



Volume 19, No 2, Fall 2024

ISSN 1932-1066

## Cosmic Consciousness and Trans-Cultural Values

### Jaspers' New Way of Thinking

Indu Sarin

*Punjab University, India*

*indusarin@yahoo.com*

**Abstract:** The author reflects on the global challenges producing military, economic, cultural, and religious theaters of war. She highlights Jaspers' solution to the above crises through awakening true humanity within mankind. Jaspers' new way of thinking with a cosmic consciousness based on ethics of responsibility, reason, philosophical faith, and intrinsic trans-cultural values is in contradistinction to the prevalent global consciousness founded on instrumental values. The author emphasizes the significance of trans-cultural values for uniting diverse cultures, leading to constructive interactions in all spheres of life. His value-based education can bring integral development of the individual by teaching one to use resources in the right and balanced way to bring about a better world of peace, prosperity, and harmony, rising above a closed shell toward a luminous encompassing vision. The author suggests that the religion of humanity should become the guiding light of all religions across borders.

**Keywords:** Jaspers, Karl; reason; philosophical faith; communication; transcendent thinking; scientific thinking; knowing-that; knowing-how; technology; education.

In this essay, I address some present-day challenges of humanity and highlight Jaspers' exploration of two possibilities, namely, either elevating oneself and saving humanity, or perishing in darkness and thereby leading to unprecedented destruction, the end of civilization, and the termination of all life on earth. The crucial question is whether the above doom can be prevented. Jaspers pleads for the restoration of peace through the intrinsic powers of ethics, self-sacrifice, and reason that make man truly human. His cosmic vision provides a new way of thinking, which is very relevant to the global scenario of catastrophe and degradation of human values. The emerging global consciousness is to be distinguished from cosmic consciousness. The foundation of global consciousness is materialistic, guided by instrumental values, whereas that of cosmic consciousness is spiritualistic, governed

by intrinsic values. Cosmic consciousness incorporates trans-cultural values in distinction to specific cultural values that are tied to a particular culture based on conventions, which may conflict with other cultures and create discrepancies, leading to exclusiveness.

Jaspers upholds a cosmic perspective that brings harmony, well-being, and fulfillment through rising above one's narrow ego, respecting the differences among humans. His new way of thinking represents a turn from intellectual thought to rational thought, from empirical to transcendental thought, which gives birth to an encompassing vision that brings equilibrium within the individual, among individuals, cultures, religions, and nations, opening diverse vistas. The emphasis is on global interactions, which are not merely based on economic returns but rather founded on true communion guided by transcendent thinking.

Jaspers' new way of thinking is called transcendent thinking, for it penetrates the depth and transcendent ground of everything. In his words, it evokes

an inner attitude of vision...We get the courage for the new thinking only from the change within ourselves, not from any demonstrable, external fact or visible achievement.<sup>1</sup>

Jaspers continues that his novel way of thinking makes the individual

manifest, both to himself and to the other, and to all those who will be with him when he is rational – that is to say, identical with his true self. [FM 208]

The above thinking does not remain merely at the theoretical level but rather leads to concrete actions, which make life worth living. Jaspers remarks in the Foreword to his *The Future of Mankind*:

Profound thought and concrete action ought to coincide in one and the same individual. [FM ix]

Jaspers reflects over the dangers of the global challenges and holds that all spheres of life are turning into

theaters of war...not only a military theater, but economic, cultural, ideological, religious theaters of war. [FM 333]

He provides resolution to the various problems by touching the very core of one's being in distinction to the superficial and transient solutions. For him, the starting point is the individual; the change must start within oneself. This change may generate constructive interactions, namely between individuals, within organizations, cultures, and nations. Jaspers is aware of the fact that

the whole world will not change if I change. But the change in myself is the premise of the greater change. [FM 325]

Communities are formed of individuals only. If a particular individual takes responsible decisions, the community as a whole imbibes the ethics of responsibility, and this will get extended from the local to the global level. Consequently, interactions in all spheres become fruitful. Jaspers highlights this point when arguing:

no plan, no action can succeed without a change in our common will, based on a change in individual thinking...everybody must begin with himself...He who will base his life on rationalistic certainties – who wants to be sure of the future – cannot help despairing. But he who feels the human tasks in the roots of his freedom and in the face of Transcendence will be inspired to do what he can. Once our minds are opened to the depth of Transcendence, we stop asking for certainties. [FM 318-9]

Jaspers gives positive suggestions to change oneself, by turning from false consciousness to true consciousness based on free choice, leading to a "bright transforming ethos" (FM 327) and saving the life of mankind through cultivating intrinsic values.

