SixEssentialsForBlissfulLiving.

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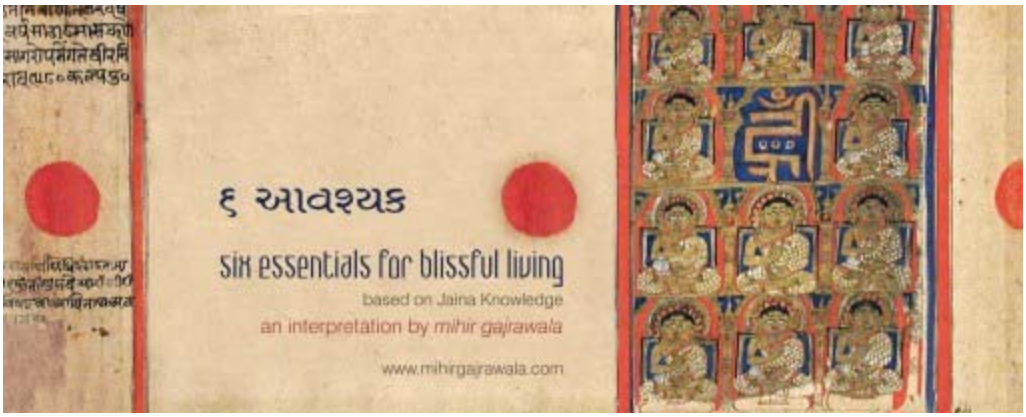

SixEssentialsforBlissfulLiving

BasedonJainaKnowledge
AninterpretationbyMihirGajrawala

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Note:ManyofthenounsandverbsusedinSanskrit,PrakritandArdhmagdhidonothavesynonymsinEnglish.Jaina knowledgedocumentsexistsintheabovethreelanguages.HistoriansandTranslators(ofEnglishlanguage)overc enturieshavecreatedcertainsynonyms,whichaspermyunderstandingaremisguiding.Foreg.*Vrat*ismadesynon ymouswithfastingand*Maya*withmagicorallure.Similarly*Yoga*istodayatermwhichmeansIndianexercisesyste m.Therecouldbeseveralsuchexamples.Totrulyunderstandthiswordsalotofefforthastobeputinunderstandingt hecontextoftheIndianknowledgebase.HoweverIwouldn'tsaythesameforvernaculartranslationworks.

InmypieceIhavetriednottoproduceatranslation.Insteadtheattemptistosharethecruxofthesubjectinatotallynew context.WhereverrequiredIhavemadeuseoftheoriginalwords.

Eachoneofusisaspiringtobecontended.Inotherwordseachonewantsapermanentstateofhappiness.Puttingitsi mplyweallaspiretobeblissful.Thecurrentorderofworldhasprescribedusacertainwayofliving,acertainsetofactiv itiestobedoneatspecifictimesofourlives.Weallhavesubscribedtothisprescriptionofschooling,economicpursuit s,materialachievements,wealthaccumulationetc.Ourcommonsenseisenoughtotellusthatthisprescriptionisn otworking.Thanwhatcouldbethewaytoblissfulliving?Howdoesoneachieveapermanentstateofbliss?

Jainaknowledgehas,manyeonsback,discoveredSIXessentialactivitiesorritualswhichifexecutedonregularba siswithhonestyandbeliefhasthepotentialtoleadeachseekertoablissfulstateofbeing.Howeversuchasuggestio nhasalwaysgarneredstiffresistanceandithaspeakedinthecurrentera.Beforegettingontothemainsubjectletust akeasmalldigressionhere.

Thetwomainargumentsinsupportofresistanceare:1)thefeelingthat'rituals'areuselessand2)theimportanceoft heoryoverpractice,whenitcomestothedomainoftraditionalwisdom.

Thesecanbearguedagainstasfollows:Wefailtounderstandthatwhateverwearedoingtoday,forourlivingisalsoa ritual.ARitualisnotaboutareligiouspractice,itisaboutacertainsetofprescribedactivitiestobedoneinacertainspe cificmanner.

