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Dictionaries usually define "patriotism" and "nationalism" as synonymous, except sometimes a second meaning to "nationalism" as an excessive or jingoist form of patriotism. Both are seen to mean "a loyal devotion to one's own country or nation above the others." Yet, though related to each other, their main differences lie in patriotism's chiefly being an attitude, whereas nationalism is an ideology. Nationalism is the political philosophy of modern nation-states who regard national sovereignty and freedom for national self-realization as the fundamental rights of the nation.

The philosophical problems, however, relate to the differences in definitions of a "nation" as civic, cultural, religious, linguistic, or racial. These differences in definitions create the different types of nationalisms preached and practiced in the world. The difficulty, at grass-root levels, lies in the common man's inability to discern the political intentions behind such definitions. The roots of modern humanism, which has become the political ideology of secular states such as India, trace back to the Renaissance (1350-1600). The Renaissance is considered to be a "rebirth" of classical humanism, especially in its cultural forms of art, literature, and architecture. Modern day humanism may be defined as the theory that views humans as solely responsible for the promotion and development of individuals. It emphasizes a concern for man in relation to the world.

Some people may consider patriotism as a form of group loyalty; but it is more than that. In patriotism, we develop an innate love towards the nation in which we are habitants. It is not that we come into this earth with this love; as we grow gradually, we develop this bond with our nation. The teachings that we get in our initial years facilitate the development of this bond. It is from our school text books that we came to know about the freedom struggle, the great freedom fighters and the glorious history of India. But it is seen in recent years that many evil forces are functioning all around the world that are manipulating the young generation for the benefit of their own. The differences between people related to casts, regional boundaries and language causing fights between communities which are great threats to the national integrity of the country. So it has become very important to infuse the spirit of nationalism and patriotism among the growing generation of our country.

Parents are the first teachers in a child's life. They can guide well their kids and can make them aware about national patriotism. Kids should learn to work mutually in their community first to develop the sense of patriotism. Taking kids to the national parade or telling them stories about the great warriors and freedom fighters of the country can help them in developing a love for the nation. In our childhood days, we used to celebrate the national events like Independence Day or Republic Day with our family members. This developed a sense of gratitude to the glorious history of the past. While some may see patriotism as outdated or out of fashion, we have felt a need to pass on feelings of patriotism to our children. Patriotism helps children feel connected to something bigger than themselves and that connection is worth the effort.

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