When a person articulates himself rationally with his concomitant values in his interactions, the hitherto existing universe is ontologically enriched. He brings harmonious relationships at all levels. At a personal level, he harmonizes physical, mental and spiritual aspects, at the social level, he harmonizes his relationships with other human beings locally as well as globally, developing love for humanity, and at the spiritual level, he connects himself with God.

Jaspers pleads for creative unity of cultures, religions, and nations. The chief characteristics of his thinking are openness and comprehensive vision, which have no place for fanaticism. He is against all forms of exclusiveness based on cultural, religious, and national differences. He opines that reason should be the guiding light of all the disciplines, institutions, organizations, and all pursuits of life.

Jaspers' novel way of thinking is based on reason, freedom, philosophical faith, and boundless communication. In the creation of cosmic vision, reason plays a very important role. He distinguishes it from intellect, which is confined to the empirical realm and takes a departmental approach. Jaspers holds that scientific thinking is governed by intellect. He is full of admiration for the role of the scientists and is grateful to them for offering the world new openings and uncovering the hidden treasures of the world that can enrich the individual's life, develop civilizations, and provide technological advancements, which are very significant in connecting individuals and cultures. However, scientific thinking confines itself to mere cognition, which is concerned with the empirical realm and instrumental values.

Jaspers evidences the significance of both science and philosophy. He writes,

<sup>1</sup> Karl Jaspers, *The Future of Mankind*, transl. E. B. Ashton, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press 1961, pp. 204-5. [Henceforth cited as FM]

These two concerns have gone with me through my whole life: a constant interest in science, the insistence upon a basically scientific attitude in a person who claims to be a philosopher, and the assertion of the indispensability of science and of its magnitude; and secondly, an interest in philosophizing, the insistence on the seriousness of thought which transforms, without having factually objective results, the assertion of the dependency of the meaning of science (not of its correctness) upon philosophy.<sup>2</sup>

For Jaspers, philosophical thinking highlights the significance of science and shows that both science and philosophy are complementary and indispensable. Science reveals facts and possibilities, whereas philosophy clarifies meaning and the limits of science. However, both follow different methodologies. Jaspers holds,

Science is objectively compelling intellectual cognition; philosophy is rational self-enlightenment. [FM 9]

Scientific thinking is governed by "knowing that" and "knowing how." "Knowing that" refers to or comprises factual propositions, which can be true or false. Such propositions refer to states of affairs, which are either affirmed or denied. "Knowing how" involves skill, which is a capacity to control and regulate objects or clusters thereof. By skill is meant the ability on the part of the agent to identify, fabricate, and implement the relevant steps to secure the product sought. Any skill also entails judging the suitability of some means to realize acknowledged ends. For example, the skill of the doctor is in bringing optimal results, that is, it is in his therapeutic performance—brought about by his expertise based on evaluation of the pathological condition of the patient, as well as his medical competence in implementing the relevant course of treatment. In other words, the doctor adheres to a pre-set paradigm of good health, as an objectively determined norm in view of the specifics of each case.

There can be a fixed criterion to judge the truth and falsity of a fact and the efficacy of a skill. The relationship between consciousness and the object in "knowing that" and "knowing how" is external, and it may not transform the being of the individual. A good doctor may not be a good person. One may be

very efficient in handling and manipulating things, but one's style of practicing disvalues the patient.

