

# Bhagawat Geeta, Class 85: Chapter 6; Verses: 9 and 10

Swamiji summarizes Lord Krishna's discussion thus far:

1. The topic of Bahiranga saadhana. These are the general disciplines to be observed by a person who wants his meditation to be successful.
2. Samatvam (equanimity) as one discipline, the importance of self-confidence, self-effort and self-integration of various personalities (the physical, the psychological, the intellectual). If a person takes care of all these disciplines, then the self-knowledge is very easy.
3. Krishna then mentioned the benefit of gaining the self-knowledge. This comes in the form of a total change of one's perspective of the world. According to Vedanta, the world does not have an intrinsic capacity to bind, to persecute, torment or disturb an individual. The individual gives the power to the world to disturb them. This occurs when a person has an unhealthy perspective of the world. The perspective is in your hands!

Chapter 6 Sloka 9

Chapter 6 Sloka 9

in the goodhearted, in friends, in enemies, in the indifferent, in neutrals, in haters, and in relatives in the righteous also and in the unrighteous one who has equal mind excels.

The yogis look upon all-well-wishers, friends, foes, the pious, and the sinners-with an impartial intellect. The yogi who is of equal intellect toward friend, companion, and foe, neutral among enemies and relatives, and impartial between the

righteous and sinful, is distinguished among humans.

In this verse, Krishna says, not only does a jnaani have samtvam regarding inanimate objects, he has the sama darshanam regarding the living beings as well. Equanimity towards the living beings is more difficult, esp. with human living beings. When we befriend a person, we develop raga, dvesha, krodha, etc. Krishna has given a wide range of human beings.

द्वेषुः means by his very nature he is a well-wisher of everyone and will help anyone without any conditions or expectations.

द्वेषुः another good person but this person is a conditional helper – helps only when the other is a known person.

द्वेषुः (not seen separately due to the sandhi) means enemy

द्वेषुः: means an indifferent person. He does not harm nor do any good. द्वेषुः: a mediator.

द्वेषुः: one who is hateful; one who provokes hatred by his behavior

द्वेषुः: a relative; connected by family relation.

द्वेषुः: a noble person who follows dharma. द्वेषुः means a person doing good to others. A द्वेषुः: is a person leading a life of values, whether an opportunity arises to help others or not.

द्वेषुः one who leads a life of द्वेषुः – an unrighteous person.

These are the various types of people. A jnaani's attitude towards all of them is equanimity.

How can you see all the people equally when one person is a saint and another a criminal? The द्वेषुः must be understood very well. This was discussed in Chapter 5, Verse 18 as द्वेषुः |

Swamiji explains द्वेषुः again.

Samatvam can be looked at from two angles:

- the philosophical and
- freedom from raga-dvesha.

The philosophical angle means that a jnaani looks at the true nature of everyone. This is the atma-svaroopam. All the differences in character belongs to the anatma or the body-mind complex. Behind this body-mind complex, everyone has only one reality, God! God or atma is uniformly present in everyone; therefore, everyone is innately good. A jnaani's vision is samtvam – that everyone is a beautiful atma.

The other angle of samatvam is that it is freedom from raga and dvesha. Neither attachment nor hatred. Both are forms of dependence. Attachment is the dependence on the presence of an object. Hatred is the dependence upon the absence of the object. A jnaani is samatvam means he doesn't have attachment and hatred. Neither a presence or absence of something or someone affects him.

## Chapter 6 Sloka 10

Yogi should let his mind steady constantly engaged in solitude remaining alone one with the mind and the body controlled free from hope noncovetousness. 6.10

Yogi the Yogi should let him keep the mind steady constantly engaged in solitude remaining alone one with the mind and the body controlled free from hope noncovetousness.

Those who seek the state of Yogi should reside in seclusion, constantly engaged in meditation with a controlled mind and body, getting rid of desires and possessions for enjoyment.

Krishna talks about the Antaranga Saadhanam from Verse 10 to Verse 15. These are specific disciplines to be observed just before meditation (Bahiranga sadhana is observed throughout all our transactions).

Krishna discusses 8 steps/stages in Antaranga saadhana. Meditation will be effective, if these steps are observed.

Stage 1: स्थान नियमः Desha NiyamaH

- स्थानम् a secluded place of meditation with minimum disturbances.
- स्थानम् alone; try to be alone.
- Let the place be spiritually and physically clean. The space should be associated with spirituality; puja room, temple, ashrama etc.

Stage 2: काल नियमः Kaala NiyamaH (Krishna does not mention this).

- कालम् Early morning is ideal for meditation. But the ideal time for meditation is when you are relaxed and not sleepy.

Stage 3: आसनम् Aasana

- आसनम् where should you be seated? You can sit on a chair if you are not able to sit on the floor. The main aim is the mind!
- Every meditator should have his/her own aasanam. It should be neither too soft nor too hard. Neither too high nor too low.

