is a constant effort to a greater connection with the subjective side of life in a modern rational way. Sarkar's vision is to develop harmony with oneself, the society and nature supported by a rationalist mentality. He called this critical spirituality a 'subjective approach with objective adjustment.'

If the ecological paradigm is to replace the modernist, industrial one, if we are to move towards "a global planetary culture", it will be necessary to have a functional cosmology that is in line with this vision. Neohumanism sees consciousness expressed through the different layers of the mind, described as crude, subtle and causal. The crude mind is more occupied by physical needs. The subtle mind is focused on intuitive thinking and the causal mind is the unconscious world of deep longings and spirit. By ignoring the subtle and causal parts of the mind, a society is lopsided in its expression and our lifestyle is out of sync with ourselves.

To be completely human, we need to honor the deeper layers of our minds. This way we create increasing harmony with each and everything, expressed through our social action for fairness and justice.

This is the Path of the Humanist: the personal unfolding and dedication to social advancement through increasingly dedicating ourselves to creating inner harmony.

Neurologically the human being is primed for receiving joy from this inner connection. It is an evolutionary adaptation that has benefitted humanity's rise and advancement. Through our personal practice we can further cultivate this. So that means Neohumanism is a natural practice, a form that through discipleship allows us to be developed further.

Lie Yu Kou, author of the *Liezi*, a Daoist book on personal and social balance, stated that the noblest conducts are non-actions. By cultivating inner purity, we can transform those around us. This lies at the heart of Neohumanism. It is an ideology that wants to take us to a new way of thinking, a thinking that takes us to a higher realization of Life.

P.R. Sarkar writes that Neohumanism manifests in three stages of development.

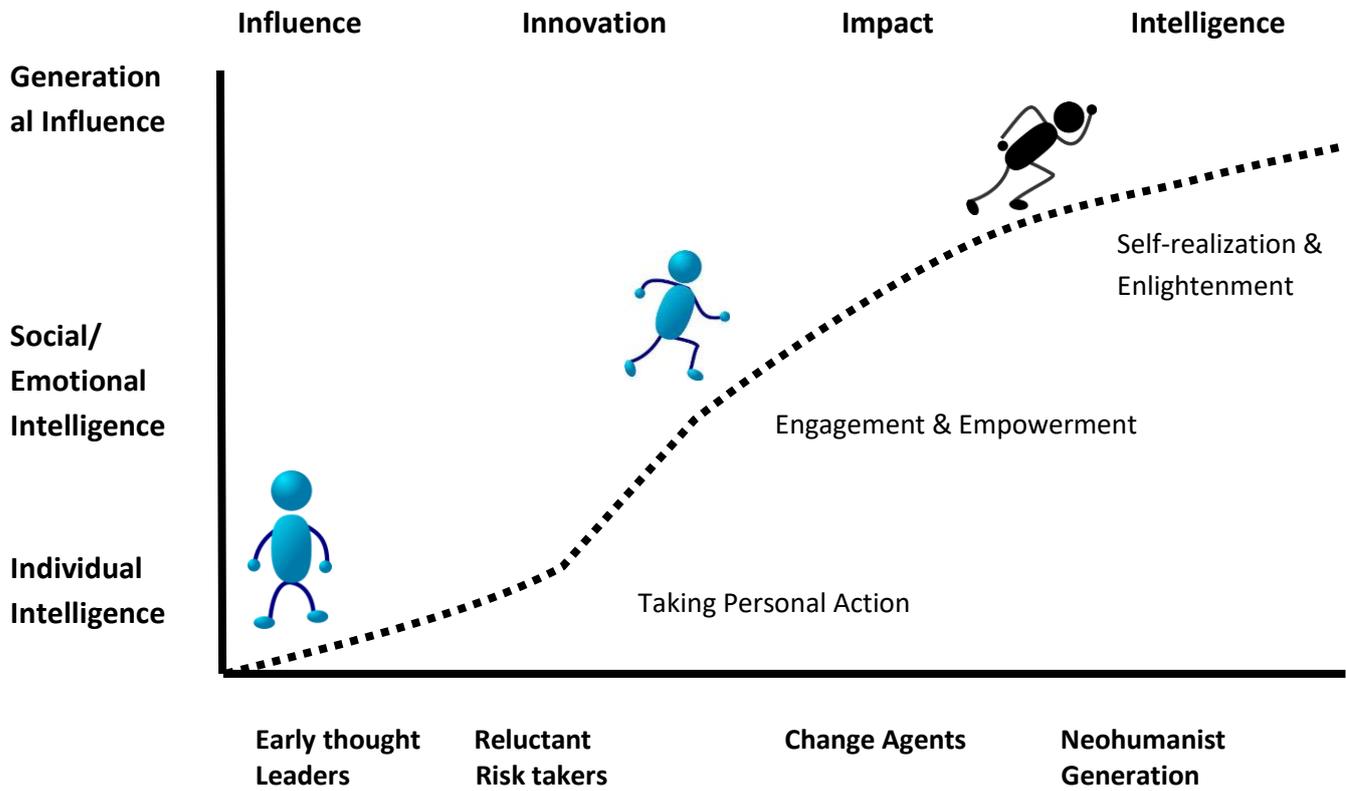
- The first stage of Neohumanism is personal practice and taking personal action to enhance the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. The stage of spiritual practice indirectly benefits society through the social service that is part of spiritual practice.
- The second stage of Neohumanism is the essence. Its impact is mainly in the mental and spiritual realms, both individual and collective. There is an increased level of engagements and empowerment.
- The third and final stage of Neohumanism is a mission/ enlightenment. According to Neohumanism, when an individual's existential nucleus (soul) merges with the "Cosmic Existential Nucleus", she/he attains self-realization. In transpersonal psychology this would be called 'self-actualization', the merger of the inner person and the ideal.



People who function at this level where life and goals match impact society deeply. P.R. Sarkar asserts that this supreme status ensures the future of not only the human world but also of the animal and plant worlds as well.

*Be you lamps onto yourselves.  
Be your own reliance  
Hold to the truth within yourselves  
As to the only lamp - Buddha*

Mark Coleman in "The Sustainability Generation" displays this process as follows:



*"The Perfect Man uses his mind like a mirror — going after nothing, welcoming nothing, responding but not storing. Therefore he can win out over things and not hurt himself."*  
 Zhuangzi

