

Chapter 9 : Understanding Harmony within ‘I’

Introduction

The pursuit of harmony within oneself is foundational to leading a fulfilling and peaceful life. In this context, the ‘I’ refers to the human self — the conscious entity that thinks, feels, decides, and experiences. Understanding harmony within ‘I’ is a step toward achieving personal well-being, clarity in thoughts, emotional stability, and responsible actions. This understanding becomes especially important for students and professionals in technical fields like engineering, as it directly affects how one perceives life, relates with others, and makes ethical decisions in society.

This chapter explores the structure, activities, and needs of the ‘I’, and how recognizing and aligning these elements brings internal harmony.

2.1 The Human Being: Coexistence of ‘I’ and the Body

The human being is a **coexistence of two distinct realities**:

- **‘I’ (Self)**: The conscious entity — the one that knows, feels, imagines, and decides.
- **Body**: The physical aspect — the biological system through which the ‘I’ expresses itself.

In day-to-day life, we often confuse the two, identifying ourselves only with the body. But a deeper understanding reveals that while the body requires physical things like food and exercise, the ‘I’ has a different set of needs and functions.

2.2 Activities of ‘I’

The ‘I’ performs several **continuous and conscious activities**, which can be grouped into the following categories:

1. *Desire (Ichchha)*

- We constantly desire — happiness, success, comfort, respect, etc.
- Desires arise from our assumptions, past experiences, and imagination.

2. *Thought (Vichar)*

- We evaluate, judge, and make sense of our desires and surroundings through thoughts.
- Thinking helps analyze and plan actions.

3. *Expectation (Anubhav) / Feeling*

- Based on desire and thought, we form expectations or feelings.
- These shape our emotional response — like love, trust, anger, or fear.

Key Insight: These activities happen *within the 'I'* and are continuous, unlike bodily activities which are temporary or physical.

2.3 Needs of 'I' vs. Needs of the Body

Aspect	'I' (Self)	Body
Type of Needs	Non-material (e.g., happiness, respect)	Physical (e.g., food, clothes)
Nature	Continuous	Temporary
Fulfilment Means	Right understanding, relationships	Physical resources

Understanding this distinction allows individuals to prioritize **right knowledge and harmonious relationships** rather than merely physical comfort.

2.4 Understanding Harmony within 'I'

Harmony within 'I' means that our desires, thoughts, and expectations are in **alignment** and **clarity**.

Characteristics of Harmony within 'I':

- **Clarity in desires** – knowing what we truly want and why.
- **Rational thought process** – evaluating desires based on right understanding.
- **Appropriate feelings** – consistent and fulfilling emotional responses.

Signs of Disharmony:

- Confusion, inner conflict, anxiety, frustration.
- Example: Wanting a luxurious life without clarity about purpose or relationships leads to stress.

Example of Internal Disharmony:

A student desires to be successful (Desire), but thinks cheating will help (Thought), yet feels guilty (Expectation/Feeling). This reflects a misalignment between the three activities.

2.5 Role of Right Understanding in Harmony

Right understanding brings coherence between:

- What we desire.
- What we think is right.
- How we feel and act.

This results in:

- Inner peace.

- Consistent decision-making.
- Freedom from unnecessary conflicts.

Without right understanding, we tend to copy others, chase illusions, or act out of fear and comparison.

2.6 Continuity of ‘I’ and Temporariness of the Body

- The ‘I’ is continuous — we are aware, think, and feel without break.
- The body has biological cycles — sleep, hunger, illness — and eventually dies.

Understanding this helps prioritize **lifelong values** like happiness, trust, and learning over **short-term pleasures**.

2.7 Natural Acceptance: A Tool for Inner Harmony

Natural acceptance is the innate ability of the ‘I’ to recognize what is right for it — without external influence.

For example:

- We naturally accept truth over lies.
- We prefer love over hatred.

By being aware of our **natural acceptance**, we can:

- Resolve internal conflicts.
 - Avoid confusion between right and wrong.
 - Make peaceful and fulfilling decisions.
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Summary

Understanding harmony within ‘I’ is crucial for self-awareness and well-being. The ‘I’ or self performs continuous activities — desire, thought, and expectation — which must be aligned through right understanding. Unlike the temporary needs of the body, the ‘I’ has continuous needs like happiness and understanding, which can only be fulfilled through clarity and internal coherence. Disharmony within the self causes confusion, frustration, and poor decision-making. By aligning our desires, thoughts, and feelings with natural acceptance, we can achieve harmony, leading to a more purposeful and joyful life.
