

Acaranga & Personality Development

Bridging Ancient Jain Wisdom with Modern Psychological Science

A synthesis of the PhD thesis by Ujjawal Daga | Supervised by
Dr. Samani Sangeet Pragya, Jain Vishva Bharati Institute (2025)

Based on the thesis submitted to the Department of Jainology and Comparative Religion & Philosophy.

The Dynamic Self: Karmic Residue to Conscious Cultivation

Audayika Personality
(Reactive)

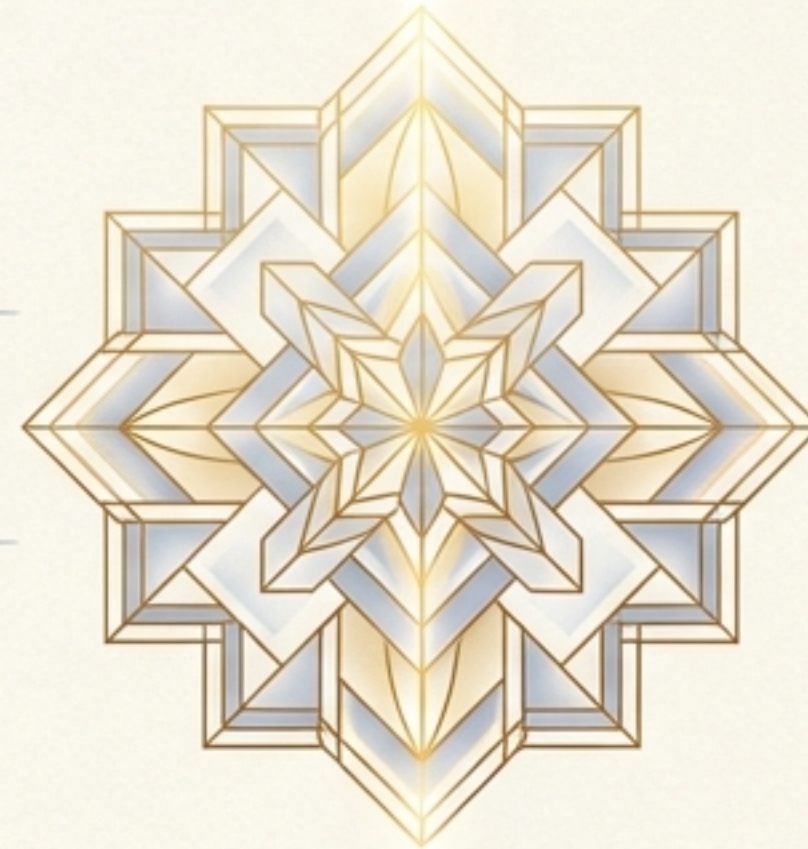


Inherited Samskaras
& Karmic Impulse

Ethical Discipline
(Vows)



Kshayopasamika Personality
(Proactive)



Refined Character
& Virtue

**The Modern
Crisis**

Contemporary youth grapple with identity diffusion, consumption-driven anxiety, and the erosion of community. The thesis posits that personality (pudgala-bhava) is not static, but a dynamic synthesis of the soul's latent karma and its present conduct.

The Source Material: *The Book of Good Conduct*



Context: The Acaranga Sutra is the oldest extant Jain canonical scripture. It is a “Book of Good Conduct” moving from Ontology (Being) to Ethics (Acting).

The Existential Anchor:

‘Ke aham asi?’ (Who was I?)

Insight: The text argues that understanding the self's journey across lifetimes is a prerequisite for behavioral change. It operates on a non-dualistic view: Truth is intrinsic to the self, not external.