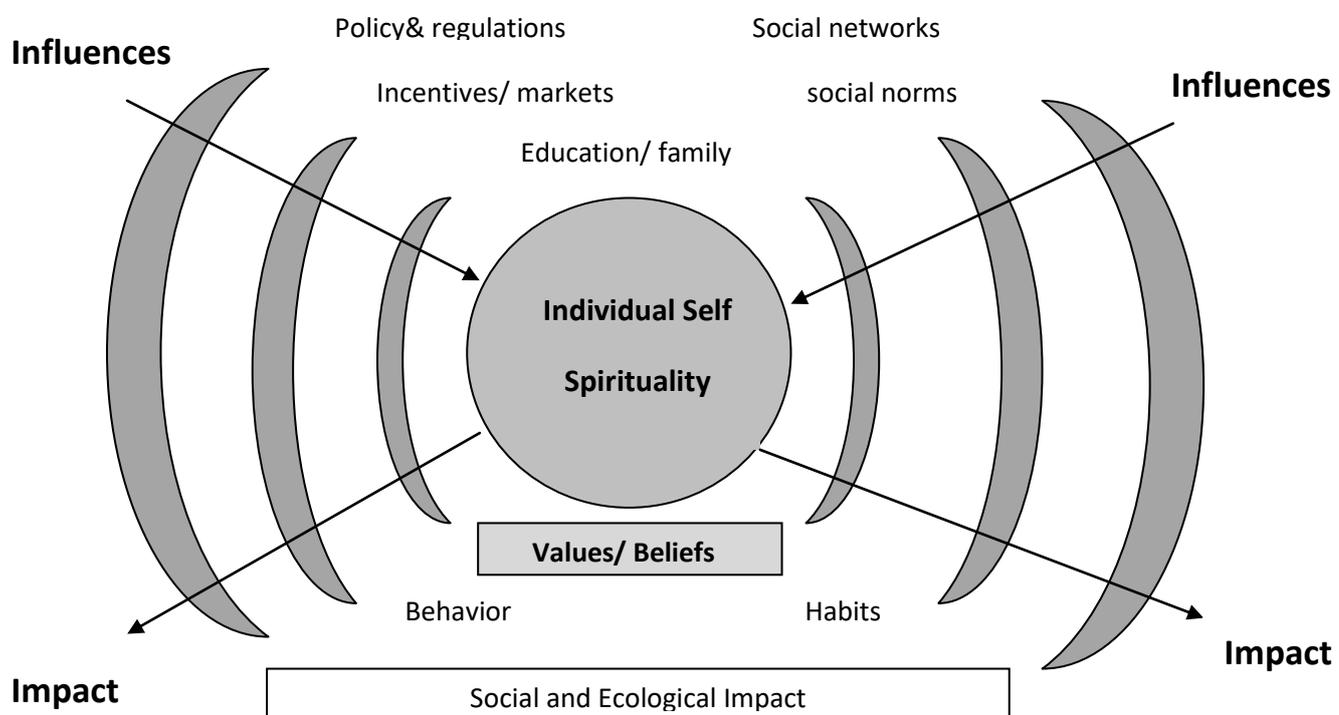
## Neohumanist Ethics – Principled Living

The cultivation of the pure mind, moral behavior and self-restraint lead to social and ecological harmony. Following our deep conscience is a way of synchronizing with the universe.

This process of inner evolution is at the heart of Neohumanist culture, family life, business management and government. The ethical philosophy an organization uses to conduct business will definitely affect the reputation, productivity and bottom line of the business

P.R. Sarkar insists ethics can't be governed by mere human sentiments. The centuries of intellectual revolutions have created a material society that is the most advanced in human history, yet it has lost its moral foundation. Today humanist ethics may be clear, their application is subjective to emotions and preferences. Human beings have the tendency to justify their own evil with the logic of moral lessons. As Erich Fromm said, "...no phenomenon contains so much destructive feeling as 'moral indignation,' which permits envy or hate to be acted out under the guise of virtue."

Ethics that is spiritually based does not have this defect as it transcends our humanist limitations, and relies on responsibility. This personal accountability comes first in all issues and the more committed we are to it, the greater it magnifies our social impact.



Neohumanism sees a direct link between the level of cultivation of spirituality, the values we live and the society we end up with. The ego, the sense of entitlement, self-indulgence

and erroneous consumption are intricately linked. By strengthening the inner awareness, the Neohumanist philosophy sees tremendous social change.

This ethical training should start from a young age. Neohumanist Education emphasizes character education along with critical spirituality as a way of harmonizing personal and social behavior. The greater the level of accountability, the greater our ability to move beyond our personal needs and empower others.

Neohumanist ethical concepts are based on the Yama and Niyama framework:

The five yamas, self-regulating behaviors involving our interactions with other people and the world at large, include:

- Ahimsa: nonviolence
- Satya: truthfulness
- Asteya: non-stealing
- Brahmacharya: positive thinking
- Aparigraha: simple life, non-possessiveness.

The five niyamas, personal practices that relate to our inner world, include:

- Shoacha: purity
- Santosha: contentment
- Tapas: service
- Svadhyaya: self-study.
- Ishvara Pranidhana: inner devotion and surrender of the self



# Neohumanist Education - Freeing the Intellect

*“Knowledge must be disseminated throughout all sections of society. You must create opportunities for all people to judge everything in the light of truth. Liberate the intellect of each and every person. – P.R. Sarkar*

History shows that when a society changes its education system, thirty to forty years later, there will be a big social change as well. One example is the French revolution, preceded by an educational transformation inspired by Rousseau’s *Emile* and others. Another example of the power of education is Hitler’s generation, brought up under an education system in the 1890’s that ignored emotions, was regimented and insisted on discipline, even for infants. Thirty years later there was a world war that saw the gassing of millions of people. Just as one generation can be taught to become fascist, universal minds can be nurtured and grown, narrow sentiments can be exposed for what they are, a new world can be created. Education is the first step towards the implementation of Neohumanism.