Secondly'Knowing'perseisnotthepath,but'conduct'acquiredfrom'knowing'isthepathtobliss!Inotherwordsitisn otknowledge,buttheconductbasedonthatknowledgethatleadstoblissfulexistence!Theessenceofallknowledg

eisconductandessenceofallconductisliberation.Knowledgeacquiredwithoutintentforgoodconductisignorance andanyformofconductexecutedwithouttheintentofliberationisanillusion.Knowledgethatdoesnotleadtorightconductandconductthatdoesnotleadtopathofliberationarerenderedfruitlessandmeaningless,inthepursuitofblissfulliving.
Inotherwordsifonepracticescertainprescribedconduct,itwouldleadtheseekertothefruitsthatarelinkedwiththat conduct.
Simplyput,aritualisknowledgeinaction.

Thisformsthebaseforallthe prescribedactivitiesthataseekermustsubscribetoo.Forallthosedemandinganexplanationforexistenceofritualsshouldconsidertheabove.

Nowletuscomebacktothepoint.

TheactivitiesorritualswhichhavethepotentialtoleadaseekertoablissfulstateofbeingaretheslXEssentials.Beforewemovefurtherletusdefine‘Blissfulstate’.Fromaspiritualperspectiveweareaimingat‘liberation’or‘moksha’.Fromamoreworldlyperspectivewemean**Healthybody,healthymind,healthyrelationsandhealthycareer**,acombinationofthesecanbeconsideredasablissfulstateofbeing.Sotheessentialsareawaytoattainandsustainthe abovementionedfourstates.

InSanskrittheseessentialsarereferredas‘shadavashyak’(षडावश्यक).Shad(षड)meansSIXandavashyak(आवश्यक)meansessentialrequirements.Thesixessentialsprescribedare:

1. **Samayik–Toexperienceequanimity**
2. **Chauvisathao–Tocultivatehigheraspirations**
3. **Vandana–Todevelopgratitude**
4. **Pratikramana–Tore-calibratetheself**
5. **Kayotsarga–Totreatatransgressedmind**
6. **Pratyakhyan–Todevelopdiscipline**

Thesesixessentialsaresameforboththemonks(whohaverenouncedworldlylife)andthecommoner.Thelifestyle ofamonkandacommonerisextremelydifferent,yettheSIXEssentialsaresaidtobenefitbothofthem.

Letusunderstandonemorefactbeforemovingahead.Anyacthasthreeparts,1)object/goal2)doerand3)method. Certaineligibilityofallthethreeisnecessaryforthesuccessfulaccomplishmentofanyact.Weshalltryandunderstandeachofthesixessentialswithrespecttoitsobjectiveanditsmethod.Thefocusofthisarticleisthe‘ritual’andhence weshallnotspendmuchtimeontheeligibilityofthedoer.Thoughitisofequalimportanceweshallnotbeabletotouch uponithere.

TheSixEssentials

1.**Samayik**
Objective:theinstallationofthedoctrine‘IambetterthannoneandIamlessertonone’ontheseekersmind.

Therootofallourconflictsis‘fear’and‘insecurity’.Fearexistsinmindasitisconditionedtobelieveincomparisons.Comparisonsleadtofeelingsofsuperiorityorinferiority.Unlessoneisfreedofthesecomplexesitisimpossibletofindsuccessinthejourneytodiscoverbliss.

Inmanagementcontext,unlessonegainsequanimityafairandobjectiveanalysisofworkdoneisimpossible.Inanorganizationtherearеonlyafewwhoareeligibleforobjectiveanalysis.

Inotherwordstobeinastateofanewbornchildistheobjectiveofthisact.Allthetools,techniques,ritualsandactivities thatcouldhelptheeffortofbeinginthisstateare‘Samayik’.Equanimityisthetruenatureofeverybeing;itremainshiddeninunawarenessandignorance.‘Samayik’istheritualormethodortechniquetodiscoverthisnatureofself.