Jaspers holds,

The turn in our destinies will come from the realization that technology know-how, achievements are not enough. The science and technology of man must become the parts of the encompassing whole. [FM viii]

He is critical of both the rejection of technology and of becoming its slave:

machine smashing and machine romanticism are equally irrational. [FM 194]

The fault does not lie in technology but in the person who is using it. One should master technology and not succumb to it. A mere technological approach does not take into account an axiological perspective. Consequently, it may result in both construction and destruction. Technology, for Jaspers,

has always served both constructive and destructive ends, and today its potentialities have leaped from the scattered destruction to the annihilation of all life on earth. [FM 191-2]

Technology as such is not a threat to humanity, but its misuse poses a threat. Science and technology need to be guided by reason:

the intellect with its research, its planning, its technology, bases its objectivizing steps. For these need guidance. [FM 204]

Jaspers holds,

since the intellect has provided us with the means of total destruction without being able to produce the means of guiding us in the use of its achievements, help can come only from the power that set the intellect in motion and made it creative. Where the intellect has brought us to the brink of disaster, the power of reason alone can hold us back...our only choice today lies in a change of man on a broad scale, affecting first a few, then many, and finally, perhaps, a majority. The atom bomb, war, the claim of absolute sovereignty and all that it implies—these cannot be controlled today by statesman unless the masses in the East and in the West, moved and enlightened by reason and changed way of thinking, compel such control... this is the job that reason alone can do. [FM 261]

Rational thinking for Jaspers is

luminous encompassing thinking...that opens all views and leads to creative decisions. [FM viii]

<sup>2</sup> Karl Jaspers, "Philosophical Autobiography," in *The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers*, ed. Paul A. Schilpp, La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing Company 1957, pp. 1-94, here p. 38.

Reason plays a very significant role in developing a clear vision, a comprehensive approach, comprising discriminating ability and moral judgment. It is a metaphysical power that controls and directs our thinking. Its function is axiological too—to give the right kind of guidance—

clarity grows deeper, discrimination more acute, the ethos stronger and rational existence more decisive. [FM 229]

No doubt, intellect is an "indispensable tool of reason" (FM 208), but reason transcends this tool without losing it. Jaspers maintains,

Unlike...abstract thinking of the mere intellect, rational thinking absorbs the abstractions, transcends them, and returns with them to reality. Such concrete thinking has content and viscosity. It is not self-sufficient. It uses fruitful abstraction as a means of achieving clarity and a deeper penetration of reality, but it never loses its grip on what it relates to, where it comes from, whence it draws substance and significance: reality itself. [FM 210]

Jaspers makes a difference between progress in technology and ethical change—inner transformation: "intellectual labor of progress and the existential establishment of moral man" (FM 211), who is free and judges the moral worth of all pursuits of life through reason. A rational person is not determined causally; one makes free decisions. One is neither governed by internal constraints of vitality nor by external restraints. One is rather guided by "well-founded judgement"<sup>3</sup> in contrast to mere opinions that give every being its due. Rational freedom by overcoming arbitrariness implies commitment and responsibility and does not take any rigid standpoint; it "destroys the narrowness of pseudo-truth, dissolves fanaticism."<sup>4</sup>

Reason fulfils the mission of unity in diversity:

It links men who may differ completely in all other respects, in their ways of life, their feelings, their desires; it links them more strongly than they are divided by all their diversities. [FM 229]

It has a twofold function of opening the diverse viewpoints and unifying them:

a radical openness, a binding force and a total will to communication. [PE xxvi]

To quote Jaspers,

Reason is attracted even by what is most alien... Reason pushes on to wherever unity is fractured, in order within this breach still to grasp its truth, and to prevent a metaphysical rupture, the disintegration of being itself, in this fragmentation. Reason, the source of order, accompanies everything that destroys order; it remains patient—incessant and infinite—in the face of everything alien, before the irruption from without or the failure from within. [PE 56]

Jaspers argues that reason should be the foundation of all organizations, institutions, and cultures, which need education and supra-political guidance. He writes,

reason is the essence of true humanity...for reason can pervade all organizations, strengthening each one and itself as well. It lives in the churches, in government, in the family, in schools and universities, in all social structures within all nations. It turns to those, not to deny their historic reality but to return them to their original truth, but also to put them on its own terms, on the terms of unreserved reason. [FM 316-7]