## **Socio-sentiments and Geo-sentiments**

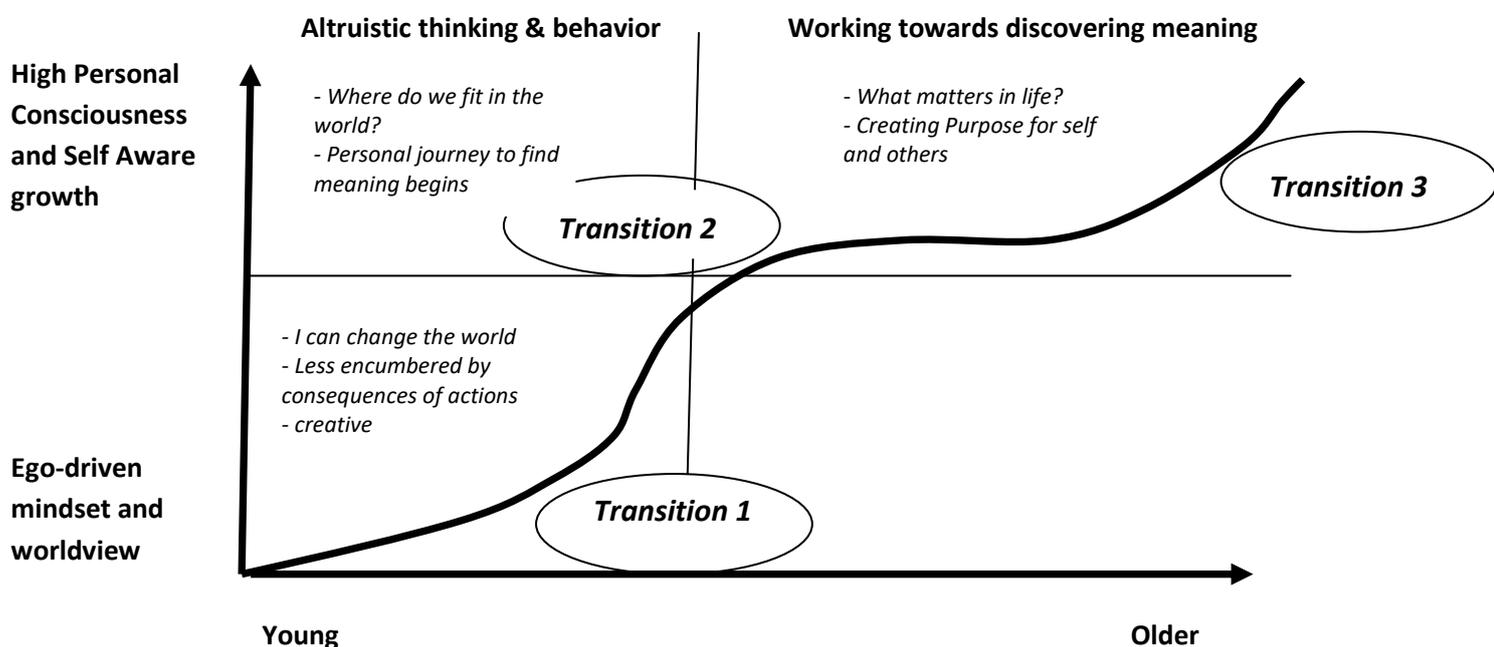
Napoleon used to say that war is ‘three parts mental and one part physical’. A simplified analysis of social conflict indeed shows that most wars center on the issues of emotion: hatred based on religion (as in the Sunni-Shia fights), racial hatred (the shooting and incarceration of African Americans), ingrained caste system that excludes (As with the Dalit in India) disrespect for people with different incomes (poor people seem to be more dispensable and have less rights), or people who come from other places (fear of immigrants) or have different lifestyles.

The ‘us vs. them’ mentality, according to P.R. Sarkar arises from what he calls socio-sentiments and geo-sentiments, not rational problems, but issues of cultural programming and stereotyping. Socio-sentiments mean preference for those belonging to a certain group, maybe based on race, religion, social status or other factors. Geo-sentiments represent special support from people from certain areas or countries at the cost of others. These sentiments are based on culturally ingrained dogmas that are taught from one generation to the other. There is a saying that “If you don’t teach your children peace, they learn violence.” We might modify this by saying, “If you don’t teach critical rationality and universalism, the children will learn social dogma and hatred.”

For 99% of human history there was no extensive human on human violence. Before Neolithic times, war was considered a waste of resources. People did not see the benefit of fighting each other. Even today anthropologists have identified forty plus communities where violence has been absent for several generations. In comparison to our pre-agricultural foraging ancestors, we are far from the noble and virtuous individuals we may

believe ourselves to be. In fact in their opinions we might be considered to have lost our minds, if not our humanity.

The Zapotec, a Mexican community divided over two different cities, is an interesting example of the effects of choices of values. In one Zapotec city violence is completely absent, while in the other violence is common. The difference? A consistent choice by its leaders for promoting peace values. The same with the Ladakhi community of the Buddhist part of Kashmir. Here anger and selfishness are looked upon for what they are: diseases in need of treatment through counseling.



Every time hatred rises, it morphs into nationalism, homophobic behavior or racial tensions and violence. Negative imagery sticks in the minds for long times. By embracing an education based on universalism and rationality, a society has the force that can move towards inclusion and unity which are the values of a harmonious lifestyle.

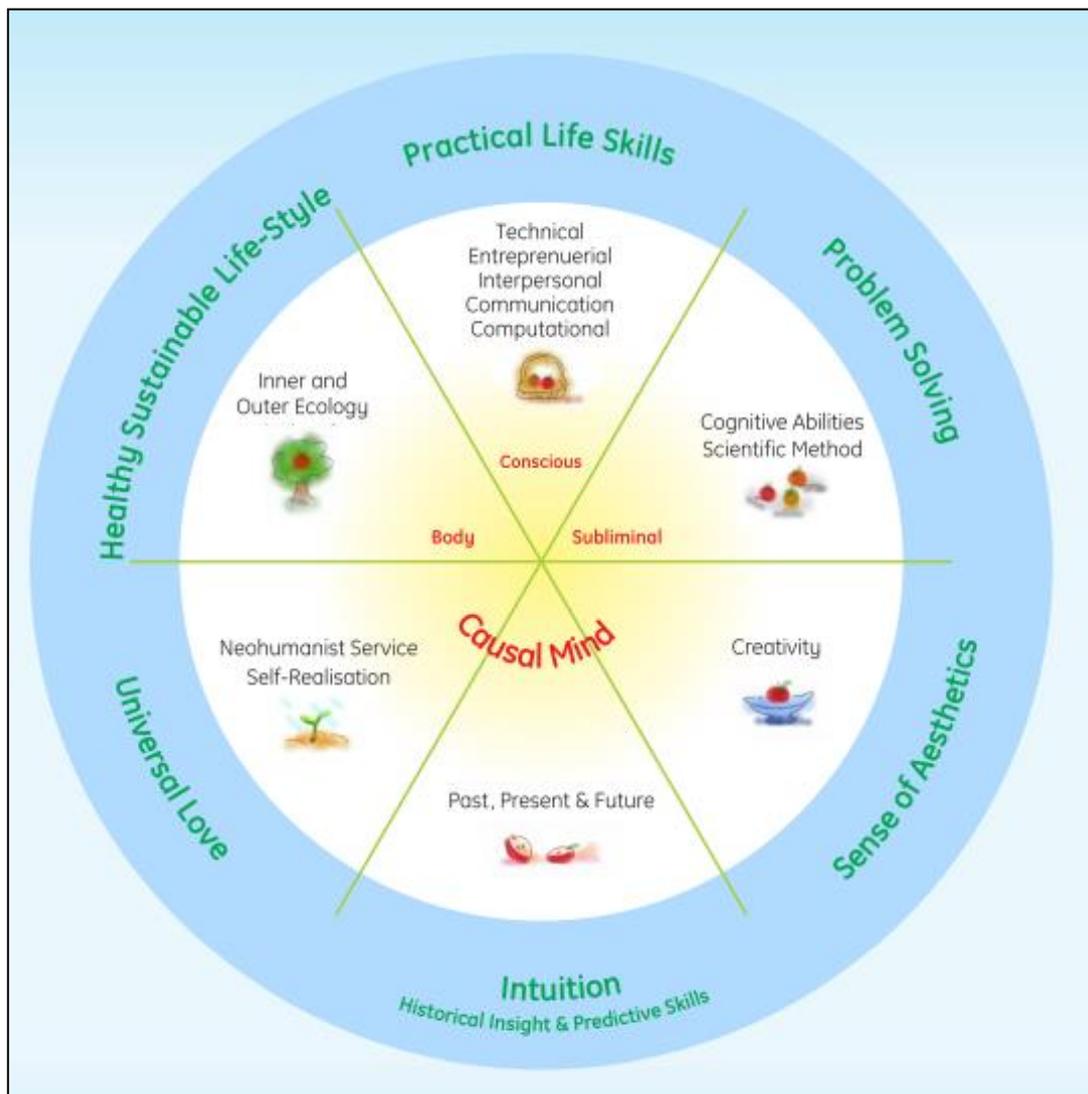
Neohumanist schools are a growing movement around the world, with projects in all continents of the planet, and associated teacher trainings and other Neohumanist promotional programs under the banner of the Gurukula Network.