Stage 4: शरीर स्थितिः Shareera SthitaH; Posture of the body

- You should sit steadily; Keep the neck and head straight and relaxed

Stage 5: प्राणसायम् Praanasaamyam

- Even breathing. The breathing should be relaxed and smooth.

Breathing and our thoughts are interconnected.

Stage 6: इन्द्रिय निग्रहः Indriya NigrahaH; Sensory restraint

- Sense organs can influence the mind since every sense organ is a gateway in which the world enters the mind.
- Krishna says to withdraw the sense organs by turning the mind away.
- Krishna specifically mentions the eyes – the most powerful sense organs. If the eyes are open, all the things seen enter the mind and triggers the thoughts to wander. When the eyes are closed, by laws of association, we tend to sleep. Krishna says, let the eyes be half-closed, as though you are looking at the tip of your nose.

#### Stage 7: मनु नग्रहाहः Mano NigrahaH; Withdrawal of the mind

- The mind must be withdrawn from mundane things; all the worldly roles you play in life as husband/wife/neighbor/mother etc. Each role has its set of anxieties and worries.
- For 15 minutes, shed all your roles. Become a sanyasi mentally. Relate to God or your Guru. These are the two relationships that have no problems.

Invoke the Guru. By law of association, you are reminded of the teachings. The relationship to the guru is in the context of teaching. Withdraw your mind; surrender to the Lord.

#### Stage 8: बुद्धि निश्चयाहः Buddhi NishchayaH

- Conviction regarding the necessity and utility of meditation. It should not be a mechanical routine. Need to meditate whole-heartedly, knowing the role of meditation.

With this conviction, sit in meditation, withdraw the sense organs; withdraw the mind. Now, you are fully available for meditation. These 8 steps are not meditation but specific preparation, called antaranga saadhanaani. The details will be discussed in the next class.

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# Bhagawat Geeta, Class 90, Chapter 6: Verses 20 to 22

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna has been talking about vedantic meditation that closely follows Ashtanga Yoga. Now he talks about the actual process of meditation and its culmination. As discussed in last class, culmination of meditation is the mental absorption in flow of similar thoughts also called Sajathiya pratyaya pravaha. In vedantic meditation, the

flow of thought should be dealing with the very nature of atma; and atma has got different features as we saw in the previous chapters, you can change the thought from one feature of atma to another feature of atma; but you should not change from atma to any other object.

Thus, Atma's features were discussed in chapters 2, 4 and 5 respectively. These features include: atma chaitanya svarupah; atma nityah; atma ekah and atma sarvagathah. The features were detailed in shlokas 12-25, chapter 2.

Vedantic meditation is impossible without having studied under a Guru. A non-vedantic student cannot perform Atma dhyanam. That is why Sri Krishna is introducing the topic after five chapters. Non-Vedantic students can, however, perform Upasana Dhyanam. Swamiji said we would have a guided meditation at the end of this chapter as well.

A vedantic student has learned the different features of atma from the guru and guru has pointed out how atma is the nature of consciousness. Thus, Atma is nitya, satyah, sarvagatah;



In this shloka two definitions are given.

**First definition of Samadhi is that it is Chitta Uparamanam or total relaxation of mind.** That is why the word samadhi is given different Sanskrit derivations; and one derivation given is sama dheehi yasmin saha; Samadhi. Sama means equanimous; tranquil, like a waveless lake. Kalidasa compares a lake to the mind of a gyani. In those days there were many Gyani's. Thus, Manas Sarovar means a lake like a mind of a Gyani.

How to tranquilize the mind? It is Chittam Nirudham or withdrawal of mind from the world that tranquilizes the mind. It means withdrawal of all roles such as of father, mother, worker etc. This is withdrawing the mind from An-atma prapancha. Keep in mind Shankaracharya's shloka:

na mē mr̥tyuśamkā na mē jātibhēdaḥ

pitā naiva mē naiva mātā na janma .

na bāndhurna mitraṁ gururnaiva śiṣyaḥ

cidānaṁdarūpaḥ śivō:'haṁ śivō:'ham .. 5

No bandhu; no mitram; no father; no mother. Come out of all relationships during meditation. This is called niruddham chittam.

Practicing it is a way of transforming life. Practicing Ashtanga Yoga's path of: Yama, Niyama ,Asana, Pranayama and Prathyahara will transform you. In these five steps one is following Antaranga and Bahiranga sadhanani. Here, the mind reaches a stage of deep silence.

## **Second:**

Atmanam Pashyan: Silencing the mind is not our aim. Silencing only gives temporary tranquility. Having silenced the mind, bring vedantic teaching into the silent mind. Thus, consider bringing the following mantra to mind:

manōbuddhyahaṁkāracittāni nāhaṁ

na ca śrōtrajivhē na ca ghrāṇanētrē .

na ca vyōmabhūmiḥ na tējō na vāyuḥ

cidānaṁdarūpaḥ śivō:'haṁ śivō:'ham .

