Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” – Mahatma Gandhi

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2020	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Selflessness, public service, empathy, purpose, moral development, altruism, social responsibility, humility, Gandhian philosophy, ethical leadership

Model Answer

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi's quotation suggests that genuine self-discovery comes through selfless service. By working for others' welfare, individuals understand their values, develop empathy and discover a deeper purpose in life.

Meaning and ethical significance

- **Self-transcendence:** Moving beyond personal interests helps individuals recognise their responsibilities towards society.
- **Development of empathy:** Serving vulnerable communities creates an understanding of their struggles and aspirations.
- **Discovery of purpose:** Meaningful service provides satisfaction that material success alone may not offer.
- **Character building:** Service cultivates humility, patience, compassion and perseverance.
- **Realisation of interdependence:** It reveals that individual well-being is connected with the welfare of the larger community.
- **Ethical leadership:** Leaders who serve rather than dominate gain credibility and public trust.

Relevance in contemporary life

- Civil servants can discover the purpose of their profession by ensuring that welfare schemes reach deserving beneficiaries.
- Doctors, teachers and social workers contribute to human dignity through their professional responsibilities.
- Citizens can support elderly people, volunteer in community initiatives and assist disadvantaged groups.
- Businesses can adopt responsible practices that balance profits with workers' welfare and environmental sustainability.

Illustration

A district officer who improves access to drinking water in a remote village may gain not only professional satisfaction but also a deeper understanding of inequality, administrative responsibility and human dignity.

However, selfless service should be accompanied by accountability and respect for beneficiaries' autonomy; it must empower people rather than create dependence.

Conclusion

Service to others is not the abandonment of one's identity but its enrichment through compassion and responsibility. As Gandhi's philosophy implies, a life devoted to the common good develops both personal character and a more humane society.

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