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Hanuman & ADR Skills and Techniques: A Contemporary Approach through Ramayana Verses

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Abstract:

Hanuman is a central figure in Hindu mythology, known for his unwavering devotion, strength and loyalty. He is attributed with numerous characteristics such as Devotion, Strength, Bhakti, Wisdom, Loyalty, Courage, Chastity and Compassion. Hanuman is a beloved figure in Hinduism and his story continues to inspire millions of people in their spiritual journeys. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) refers to various methods and processes used to resolve disputes or conflicts outside of traditional litigation or the formal court system. ADR methods are often chosen as an alternative to going to court because they can be faster, more cost-effective and less

adversarial. In light of the same, this chapter deals with ADR Skills and Techniques associated with Hanuman. The character of Hanuman and his skilful mediation and negotiations have been discussed in this chapter. It mainly discusses Hanuman's conversations with various characters of the Ramayana and how he mediated and negotiated with those characters. The chapter also discusses the skills of Hanuman and their relevance to the contemporary era, with special relevance to the mediators of the 21st century.

Key Words: Hanuman, Skills, Techniques, Mediation, Negotiation, ADR

I. Introduction

Hanuman's conversations and interactions are spread throughout the Ramayana and they can be found in various Kandas (books or sections) of the epic. There are some of the primary Kandas in which Hanuman's conversations and actions are significant.

1. Sundara Kanda: The Sundara Kanda, often referred to as the 'Book of Beauty' or the 'Book of Hanuman', is the fifth Kanda in the Ramayana. This section primarily focuses on Hanuman's journey to Lanka, his encounter with various characters, including Sita, and his interactions with Ravana and other demons. Many of Hanuman's verses and conversations can be found in this Kanda.

2. Kishkindha Kanda: The Kishkindha Kanda, which is the fourth Kanda of the Ramayana, contains episodes related to the monkey kingdom of Kishkindha, including Hanuman's mediation between Sugriva and Vali. While it doesn't feature as many conversations with Hanuman as the Sundara Kanda, it provides essential context for his character.

3. Aranya Kanda: The Aranya Kanda, the third Kanda of the Ramayana, includes some episodes involving Hanuman, especially his initial encounter with Lord Rama and his introduction to Sugriva.

4. Yuddha Kanda: The Yuddha Kanda or the 'Book of War' focuses on the great battle between Lord Rama's army and Ravana's forces in Lanka. While Hanuman's role in this Kanda is more action-oriented than conversational, it contains his heroic deeds and participation in the war.

These Kandas collectively highlight Hanuman's various interactions and conversations with different characters, showcasing his diplomatic, mediation and negotiation skills as well as his unwavering devotion to Lord Rama.

II. Hanuman: ADR VIS-À-VIS Rama & Sugriva, and Sugriva & Bali

a) Conversation between Hanuman, Rama and Sugriva

The Ramayana features numerous conversations between Hanuman, Lord Rama, and Sugriva. Hanuman served as a trusted messenger and advisor to Sugriva and played a crucial role in facilitating communication between Sugriva and Lord Rama. Here is a summarised version of a conversation that reflects their interactions:

Scene: Sugriva and Hanuman meet Lord Rama in the forest.

Lord Rama (Addressing Sugriva): Sugriva, I understand that you seek my help to

defeat Vali and regain your kingdom. Is this true?

Sugriva (Bowing respectfully): Yes, my Lord. Vali, my brother, unjustly banished me from our kingdom and I have been living in exile. I beseech your assistance in this matter.

Hanuman (Interjecting respectfully): Lord Rama, this is Sugriva, the rightful king of Kishkindha. He has suffered greatly and seeks your aid to defeat Vali.

Lord Rama (Assessing the situation): I believe in justice and dharma. If Sugriva's cause is just, I am willing to help. But first, I must understand the details of your conflict.

Sugriva (Explaining): My Lord, Vali banished me after accusing me of conspiring with his enemies. He unjustly took my wife and kingdom. Please help me regain what is rightfully mine.

Hanuman (Supporting Sugriva): Lord Rama, Sugriva has suffered long enough. He deserves justice and his loyalty to you is unwavering.

