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MAD- 2020
Day – 24
ETHICS

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Question:

Where the roots of private virtue are diseased, the fruit of public probity cannot but be corrupt. Elaborate.

Answer:

Define Virtue:

Virtue is moral excellence.

Aristotle on Virtues

- **Aristotle**, with whom Virtue Ethics is largely identified, categorized the virtues as **moral virtues and intellectual virtues.**
- **Moral virtues** are dispositions or habits of living that deal with the whole person. For example, prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance are moral virtues.
- **Intellectual virtues** are habits of thinking like understanding the nature of things, judging the truth of matters, reasoning from a truth known to a truth that is not known.

How does a person develop virtues?

- Virtues are developed through learning and through practice.
- As the ancient philosopher Aristotle suggested, a person can improve his or her character by practicing self-discipline, while a good character can be corrupted by repeated self-indulgence.

Application of Virtues possed in Private life to Public Life:

Initial Application:

PHASE - 1

Let us divide the idea of Virtue from private to public life into 3 stages:

1. Initial Stage (Private Virtue)
2. Intermediate State (The stage of Transformation)
3. Final State (Virtue @ Public Probity)

We know that Virtues are developed through learning and through practice.

- So the idea adapted by the person in Intermediate state decides the implementation of Virtue in the public life. If the person decides to learn and practice good virtues or is trained for the same in the intermediate stage; the end result would always be good virtues in Public Life or if the transformation does not take place; then the idea of public probity will always be stale.

Example:

- A person who gets selected in paramilitary forces; is trained to have certain qualities irrespective of his roots; therefore he is transformed completely.

Chance at redemption:

PHASE – 2

Let us add another stage to one's life:

1. **Chance at redemption (Due to experiences gained)**
    - **Man learns from his experiences**. In case man does not change in the intermediate state; But due to certain experiences decides to change; then public probity will eventually be clean or else it will be corrupt.

Example:

- An IAS **officer was fined after a certain act but decides to change** ways after the punishment has chances at redemption and eventually at better public probity.

Conclusion:

- Therefore; **even though the roots of private virtue are diseased, Emotional intelligence along with practicality can make sure that the fruit of public probity might not be corrupt all the time**.