समत्वंयोगउच्यते(bhavadgita,2-48)
योग:कर्मसु–कौशलम्(bhagvadgita,2-50)

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोध:(patanjaliyogsutra,1-2)

चतुर्वेगग्रनिर्मेक्षोयोगस्तस्यचकारणम्।
ग्यान–श्रद्धां–चरित्ररूपम्रत्नत्रयचस:।।(Yogshastra,1–15)

ManywillfinditradicalwhenIsay‘Samayik’isanequivalentof‘Yoga’.ToprovethepointIhavequotedthreesages/scholarswhoareundisputedasfarastheirabilityofcomprehensionisconcerned.SageVedVyasainBhagvadGitahasdescribed‘Yoga’asequanimityanddeftnessofaction;SagePatanjali,helmedasfatherof‘Yoga’hasdescribedcessationoftheperturbationsofthemindas‘Yoga’;SageHemchandracharyainhiswork‘Yogashastra’hasdescribed‘Yoga’asthetechniquetoattain‘moksha’orLiberation.Allthesedefinitionsof‘Yoga’arecomparabletotheconceptof‘Samayik’.Toattainliberation,tolearnrightconduct,todevelopequanimity,tofreemindfrompresenceofconflictsanddevelopstillness–bothSamayikandYogahavepracticallysameresults,whichistransformingthemindofthedoer.

Yogahasfourtypes:MantraYoga,LayaYoga,RajaYogaandHathyoga.‘Samayik’fallsunderthe‘Rajayog’categorywhichfocusesonmindbywayofself-discipline.

Tosumitup‘Samayik’isaformofYogacalled‘RajaYoga’;thepracticalformof‘RajaYoga’is‘Samayik’

2.**Chauvisathao**
Objective:Tocultivateandinstallaspirationsofhigherdegrees.

Menhavethetendencytobecomewhattheybelievein.Soitisimportanttohaverightbeliefs.Ifforsomeone,asmallhilltopistheonlypeaktovisit,s/hewillonlyreachtillthere,butifsomeoneknowsabouttheexistenceofMt.Everest,thehighestpeak,thans/hemightstrivetoreachthere.Thismeansthatthequalityofone’spursuitdependsonthequalityofone’saspirations.Giventhis,eachoneshouldunderstandandimbibethehighestpossibleaspirationsonone’smind.

Thisleadsustotheinquirythatwhatisthe‘peak’ofblissfulliving?Thepeakofblissfullivingarethe24Tirtankaras,whohadachievedthemostanyindividualcanevercomprehend.Henceknowingaboutthem,andacceptingthemaspeakofexistenceisthesecondessentialtostrivefor.A*Tirthankar*isabeingwhohasbecome‘Arihant’–devoidofallconflicts.Therecannotbeahigherstateofbeingthanthis.Eachofthe24Tirthankarashaveexhibited12distinctqualities.‘Chauvisathao’isthetechniquetoknowanddevelopthosequalitieswithinoneself.