He adds,

The rational way of the free world is one of self-enlightenment, self-criticism, self-reproach. It leads from every individual's way of thinking, to the self-education of nations, and hence to the education of generations to come...This education alone can preserve the historic content of our existence and replenish our lives in the world situation with creative vigor. [FM 312]

Without reason, institutions work like a machine, and the consequence is inhuman existence—"machine-like organizations" (FM 220). The basis of organizations is the "community of rational men" (FM 223). Jaspers argues that,

The germ of all public good, too, lies in the meeting of rational men...there is the "brotherhood of reasonable men"—objectively invisible even to itself, yet of a reliability grounded in the very depths of man. It upholds every individual and will uphold him even as a spectral realm, when he is in need and alone. In this invisible brotherhood, everyone shares the responsibility for the effects of creative endeavor... Whatever happens in this arena is a moral-political

<sup>3</sup> Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History*, transl. Michael Bullock, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 1953, p. 154.

<sup>4</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy of Existence*, transl. Richard F. Grabau, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press 1971, p. 60. [Henceforth cited as PE]



factor...No personal attachments matter here, no circles, no cliques, no league – the only free vinculum is the idea of quality and truth. [FM 225-7]

He elaborates,

the clairvoyant love of humans sharing their destinies in rational union; it is the consciousness of doing right; it is the strength of advancing on the path of reason; it is the resistance that checks my self-will, my drifting, my untruthfulness, my anger, my arrogance, like the flaming sword of an angel parrying whatever would revolt in my existence; it is what happens in the deepest recesses of my being, by myself and not by myself alone; it is what guides my outward actions. [FM 341]

Jaspers also highlights the importance of reason in politics also. How to make politics constructive and enduring? Jaspers holds that politics should be governed by reason and morality. The politician needs to be the rational statesman who takes constructive moral decisions and implements these into actions without taking rigid standpoints:

The rational statesman...does not let ideologies limit his horizon; they are at the beck and call of his mind, which remains alert to the perception of new possibilities. [FM 244]

Jaspers distinguishes a statesman from an ordinary politician who is motivated by his ego, selfish interest, and craves for power, whereas a statesman is governed by moral values and does not care for "the pomp and panoply of his power" (FM 238). The latter is guided by reason, and his approach is holistic, yearning for unity.

Jaspers thus shows the significance of reason both at individual and collective levels. By awakening *humanitas* within man, reason brings authentic communication. For Jaspers, reason is

a will to unity and a will to communication. Reason not only respects but actively seeks out what is foreign to it in order to communicate with it and to project an encompassing unity which includes everything and lets nothing sink into oblivion. [PE xxv]

Jaspers ponders over the question—how to make life worth living? He explores this question by focusing on: what it means "to be?"<sup>5</sup> The mundane

being, the empirical reality does not exhaust the very being of the individual. The question of "to be" is to be understood through *Existenz* that is guided by reason that points to Transcendence. Empirical world-orientation is concerned with instrumental values. *Existenz* characterized by transcendent thinking, is concerned with intrinsic values and is rooted in freedom. Jaspers writes,

Yet *Existenz* can grasp itself in its own freedom only if at the same time, and in the same act, it will perceive something other than itself...In some way or other, the realization of unconditionality will occur only in relation to its transcendence...The test of the possibility of my *Existenz* is the knowledge that it rests upon transcendence. [P3 5-6]

Transcendence does not mean to deny the reality of the world. It is rather living in it meaningfully. Jaspers rejects three approaches:

wordlessness, complicity, defiance...miss the existential situation. They lose sight of the measure of man; they miss the human opportunities of reason. The ascetic is ineffectual; he seems to vanish in his solitude. The joiner surrenders to the evil of violence. The stubborn independent does not get beyond saying "No" to an evil for which he, too, bears the guilt. These three approaches do not tell us what to do; they show only what does not help. [FM 331]

The above three approaches are negative, namely, firstly, an ascetic approach that denies the reality of the world, secondly, a form of despotism that surrenders to violence and wrong acts, and thirdly, a defiant saying "No" to every situation. These approaches are negative and do not make any positive contribution by way of condemning the existing situation in one way or another. The worthy life is to be lived by *Existenz*, which makes a positive contribution to society. Jaspers rejects nihilism and cynicism of any kind. He is for the fulfillment of life through reason, love, and faith, which is, opening immense opportunities and interlinking the private and the public, the inner and the outer.

