

Indian Education Philosophy
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Main Principles

Jainism encourages spiritual development through cultivation of one's own personal wisdom and reliance on self control through vows.

The triple gems of Jainism - **right vision or view** (Samyak Darshana), **right knowledge** (Samyak Gyana) and **right conduct** (Samyak Charitra) - provide the path for attaining liberation from the cycles of birth and death. When the soul sheds its Karmic bonds completely, it attains divine consciousness. Those who have attained Moksha are called Siddhas, while those attached to the world through this Karma are called Samasarin. Every soul has to follow the path, as explained by the Jinas and revived by the Tirthankaras to attain complete liberation or nirvana. Jains do not believe in a creator deity that could be responsible for the manifestation, creation, or maintenance of this universe. The universe is self regulated by the laws of nature. Jains believe that life exists in various forms in different parts of universe classification of various living organisms including Micro - organisms that live in Mud, air and water. All living organisms have soul and therefore, need to be interacted with without causing much harm.

Jains believe that to attain enlightenment and ultimately liberation from all Karmic bonding, one must practice the following ethical principles not only in thought, but also in words (speech) and action such a practice through life long work towards oneself is called as observing the Mahavrata ("Great Vows"). These vows are :

- **Ahimsa (Non-Violence)**

To cause "no harm" to living beings (on the lines of "live" and "let live".) The vow involves "Minimizing" intentional as well as unintentional harm to another living creature. There should even be no room for any thought conjuring injury to others let

alone talking about it or performing of such an act. Besides it also includes respecting the views others (non-absolutism and acceptance of multiple views.)

- **Satya (Truthfulness)**

To always speak of truth such that no harm is caused to others. A person who speaks truth becomes trust-worthy like a mother, venerable like a preceptor and dear to everyone like a Kinsman. Given that non-violence has priority, all other Principles yield to it whenever there is a conflict. For example in a situation where speaking truth would lead to violence it would be perfectly moral to remain silent (for you are neither being untrue, not causing violence by way of truth.

- **Asteya (Non-stealing)**

Not to take into possession, anything that is not willingly offered. It is the strict adherence to one's own possessions without deriving for the ones that belong to others. One should remain satisfied by whatever is earned through honest labour. Any attempt to squeeze material wealth from others and / or exploit the weak is considered theft. Some of the guidelines for this principle follow as under.

- Always give people faire value for their labour or product.
- Not to take into possession materials that are not earned or offered by others.
- Not to take materials into personal possession that have been dropped off or forgotten by others.
- Not to purchase materials as a result of being cheaper in value, if the resultant price reduction is a result of improper method of preparation. For instance, products made out of raw materials obtained by way of pyramid schemes, illegal businesses, stolen goods etc. should be strictly prohibited.

- **Brahmacharya (Celibacy)**

To exercise control over senses (including mind) fro indulgence. The basic intent of this vow is to conquer passion, thus preventing wastage of energy in the direction of pleasurable desires. During observance of this vow, the householder must not have a sensual relationship with anybody other than one's own spouse. Jain Monks ans nuns practice complete abstinence fro any sexual activity.

- **Aparigraha (Non-Possession, Non-Materialism)**

To observe detachment from people places and material things. Ownership of an object itself is not possessiveness, however attachment to the owned object is possessiveness. Fr householders, non-possessions is owning without attachment, because the notion of possession is illusory. The basic principle behind observance of this vow lies in the fact that life changes, what you own today may not be rightfully

yours tomorrow. Hence the householder is encouraged to discharge his or her duties to related people and objects as a trustee, without excessive attachment or aversion. For Monks and nuns, non-possession involves complete renunciation of property and human relations.

Jains hold that the universe and its natural law are eternal, and have always existed in time. However, the world constantly undergoes cyclical changes as per governing universal laws. The universe is occupied by both living beings (Jiva) and non-living objects (Ajiva). The Samsarin soul incarnates in various life forms during its journey over time. Human, sub-human (category catering to inclusion of animals, birds, insects and other forms of living creatures), super human (heavenly beings) and hellish - beings are the four forms of Samsarin soul incarnations. A living being's thoughts, expressions and actions, executed with intent of attachment and aversion, give rise to the accumulation of Karma. These influxes of Karma in turn contribute to determination of circumstances that would hold up in our future in the form of rewards or punishment. Jain scholars have explained in depth methods and techniques that are said to result in clearance of past accumulated Karmas as well as stopping the inflow of fresh Karmas. This is the path to salvation in Jainism.