Students who graduate from Neohumanist schools have a different vision of themselves and their lives. Research on graduates from one of the oldest Neohumanist schools in the USA, the Progressive School of Long Island, identified several character qualities that these young people, now in high-school, college and beyond, consistently report observing both in

themselves, and in their peers. Although these qualities may exist in others too, they are seen with amazing frequency and to a high degree in those who benefited from our educational foundation. We call these qualities "intangible gains" because they are not easily quantified. Yet they **are** the engine that drives academic and personal growth. These observed qualities include:

- Service, zest for Learning, Self-Knowledge, Leadership
- Self-Constructivity, Calm Rationality, Literacy
- Self-Confidence, Universal Outlook,
- Aesthetic Sensitivity, Discriminating Trust, Integrity, The Joy Factor

Our education system has to be transformative, expose the roots of socio- and geo-sentiments through critical rationality and inspire universal love. These are the fundamental targets of any Neohumanist school in the world.



## Cultivating Universalism



*The Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO declares that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed".*

It is not natural for human beings to kill other members of their own species. In fact that could be extended to most other species. There is a hardwired resistance against killing one's own kind. Even soldiers find this hard. In WW II only 15 to 20 % of the individual riflemen fired their weapons at an exposed 'enemy' soldier. At times enemy soldiers of opposing groups would consciously ignore each other. Somewhere in our mid brain we are wired to care, identify and embrace the other.

We see that in weapons banning treaties and policies that have existed throughout human history. For several centuries the Japanese banned guns starting in the 1500's. The Chinese blocked the use of dynamite in their weapons. Unlike what Hobbesian evolutionary psychology has projected for centuries, human beings are capable in acting for the good.

We are wired for benevolence, with aggression a learned behavior. George Vaillant argues that the Neanderthal became extinct due to their lacking ability to bond, interact and communicate with others, qualities the *Homo Sapiens* excels in. Neohumanism aims to expand this natural inclination to empathy to include all living beings through education.

Throughout the years of our infancy and childhood, well into adolescence we put down roots that shape our identity. We identify ourselves by our family, our school, our social activities and achievements. This may have led to a sense of nationalist pride, a heightened feeling of entitlement to a certain land, or a feeling of superiority of a particular race.

Sarkar's approach is to retrain the mind. By deepening our self-insight and learning its related values, we grow a different set of roots that tap into another set of values and attitudes, one that is fundamentally timeless, universal and selfless. These values will shape our actions and social choices and help us transcend our narrow socio- and geo-sentiments. We realize we are all children of the Universe, specs of dust in a cosmic tableau.

*"... human feelings cannot check the infighting prevalent among human beings. For this purpose we should have a two-fold approach. For the purpose of training this turbulent mind, what should be done? We will have to educate the mind properly, along the lines of Neohumanism. This Neohumanist education will impart proper training to the mind. And at the same time there should be spiritual practice for proper psychic transformation. This is what we require most. There is no alternative."*

*P.R. Sarkar*

Spiritual practice is the undoing of the old memories that block pure perception. By cultivating the spiritual, we can learn to live the universal. They are two sides of the same issue, inseparable and totally interdependent. And the ability to embrace all living things is a projection of our ability to embrace all of the inner self.

*When my mind was cleansed of impurities,  
like a mirror of its dust and dirt,  
I recognized the Self in me:  
When I saw Him dwelling in me,  
I realized that He was the Everything  
and I was nothing. - Lalla*



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# Rationalistic mentality

***“Rationalistic mentality is one step towards the establishment of Neohumanism.”***

***P.R. Sarkar***

The idea of self-realization is a form of self-education, applying one's own mind to deepen thinking and link with the self. It is a form of self-research, not parroting or blind following. This automatically translates in to a critical pedagogy that encourages questioning, the importance of study and research and the development of new technology.

Rationality empowers people. Those who want personal power, may not like that. Stalin said that 'ideas are more powerful than guns and as we would not like our enemies to have guns, we surely should not allow them to have ideas'. Ignorance is often encouraged and questioning abhorred by those who look for compliance. Yet is also such societies that lack developmental drive and progress and are aggressors in conflicts.

Rationality and common sense lead to pragmatic choices. Throughout history good intentions for more harmonious lifestyles have found their defeat at the hands of others. One example are the Moriori of the Chatham Islands, who in the 1500's under the guidance of their great Chief Nunuku, banned all sticks 'thicker than a thumb' in warfare. This brought about a relatively peaceful environment that lasted for centuries. In the early eighteen hundreds however the Moriori were slaughtered, raped and enslaved by the much more bellicose Maori from New Zealand. Similar fates have befallen other peaceful societies. By banning weapons from its society, Chief Nunuku endangered his people's long term survival.

In P.R. Sarkar's approach to building a society centered on the values of self-awakening, 'a protective fence' has to be built, one that protects its universal values from exploitation, dogma and narrow sentiments, as much as from physical attack. Sarkar believed that to fight the dogmas that underlie violence and injustice, awakened rationality (intellect guided by conscience) is the best weapon. Based on logic one has to see what weapons and tools may be necessary. Only this can protect the subtler aspects of our humanity.

Schools have to encourage critical thinking, questioning and independent thought within a framework of the values of self-realization. In Steve Pinker's in *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, one of the reasons he sees for reduced violence is literacy. Research shows that someone who can read by the age of ten, does rarely get in trouble with the law. A simple overlapping map of low literacy rates and war spots shows they almost totally coincide. Recidivism amongst inmates who got educated while in jail, was much lower than those who did not get any training. The ability to rationalize critically and independently prevents crime, violence and war.

For Neohumanism to be accepted a greater number of independent thinkers ready to expand our humanity, create greater compassion in our lives, is necessary. This transformational process involves different steps:

1. The process of change starts with the acceptance that our current lifestyle is unsustainable, ecologically, economically, socially and psychologically.
2. Empower people to act upon the wish for change.
3. Encourage institutional change: religious, governmental transformation
4. Generational transformation and acceptance of the new model.

Schools play an important role in helping us change how we think to create the world we want. If we can harness all of humanity's available rationality, balanced by the power of discrimination, one generation can move society into new territory.