IwouldheretakeanotherdigressiontoexplainabasictenetofJainaKnowledge.InJainaknowledgethereisno‘creator’.ItbelievesthatuniversewAs,isandwillremain.InthemostancientofJainTextsonewouldfindreferencetothetem‘Pudgal’.ItismentionedthatheUniverseisa‘Pudgal';‘Pudgal’meansthatwhichiscreatedanddestroyedsimultaneously.Today,inmodernscience,thetwentyfirstcenturydescriptionofvacuumstatesthatinavacuumstatewherethereissupposedtobenothing,thereisaconstanteruptionofparticlesanddestructionofparticles.CreationandDestructionarehappeningatthesametimeinavacuumstate.Alltheseyearswebelievedthatavacuummeanstotalnothingness;thatnothinghappensthere.Butnowweknowavacuumstateisphenomenallydynamic.Creationanddestructionishappeningatthesametime.ModernScienceissayingthattoday.ThisiswhatJainaKnowledgehasbeensayingsincethousandsofyearsago.Scientistsnowtalkaboutblackhole–somethingwhichisnothingyetpowerful.ThisfundamentalofphysicsisalreadydiscoveredinthemeaningofPudgal’.Thereisnocreationandhencenocreator.InJainaSchoolitisnotabout‘being’itisabout‘becoming’.Andhenceth eentirefocusshiftsfrom‘creator’tothe‘doer’.Inthatperspectiveitisanatheist’sreligion.InJainschool‘Dharma’isnottheend,itisameanstoanend;theendisbecomingone’sownself,discoveringone’struenature,totallyfreeofallinfluencesandimpressions.TheNavkarmantraconsideredamongthemostpowerfulsoundinuniversenevertalksaboutanyindividual.Itonlytalksaboutqualitiesandstatesofbeing.SameisappliedinvarioussuggestionsfromJainaKnowledge.

ManythinkthatChauvisanthao’isaboutworshipingtheTirthankaras.Thatisagravemisunderstanding.Theentirefocusofthisessentialistomemorizethequalitiesthatmakea‘Tirthankara.ASdiscussedaboveiftherealityisnotabout‘beingsomeone’but‘becomingsomeone’,thepursuitistobemore,tobedeepandtobeconstantlyturningintosomethingmoreandmore.Wecanbemoreonlywhenwedesiremore,tobeatthepeak.aTirthankaristhepeark,andifthequalitiesof24Tirthankarasarerememberedregularlyitcanhaveunfathomableimpactontheaspirationsofaseekerwhicheventuallywouldpositivelyimpactthequalityoflifeoftheseeker.Sciencehasprovedthathabitualdoingofanyacthasaneffectonthemindandbeliefsystem.

‘Chauvisathao’istheritualtodothesame.

3.**Vandana**
Objective:Todevelopgratitudetowardslearnedbeings.

Itisnotpossibletotravelthepathofblisswithouttheguidanceofa‘guru’.Agurumeans‘dispellerofdarkness’.Inoursocietytherareareindividualswhohavededicatedtheirbeingtoknowledgeandattainmentoftheultimatestateofliberation.Theseindividualshavegivenuponthe worldlychoressothattheyfocusalltheirenergiesinthesinglepursuitofliberation.Wecallthemmonksor‘sadhu’and‘sadhvi’.Thequalitiesofrightknowledge,rightperception,rightconductandpenancearewhatdefineamonk.Thepracticalformofitcanbeseenwhenanindividualexhibitsacoherencebetweenhis/herdeeds,wordsandactions.

Respectingandsurrendertosuchamonkisthefirststeptopathofbliss.Gratitudeisthegreatestqualityofaseeker,and‘Vandana’exploresthisqualityofabeing.

Intoday’sworld,weaskchildrentocelebrateTeachersDay.Weaskthemtodevelopgratitudefortheirteacherswhoimpartknowledgetothem.Sameappliesforaseekerwhoissetonahigherpursuitofblissfulliving.

‘Vandan’or‘Bowing’isanactwhichpreparesaseekerforsurrender.Surrendermeansabsenceofstruggle,justfalling.Suchasurrendercanexponentiallyopenthereceptivityoftheseekerandmakehimimbibethehigherqualities.

Vandanaistheritualforthesame.

4.**Pratikramana**
Objective:Torecalibratetheselfthroughintrospectionandretrospection.

Influencedbyindifference(towardsself)thesoulgetsdisplaced,themovementofsoulfromitsdisplacedpositiontoitsoriginalpositionistermedas‘pratikramana’injainscience.Insimpletermstheprocessofre-calibratingaselfindulgedindigressionsortheprocessofbringingtheselfbacktoselfiscalled‘pratikramana’.