A major characteristic of Jain belief is the emphasis on the consequences of not only physical but also mental behaviours. One's unconquered mind tainted with anger, pride (ego), deceit and greed joined with uncontrolled sense organs are powerful enemies of humans. Anger comes in the way of good human relations, pride and greed destroys good judgment. Jainism recommends conquering anger by forgiveness. Pride (ego) humility, deceit by straight-forwardness and greed by contentment.

The principles of non-violence seek to minimize Karmas that limit the capabilities of one's own soul. Jainism views every soul as worthy of respect because it has the potential to become Siddhah (Paramatma "highest soul"). Because all living beings possess a soul, great care and awareness is essential in one's actions. Jainism emphasizes the equality of all living beings possess a soul, great care and awareness is essential in one's actions. Jainism emphasizes the equality of all life advocating harmlessness towards all, whether great or small. This policy extends even to microscopic organisms.

Jainism acknowledges that every person has different capabilities and capacities to practice and therefore accepts different levels of compliance for ascetics and householders. The great vows are prescribed for Jain Monastics while limited vows are prescribed for householder. Householders are encouraged to practice five cardinal principles of non-violence truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-possessiveness with their current practical limitations. While Monks and nuns have to

observe them very strictly with consistent practice it is possible to overcome the limitations gradually, accelerating spiritual progress.

Non-violence in Thought and Practice

Jains hold the above five major vows at the center of their lives. These, vows can not be fully implemented without the acceptance of a Philosophy of non-absolution. Anekantavada ("Multiple points of view") is a foundation of Jain Philosophy. This Philosophy allows the Jains to accept the truth in other Philosophies from their perspective and thus inculcating a tolerance for other view points. Jain scholars have devised methods to view both Physical objects and abstract ideas from different perspectives systematically. This is the application of non-violence in the sphere of thought. It is a Jain Philosophical stand point just as there is the Advaitic stand point of Sankara and the stand point of the "Middle Way" of the Buddhists.

This search to view things from different angles leads to understanding and toleration of different and even conflicting views. When this happens prejudices subside and a tendency to accommodate increases.

The doctrine of Anekanta is therefore a unique experiment of non-violence at the root.

A derivation of this principle is the doctrine of Syadvada that highlights every model relative to its view point. It is a matter of our daily experience that the same object that gives pleasure to us under certain circumstances becomes boring under different situations. Nonetheless, relative truth is useful, as is a stepping - stone to the ultimate realization and understanding of reality. The doctrine of Syadvada is based on the premise that every proposition is only relatively true. It all depends on the particular aspect from which we approach that proposition, Jains, therefore, developed logic that encompasses seven-fold predication, so as to assist in the construction of proper judgment about any proposition.

Syadvada provides Jains with a systematic methodology to explore the real nature of reality and consider the problem in a non-violent way from different perspectives. This process ensures that each statement is expressed from seven different conditional and relative view points or propositions, and thus it is known as theory of conditional predication, these seven propositions are described as follows:

1. Syad - asti - "in some ways it is."
2. Syad - nasti - "in some ways it is not."
3. Syad - asti - nasti - "in some ways it is and it is not."
4. Syad - asti - avaktavya - "in some ways it is and it is indescribable."
5. Syad - nasti - avaktavya - "in some ways it is not and it is indescribable."

6. Syad - asti - nasti - avaktavya - in some ways it is, it is not and it is indescribable."

7. Syad - avaktavya - in some ways it is indescribable."

For example, a tree could be stationery with respect to an observer on earth, however it will be viewed as moving along with planet earth foran observer in space.

Jains are very welcoming and friendly toward faiths and often help with interfaith functions. Several non-Jain temples in India are administered by Jains. A palpable presence in Indian culture. Jains have contributed to Indian Philosophy, art, architecture and science.