Know the meaning of the mantra and meditate on it. One should see the Atma, as revealed by the Guru and shastras during sravanam of Vedanta; hence the need for Vedanta sravanam. Without it, Vedanta dhyanam is not possible.

Where does he see the Atma? He sees it in his mind by recollecting the teaching of his Guru. This is vedantic meditation. **It is like a cow chewing the cud.** And in shloka atmanam means the atma; atmani means the mind; and atmana, means with the help of the mind itself. **So, with help of mind see the Atma, in mind itself.** Here you see Atma as a Sakshi. **Atma darshanam is second definition of Samadhi.**

What benefit do I get? Suppose you have a clock. Do you notice its ticking during day time; Probably not. But at night, in bed, you can hear it clearly. Nothing changed with the clock. In daytime the outside disturbances overpower. In Nidhidhyasanam all other noises are removed. In Nidhidhyasanam, when I recollect the teaching, it has more impact. Thus, the teaching becomes stronger. Citing another example, on poornami day, at daytime, it is difficult to see the moon. But once it gets dark, you see the full moon. Did the moon suddenly brighten? No. In daylight, the moonlight was obscured and at night it became clear.

Similarly, during shravanam itself; knowledge does take place; every student gets the Teaching. In nidhidhyasanam he brings the same teaching into a silent mind; in a withdrawn mind, then the teaching becomes more powerful. Here Gyanam becomes Gyana nishta. It is strongly registered; and therefore the **second definition can be called atma darshanam.**





and need; luxury is that whose presence you enjoy; whose absence, you do not miss; need is that whose presence you do not recognize, whose absence you very badly feel.

For a Gyani everything in life is a luxury. When they are not there he does not miss them. Sanyasi's in Hrishikesh live on Bhiksha. They are used to it. Then tourists come. They want to feed the Sanyasi's with puri, halwa etc. Sanyasi's enjoy it knowing the next day they will be back on Roti and Dal.

So Sri Krishna says yam labdhva, having owned up this purnatvam, all the other aims in life; all other accomplishments become insignificant.

**Therefore, the fifth definition of Samadhi is athyantika labhah. It is the highest gain in front of which all the other gains are insignificant.**

They become insignificant in face of poornatvam.

**Sixth definition:** Remaining in Atma Nishta one is not shocked or shaken by the worst tragedy in life. Reacting to a situation, he says "What? When he hears about it at first, then changes to "so what"? He knows everything in life is subject to arrival and departure.

In shloka, the word guru is not a noun; rather it is an adjective, meaning, even by the heaviest sorrow.

**The sixth definition of Samadhi here is atyantika dukhena nivrithhi or total freedom from sorrow.**

**Take away:**

1. Vedantic meditation is recollecting and remembering all of Guru's teachings.
2. First definition of Samadhi is total relaxation of mind.
3. Second definition of Samadhi is with help of mind see the Atma, in mind itself.
4. Third definition of Samadhi is Atyantikam sukham or

limitless ananda. It is a state that is beyond sense pleasures.

5. Fourth definition of Samadhi is remaining in this absorption; or abiding in this atma; one does not deviate into anatma;
6. The fifth definition of Samadhi is athyantika labhah or obtaining poornatvam. It is the highest gain in front of which all the other gains are insignificant.
7. The sixth definition of Samadhi is atyantika dukhena nivrithhi or total freedom from sorrow.
8. Luxury versus need: luxury is that whose presence you enjoy; whose absence, you do not miss. Need is that whose presence you do not recognize, whose absence you very badly feel.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

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## **Baghawat Geeta, Class 89, Chapter 6, Verses 18 and 19**

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, after discussing the general and specific preparations to be taken care of before meditation, now, Sri Krishna is talking about the actual process of meditation itself. The

process of meditation includes dharana, dhyanam and samadhi. Dharana is focusing mind on object of meditation. This focusing happens only as a relevant thought modification. Thus, focusing on a tree means that tree is the object. In Sanskrit, we call it vriksha akara vritti; vriksha means tree; akara means the form of an object & vritti means a thought modification. So when I entertain vriksha akara vritti, my mind is focused on vrikshah; Ghatakara vritti is focusing on ghatah. Ishvara akara vritti is focusing on Ishvara and atmakara vritti is focusing on Atma

And after that, try to retain the flow of the same thought. Thus, vriksha akara vritti can stand for a moment alone, because every thought has got only a momentary life. No thought can exist continuously; it has only a momentary existence. Therefore, in Dhyanam, what I try, after entertaining vriksha akara vritti, is to have the next vritti also as vriksha akara vritti and continuing with the same thought. This repetition of same thought is technically called sajatiya prathyaya pravahah or the flow of similar thought with each thought dealing with the same object. This is called dhyanam. As a result of this attempt, which involves effort, which involves initiative, which involves deliberation, if a person follows naturally, after sometime, the mind gets into the groove of a similar thinking, by sheer habit, which you can also experience if you have attended akhanda nama bhajana.