The Triad of Psychological Stability

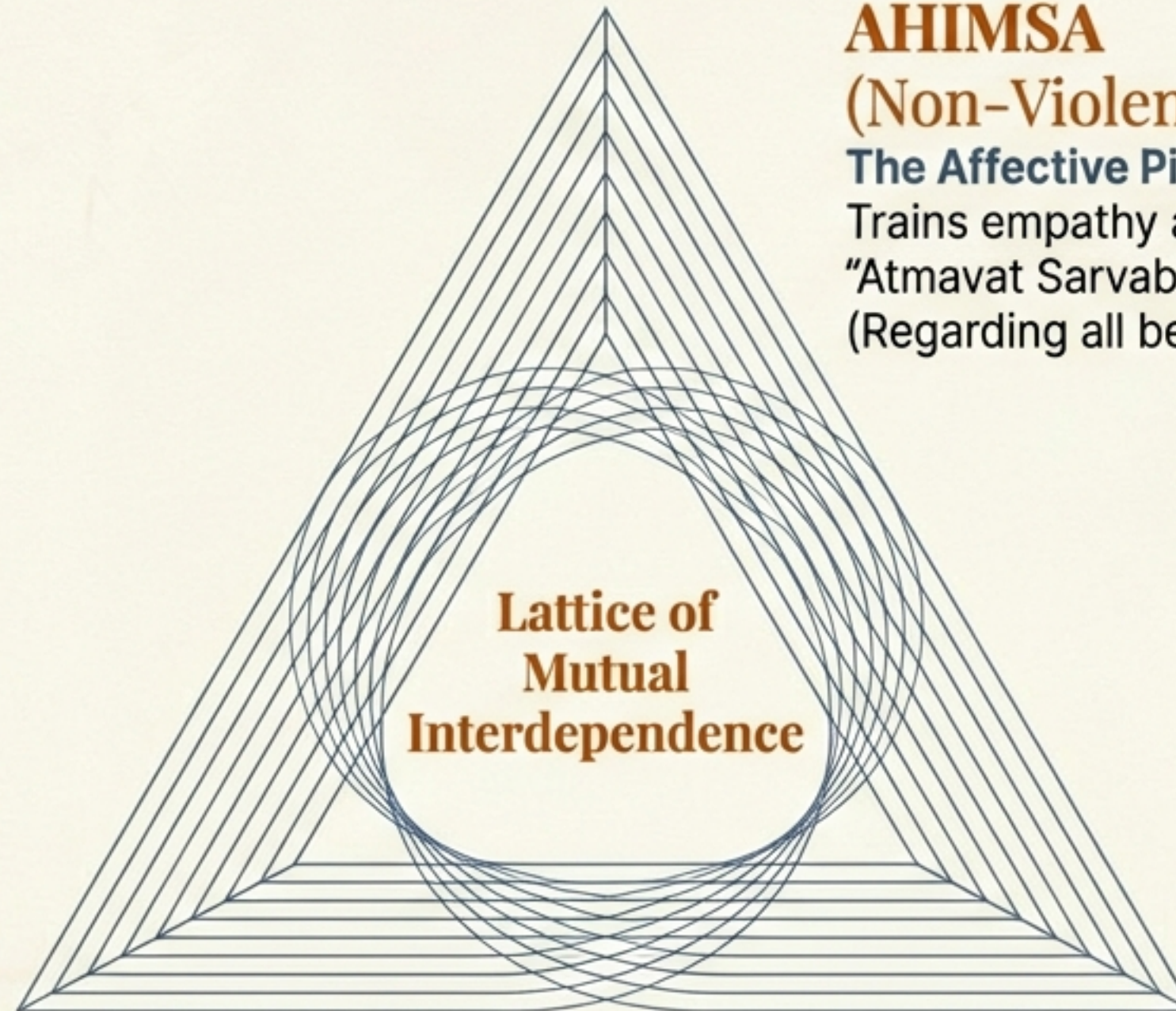
AHIMSA (Non-Violence)

The Affective Pillar.

Trains empathy and impulse control.
"Atmavat Sarvabhuteshu"
(Regarding all beings as oneself).

APARIGRAHA (Non-Possessiveness)

The Conative Pillar. Dismantles
loss aversion and status anxiety.
Frees attentional bandwidth
from "mineness".



ANEKANTAVADA (Non-Absolutism)

The Cognitive Pillar. Epistemic
humility. Reduces dogmatic
stress by recognizing the
partiality of all viewpoints.