Manyofusworkingincorporateenvironmentwouldhavestruggledwithfrustration,resultingoutofone’sinabilityto attainone’sgoals.Thishappensbecauseineverydayactivitieswelosesightofourgoals.Worseiswhenmanyofushavenogoals.Suchaselfremainslostanddissatisfied,irrespectiveofone’spotentialandability.ManagementGurushaveformedatheorythateverycompanyandeveryindividualshouldhavetheirpersonalVisionandMissionstatement,whichontimelybasisshouldbere-lookedat,sothatonedoesn’tlosesightofwhereoneisheading.

Fromotherperspective,themainreasonforthisdisplacementistoomuchfocuson‘future’or‘tomorrow’.Thegoalliesinthefutureandhenceweremainfocusedonfuture,forgettingthatlearningliesinthepast.Learninghappensfromknowingwhathappenedbefore,whathappenedyesterday.Unlessthisisdone,onecannotgainexperience.Onejustblindlykeepsondoing.Andinallpossibilitywillkeeponfallinginthesamepuddleeveryday,becauseonehasforgottentoretrospect,onehasforgottentointrospect,tolookwithin!

Suchaneffortofintrospectionandretrospectionwhendoneinacertaindisciplinedmannerforlife’sobjectiveofattaining blissiscalled‘Pratikramana’.

5.**Kayotsarga**
Objective:treatingatransgressedmind

Inoureverydayroutineswearefocusedonlyonourphysicalbeing.Jainknowledgesaysthatstateofblisscanbeattainedoncethefocusshiftsfrommattertonon-matter.Selfismadeupofboththematterandnon-matter;non-matteristrappedwithinthematterthatishowaphysicalbeingisconstructed.Matterisknownas‘ajiva’andnon-matteristermedas‘jiva’.‘Ajiva’isthatwhichwilldieand‘Jiva’isthatwhichcannotdie,itisinfinite.

KayotsargawordiscombinationofKaya(body)+utsarga(upwardmovement,arising),meaningtheacttoexperiencetheselfbeyondthephysicalboundaries.Ifoneisabletoestablishthisbeliefthats/heismorethanthisbody,acompletelynewsetofpossibilitieswouldemerge.

Continuingfromaboveexampleoffrustrationfromcorporatelife,manytimesevenafterhavingavisionormissionstatement,evenafterregularlyre-lookingatit,onefindsunabletoseeanydirection.Thisisduetoextremenegativehabitualpatternsdevelopedwhichhurttheindividual’sabilityandcapacity.ThemodernManagementguru’shavenogreatsolutionforsuchastate.Theonlysolutionofferedare‘takingabreak’,‘asabbatical’or‘switchyourjob’kindofnon-descriptacts.

Howeverifoneisfocusedonattainingablissfulstateoflivingsuchawanderingsoulisofferedatechniquetoovercomesuchsevereperturbations.

Theritualtodothesameistermed‘Kayotsarga’;whereinoneismadetoexperiencethenon-physicalpartofself.Simplyputitisadeeperformofmeditation.

6.**Pratyakhyan**
Objective:Todevelopdiscipline

Thepathtoblissisthepathtogradually‘notdo’.Slowlyandsilentlyastheseekerstartsrealizingthefruitlessnessofhisactions,heshouldstartto‘notdo’thoseactions.Thereareinnumerableactionsthataselfperforms.Andthisrealizationmayhappenoveracertainbreadthoftime.Giventhisitisimportanttobuildtomorrowupontoday’srealization.Themethodtodothisisbywaytotakingvowsofselfcontrol.

Eveninmoderncorporatecontext,amanagementexecutiveisaskedtokeepalogofhis/herlearning’sandbuildhis/herfuturestrategiesbasedonthoselearning’s.Sameifappliedtospiritualcontextcantakeoneaheadinhis/herpathtobliss.