In akhanda nama bhajan same name is repeated without a break. In this process the mind gets into a groove and thought gets deeply registered in subconscious mind. So, even after akhanda nama bhajan, that thought, such as Hare Rama or Om Namashivaya, keeps playing in our mind.

It is like an advertisement that keeps playing in our mind. The mind has a capacity to form Vasanas or impressions.

Samskara means vasanas and by the strength of that vasana that particular thought continues. It is like for pedaling the

cycle for sometime, and thereafter you do not cycle, but because of the momentum of the initial effort, the cycle continues to run for sometime. The same thing happens to the thought cycle also; once that vritti continues, my willpower is not required; and any vritti which takes place without our effort is called sukshma vritti; any vritti that occurs in our mind, without deliberate effort is called sukshma vritti, the om namasivayah mantra which goes on in your head

throughout the day, is a sukshma vritti. Sukshma vritti means subtle thoughts. When the subtle thought is taking place in your mind you are not even aware of

it since your mind's focus is not on it. This is called absorption in a particular thought and in this state of absorption the subject object division is not felt.

It is exactly as in deep sleep state. In sleep state, the subject-object division is not felt; but still there is a thought modification taking place in sleep. It is not a deliberately entertained thought; but it happens in the sleep. How do you know that such a thought took place in sleep? Because, after waking up, we say I slept well.

To have that experience, we should have gone through a thought modification and that thought modification is called sukshma vritti. It is this sukshma vritti, subtle thought, which registers the experience in the dormant mind which we activate in waking state.

**(Note: See explanation of Vrithi given below as a postscript.)**

After some time by sheer momentum the thought continues and that thought is called

sukshma vritti. In Sukshma Vritti the subject-object division is not manifest. The subject-object division exists but it is not manifest at that time. This state of the sukshma vritti continuation, this state of the subtle thought continuation,

is called absorption or Samadhi. Since the division is not manifest in that state it is called nirvikalpaka samadhi. Nirvikalpa samadhi is a state of division-less-ness. What division are we talking about? It is about the subject-object-instrument division. When we say that it is a state of division-less-ness one, we do not mean the divisions are absent; rather it means divisions are in un-manifest form.

An Acharya has given the example of water in which salt is dissolved. I, myself, have added the salt to the water. However, since it has become one with the water, **visibly** the salt is not there, although you know salt is there. In the same way, in absorption, thoughts are there but the thoughts are like the dissolved salt. They are there and they are capable of doing their functions, but they are not dominantly experienced. Such a state is called Nirvikalpaka samadhi. And Sri Krishna wants to talk about dharana, dhyana and samadhi in the verses Shloka's 18 and 19 respectively.

### **Shloka # 18:**

यदा यदाचित्तं प्रवृत्तं तदा तदात्मनि निवृत्तं  
यदा यदाचित्तं प्रवृत्तं तदा तदात्मनि निवृत्तं 6.18

**When the well-controlled mind abides solely in the Self, rid of cravings for objects of desires, one is said to be integrated in Yoga.**

In the shloka Viniyatam chittam means withdrawing mind from object. It means thoughts are not entertained. Thus, if my mind is in the office, it means Officeakara Vrithi is maintained. So one has to withdraw mind from office. Here mind withdraws from Anatma or objective universe. **Now, Anatma has three parts. They are: Whole world, Body and Mind.** So do not entertain thoughts related to these three. This is called Chittam Viniyatam. This is possible only by forming detachment from Anatma. So, if you are attached to a person, that thought keeps coming up. **Our Ragaha and Dveshaha dominate our**

**thoughts. Meditation, however, requires detachment.**

When the mind is rid of anatma akara vritti then the mind becomes free. When the mind is pre-occupied with the objective world, how can that mind be available for atma dhyanam? Therefore, withdraw the mind from the world then the mind abides in atma or the mind dwells in atma.

Atma being all pervading, the mind also rests in it. Mind cannot go out of Atma. If so, what does it mean when we say mind dwelling in Atma? It only means that you have thoughts related to that object, Atma.

If my mind dwells on Badrinath, it means I have thoughts related to Badrinath; therefore if the mind has to abide in atma it means the mind should entertain the thought modification's of one's associated with atma. Vedantic meditation is not thoughtlessness. Yoga does have thoughtless meditation. This, however, is not approved by the Vedas. They feel thoughtless meditation is of no use. We give importance to thought centered on Atma. The " I am Consciousness" principle by which the mind, body and thought are known also knows the thoughtless state of mind. This awareness is the witness (sakshi) of thoughtful and thoughtless mind.

The " I am" thought arises in consciousness. This thought, however, cannot disturb consciousness.

It is like my hand moving in the light; but the hand does not disturb the light; the light illumines the hand. Similarly "I" the consciousness illumines the thought, witnesses the thought, but the thoughts themselves do not disturb me; this is called asangatvam. So aham asangh; is one form of thought; aham sakshi is another form of thought; and these thoughts arrive and depart, but "I" never arrive and depart. It is exactly like the people entering a hall, the light illumines the hall; all the people vacate the hall, the empty hall is also illumined by the light; people come and go; hall gets

filled up and

vacated; but the light illumines the full hall, as well as vacated hall. Our mind is like the hall; the thoughts are like the people, and consciousness is like the light, however, "I" never come nor go.