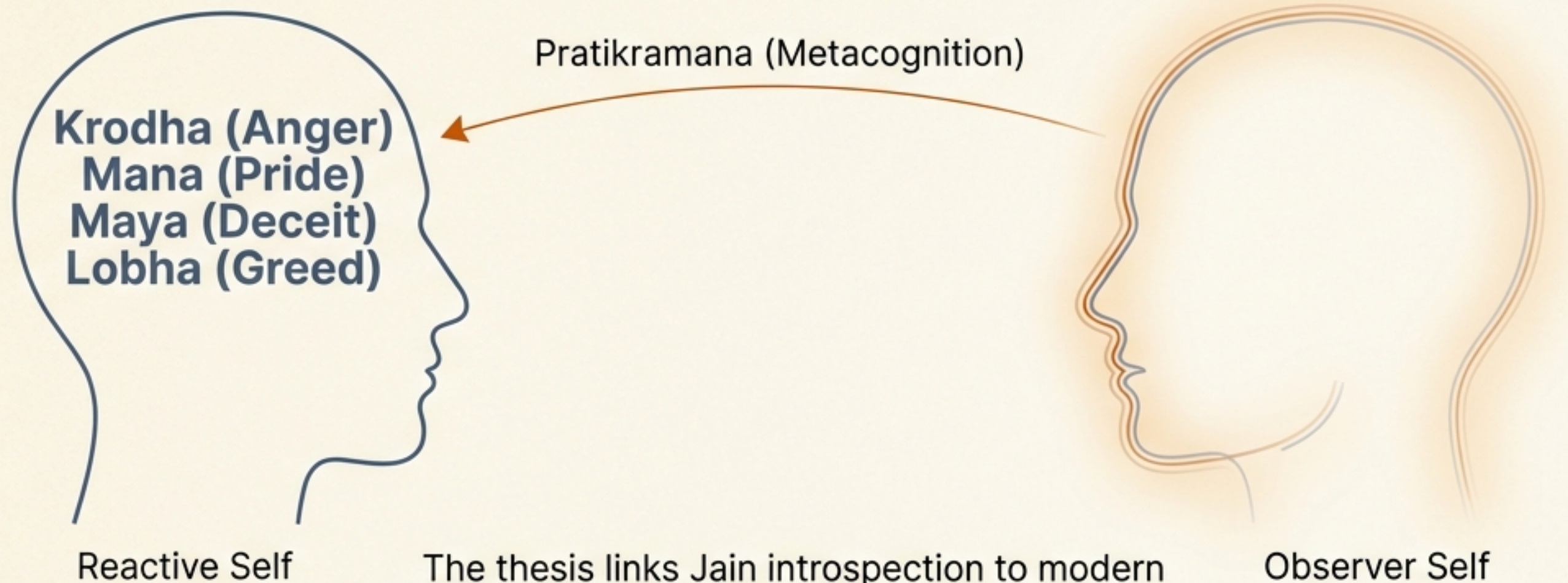
Mapping Scripture to Science: The HEXACO Convergence

Empirical parallels between Acaranga virtues and the modern HEXACO personality inventory.

| HEXACO MODEL | JAIN VIRTUES (ACARANGA) |
|---|---|
| Honesty-Humility | Satya & Aparigraha (Truth & Non-possession) |
| Both reject greed and prioritize fairness over exploitation. | |
| Agreeableness | Ahimsa & Kshama (Non-violence & Tolerance) |
| Both predict conflict resolution and forgiveness; rejection of retaliation. | |
| Conscientiousness | Samyak Charitra (Right Conduct) |
| Organization, diligence, and prudent discipline. | |
| Emotional Stability | Samayika (Equanimity) |
| Resilience and a high threshold for emotional volatility. | |
| Openness | Anekantavada |
| Intellectual flexibility and receptivity to new ideas. | |