# The Principle of Social Equality

*Ubuntu: "I am what I am, because of what we are."*

Anthropological studies have shown that one major condition for maintaining peace is a certain level of egalitarianism, as used to exist in the pre-agricultural societies. In studies of currently peaceful societies, anthropologists have found that many of these societies do not emphasize individuality. Societies on some Pacific islands even do not have a word for 'I'. The focus is on the collective 'we'. The hunter gatherer societies of the Congolese Pygmies were peaceful in part due to their respect and love for the forest and nature. Trusting the forest's abundance, the Pygmies are not possessive or self-centered in nature. What seems to be a common thread in all these communities is that there is on the one hand a culture of conflict resolution techniques. On the other hand, that culture seems to be maintained by a firm commitment to collective welfare.

In the USA, children are from the first days of life taught to become independent, opposed to Asian cultures where 'interdependence' is the norm. North American societies are more aggressive and individualistic. This translates into a very different social cohesiveness and norm training. For example in Africa, an infant will be cared for by different other children. In rural areas, where the traditional structures are firm, crime rates are low. Similarly, in modern Japan where the collective's needs often supersede those of the individual, the murder rate is one twelfth of that in the USA.

## The Principle of Social Equality

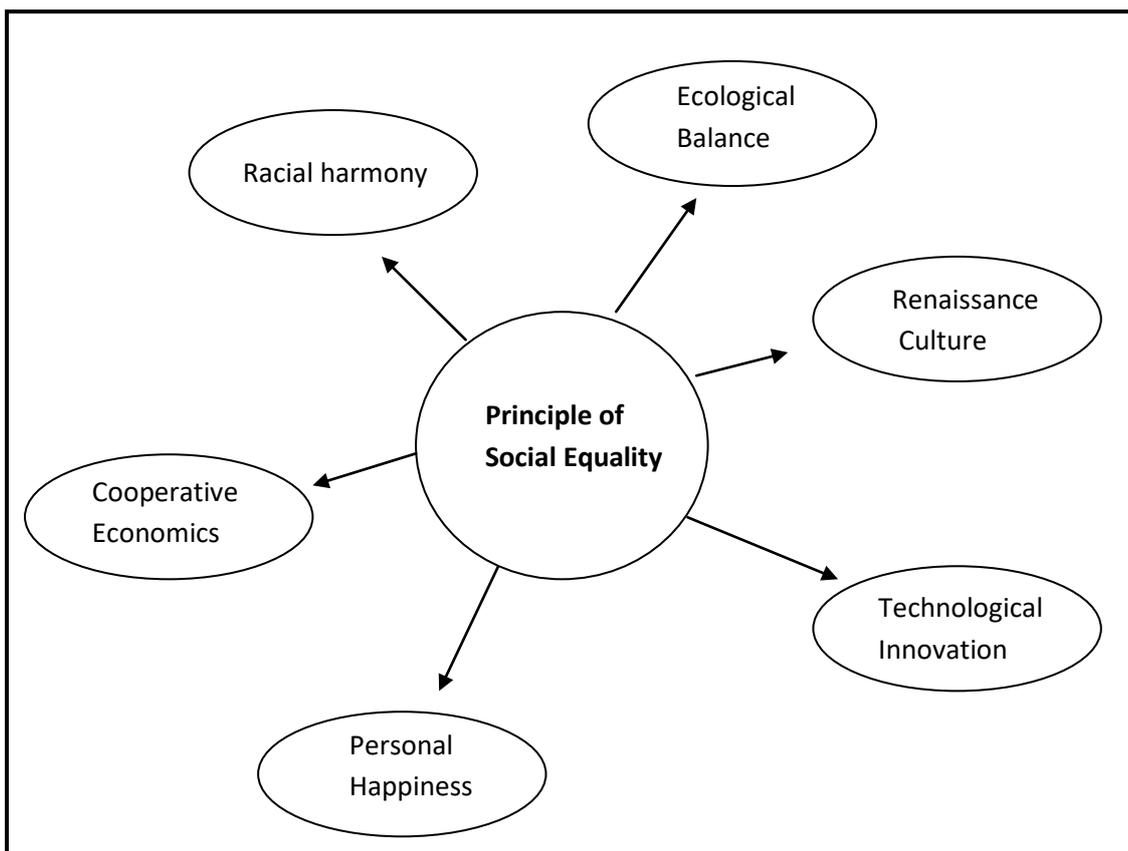
In the current social set up with wide access to material goods for many people, the sense of entitlement is very powerful. In Neohumanist terminology this is called the 'principle of selfish pleasure' (atmasukhatattva). This has resulted in excessive consumerism, with little regard to its health impact or ecological impact. This perception has arisen due to different factors:

1. Resource Abundance has created the mentality that because it is available, we should consume it.
2. Unknown Consequences: when not aware of the risks and consequences of our actions, we may not feel the need for restraint.
3. Lack of Governance and Oversight – The "If I can get away with it, why not?"- mentality has been thriving for years, yet the current natural resources are being over stretched, with terrible consequences for food and life forms.
4. Ill-aligned Incentives: Through tax and subsidies governments may support otherwise unsustainable ecological practices for short term needs and political reasons.

5. Generational Inheritance: “Others do it, so why can’t we!”

These issues perpetrate the sense of entitlement and its related consumerist and socially hateful behavior. This pattern of entitlement blindsides to the unsustainability of our lifestyle. Without the aim of promoting self-evasive behavior that ignores individual needs, P.R. Sarkar emphasizes the importance of a sense of collectivity based on the principle of embracing all. This approach is known as the ‘principle of social equality’, key to maintaining social and ecological balance and a cornerstone to an equitable and just society. He calls that ‘sama-samajtattva’.

When commenting on Max Weber’s thesis, Karl Marx said that “All social behavior is practical.” Change doesn’t come by itself. It is created by circumstances. The ecological precarious situation globally, the issues of discrimination suffered by women around the world, the issues of racism and homophobic behavior forces all of us to come together and create a new consensus. We have to embrace universalism and accept the fundamental truth of social equality.



The Principle of Social Equality grows through the cultivation of different qualities:

1. Empathize: listen to yourself and others.

2. Educate: expand your knowledge
3. Engage: get involved in social action
4. Empower: assume responsibility
5. Enlighten: it is the enlightened self that truly understands motivation and develop self-generated wisdom from where to act.

Here we aim to move forward to a 'we'-based mentality of collective intelligence that reduces the effect of the ego. How do we develop this? Through an education that trains people to see connection, communication and cooperation within the framework of a universal ideology.



# Cooperative Economics

*“In every field of collective life there should be cooperation among the members of society. Where this cooperation is between free human beings, each with equal rights and mutual respect for each other, and each working for the welfare of the other, it is called “coordinated cooperation”. In each and every stratum of life, we should do everything with coordinated cooperation.”* P.R. Sarkar

Building wealth as a game that benefits the few and ignores the wider needs of the society is not just immoral, it is socially destructive. There can be no social equality when there is excessive economic disparity. War and homicide are inseparably linked to issues of resource imbalance. Great material inequality breeds violence. Hunter gatherer societies of the past have not cared so much for material possessions, and had mechanisms to avoid pride and superiority sentiments. The collective welfare stood first.

