**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.**

**II.34 vitarkā-hiṁsā-ādayaḥ-kṛta-kārita-anumoditāḥ-lobha-krodha-moha-pūrvakāḥ mṛdu-madhya-adhimātrāḥ duḥkha-ajñāna-ananta-phalāḥ iti pratipakṣa-bhāvanam
Translation** : When our thoughts are clouded (vitarkā) we often act while ‘drunk’ with greed (lobha), anger (krodha) or infatuation (moha). Regardless of whether our actions are mild (mṛdu), moderate (madhya) or strong (adhimātrāḥ), and regardless of whether the act was done by us (kṛta), or we caused it (kārita), or even approved of it (anumoditāḥ), the consequences (phalāḥ) are unlimited (ananta) suffering (duḥkha) and ignorance (ajñāna). Therefore (iti), we should cultivate a different (pratipakṣa) mental attitude (bhāvanam).

**Meaning** :  This sutra is about the chain of reactions that happens when we are not actively practicing the yamas (kindness, honesty, moderation) and niyamas (gratitude, reflection and surrender)

**II.35 ahiṁsā-pratiṣṭāyāṁ tat-sannidhau vairatyāgaḥ**

**Translation:** 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).

**Meaning :** Love and kindness is contagious. Non reaction to aggressiveness leads to pacification.

Those Sutras are important teachings. They remind us the importance of being mindful in our daily life. They stress that if we are on autopilot mode, we got carried away by our conditioning and our biased view of the world. This, inevitably leads to conflict and cause us to harm others and ourselves. As we are not Buddhas (..yet), we will still react, generating negative thoughts or actions towards what we see as different from us. Instead of condemning or blaming ourselves, therefore generating more negativity within, we should apply love and kindness to ourselves and by any means, reflect upon our actions and reactions, making sure to understand what triggered them. As Krishnamurti said: "We can bring about a transformation in ourselves only when we understand the process of our own thinking."

People who we meet in our daily life have a different perception of the world and are stuck in their own patterns. Self-reflection allows us to be less ignorant, to realize that what we do to others, we do it to ourselves. The more we put a light on our own flaws the less we find people difficult. We stop seeing the world as a dichotomy and we can see the interconnectedness of everything around us. As a teacher, we need to be ourselves, drop the mask, live by example and be honest about our limitation. We need to be conscious of the effect we have on students : our words, comments, mood and own patterns have repercussions on others. After all, our mission is to create a safe and peaceful space for people to connect with themselves. We don't own the truth, so we need to ask self-reflecting questions instead of making students follow commands. We have to learn to put our ego aside. It requires tremendous focus and patience towards ourselves and others in order to become *mind like water*. Everything change when we understand that people are not difficult, they just don't fit in our personal scenario (that we imagine to be the right one) Under different circumstances, we could have been this person.
Ram Dass once said: “I would like my life to be a statement of love and compassion–and where it isn’t, that’s where my work lies.”. If our aim is to love everyone, our biggest teachers are the people that annoy the ego the most.