Lord Rama (Making a decision): Very well, Sugriva, I agree to help you. Hanuman, you will be our messenger and advisor. Convey my intentions to Sugriva and let us work together to resolve this matter.

Hanuman (Accepting the responsibility): I am honoured, my Lord. I will ensure that your message is conveyed accurately to Sugriva and together, we will achieve justice.

This conversation represents the initial interaction between Lord Rama, Sugriva and Hanuman, setting the stage for their alliance. Hanuman's role as a mediator and messenger was pivotal in bringing the two parties together, leading to their collaboration in the quest to defeat Vali and restore Sugriva's kingdom. This alliance ultimately played a central role in Ramayana's narrative.

b) Mediating between Rama and Sugriva

In the Kishkindha Kanda, Hanuman acted as a mediator between Lord Rama and Sugriva, who had pledged his support to Rama in return for help in defeating Vali and regaining his throne.

Here is a paraphrased reference to Hanuman's mediation: Hanuman, as Sugriva's trusted advisor, conveyed Rama's request for assistance. He ensured that Sugriva understood the importance of honouring their alliance with Lord Rama and provided the necessary mediation to strengthen their cooperation.

c) Conversation between Hanuman, Sugriva and Vali

The conversation between Hanuman, Sugriva and Vali took place in the Indian epic, the Ramayana, during the Kishkindha Kanda (Book of Kishkindha). It is a pivotal moment in the story when Sugriva, with Hanuman's help, confronted Vali to resolve their longstanding feud over the throne of Kishkindha. Here is a summarised version of their conversation:

Sugriva (Addressing Vali): Vali, after years of exile and suffering, I have found a friend in Lord Rama. He has agreed to help me regain my kingdom. It is time to end our conflict and restore peace to Kishkindha.

Vali (Defiant): Sugriva, you betrayed me by taking shelter in a cave and conspired with my enemy, Rama. You deserve to be punished for your disloyalty.

Sugriva (Explaining his actions): Vali, you abandoned your duties as a king and your actions have caused suffering to our subjects. I had no choice but to seek help from Rama. Let us resolve our differences and rule together as brothers.

Hanuman (Mediating): Vali, Sugriva is sincere in his desire for reconciliation. Lord Rama values dharma (righteousness) and will ensure justice. It's time to end this feud for the greater good

of Kishkindha.

Vali (Considering the proposal): If you truly seek reconciliation, Sugriva, then we shall settle this matter through a fair duel. Let the strongest one rule Kishkindha.

Sugriva (Accepting the challenge): I agree, Vali. Let this duel be conducted fairly, without any deceit or trickery.

Hanuman (Ensuring fairness): Vali, as Sugriva's loyal minister, I will ensure the duel is conducted according to dharma, with no foul play.

d) Hanuman as a Demonstrator of the Rule of Law

The conversation set the stage for the great duel between Vali and Sugriva, with Hanuman acting as a mediator and ensuring that the contest was conducted fairly. Ultimately, Sugriva emerged victorious, leading to his coronation as the king of Kishkindha. This mediation and resolution of the conflict demonstrate the importance of dharma, i.e., Rule of Law and justice, including Natural Principles, equity and good conscience, in the Ramayana and highlight Hanuman's role as a wise and diplomatic advisor to Sugriva.

e) Hanuman Mediating and Negotiating

One of the most significant feats of mediation by Hanuman occurred when

he helped resolve the longstanding feud between Sugriva and Vali, two monkey brothers who were at odds over the kingship of Kishkindha.

Mediating with the Vanaras (Monkey Warriors): Hanuman was instrumental in maintaining discipline and order among the monkey warriors during their search for Sita. His mediation skills came into play when disputes or disagreements arose within the monkey army. His ability to calm tensions and foster unity ensured that the mission remained focused and productive.

Negotiating with Sugriva: Before Hanuman became a messenger for Lord Rama, he was a trusted minister and diplomat in the monkey kingdom of Kishkindha under King Sugriva. Hanuman often played a crucial role in diplomatic negotiations within the monkey kingdom, mediating disputes and resolving conflicts.

