Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

The crisis of ethical values in modern times is traced to a narrow perception of the good life. Discuss.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Materialism; consumerism; narrow definition of success; individualism; declining empathy; social responsibility; ethical education; holistic well-being

Model Answer

Introduction

A narrow perception of the good life equates success with wealth, status and consumption. When material achievement dominates, ethical responsibilities and collective welfare may be neglected.

How It Creates an Ethical Crisis

- **Materialism:** Excessive consumption encourages greed and status competition.
- **Instrumental relationships:** People may prioritise personal benefit over trust, loyalty and compassion.
- **Unethical success:** Corruption, cheating and exploitation may be justified as shortcuts to achievement.
- **Social indifference:** Excessive individualism weakens concern for disadvantaged groups and public welfare.
- **Environmental harm:** Unrestrained consumption disregards sustainability and intergenerational responsibility.

Way Forward

A broader understanding of the good life should combine material well-being with integrity, meaningful relationships and social contribution. Value-based education, ethical leadership and responsible citizenship can reinforce these principles.

Conclusion

Prosperity is important, but it cannot alone define a good life. Genuine well-being requires balancing personal success with justice, compassion and responsibility towards society.

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