Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

“Life doesn’t make any sense without interdependence. We need each other, and the sooner we learn that, it is better for us all.” — Erik Erikson. What does this quotation mean to you?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2021	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Interdependence, social cooperation, mutual responsibility, empathy, community, collective action, public goods, social capital, inclusive development, environmental sustainability

Model Answer

Meaning of the Quotation

The quotation emphasises that human beings are interconnected. Individual well-being depends on relationships, institutions and collective efforts. Recognising this interdependence encourages cooperation instead of excessive individualism.

Ethical Significance

- **Mutual responsibility:** Individuals have duties towards family, community and society.
- **Empathy and respect:** Recognising others' contributions encourages dignity and tolerance.
- **Collective problem-solving:** Challenges such as pandemics, climate change and poverty require coordinated action.
- **Social justice:** Strong societies support vulnerable people rather than treating their difficulties as solely individual failures.
- **Environmental ethics:** Human dependence on natural ecosystems requires responsible resource use and intergenerational concern.

Illustration

During the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare workers, sanitation staff, scientists, public officials and citizens depended on one another. Public cooperation with health measures and the collective delivery of essential supplies demonstrated how shared responsibility can protect society.

Relevance to Public Administration

A civil servant must work collaboratively with citizens, local bodies, civil society organisations and other departments. Participatory governance improves both the quality and legitimacy of public decisions.

Conclusion

Interdependence is not a denial of individual freedom; it is recognition that freedom and well-being flourish through cooperation. A just society balances personal responsibility with solidarity and collective welfare.

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