Mediating between Sugriva and Vali: In Kishkindha Kanda (Book of Kishkindha), Valmiki's Ramayana narrates how Hanuman played a pivotal role in mediating between Sugriva and Vali, the two monkey brothers who were engaged in a bitter feud over the throne of Kishkindha. In this context, Hanuman conveyed Lord Rama's message to

Sugriva, urging him to seek reconciliation with Vali. Here is a paraphrased reference to Hanuman's mediation: Hanuman approached Sugriva, carrying Rama's message of friendship and assistance. He advised Sugriva to seek a peaceful resolution with Vali and end the conflict that had plagued their kingdom for too long.

Mediating between Rama and Sugriva: After becoming king, Sugriva faced another challenge when Lord Rama sought his assistance in locating his kidnapped wife, Sita. Hanuman served as a mediator between Lord Rama and Sugriva, helping them form an alliance. He facilitated their understanding and cooperation, which was essential to Lord Rama's mission to rescue Sita and defeat Ravana.

III. Hanuman: ADR VIS-À-VIS Vibhishana

a) Conversation between Hanuman and Vibhishana

The conversation between Hanuman and Vibhishana is a significant episode from the Indian epic, the Ramayana. Vibhishana was the younger brother of Ravana, the demon king of Lanka, but he chose to align himself with Lord Rama and his righteous cause. When Hanuman and the monkey army arrived in Lanka to

search for Sita, they encountered Vibhishana, who had turned against his own brother due to his disapproval of Ravana's actions. Here is a summarised version of their conversation:

Hanuman (Addressing Vibhishana): Who are you, and why do you stand apart from Ravana's forces?

Vibhishana (With humility): I am Vibhishana, the younger brother of Ravana. However, I have renounced his evil ways and injustice. I have sought refuge with Lord Rama, who represents dharma (righteousness), and I am committed to helping him in his quest to rescue Sita.

Hanuman (Impressed by Vibhishana's devotion to righteousness): It is a noble decision to stand for dharma, even when it means going against your own family. Tell me, how can we trust you, and how can you help us in our mission to find Sita?

Vibhishana (With sincerity in his voice): My devotion to Lord Rama is unwavering and I can provide valuable information about the layout of Lanka, its defences and the whereabouts of Sita. I can guide you in your efforts to reach her and defeat Ravana's forces.

Hanuman (Expressing gratitude): Your assistance is most welcome, Vibhishana. We share the same goal – the rescue of

Sita and the defeat of Ravana. Together, we can work towards this righteous cause.

Vibhishana's decision to side with Lord Rama and Hanuman's acceptance of his help played a pivotal role in the eventual victory of Lord Rama's army over Ravana. Vibhishana's knowledge of Lanka and his commitment to dharma were valuable assets in the battle against evil. This encounter exemplifies the themes of righteousness and the power of alliances in the Ramayana.

b) Hanuman: ADR and Diplomacy

Hanuman also played a crucial role in negotiating an alliance between Lord Rama and Vibhishana, Ravana's brother who is disenchanted with Ravana's tyranny. Hanuman's diplomacy helped win Vibhishana's trust and convince him to defect to Rama's side. Vibhishana's defection proved instrumental in the eventual victory of Lord Rama's army over Ravana.

IV. Hanuman: ADR VIS-À-VIS Sita

a) Conversation between Hanuman and Sita

Hanuman: Jai Shri Ram, Devi Sita! I am Hanuman, the devoted disciple of Lord Rama. I have come to Lanka in search of you, carrying his message.

Sita: Jai Shri Ram, Hanuman! How blessed I am to see a devotee of my beloved Rama in this dreadful place. Please tell me, how is my Lord? Is he safe?

Hanuman: Devi Sita, do not worry. Lord Rama is safe and determined to rescue you from the clutches of Ravana. He is filled with sorrow due to your separation and is tirelessly searching for you.

Sita: Thank you for bringing me this solace, Hanuman. I have endured so much in this captivity, and my only hope has been the thought of Rama's love and valour. How did you find me here in Lanka?

Hanuman: I leaped across the vast ocean with the strength bestowed upon me by Lord Rama. The wind god, Vayu, guided my flight and I searched every corner of Lanka until I finally found you in Ashoka Vatika.