While I have been talking ,you have been listening and even as you listen, your mind should have entertained relevant thoughts about Atma or Anatma. All the thoughts that you have been entertaining are dealing with Atma and this is called akhanda akara vrtti. Akhanda akara vrtti means any thought pattern connected with the consciousness or sakshi.

And entertaining this thought pattern, is called atmani avasthanam or it means dwelling in atma or abiding in atma. It is not thoughtlessness. I can have thoughts like aham ekahah; aham asangh; aham rupa rahitah; **I am formless, I illumine the formed body, but myself am formless, like the light illumines the formed hand, but the light itself is formless,** thus aham arupah, aham sakshi, aham asangh, aham nityah; aham

shuddhah; All these are called atma dhyanam.

And entertaining this thought pattern is called atmani avasthanam.

Therefore, Sri Krishna says, the mind abides in atma, entertaining the relevant thoughts and this state is called yogah or samadhih or state of absorption.

And as I said in the last class, samadhi itself is divided into two types. When effort is involved it is called Savikalpa Samadhi. It is a state where ego is dominant and individual effort is pronounced. Once this effort is maintained for some time and then it becomes an effortless process, like pedaling the cycle for some time then cycle moves on its own momentum. This is the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. It is a state of absorption.

And what is this state of mind like? An example is given in the next shloka.

### **Shloka # 19:**

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**As light in a windless spot stirs not, this is the simile of the Yogin whose mind is controlled and who applies himself to Yoga.**

Suppose a lamp is lighted. When kept in an open place, the flame flickers due to breeze. The direction depends on the breeze. In meditation, thought is like a flame. When I think of an object, within moments some other thought comes up without any awareness. This is the flickering mind. Now, when the mind is protected, like the lamp in an enclosure, the flame remains steady. This steady flame is an example of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. My Atmakara Vrithi is not disturbed.

**So, what can enclose the mind? What can protect it?**

**Mind is subtle and it requires Vairagyam and Bhakti as its enclosures.** What is Bhakti and Vairagyam? I will just give a clue. Details of these two topics I will discuss later. Sri Krishna discusses this in shloka 6.35 as well.

All our worries are because we cannot face the future. There are two types of future, the actual future and the imaginary future. The imaginary future threatens more than the actual. Questions come up like what will happen if I fall sick etc. Thus, the worry of future is a cause of disturbance. Only solution here is to surrender the future to God.

The second disturbance is due to attachment. If I do not worry about myself; I worry about my family members; what will happen to them; and how can I help them; etc. When such thought comes, you tell yourselves they will be better off,

without me; they will be taken care of by God.

And what is that disciplined mind doing? It is practicing atma dhyanam. Yogam in shloka means dhyanam. So, the un-flickering flame is an example of the restrained mind. Such a mind that is engaged in atma dhyanam reaches a state called samadhi.

So far Dhyana swaroopam was discussed. Shlokas # 20-23 are the culmination of Dhyanam. It is all about Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This is the consequence of ashtanga yoga. Nirvikalpa Samadhi can be in any field. It is our natural faculty. We had this faculty in full measure when we were babies. Babies when they see an ant or cockroach they want to catch them with single-minded attention. You cannot distract a baby. It is a faculty we have lost in the name of growing up and now further eroded with our worries.

An absorbing book, a thrilling one-day cricket match all have moments of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. There is no mysticism in it. We use this faculty in Vedanta to direct our mind to Atma. Seven definitions of Nirvikalpa Samadhi are given now.

### **Take away:**

**Atma:** I am formless, I illumine the formed body, but myself am formless, like the light illumines the formed hand, but the light itself is formless.

**Anatma:** Anatma has three parts. They are: Whole world, Body and Mind.

**How to keep mind steady in meditation?** The mind is subtle and it requires Vairagyam and Bhakti to keep it steady.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

P.S: Explanation of Vrithi from the internet:

Between the two compartments of thinking and perceiving of mind, though it is easy to stop the thinking part, it is verily hard nut to crack so far as the perceiving mind is concerned. According to the Advaitic theory of perception it is the consciousness within us which makes perception possible by uniting the consciousness in the object. The Vedantic theory of perception is that the mind comes out through the eye and assumes the shape of the object outside. A ray of the mind actually goes out assumes the shape and form of the object and envelops the object. Mental image coupled with the external something is the object, for whatever objects we see outside have got their own images in the mind. When we pass through a mango garden, a ray of the mind comes out through the eye and envelops the mango. When it assumes the shape of mango, the ray is termed as impression or Vritti. The enveloping process is called Vritti Vyapti. The veil that envelops mango is removed by the mental ray. As there is chaitanya associated with the vritti which illuminates the object 'Mango', this is called Phala vyapti.