Jaspers' novel way of thinking recognizes the significance as well as the boundaries of world-orientation and *Existenz*, showing the way to Transcendence. The first step consists of ascending from particular objects of the world to a unified world. The scientific method cognizes the particular objects of the world, but the world as a whole cannot be known through it. Rather, one takes a step from

<sup>5</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Philosophy, Volume 3*, transl. E. B. Ashton, Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press 1971, p. 3. [Henceforth cited as P3]

mere cognition to transcendent thinking that is aware of the limitations of mere cognition. The second step leads from empirical world-orientation to *Existenz*, realizing its limitations and immense potentialities. The third step involves an act of transcending taken by *Existenz* to confront Transcendence, which builds courage within *Existenz* to overcome the ultimate situations of life, namely, the realization of both finitude and infinitude of *Existenz*. Empirical existence is concerned with extrinsic world-orientation, whereas *Existenz* is concerned with the intrinsic self and its relation to world and transcendence. This is the realm of metaphysical speculation that leads to the realization of absolute consciousness, which originates intrinsic values. Jaspers explains,

Speculation is a thinking that drives us to think the unthinkable. It is mysticism to the intellect that wants cognition, but it is lucidity to a self-being that transcends in it ...it means to break through the tangled web of empirical realities and cogent validities in order to stand directly before the unknown. [P3 118-9]

Metaphysical speculation cannot be turned into dogmatic institutionalized religion. This is the experience of eternity in time, which is to be realized through philosophical faith in contradistinction to religious faith. The latter is rigid and dogmatic and stands against the former faith, thereby generating conflicts leading to exclusiveness and quarrels among different religions, in which one insists on my religion, your religion, my god, your god, my religion is superior to your religion. God is One, and to confine Him to a particular religion is a total misinterpretation of the very meaning of Him. Names are given to physical entities; however, God is above space-time and therefore above names and forms. Philosophical faith is unifying and embraces all cultures, thereby making room for tolerance, which integrates diversity and is open to diverse viewpoints, respecting others' freedom.

The dogmatic religion fosters the creation of cults, which lead to divisions among different religions. It works with set beliefs, rituals, and conventions, which differ from one religion to another. It is also tied to institutions and organizations, whereas philosophical faith involves personal inward journey, which, of course, takes a comprehensive vision and includes responsibility toward the surrounding environment, that is, nature, fellow beings, institutions, and people across borders.

Philosophical faith traverses the path of intrinsic values (trans-cultural ones), which transform the very being of the individual. My subjective self is distinguishable from my knowledge and skills, whereas my value is not different from my own being. In this sense, it is an ideal formulation of the self. Knowing a value commits oneself to a distinct praxis. This is the difference between axiological formulation and theoretical construction. Values are not an abstract ideal; they must press for its realization. Their function is to guide conduct and to commit oneself to making relevant choices and performing actions.

The relationship between a person and values is that of generation and regulation. The person posits the values, yet once they are posited, they regulate one and make one's being intelligible. The emergence of values is not mechanical; it is an emanation of meaning generated through existential reflexivity. Temporality and historicity reveal the limitations of human beings. They overcome them with their free will, which instills courage within them to rise ever higher. The distinction between self and values gets fused and coalesced into uplifting axiological experience.

The quest for values, thus, is the quest for one's authentic being that is entering the realm of freedom. Self-realization is culmination of the value-journey, which is the process of encountering oneself. The self-illuminated state of consciousness implies self-certitude and personal commitment, which does not need any proof to certify it. It is ready to take any risk for the fulfillment of its values, and the antithesis presented by any external argument does not have any place in it. There is no room for doubt; others may doubt it, but skepticism loses its sense when its pointer is turned to one's own self. This is the certainty of philosophical faith. The quest for values is neither at the level of the ego nor in the already realized self; it rather consists in the journey of realizing it. This means that it occurs in enacting values in actions, in time and history. The already realized self does not need any values. The most significant point is how individuals pass through their historical journey to arrive at fully integrated being.