Sita: Your devotion and bravery are truly unmatched, Hanuman. But please tell me, what message does Rama have for me?

Hanuman: Lord Rama wants you to know that he is coming for you. He has gathered a mighty army of Vanaras (monkeys) and allies, including me, the great warriors Sugriva, Lakshmana and others. They are determined to defeat

Ravana and bring you back to Ayodhya.

Sita (teary-eyed): Oh, Hanuman, please convey my love and longing to Rama. Tell him that every moment without him feels like an eternity and I yearn for the day when I can once again be in his arms.

Hanuman: I will deliver your message faithfully, Devi Sita. The entire army is filled with devotion and resolve and they will not rest until you are reunited with Lord Rama. Have faith, for your suffering will soon come to an end.

Sita (smiling through tears): Thank you, Hanuman. Your arrival has given me renewed hope and strength. Please stay with me for a while and tell me more about Lord Rama and his heroic deeds.

Hanuman: I would be honoured, Devi Sita. Let me share with you the stories of our beloved Rama and the countless miracles he has performed. May his tales fill your heart with courage and optimism during these challenging times.

And so, Hanuman stayed with Sita, narrating the epic stories of Lord Rama's bravery, righteousness and unwavering love. Their conversation provided comfort to Sita and strengthened her resolve to endure until the day of her reunion with Rama.

b) Hanuman as a Mediator between Rama and Sita

In the Sundara Kanda (Book of Sundara), Hanuman successfully found Sita in Lanka and engaged in a delicate conversation with her, serving as a mediator between Sita and Lord Rama. A paraphrased reference to Hanuman's mediation with Sita: Hanuman, with great compassion, conveyed Rama's message to Sita. He reassured her of Rama's unwavering love and determination to rescue her, acting as a mediator to comfort and strengthen her resolve during her captivity.

When Hanuman finally located Sita in Lanka, he skilfully served as a mediator between her and Lord Rama. He used his negotiation skills to assure her that he was a messenger from Lord Rama, sent to rescue her. He conveyed Rama's message and reassured Sita of Rama's love and determination to rescue her. He provided her with hope and comfort, assuring her of Rama's love and determination to rescue her. Hanuman's diplomatic approach helped comfort and strengthen Sita's resolve during her captivity. This diplomatic approach helped in gaining Sita's trust and cooperation.

V. Hanuman: ADR VIS-À-VIS Ravana

a) Conversation between Ravana and

Hanuman

The conversation between Ravana and Hanuman is a significant episode from the Indian epic, the Ramayana. In this encounter, Hanuman, the devoted follower of Lord Rama, infiltrated the city of Lanka (Ravana's kingdom) to search for Sita, who had been abducted by Ravana. When Hanuman was captured by Ravana's forces and brought before the demon king himself, a conversation took place between them.

Here is a summarised version of their conversation:

Ravana (Addressing Hanuman): Who are you and why have you come to Lanka?

Hanuman (Remaining calm and composed): I am Hanuman, a servant of Lord Rama. I have come here in search of Sita, the wife of Lord Rama, who was abducted by you. I am here to convey Lord Rama's message to her and assess her well-being.

Ravana (Amused): You are a mere monkey and yet you speak of challenging me, the mighty Ravana, the king of Lanka?

Hanuman (With unwavering determination): My strength comes from my devotion to Lord Rama. I am here on a mission of love and righteousness. Release Sita and seek forgiveness from

Lord Rama, for your actions have brought great sorrow to her and her family.

Ravana (Growing angry): You dare to advise me, Hanuman? I could crush you with a flick of my finger!

Hanuman (Smiling): If you have the power to crush me, then why haven't you been able to defeat Lord Rama and his army? Your power is no match for the righteousness and divine grace that protect them.

Ravana (Becoming furious): You are testing my patience, monkey! Tell me, what is it that you can do?

Hanuman (Grows in size and stature): I am the humble servant of Lord Rama and with his blessings, I can do the unimaginable. If you refuse to release Sita, I will burn Lanka to the ground with the fire of my devotion.