‘Pratyakhyan’istheritualtobuildself-control.Noneoftheessentialswouldgivebenefitunlessdisciplineandselfcontrolispracticed.Therearesystematictoolsprovidedtohelponedevelopsuchdiscipline.
Ihaven’tgoneintothedetailsoftheproceduresofeachritual.Asdiscussedaboveforsuccessfulaccomplishmentofanyact–eligibilityoftheobjective,thedoerandthemethod–allthreeareimportant.Inthispiecewehaveattemptedtounderstandtheobjectiveandknowtheconceptbehindthemethod.Wearenottouchingthedetailsofmethodnorarewediscussingtheeligibilityofthedoer.

Manywillhavequestion,thatifaboveisdoneinritualisticmanner,willoneattainbliss?Theresponsetothatis–apartfromtheefficiencyoftechnologytheeligibilityoftheuserisalsoimportant.Atablet’sefficiencyandutilitychangesfromusertouser,eveniftheyallhavethesameoperatingsystem.Sameappliestothisblissattainmenttechnologies.

Thesesixritualsarethesixessentialactivitiestobeperformedtoattainapermanentstateofblissfulliving.Therecouldbeotheractivitiestoo,buttheseSIXaretheessentialmost;thecompulsoryones.

Letussumitup:
1.Equanimity
2.Higheraspirations
3.Gratitude
4.Re-calibration
5.Meditation
6.Self-discipline.

TheseSixtermsaretobetattooedonone’smind.IftheseSIXwordsareincorporatedinone’slife,thereisnostoppingtoachieveahealthybody,ahealthymind,healthyrelationsandhealthycareer.

Theseactions(essentials)puttogetheriswhatinlaymantermsweknowas‘pratikramana’.A‘pratikramana’isactuallyacombinationofthesesixessentialritualstobeperformedinasequentialmanneraspartofaregularritualpractice.

Itissuggestedtoperformthisatfollowingintervals:
•Everymorningatdawn:Rayasipratikramana
•Everyeveningaftersunset:Devasipratikramana
•Everymonth:Pakhipratikramana
•Everyfourmonths:Chaumasipratikramana(onfullmoondayofkartk,FagunandashadhmonthsofJaincalendar)
•Everyyear:Samvatsaripratikramana

Importanceisgiventodifferentessentialsinthisdifferentpratikramana’s.Itisadeepscience;havingsaidthatmorethanscientificexploration,thebetterwaytounderstanditwouldbethewayofdoing.

Eachofthisessentialcanalsobeperformedindividually.Importantisdisciplineandregularexecution.

Inourworkandbusinesseswedokeepauditsatregularintervals,inordertoknowwherethebusinessisgoing.Even employeesgothroughappraisalsatregularintervals.Thepointisregularcheckpointsarepre-requisiteforsuccessfulgoalachievement.Similarlyifthegoalisapermanentstateofbliss,theabovediscussedritualswouldactascheckpoints,onthepathofspiritualprogression.

PostScript:Iwouldnotwanttocategorizetheaboveasapieceofresearch.AndhenceIamnotofferingthebibliography.Howeverthestrengthandqualityoftheinterpretationattemptediscapabletowithstandseverecriticalanalysis.Thereisnoclaimaboutmyauthorityonthesubject.Theabovepieceisanoutcomeofvariousreadings,variousdiscussionswithscholarsandmyownobservationofritualpracticesthatIhavebeenpartofinmyfamilytradition.HenceIcallitan'Interpretation'andnotanessay.Ihavedeliberatelykeptitconcisetogarnergreaterengagement.Thispieceshallformthebasisoffurtherresearchandanalysisworkwhich Iintendtotakeup;wherebyIshalllookateachofthesessentialsingreaterdetail.WiththisIhumblyacceptmylimitedcapacityofcomprehensionandapologizeforanypertinenterrors.

सिद्धि:स्याद–वादात्।

(Toacceptinfinitebeingsmadefrominfiniteexpectationsandinfiniteperceptionsis'Syadvad'.Thisacceptanceis whatleadsonetoultimateknowledgeandglory)

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