When this vritti chaitanya illumines the object, then only does perception of mango take place. At this point, mind comes to function and does sankalpa – vikalpa by asking as to whether this is mango or not? Budhi (intellect) comes as a prop and determines from previous experience that this is mango. Chitta then makes enquiry "how can I get the mango?", "may I ask the gardener?" Ego asserts: "I must get the mango anyhow, as I want it." Then senses of actions are commanded by mind for execution. When we see a mango tree it is external to us as far as our body is concerned, for we know the existence of the tree through the mind only so also our body is as much external to us as the yonder mango tree for it is also a mental percept. They are mere appearances that float in the one absolute Reality. Now as the tree is external to body and body is also external to us, the idea of externality of this universe is blown up. There is internality with reference to externality and when externality goes away where



past to control you. One has to control the past. Surrender all experiences such as insults, pain etc., at Lord's feet. Say, " O God, you have given me all these experiences only for my inner growth. I do not have anger or hatred towards anyone. I surrender everything at your divine feet." Past is good, if we can learn from it, however, it can be a burden if it causes inferiority complex, hatred etc. Then, the past is a bad experience. **Remember, in hatred it is the hater who is suffering and not the hated. Hatred is an obstacle to the hating person; hatred is never an obstacle to the hated person.** The hated may not even be aware of the hate. So, forgive everyone.

**Call up all people you don't like in your mind and forgive them.**

Every pain we go through is for polishing us. Then, I enjoy a prashanta atma, an atma relieved of a ton of regrets.

**The second disturbance** of the mind is worry about the future. Surrender future to God. "Whatever the future is, it is due to my own karmas. I cannot escape the future. Rather, I welcome my future." The future here includes family and friends. After all, I cannot determine the future of my children. I also pray to god that, " God, give me the strength to face and learn from experiences". It requires a peculiar mind to learn from adversity. Like the Hamsa bird that separates milk from water. Like, when we eat the sugar cane, we take in the juice and leave the fiber behind. Similarly, from every experience I should take the essence; that is learning and forget the experience itself. With such an attitude, welcome the future. This will result in a relaxed mind. **Thinking of future brings anxiety to the mind.**

The word Vigata, means both past and future are given up. In this state the present is fully available to me for my use in meditation. Normally the present is not available to me because it is affected by past and future. Now, when I have

taken care of the past and future, the present time is available for meditation.

Brahmacharya means student of scriptures. Brahma means scriptures and Chari means leading a way of life. Scriptures prescribe several disciplines to a Brahmachari to get maximum benefit from his studies and it is called Brahmacharyam. One of the disciplines imposed by the scriptures says a brahmachari should have only three relationships. They are with:

- 1) God;
- 2) Guru; and
- 3) Shatstram.

He should not have any other relationships.

That is the reason that during initiation into Sanyasa they remove the tuft signifying all these three relationships are also broken. When the Sanyasi discovers advaitam there is no more relationships. All relations require at least two people or Dvaitam. In a Brahmachari there is no worldly relationship. It is the same in a Sanyasi as well.

**At least at the time of meditation, I should cut all the relationship.** Tell yourselves, I am not a father now; I am not a mother; I am not a husband; I am not a wife; I am not a son; I am not a daughter; I am not a son-in-law, and a daughter. Whatever the relationship especially the disturbing relationship, cut them all off and **temporarily at least become a mental sanyasi.**

And that is why Sri Krishna said at the end of the 5th chapter, temporarily renouncing all the worldly relationships become a mental sanyasi.

Kailvalya Upanishad says “ Even a Grihastha should not have any relationship during meditation.” This is known as

Brahmacharya Vrattam. It is a temporary mental state of Sanyasa during meditation.

Invoke relationship with God and fix the mind on God. This is the only relationship that continues in every life one takes. In our temporary relationships we lose sight of this one permanent relationship with God. It is like the river that is related to the ocean. So, also it is with God and me. So, with an integrated mind may you sit in meditation.

And what is the goal of the meditation; matparaha; **keep Me** not only as an object of meditation; but also as the destination of the life; therefore mumukṣu (seeker) may you practice meditation.

### **Shloka # 15:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.15 ॥

**Thus applying himself unintermittently, with a disciplined mind, the Yogin wins peace, which is abidance in Me, and whose climax is emancipation.**

How long does one practice meditation? Sri Krishna says it should be practiced consistently, regularly and for a long time. In the shloka Atma means the mind, Yunjan means meditator and Evam means dwelling upon God. When we say fixing the mind on God, what type of God is meant here? Now Scriptures present God in three different ways depending upon the level of the Student as mandah, madhyama, and uttama; Mandah: (Mild) at the mandah level, first stage, God is a personal God, with a particular form like Rama rupam, Krishna rupam, Devi rupam and it is called eka rupam dhyanam. This also signifies Dvaita. Madhyam: (Medium): when a person is advanced, then the very same Lord becomes vishva rupah; aneka rupa, which means I see the lord as the very creation itself. So for a madhyama adhikari it is aneka rupa dhyanam. This also signifies dvaita. Uttama: (Ideal): A person who is still more





**recommended for a meditator.** It should be like having pickle with curd rice. We should know when to stop. Moderation should also be practiced in activity. A workaholic is also not a good meditator. He needs to spend time with family as well.

