



Mains Practice Question

Q. “Compassion and tolerance are not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength.” What does this quote mean in the present context? (150 words)

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Approach

- Start your answer by explaining the quote.
- Describe the relevance of the quote with reference to current times.
- Conclude with explaining how this could help framing one's character in today's time.

Introduction

This quote suggests that having compassion and tolerance towards others, even in difficult or challenging situations, does not make a person weak. Instead, it implies that showing empathy and understanding towards others, even those with different beliefs or opinions, requires a great deal of inner strength and emotional maturity.

Body

- In today's world, where power is considered to as the weapon of the strong. That is, to the extent that one can dominate others, is the extent to which he or she is powerful. But this understanding of power has been shown to be inadequate and even misleading by the likes of none other than Gandhiji, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther king.
- For Gandhiji, non-violence is the weapon of the strong. Whenever any situation of conflict arises, we have 2 options- either to lash out in anger and emotions or to be cool and compassionate and try to work around the issue. In the contemporary context, the perception is such that the former response is often seen as assertive and desirable while the latter is dismissed as being timid and weak. But before arriving at such premature conclusions, we must pause and ask ourselves the utility of a belligerent response and if we really need it. Most of the time, we'd find that a balanced, tolerant, and sensitive approach works much better.
- Compassion and tolerance can be a strength as they allow individuals to understand and empathize with others' struggles and viewpoints, which can foster stronger relationships and create a more supportive environment. These qualities can serve as a binding force to keep our society intact.

Conclusion

- By being compassionate and tolerant, one can handle situations in a more peaceful and constructive manner, rather than reacting with anger or aggression. This approach can lead to more positive outcomes, as it promotes understanding and cooperation instead of conflict and hostility.

