**Essay Question:**

**Read Lines II.34 and II.35 from chapter two of the Yoga Sutra’s of Patanjali. Summerize, in your own words, the meaning of these sutra’s. Explain how they can be used in your life, with people you find difficult, in your practice and in teaching your students.**

11.34

“Negative thoughts are violence, ect. They may be performed, performed on one's behalf by another, or authorized by oneself; they may be triggered by greed, anger, or delusion; and they may be slight, moderate, or extreme in intensity. One should cultivate counteracting thoughts, namely, that the end results are ongoing suffering and ignorance.”

The first part of this sutra means for me that harm and violence can take many different forms, we can be the direct or indirect cause of it, but also, just approving it is also harm or violence, even though we are not the person performing the act. Further than that, negative thoughts are violence. Even though some negative thoughts are about things or others, most of our negative thoughts are about ourselves, but how can we be of service to others, kind to others and love others if we don’t first give ourselves our love and respect?

Another reflexion about this is whether it is violence not to say anything while witnessing an act of violence. If our life is in danger, I think the question is different, but if reporting or saying our disapproval can be done without being in danger, I think we should do it, and that not doing it is an act of violence. Of mild intensity one might say, but an act of violence anyway, because you are letting the violence perpetuate, while you could have performed an act showing your disapproval.

The second part for me explains who to counteract these negative thoughts or act of violence. For me it clearly refers to the Yamas and the Niyamas. One should cultivate these qualities and practice meditation, self forgiveness, separation and observation of the emotions in order to counteract and tend towards elimination of the negative thoughts. Also, it means for me, that we are humans, perfection is not what we are, and that is a good thing as life would have no purpose!

That being said, this sutra then means for me one walks that path towards the end of suffering and ignorance by being remembered to notice when negative thoughts or act of violence occur with the help of tools and values like the Yamas and the Niyamas.

11.35

“In the presence of one who is established in nonviolence, enmity is abandoned.”

or

“That person (tat) who is deeply rooted (pratiṣṭāyāṁ) in the art of kindness (ahiṁsā) affects those around (sannidhau) him/her by causing them to give up (tyāgaḥ) their aggressiveness (vaira).”

This sutra means for me that one who is far on the path of kindness, who forgives her/himself, distantiated her/himself from the ego, is able to love her/himself, puts into application daily the Yamas and the Niyamas, etc., is radiates on others these same qualities. In other words, by being kind and respectful to others, others tend to let go of their anger and become more kind and respectful themselves.

I wonder if that could be linked to the human capacity of mimicking. It also makes me think that we are social beings. We want to fit in and be accepted. So we tend to unconsciously imitate the person in front of us. That is just a reflexion, but it could be interesting to further the investigation. Therefore, does the simple act of being respectful of oneself and others inspire others to do the same?