

Module 4: Harmony in Nature and Existence (Coexistence)

Topic: Existence as Co-existence of Mutually Interacting Units

Introduction

The concept of *existence as co-existence* lies at the heart of a holistic understanding of reality, life, and the universe. In the context of *Human Values* and *Universal Human Order*, this topic helps learners recognize that the entire existence is not a chaotic or random collection of elements but an **interconnected, harmonious system** of **mutually interacting units**. This understanding shifts our world view from material-centric or competition-centric to **relation-centric and coexistence-centric** living, which is essential for sustainable peace and universal human welfare.

Detailed Explanation

1. Understanding Existence

Existence refers to *everything that exists*, the totality of reality, including nature, living beings, physical entities, and human-made systems. In the course of Human Values, it is often referred to as ‘**unit in existence**’, meaning each entity has its own identity and role.

2. Units in Existence

Existence is made up of various **units**, which can be broadly classified as:

- **Material Units** (Inanimate): e.g., air, water, soil, metals, planets These units exhibit *self-organization* but not self-awareness.
- **Conscious Units** (Animate): e.g., plants, animals, human beings These units exhibit *both self-organization and self-awareness* (in varying degrees).

Each unit is unique but also **interconnected**, forming a **web of relationships** necessary for survival and evolution.

3. Co-existence – The Core Principle

Co-existence means **living or existing together in mutual harmony, supporting and being supported**, rather than dominating or exploiting. This principle reveals that:

- No unit exists independently.
- All units **exist in a relationship** with one another.

- These relationships are **mutually enriching and fulfilling** when understood and respected.

Examples of Co-existence:

- **Plants and Animals:** Plants release oxygen that animals need, while animals exhale carbon dioxide that plants use. This exchange maintains atmospheric balance.
- **Sun and Earth:** The Sun provides energy, the Earth rotates and revolves to maintain the environment conducive to life.
- **Human and Nature:** Nature provides resources like food, water, and shelter, while humans are meant to use these responsibly and reciprocate care.

4. Interaction Between Units

Each unit in existence **interacts** with other units in one or more of the following ways:

| Type of Unit | Interaction Type | Example |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Material ↔ Material | Physico-chemical interaction | Water evaporating into vapor |
| Material ↔ Conscious | Nutrient exchange | Soil nourishing plants |
| Conscious ↔ Conscious | Communication, relationship | Human interactions, animal behavior |
| Human ↔ Nature | Responsible usage and care | Sustainable farming, afforestation |

These interactions are **mutual**, meaning every action has a corresponding reaction in the ecosystem or in the societal environment.

5. The Nature of Relationship

All units of existence are **related** to each other. These relationships are not superficial but **intrinsic** and **existential**.

Key Features:

- **Mutual Fulfillment:** All relationships are meant for mutual growth and enrichment, not exploitation.
- **Naturally Regulated:** Natural processes (photosynthesis, water cycle, reproduction) operate without human interference.
- **Holistic System:** The universe operates as a holistic, self-organizing system—every unit supports others.

6. Human Misunderstanding and Its Impact

When humans fail to understand this principle of coexistence:

- They exploit nature and other beings.
- Prioritize short-term gains over long-term harmony.
- Cause environmental degradation, climate crisis, social injustice, and mental unrest.

But when coexistence is understood:

- We move toward sustainability, balance, peace, and true prosperity.
 - Develop relationships of mutual trust, care, and respect.
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7. Universal Human Order and Coexistence

This concept is foundational to the vision of a **Universal Human Order (Sarvabhauma Vyavastha)**—a world where:

- Humans live with mutual prosperity.
 - Nature is protected and respected.
 - Systems are ethical, sustainable, and inclusive.
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Summary

- **Existence is Co-existence** of all units—both material and conscious.
 - Every unit **interacts with** and **supports** other units in natural harmony.
 - **Nothing exists in isolation**; everything is interrelated.
 - Misunderstanding coexistence leads to **conflict, exploitation, and destruction**.
 - Understanding coexistence promotes **peace, sustainability, and universal harmony**.
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Key Takeaways

- The universe is an interconnected system of **mutually interacting units**.
 - **Co-existence** is a natural and fundamental truth of reality.
 - Humans must align their actions with the principle of **mutual harmony** to ensure sustainable living.
 - This understanding leads to a **value-based life**, rooted in **relationship and responsibility**.
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