In an age where everybody is trying for corporate success Shastras are not always followed. Sri Krishna is reminding us of our life goals. So, meditation comes to one who practices moderation in life. So, moderation is very important.

**Take away:**

To succeed in meditation:

2. Get over your past regrets. In your mind, invoke all people you don't like and forgive them.
3. Don't dwell on your or families' future as it can bring anxieties. They are not conducive for meditation. Place the future in God's hands.
4. At least at the time of meditation, I should cut all the relationship. At least during meditation become a mental sanyasi.
5. Practice moderation in eating, sleeping and work.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

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**Bhawat Geeta, Class 86:**



**himself to Yoga incessantly.**

One should practice meditation regularly. It should not be a sporadic practice. Sitting in a secluded place, at a Satvika time, all alone, keeping the body and mind in control, apply mind in meditation.

Even in Patanjali's Yoga shastra, meditation is only the seventh step. Thus, he talks about the following eight stages: yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, prathyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi.

Yama and Niyama are code of conduct and regulations to be followed in life. Asana's are meant to keep the body fit. Only then can one forget the body during meditation. Think of it like a shoe that does not fit and see how uncomfortable one feels wearing it. However, the moment your shoe fits you do not even think about it, anymore.

Pranayama helps one with control of the mind. One's desires should not create anxieties in the mind. Desires that are legitimate such as, a parents concern for the welfare of their children are fine. However, this concern should not result in anxiety. Only way to get over anxiety is through Sharanagathi or surrender to the Lord. " I am not the controller of my family. I do my best for the family and leave the rest to God", should be the approach taken. Nonbinding desires are good while binding desires can disturb the mind.

Simple living and high thinking should be practiced. High living requires a lot of materials and they need to be maintained. Vedas refer to this condition as Yoga Kshema. Yoga means accomplishments and Kshema means maintenance. Now, Nirashi, non-binding desires reduce Yoga while Aparigraha (non-possession) reduces Kshema. Parigraha means possession. Shankaracharya has defined Aparigraha to mean Sanyasa as well.

Even a Sanyasi has possessions like a rudraksha, paduka etc. So, offer all possessions to God. Feel you are a trustee of

Lord's property. Feel you are without ownership during meditation. Even one's children, consider them as children of God, not as mine. Remember children are not of you; they only have come through you. So, reduce possessions and give up ownership and have the idea of trusteeship. All these are preparations for meditation.

### **Shloka # 11:**

शुद्धं शुद्धं शुद्धशुद्धशुद्धं शुद्धशुद्धशुद्धशुद्धं  
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**Setting one's firm seat in a clean spot, neither too high nor too low, covered with a cloth, or hide, and kusa grass, one over the other.**

Sri Krishna gives another condition for the place of meditation. He says the place should be clean physically and spiritually. Spiritually means it is a place that helps us with spiritual thoughts. Thus, lighting a lamp, keeping God's picture etc., can make the place of meditation sacred. A spiritual place can even be a temple or an ashram.

Discussing asana or the seat, Sri Krishna says, it must have three layers. Bottom most layer must be Kusha grass, on top of it must be Adhinam or deer skin and the top most layer should be a piece of cloth called Chailam. Kusha grass is supposed to help with concentration, deer skin is supposed to protect us from negative forces and the piece of cloth is meant for making the seat comfortable for meditation. The deerskin is also used in the sacred thread ceremony.

In today's world we have to take the spirit behind this teaching. So long as the seat is not too hard or too soft it is acceptable. The asana also should not be too high or too low. The asana should be a firm place to sit down upon for meditation.

### **Shloka # 12:**

योगशास्त्रेण चित्तं एकचित्तं कर्तव्यं ।  
अस्य चित्तं योगोऽस्ति । 6.12

**Sitting on it, making the mind one-pointed, controlling the activities of the mind and senses, let the practitioner apply himself to Uoga for self-purification.**

After fixing the asana one should sit on it. One should then withdraw from all activities of the karmendriyas and Gyanenindriyas within the mind. Having withdrawn the mind, direct the mind to the chosen object. In this process I stop all wasteful flow of mental energy and direct it. It is like building a dam to stop the river water from being wasted by flowing into the ocean. So, when I build a dam, the water is conserved and that stored water is channelized for irrigation purposes. Otherwise the water will go waste.

Another analogy would be like the sun's rays concentrated by a lens resulting in an energy that can burn objects. One Vedic fire lighting ritual is through such a lens.

Purpose of meditation is atma shudhi or purification of mind. Meditation is not for knowledge or self-realization. That can come only through study of scriptures. Purpose of meditation is to remove impurities of the mind called malam and vikshepa (extrovertedness of mind).