While apparently the private and public sectors of the economy consist of large companies, half of most economies are made up of small and medium enterprises (SME's), which often employ half of the nation's workforce, and most of the scientists. These SME's create tremendous wealth for the country and are the engines for innovation. These companies are often family owned and nearly never franchised. To maintain an egalitarian society, small business can be privately owned while larger companies ideally should be cooperatively managed. This allows for a fair sharing of profits and strengthens social and cultural cohesion.

- Neohumanist inspired economics would be to encourage innovation in management with the aim of fair income distribution. Cooperative enterprises where workers share in the profits of their hard labor would be the ideal.
- Neohumanism also advocates regional self-reliance and food sovereignty. This means that the basic commodities are produced within a certain socio-cultural and economic area and protected from external imports.
- Limits on the individual accumulation of excessive wealth. This to ensure the whole of the society benefits from development and effort.

The overall aim is to create the economic base in which ethics, and the values of social equality, ecological sustainability and the cultivation of our spiritual nature can thrive.

*The absence of universal spirit is the root of all atrocities. Strong people are torturing the weak. Powerful human groups are exploiting the weaker ones. Under*

*such circumstances, it is the duty of good people to declare war on the oppressors. It will not be of use to sit quietly for an indefinite period in the hope that only moral preaching will be fruitful. All good people have to be united. - P.R. Sarkar*



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# Renaissance Culture – Spirit Centered

*Violence is in large measure a result of culture, and to reduce violence one must reduce the contributing causes. This cannot be achieved by decree, treaty or imposition. – R. Carazo*

Psycho-historians say that many of the social changes we see today are due to psychological issues. For example, in their eyes, at the core of American violence and social decay are cultural issues. The average four and five year old in the US watches four to five hours of television a day. By the age of 18, these children have watched over 200.000 acts of violence. The US has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy, illicit drug use, obesity diabetes and use of anti-depressants in the industrialized world.

And yet the human mind is capable of the most beautiful things, when inspired and supported by a positive environment. This cultural environment will shape our behavior. One can say that cultural reforms are the engine of enduring social change. And unlike biological evolution, social evolution can progress quite rapidly.

Current cultural models are often packaged, exploitative and commercial. The compromises the artists have to make have led to the development of performances that are dictated by the market rather than the soul of the artist. Without the meaning to uplift, this culture, should be called 'pseudo-culture'.

In a pseudo-culture:

- 1) The priority is to make money.
- 2) The basest of impulses are stimulated.
- 3) Cultural vitality is left in the hands of those who may not have the character or insight to lead humanity forward.

Neohumanism encourages a renaissance of the arts along spiritual values. According to Parker Palmer spirit culture is about: “. . . *the ancient and abiding human quest for connectedness with something larger and more trustworthy than our egos - with our own souls....*”The spiritual revolution is a spontaneous movement in society, a new interest in the reality of spirit and its healing effects on life

*P.R. Sarkar said that art should be for 'service and blessedness'. The liberation of the mind, is when the memories of one's existence are no longer exclusively related to the experiences of the present body. The notion of life begins to extend into the life of the universe. The arts can take us there.*



The Path of the  
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# Universal Ecology - Nature is us

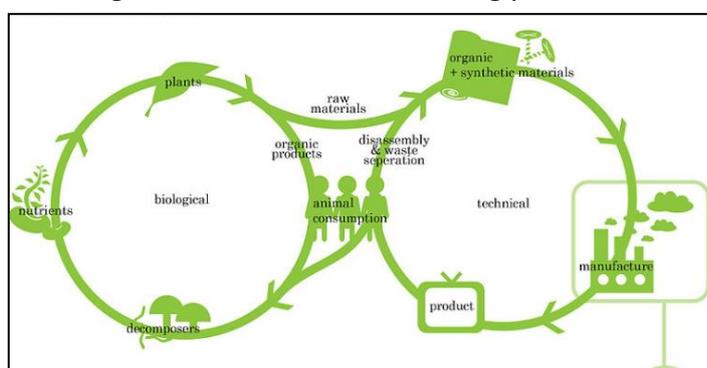
*What happens to the Earth, happens to the children of the Earth – Chief Seattle*

In his book *Collapse – How Societies choose to Fail or Survive*, Jared Diamond chronicles the self-inflicted demise of a number of the world’s societies, from the East Islanders to the Greenland Norse. In trying to answer the question, “Why did these societies collapse?” amongst the main reasons for a society’s demise was the wasteful plunder of its natural environment. Today humanity has destroyed so much of nature that it may take ten million years to re-establish the earth’s bio-diversity. And though a growing number of people are aware of that, as a society we have not taken the radical steps that can change the direction of our planet’s care.

Technically the environmental problems can be resolved and people are ready. The challenge is that self-absorbed leadership in economics and politics ignores the effect of their actions on the environment. The destruction of ecology is a leadership problem.

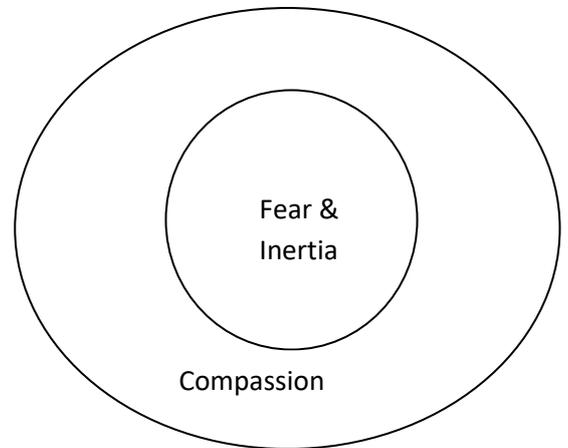
Neohumanist ecology and farming techniques are reflected in many perma-culture concepts, with stress on ecological balance through intercropping and food forests. Recent research by the Rodale Institute has shown that through natural soil regeneration, all of the excess carbon dioxide in the atmosphere can be reabsorbed. *“Organic farming can pull **forty percent** of global greenhouse gas emissions out of the atmosphere - each year. Farmers who are building soil organic carbon can remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere at rates of 2 tons of CO2 per acre. “*

Another approach that makes sense is to make nature part of the market equation and place financial value on ecosystem services. One such a system that has tried to value nature is the *cradle to cradle* approach. This method of regenerative economics integrates the technical with the biological and assures there is no loss to nature in the production process. It sees ecological balance as an accounting problem.