Further, the experience of value involves awareness of others both at the local and global levels. The question arises whether there is there any role of culture in nurturing the quest for values. Is it purely innate? Does culture through different

institutions contribute anything to developing the values that are potentially present within human beings? The materialistic culture, in contradistinction to the spiritualistic one, may have different impact on the development of the individual.

The framework for values has a fourfold function: (1) a guide of one's decisions and actions, (2) a standard of judgment for one's actions as well as one for the actions of others, (3) a prescription of what one ought to follow, and (4) an ideal to be sought for, which is manifested in human's aspirations and renders life meaningful. It is to bring equilibrium to one's own life and to aspire for the same on behalf of others around the globe.

The concept of value can be analyzed both from personal and social (values of the group, community, and culture) perspectives. Both perspectives may or may not be antithetical, but they may be mutually supplementary. How an individual organizes his life in terms of his framework of values is the personal perspective. How the different groups organize the institutions constitutes the social perspective. Are values culture-bound or trans-cultural? The cultural foundation of values denotes the customary ways of a particular community for its smooth functioning. The code of conduct is judged in terms of the standards established by a specific community. However, the overemphasis on the set code of conduct may lead to cultural gaps in other regards.

Cultural interactions may generate either conflicts or harmony. The trans-cultural values transform the very being of the individual and open a wider horizon that makes room for the positive and creative encounter among different persons and cultures. The trans-cultural values are the foundational universal values (not confined to the codes of a particular culture), which may help in a culturally plural society.

Rationality and freedom are the presuppositions of values. Reason discriminates between right and wrong and goes against dogmatic beliefs. Freedom implies power to choose and respond in a different way, thus deviating from conformity and awakening strong willpower to carry forward what one has freely chosen. This strong willpower is not subject to moral weaknesses. It is not enough to have positive thoughts, as moral strength is also needed to turn them into deeds. Sometimes one knows what is right but does not practice it, which happens due to a weakness of the will, which is the result of lacking

courage and strength. The selfish motives, urges, passions, and utilitarian considerations come in the way: One becomes prone to temptations and breaks the resolution.

The practice of values also needs the dissolution of one's ego: abandoning attachment to false images (both at the individual and social levels). The ego is self-glorification, which is the source of inequalities (for example, a belief that I am superior, and the other is inferior), dichotomies, and conflicts, that confine one to spend one's life within closed walls. For the practice of values, the individual must rise above his narrow selfish interests and widen his horizon to integrate others' interests within him, regarding them as equal.

At the social level, the groups need to transcend their selfish interests (the ego and hubris of the group) and be open to other communities and groups. Otherwise, what happens is that they show their superiority over other groups by going to any extent, even to downgrading others and harming them. The practice of intrinsic values eliminates antagonism (which is the source of quarrels and conflicts) between me and others that is created by religion, class, race, community, or gender. A particular culture with its institutions plays a crucial role in developing the individual personality based on values. Yet, these institutions sometimes become stereotyped and rigid in their practices, which may conflict with other cultures. The creative individual, as mentioned earlier, rises above rigidity and exercises his own freedom while making decisions. It is openness that makes room for communication amongst various sections of society.

The values, as seen from the social perspective, are the attainment of what is good for society. Justice, equality, liberty, and fraternity are usually considered as social values to maintain equilibrium in society. However, these values are significant from the point of view of the individual, too. As explored earlier, the foundation of any society is the individual; if the individual practices values, it will automatically create a society based on values. There is a long list of intrinsic values for both individuals and groups, such as love, compassion, freedom, honesty, tolerance, integrity, among others. The values of peace and stability are of great significance in the spiritual quest. Truth, beauty, and goodness are considered to be the core values, and the remaining values are also considered to be of great worth both for the individual

and the group. It is difficult to have a strict hierarchy of values because it also depends on the individual's or the group's decisions to choose the most significant value at that moment.