The Mechanism of Change: Deep Introspection

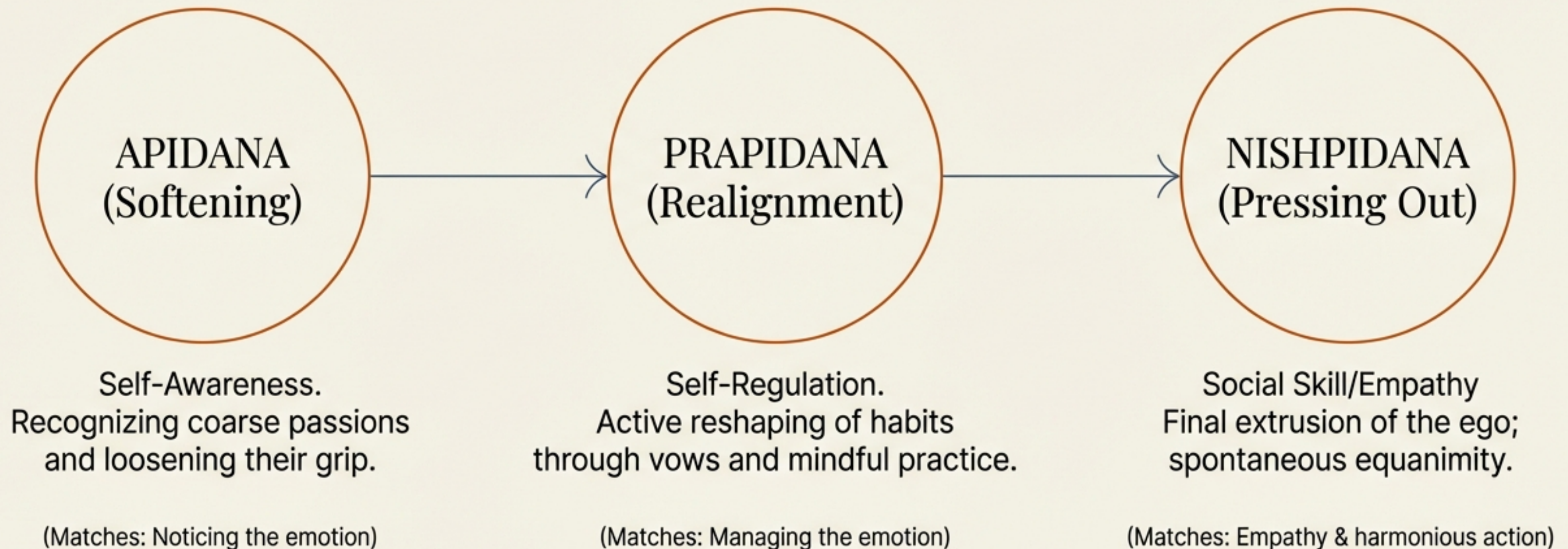
‘Je egam janai, se savvam janai’ (One who knows the Self knows all).



‘The soul must be perceived by the soul.’ (Appanam appane pekkhae).

The Architecture of Emotional Intelligence

Acaranga's developmental arc mirroring the Goleman EQ Model.



Personality as a Social Construct

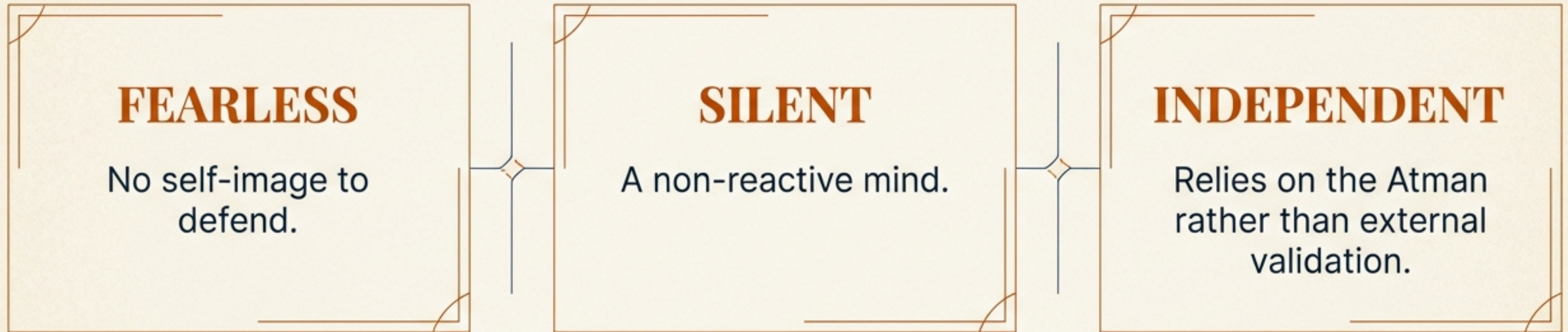
‘Parasparopagraho Jivanam’ (Souls render service to one another).

