

YOGIC PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY

Now we'll run through the yogic principles of morality. They're important to follow in day-to-day life, especially if you're meditating. Our conscience is disturbed if we do something wrong, and that disturbs our peace of mind, making it difficult to concentrate. So following the principles of morality is essential for meditation as well as a harmonious and peaceful society.

The principles are not hard-and-fast rules - they're flexible, according to the circumstance. Each situation is unique. Use your conscience to decide the best thing to do.

- * Non-harm in thought, word and action. This means maintaining the least harm in any given situation. It's the intention that's important here. Non-harm does not exclude the possibility of using physical force to defend oneself or others if necessary.
- * Benevolent truthfulness. This is the use of mind and words in the spirit of welfare. The emphasis is on "helpful" truthfulness (as opposed to unhelpful truthfulness!). Buddha said the first priority for words is that they should be helpful to others. The second priority is that they should be true. And the third priority is that they should be sweet-sounding. Note that sweet-sounding comes in only third!
- * Non-stealing. Not to take what belongs to others without their permission. It also means not to deprive others of what you owe them. One must not steal either physically or mentally. The thought of stealing is also contrary to morality as the mind is crudifying itself through such thoughts.
- * Universal thinking. To consider everything as an expression of the Cosmic Consciousness. By doing this regularly, the thought that we are all part of the same Cosmic family will gradually increase in the mind, and with it the feeling of family love and security.
- * Simple living. Not to accumulate more than you need for a reasonable standard of living. This has personal consequences as well as social. We can never be satisfied with what we have unless we stop accumulating things unnecessarily. Also, the physical wealth of this world is limited, but there IS enough to go around if nobody hoards anything that they don't need. By accumulating excessive physical wealth you would be depriving others of their necessities.
- * Purity of mind and cleanliness of body. To keep the body clean not only means externally. There's no use in washing your car on the outside only if the inside is like a pigsty! Internal cleanliness depends on what we eat, and other things we ingest.
- * Mental ease and contentment. Living simply is essential for peace of mind. Only when the mind is at ease is it possible to be satisfied with your life, and to infuse others with your cheerfulness and enthusiasm.
- * Social service. This means to help others in need without expecting anything in return. There is a flow of love within us that we can only express when we give willingly and selflessly to others. Note that it means to others that need it. Giving money to a rich man is not service!
- * Inspirational reading. To read uplifting books, understanding their underlying meaning. This is best done after meditation, when the mind is most receptive to deep ideas and higher thinking.
- * Spiritual ideation or goal. To feel one with the Cosmic Consciousness. This gives the realization that you are one with the Infinite Consciousness, and this realization in turn gives you the strength to do great things in your life!

Continue your meditation to experience that!