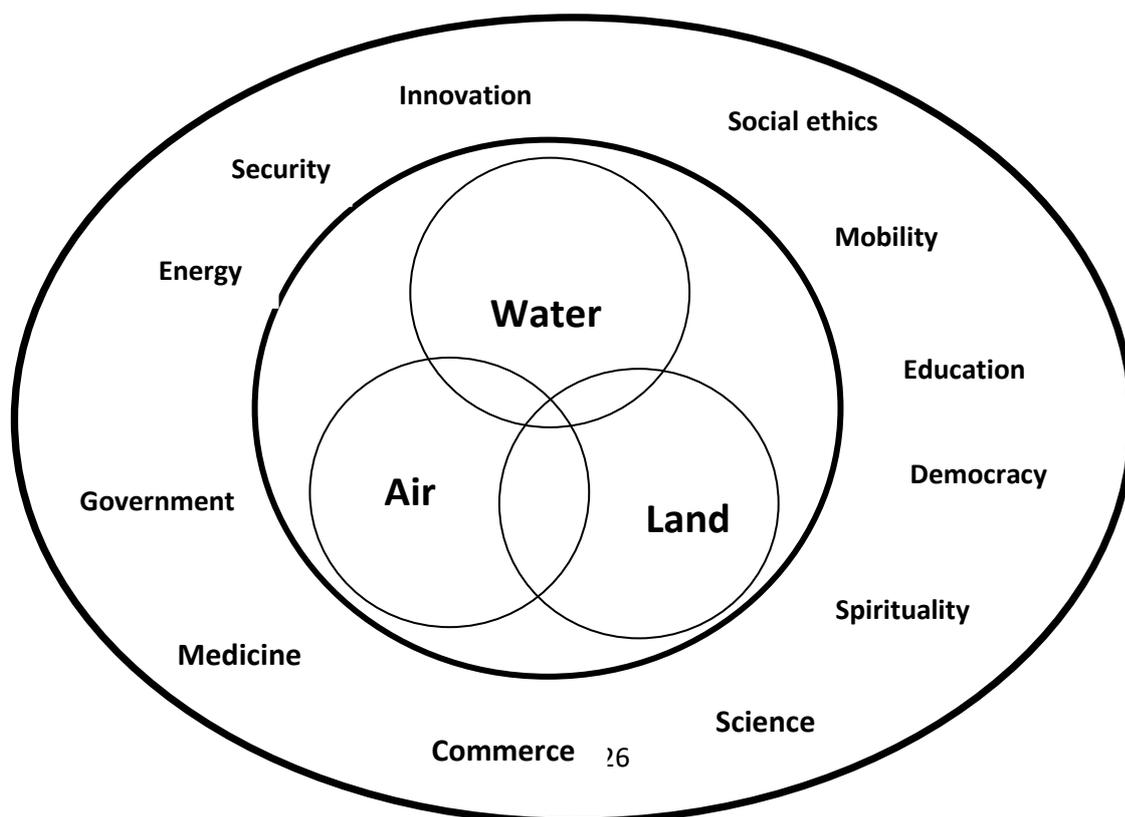
On a practical level, these actions make sense, however philosophically the Neohumanist movement insists on the mental shift for universal harmony. Ecological issues are not just about pollution and prevention mass extinction, it is about us finding our place in the cosmos.

Neohumanism advocates that one expands one's compassion to all creatures and thus takes the relationship between humanity and nature one step further. It embraces nature, the entire cosmos as inseparable of the self. By defining humans as integrally connected to, even one with the rest of the living and non-living environment, it raises ecology to a new level, that of universal ecology.



Neohumanism not only embraces universal ecology, it provides the means to experience this new definition of what a human being is through spiritual practice. In simple terms, "We must act to preserve nature for the welfare of humanity," must be replaced by "We must act to preserve nature because it is us." It is us and it heals and sustains us.

Thus, facing nature in its myriad expressions, makes us reflect on the spiritual force that underlies its wonder. Living with nature harmoniously pays us back a thousand times. In our current social context this protection, conservation and enhancement of the environment is complex with many factors weighing in.



When the drive is right, the inspiration and vision enhanced, we can ensure 'prama' or balance and the ability to deal with all the future issues of caring for the environment.

**Rocks and waters are words of God, and so are men.**

**We all flow from one fountain Soul.**

**All are expressions of one Love.**

**-John Muir, environmentalist**

## Sadvipras - Inspired Leadership

Leadership is essential to the well-being of a society and its care for nature. By and large, leaders reflect the values of the people. There may be individuals in a society who have outstanding leadership qualities, and whose personal values are very noble, but if the values and objectives of the people go in a different orientation, it is unlikely these noble persons will be given leadership roles. Instead, people may prefer a strongman, or a leader who is charismatic, or one who is professionally competent.

If superficial qualities of leadership appeal to voters, they will select inept and corrupt individuals to lead. But if the populace possesses high values and high aspirations, they will put into office leaders having noble character, a spirit of service, and great competency. They will select the best of their society to lead them. The people will love and trust such leaders. They will find that their real interests are being served, and they will feel inspiration to contribute their best to the collective welfare. In the Neohumanist ideology the ideal leader is the *sadvipra*, a deeply moral and spiritual personality who is wholly devoted to the collective welfare and established in strong Neohumanist values. *Sadvipras* do not identify with any particular group but with all living beings. Such *sadvipras* are ideally suited to inspire collective unity and social vitality.

*"Sadvipras are those whose all efforts are directed towards the attainment of Bliss. They are strong in morality and always ready to wage war against immoral activities. Those who strictly adhere to the principles of morality, are ensconced in sacrificing service and who are ready to wage war against immoralists are sadvipras."*

- P.R. Sarkar

Sadvipra [sat (Cosmic truth) + vipra (intellect); "one whose intellect is ensconced in truth"] means essentially a spiritual revolutionary, someone who is not merely a revolutionary in the physical and intellectual realms but in the spiritual realm as well. Furthermore, a sadvipra's approach to anything, be it farming, economics, politics or psychology is fundamentally rooted in spiritual realization..