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Trust vs. Mistrust | → | Facilitated by AHIMSA (Tender, non-violent care). |
| 2. Autonomy vs. Shame | → | Facilitated by APRAMADA (Vigilant guidance). |
| 3. Identity vs. Confusion | → | Facilitated by ANEKANTAVADA (Critical value framework). |

Insight: Jain ethics act as a biological buffer against social stress, creating high-trust environments that lower cortisol and foster resilience.

The Ideal State: The Nishkarmadarsi

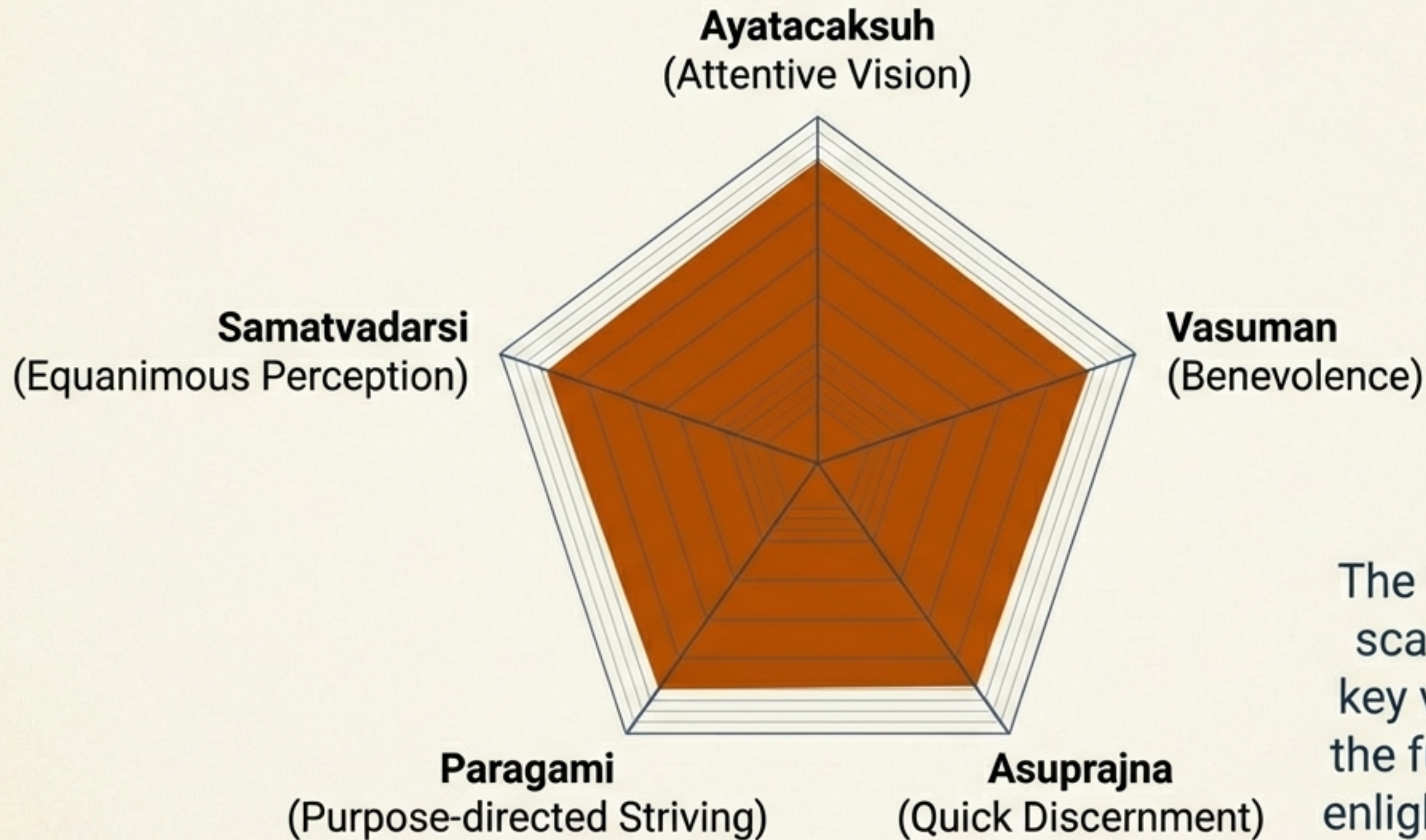
The “Actionless Seer” who acts without the ego of the doer.