Ravana (Realising Hanuman's devotion and power): You may be a monkey, but you possess great strength and courage. I am impressed by your devotion to Lord Rama. Go, find Sita and convey to her that I am willing to release her if she agrees to become my queen.

Hanuman (Acknowledging Ravana's offer): I will deliver your message to Sita, but I know she will never accept your

proposal. Lord Rama will come to rescue her and your tyranny will be destroyed.

After this conversation, Hanuman proceeded to find Sita and convey Ravana's message to her. However, Sita remained steadfast in her devotion to Lord Rama and Hanuman's mission to Lanka eventually led to the events that culminated in the great battle between Rama and Ravana.

b) Hanuman: ADR and Ravana

As mentioned earlier, Hanuman engaged in a conversation with Ravana, the demon king of Lanka, when he was captured. While this interaction is primarily about delivering Lord Rama's message and demanding Sita's release, it also showcases Hanuman's ability to engage in diplomatic communication even with those who are considered adversaries.

One of the most famous examples of Hanuman's negotiation skills is the conversation he had with Ravana, the demon king of Lanka, when he was brought before him as a captive. Despite being in a vulnerable position, Hanuman remained composed and eloquently conveyed Lord Rama's message to Ravana. He advised Ravana to release Sita and seek forgiveness, offering a peaceful resolution to the conflict. This

demonstrates Hanuman's diplomacy even in the face of a powerful adversary.

VI. Hanuman's Ability to Mediate and Negotiate

Hanuman, a central character in the Indian epic, the Ramayana, is known not only for his immense physical strength and unwavering devotion to Lord Rama but also for his diplomatic and negotiation skills. His ability to negotiate is exemplified in several instances in the Ramayana. Hanuman's mediation skills in the Ramayana are evident throughout the epic. He serves as a mediator and diplomat in various situations, helping to resolve conflicts and foster cooperation.

1. Hanuman's ability to negotiate and communicate effectively: This was not just a result of his intelligence but also stemmed from his unwavering devotion and commitment to Lord Rama's mission. His diplomatic efforts contributed significantly to the success of Lord Rama's quest to rescue Sita and defeat Ravana, making him not only a symbol of physical strength but also of intellectual and emotional prowess.

2. Hanuman's ability to mediate: Hanuman, a prominent character in the Indian epic, the Ramayana, is known for his remarkable ability to mediate and resolve conflicts. While he is primarily

celebrated for his physical strength and unwavering devotion to Lord Rama, his mediation skills played a crucial role in maintaining peace and harmony within the monkey kingdom of Kishkindha and facilitating various key events in the epic.

Hanuman's mediation skills are a testament to his intelligence, wisdom and dedication to the principles of righteousness (dharma). He often served as a bridge between the conflicting parties, facilitating understanding, reconciliation and cooperation. His contributions in this regard not only played a pivotal role in the Ramayana's narrative but also highlighted his multifaceted character as a diplomat and peacemaker, in addition to being a symbol of physical strength and devotion.

Throughout these episodes in the Ramayana, Hanuman's mediation skills shine as he bridged gaps between individuals and facilitated dialogue, understanding and cooperation, all in service of Lord Rama's mission and the greater good. These skills further establish Hanuman as a diplomat and peacemaker in addition to his renowned devotion and strength.

3. Conflict Resolution: Hanuman was instrumental in mediating the conflict between Sugriva and Vali. He helped

Sugriva seek reconciliation with his estranged brother Vali by convincing Vali to engage in a fair combat to determine the rightful ruler of Kishkindha. Hanuman's role as a mediator in this crucial moment led to the resolution of a long-standing feud.

4. Alliance Building: Hanuman played a pivotal role in building an alliance between Lord Rama and Sugriva. He acted as a bridge between the two, conveying Rama's intentions and Sugriva's commitment to help Rama in the search for Sita. Hanuman's mediation skills facilitated the formation of a strong partnership between Rama and Sugriva.

5. Negotiation with Vibhishana: Hanuman successfully negotiated with Vibhishana, Ravana's brother, convincing him to switch sides and support Lord Rama. His diplomatic skills helped gain Vibhishana's trust and commitment to the righteous cause, ultimately leading to Vibhishana's alliance with Rama.