The modern education system is dominated by instrumental values. No doubt information transfer and technical skills are very important aspects of education, but they need to be grounded in humane values. How to use information and skills, how to use the surrounding environment, and how to interact with fellow beings, institutions, and cultures are very crucial for both the development of the individual and society. The harmonious growth of the individual is the most important aspect, which means developing a balanced personality and harmonizing with others, too. Besides outward achievements, there must be work done on the development of the inner resources of the individual. The individual is born with tremendous inner powers, which need to be developed. For Jaspers, education is not meant merely to increase economic productivity and produce skilled workers. Mere technological training is not enough; it must awaken "true humanity" (*FM* 245) and inculcate "rational brotherhood" (*FM* 224)—an authentic bond, which makes one rise above egoistic interests.

A value-based education plays an important role in developing the character of the individual. Its emphasis is on "how to be," that is, on becoming a person in the authentic sense, practicing values, which build a good character. Education should aim at the integral development of the individual—development of the physical, mental, social, and moral-spiritual dimensions. No doubt, the physical (the body) plays an important role, and it is an instrument of man's interactions with others. The body needs to be fit and healthy to fulfill its functions in healthy interactions. However, mere development of the body is not enough. The intellect is a very powerful energy that has the capacity to generate new thoughts and replace old ones; it can construct as well as destroy.

Education needs to develop the powers of the mind (which arguably is more than merely brain mass) in a positive and constructive direction to create fruitful thoughts, motivate the individual to perform actions accordingly, which makes this universe richer and harmonious along with material and intellectual developments. The emphasis should be on moral dignity, self-responsibility and open-

mindedness that allow one to embrace others. The spirit of co-operation is to be ingrained into the mind of the person, which would help in protecting and enhancing bonds between persons and cultures.

The individual cannot remain in isolation; therefore, social interactions play a very significant role in the well-being of the individual, as it has social obligations and is required to contribute to the well-being of society and promote a value-based culture. A value-based education makes the life of the individual worthy of living by enabling all the dimensions to function in the constructive manner and by making the energies flow spontaneously without any blockage. It can play a vital role in bringing a better world based on peaceful coexistence.

The upshot that emerges from the above discussion is that the rational perspective governed by intrinsic values transforms the individual, his world through encountering God on earth under the never-exhausted open sky—a voyage from a narrow, closed subjective ego to an integrative comprehensiveness, which leads to inclusive, elevated experience. The individual is in harmony with himself when there is harmony in his thoughts, words, and actions. If there is harmony within oneself, then the energy flows spontaneously that encompasses others, generating a creative bloom, which radiates its fragrance irrespective of caste, race, color, and geographical boundaries. At the outer level, to have a healthy ecological paradigm and creative human interactions both at the local and global levels, intrinsic values are needed while making technological, economic, and political policies. The use and misuse of resources (human as well as non-human ones) requires careful examination. Global interactions need to be founded on true communion and not on religious, political, and commercial egoism.

How a man looks at the universe is a crucial question. The scientist looks at the universe as existing independently of the human mind, and a separation between man and the universe is drawn—the dichotomy between the subjective and the objective. The axiological quest revolves around self-enquiry—who am I? How am I connected to others? The scientific way of looking at earth, sky, mortals, and God is different from the axiological perspective. The former is not bothered to produce their cosmic dance—equilibrium and harmony. Transcendence or God may not be required at all. Equilibrium and harmony are essential for the axiological quest.



However, the scientific quest for the welfare of humanity and the axiological quest for human well-being may not be seen as antagonistic. They need to go hand in hand, taking into consideration all the aspects of life.

In closing, trans-cultural values unite humanity. It is the responsibility of individuals and cultures to make responsible decisions. The axiological approach aspires for the holistic outlook, which is eco-friendly and develops harmonious relationships with people worldwide and diverse cultures. It

has been shown that unifying power marks reason and discriminating ability, followed by authentic commitment to implement what one thinks to be right and making it a part of one's being. It seeks the transformation of the very being of the individual, awakening the positive and creative aspects, so that he can remain strong even in adverse circumstances. Jaspers' ethics of responsibility, rational freedom, and philosophical faith lead to boundless communication and generate cosmic consciousness within man through internalizing trans-cultural values.