Nishkarmadarsi = Maslow's **'Self-Actualization'** + **Stoic Ideal** + Gita's **'Sthita-prajna'** (Steady Wisdom).

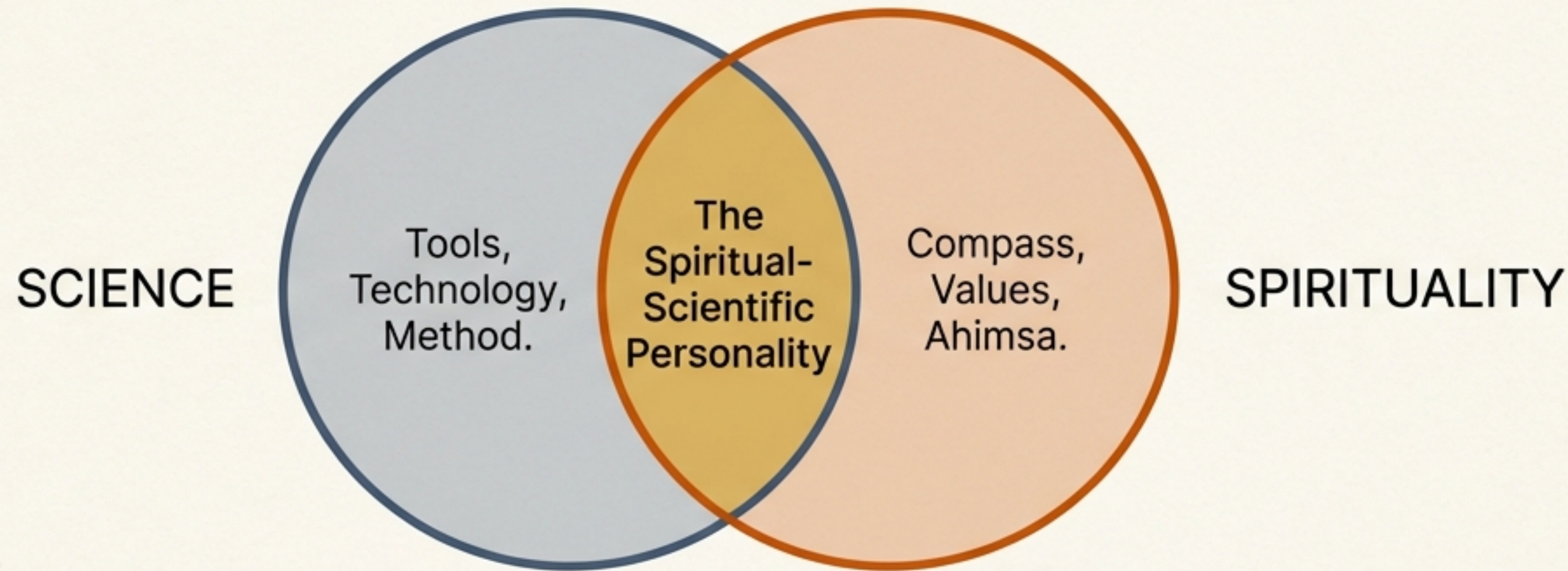
‘Je aya se vinnaya, je vinnaya se aya’ (The self is the knower, and the knower is the self).

The Nishkarmadarsi Personality Matrix



The thesis proposes a scaffold of these five key virtues that define the fully realized, enlightened personality.