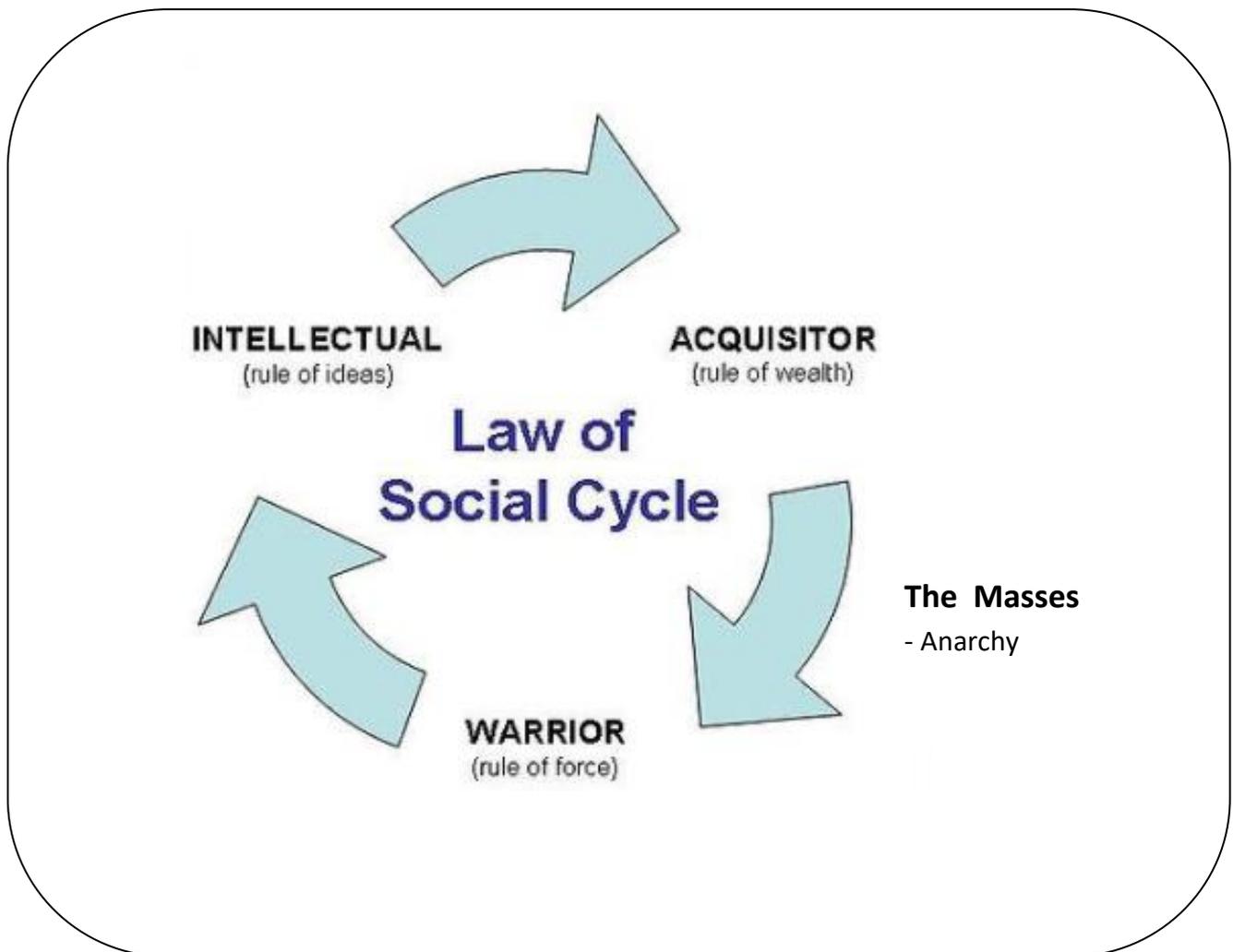
What then is the foremost characteristic by which people may recognize a sadvipra? It is none other than adamant, uncompromising morality. The clear, unequivocal, perseverant pursuit of justice without the slightest trace of any prejudice or vindictiveness is the defining characteristic of a sadvipra. In the words of Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar,

"Sadvipras will wage a ceaseless, pactless struggle against immorality and all sorts of divisive

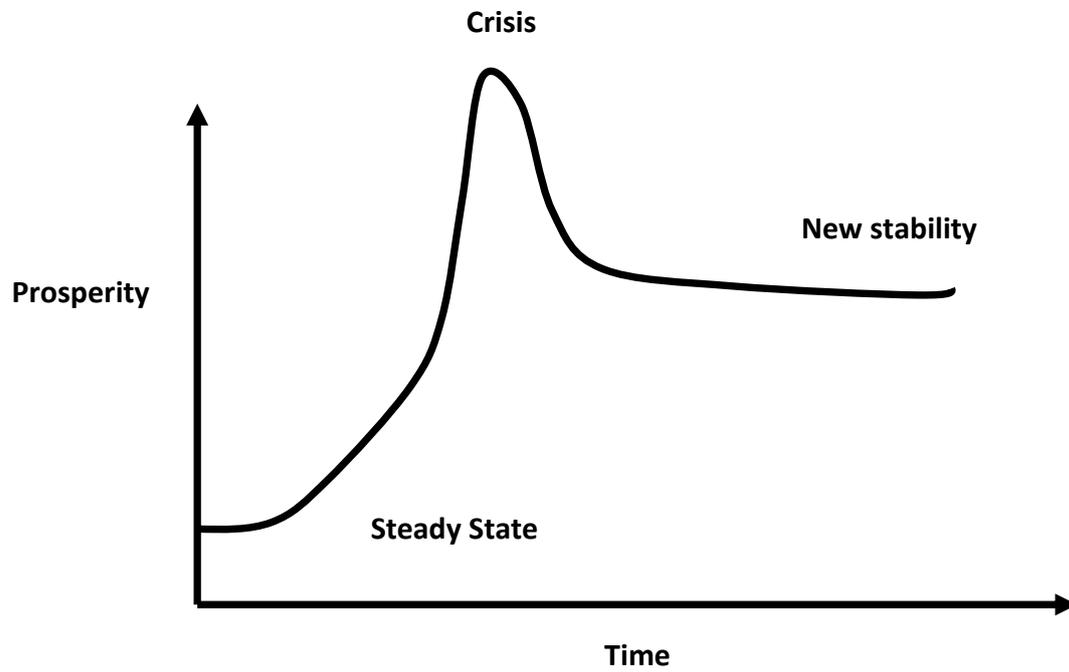
tendencies. Those who pose to be righteous (dharmic) but are timid with (regard to) the spirit of fight cannot be called sadvipras."

The Sadvipras main role is to guide society through times of crisis and change. The leadership of society shifts naturally from one section of society to another.

P.R. Sarkar describes four main social groups: the intellectual, the business minded, the military and the masses. When the people live without leadership, the military may come in to create greater social cohesion and structure. With the increasing complexity of society intellectuals (technocrats) influence social management, which in turn helps business people to prosper, till the masses rise due to excessive exploitation and the lack of morality.



The transitions are the critical times in society. The effort of the inspired leader (*sadvipra*) can help this transition in such a way that the outcome is most beneficial.



## Prama – A World in Balance

When the fisherman Pu Qie Zi “went hunting he only used frail bows and arrows. When fishing he used a silk thread, a needle as hook, a half grain of wheat as bait. This is how he conquered the big and strong with what is small and weak, and obtained the valuable with what is cheap. If the government could manage the state in this manner, it would be as easy as a turn of hand. He need not do anything else.”

The cultivation of the subtle, harmonizes the mental and physical. P.R. Sarkar calls this Prama, a trial of strength between all the aspects of life. A society which puts sufficient effort in the cultivation and nurture of practical spiritual values, will develop a balanced and harmonious condition that allows for sustainability and progressive development.

Balance is the supreme state of nature. A society that puts spiritual growth at its core will achieve balance in all other spheres of life. Neohumanism sees the advancement of critical spirituality at the core of the society as the key to world peace. The establishment of life-affirming and life-enhancing values and structures and conscious strategies to achieve harmony within oneself, within community and amongst nations will bring about balanced and sustainable peace. This is not a religion. It is the empowerment of our own humanity.



So what is to be done? The same thing enlightened/futures-thinking people have already been doing for decades if not centuries, working and teaching for a different future based on inner peace. This is The Path of the Neohumanist.

*“Neohumanism is a journey, not a destination. Neohumanism is an ideal that we as citizens and governments should constantly strive and work toward.”*



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