6. Mediating with Sita: When Hanuman met Sita in Lanka, he served as a mediator between her and Lord Rama. He conveyed Rama's message and assured Sita of Rama's love and determination to rescue her. Hanuman's diplomatic communication provided comfort to Sita during her captivity.

7. Mediating with Ravana: Hanuman's conversation with Ravana showcases his diplomacy even when facing a formidable adversary. He conveyed Rama's message and demanded Sita's release, maintaining composure and eloquence in his negotiations.

8. Resolution of Internal Conflicts: Hanuman also played a role in resolving internal conflicts within the monkey army. His wisdom and mediation skills helped maintain discipline and unity among the monkey warriors during their mission to find Sita.

9. Bridge-building with Varuna: When Lord Rama and his army needed to cross the ocean to reach Lanka, Hanuman negotiated with Varuna, the ocean god, to allow them to build a bridge (Rama Setu). His diplomatic efforts ensured the cooperation of the elements in their mission.

VII. Hanuman as a 21st Century Mediator

Hanuman, the legendary figure from ancient Indian mythology, embodies several qualities and characteristics that could make him an effective mediator in the 21st century. While he is a mythological character, we can draw inspiration from his attributes to apply them to modern mediation contexts.

Here's how Hanuman's qualities could translate into a 21st-century mediator:

1. Effective Communication Skills:

Hanuman was an eloquent and persuasive communicator. In the 21st century, a mediator should possess excellent communication skills, including active listening, empathy and the ability to convey complex ideas clearly and concisely. Hanuman's communication skills can serve as a model for modern mediators to foster understanding and facilitate dialogue.

2. Neutrality and Impartiality:

Hanuman's unwavering devotion to Lord Rama is an example of his neutrality and impartiality. In mediation, it is essential for the mediator to remain neutral and not take sides. Hanuman's commitment to righteousness (dharma) can inspire mediators to uphold ethical standards and ensure a fair process.

3. Conflict Resolution Expertise:

Hanuman played a pivotal role in resolving conflicts, such as the feud between Sugriva and Vali. In the 21st century, mediators often deal with complex interpersonal and organisational disputes. Hanuman's ability to mediate and find common ground can be a source of inspiration for modern mediators working to resolve conflicts.

4. Bridge-builder: Hanuman's ability to bridge gaps between different parties is a valuable quality for mediators in the 21st century. Mediators often act as bridges between conflicting parties, helping them understand each other's perspectives and work towards mutually beneficial solutions.

5. Cultural Sensitivity: Hanuman's adaptability and respect for diverse cultures and beliefs can serve as a reminder for modern mediators to be culturally sensitive. In a globalised world, mediators often work with parties from diverse backgrounds and understanding cultural nuances is crucial for effective mediation.

6. Diplomacy and Negotiation Skills:

Hanuman's conversations with Ravana and Vibhishana demonstrate his diplomacy and negotiation skills. Mediators today need to excel in negotiation and diplomacy to facilitate agreements and resolve disputes amicably.

7. Persistence and Dedication:

Hanuman's unwavering dedication to his mission is a valuable trait for mediators. Mediation often requires persistence and commitment to seeing the process through to a resolution, even when faced with challenges.

8. Conflict Transformation: Hanuman's role in transforming conflicts into alliances, such as convincing Vibhishana to switch sides, showcases his conflict transformation abilities. In the 21st

century, mediators aim not only to resolve conflicts but also to transform relationships and promote long-term reconciliation.

Conclusion

Throughout the Ramayana, Hanuman's mediation skills are characterised by his ability to communicate effectively, negotiate peacefully and facilitate understanding between different parties. His unwavering commitment to righteousness (dharma) and his dedication to Lord Rama's mission make him an exemplary mediator and diplomat, contributing significantly to the epic's plot and the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

While Hanuman is a mythical character, his qualities and attributes can serve as a source of inspiration for mediators in the 21st century. Modern mediators can draw upon these qualities to enhance their skills and contribute to peaceful conflict resolution and effective communication in diverse and complex situations.

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