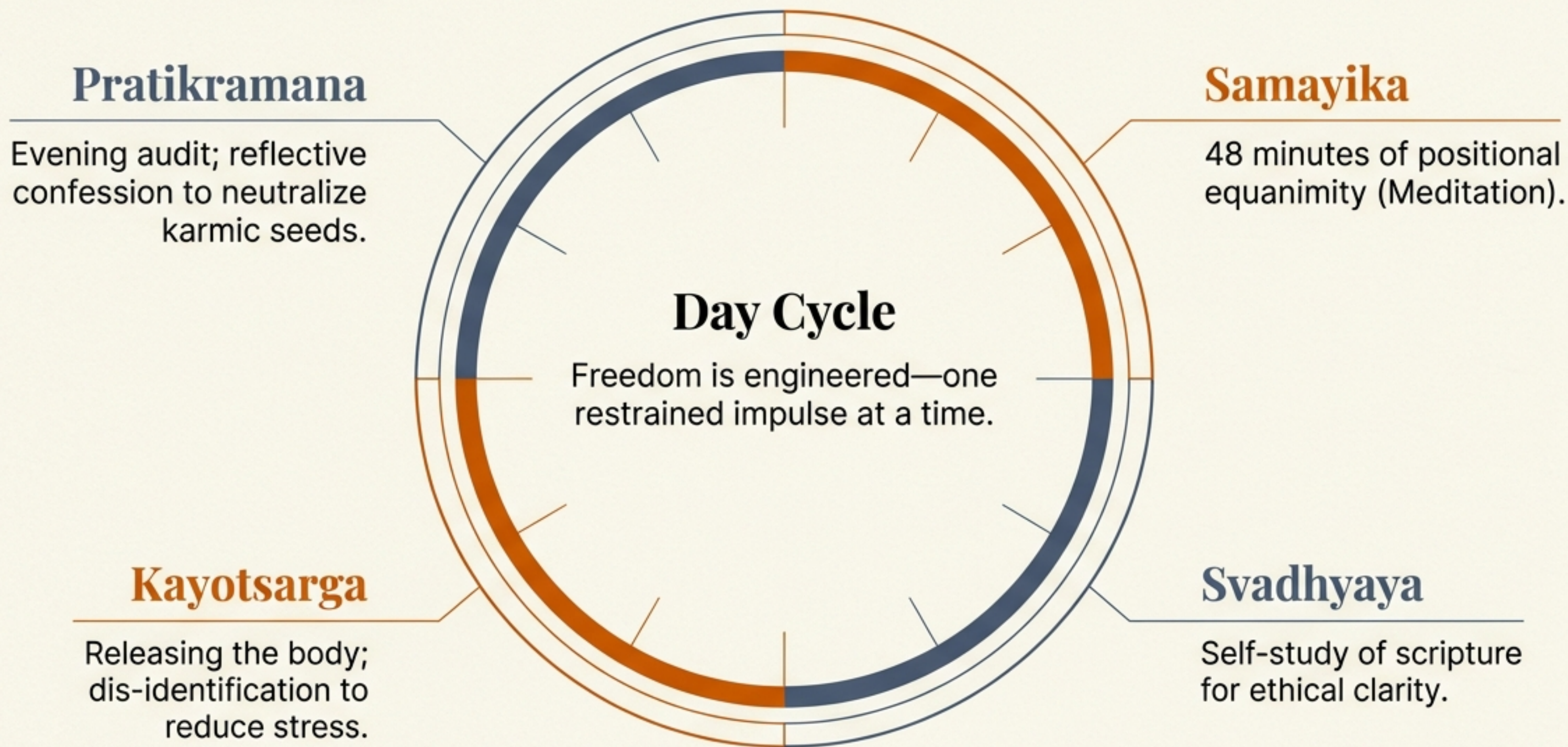
The Imperative: A Spiritual-Scientific Personality



“Science without spirituality is merchandise; spirituality without science is escapism; their union unseals the real.” — Acharya Mahapragya

Personality development is 'centrifugal sanctification': purify the core, and the circumference radiates harmlessness.

The Practitioner's Toolkit: A Daily Regimen



Managing Modern Suffering

Problem:

Anxiety & Burnout



Solution:

APARIGRAHA

Detachment from outcomes and “mineness” reduces the fear of loss.

Problem:

Polarization & Conflict



Solution:

ANEKANTAVADA

Recognizing the partiality of truth defuses dogmatic stress.

Problem:

Impulse & Addiction



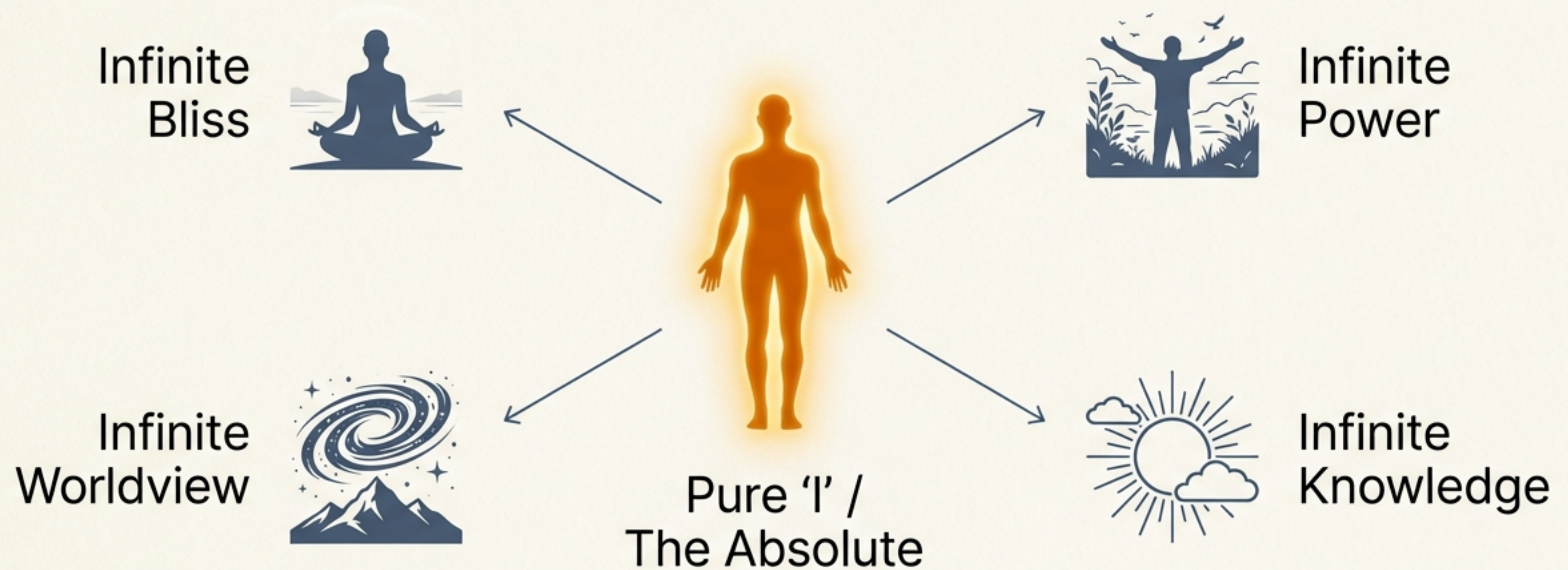
Solution:

SAMAYAMA

Shift from reactive conditioning to deliberate ethical awareness.

Key Concept: **Vitaragata** — Freedom from the pendulum of attachment (raga) and aversion (dveṣa).

The Ultimate Discovery: Who is the Real 'I'?



“The soul that knows itself as separate from the body, mind, and passions... that soul is the conqueror.”


Acknowledgments & Credits

Based on the PhD Thesis: 'Acaranga and Personality Development" (2025)

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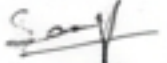
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled "Ācārāṅga and Personality Development" by UJJAWAL DAGA has been submitted under my guidance. She has completed the following requirements as per Ph.D. regulation of the University rules:-

- (a) Course Work as per the University rules.
- (b) Residential requirements of the university.
- (c) Regularly submitted six monthly progress reports.
- (d) Presented her work in the departmental seminar.
- (e) Published/accepted minimum of Two research papers in a UGC Care Listed Research Journal.

I recommend the submission of thesis.


(Dr Samani Sangeet Pragya)
Supervisor