Malam means unhealthy ways of thinking. Thus, ragah- dveshah; kamah, krodhah; lobhah, mohah; madah, matsaryah etc., are all called malam. Uncultured, unrefined, indecent thoughts are called malam.

Vikshepah is the second impurity and it means extrovertedness of the mind or restlessness of the mind.

After purifying the mind one has to study scriptures for Gyanam. Thus:

Meditation before study of scriptures is called Upsana and

meant to remove mala and vikshepa.

Meditation after scriptural study is for nidhidhyasanam. Here one is purifying oneself from habitual vasana's of body identification, which is called deha vasana or deha abhimana vasana or also called viparitha bhavana. These are all our deeply entrenched habits to which we continue to fall back upon. Therefore, in meditation, I have to train my mind to think, " I am not this body", and the removal of this deha vasana is called atma vishuddhaye.

### **Shloka # 13:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.13 ॥

**Holding the body, head and neck evenly and steadily, the resolute Yogin fixes his gaze on the tip of his nose, not looking around.**

Here Sri Krishna talks about posture during meditation. Sitting on ground with folded legs is best method to obtain steadiness and balance. This, however, is not compulsory. Nowadays many people have knee problems and other such problems. In this context one can sit anywhere or even lie down. Meditation is a job of the mind. All other ideas are suggestions only.

Upper part of the body should be erect and straight. Kaya means the body from hip to neck, then griva, means the neck, shirah, means the head, these three must be in one straight line, perpendicular to the ground.

They say even musicians need to sit straight to allow full flow of sound. So be firm and erect.

Withdraw sense organs from sensory field. It means withdrawing the mind from sense organs especially, the eyes, as they are the most active of all organs. Keep eyes focused on tip of

one's nose. Keep eyes partially closed.

Sri Krishna does not talk about breath regulation here. He did discuss it in chapter five. Make sure eyes do not distract you. You can even close the eyes. Make sure breathing is slow and even.

In fact, they say prana vikshanam, is a very good discipline; as different from prana ayama; pranayama is regulation of breathing; prana vikshanam is observation of the breath; and when I observe, I am aware of the breathing process, the very awareness of the breathing process, makes it smooth and even; so that is called prana vikshanam.

### **Take away:**

Purpose of meditation is atma shudhi or purification of mind. Meditation is not for self-realization.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

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# **Bhawat Geeta, Class 84: Chapter 6, Verses 7 & 8**

Greetings All,

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**The supreme Self is concentrated for one who has subdued the self and is quiescent, in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, and in honor and disgrace.**

Continuing his teaching of the Gita Swami Paramarthananda said, in chapter six Sri Krishna is talking about general preparations to be followed by a meditator. He prescribes four disciplines called Samanya sadhanani and they are:

1. First Bahirange Sadhana: Is maintaining a balanced mind while conducting day-to-day transactions. Violent agitations of mind will register and later come up during meditation. One should avoid such violent agitations of mind. This state is called Samatvam. To achieve this Samatvam one has to follow Karma Yoga as described in Chapter # 3.
2. The Second Bahiranga Sadhana is having Self Confidence. One without self-confidence cannot be helped by anybody including God, Guru or the Shastras. Self-Grace is paramount. This Self Grace is Self-confidence and it is also called Atma Kripa.
3. The Third Bahiranga Sadhana is Self Effort. Fate or destiny oriented person will always fall back upon fate. He will say, " If God wants me to get liberated, this effort is not required. If God has decided I should not get liberated, then my efforts are in vain." This is fatalistic thinking. Sri Krishna does not accept this approach. He says individual effort is required. In fact, individual effort alone will help in tapping the grace of the Lord, therefore, the third value is self-effort.
4. The Fourth Bahiranga Sadhana is Self-mastery or Self Management.

Every organ that is given to me is an instrument gifted by the Lord to me. The physical body is an instrument; the sense organs of knowledge and action are instruments; my mind is a wonderful instrument, and above all my intellect is the most

powerful instrument. By using these instruments I can accomplish anything in life. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, all the four purusharthas are accessible to me, if only I am willing to put these organs to proper use. This requires above all that the organs remain healthy. An unhealthy body, an unhealthy mind and intellect cannot accomplish anything. Therefore, every organ should be healthy. They also must function in coordination as well. Citing an example, if intellect says, "attend Gita class" and you attend. But in the class, if the mind wanders off then the mind and intellect are not integrated. All organs should function in harmony. The healthy and harmonious function of the organs is self-mastery.

Sri Krishna says if these four attributes, that is, Equanimity, Self effort, Self confidence and Self mastery are in place one can attain spiritual success. His mind is relaxed and free from turmoil and extroverted-ness. For such a person recognizing the Self is very easy. He can make use of scriptures to know his own Atma. By following scriptures one can get Atma easily. Why is it so? Because, scriptures say the Atma is available to us all the time. It is not as if it is only available at certain times. Some objects such as higher Lokas, Devatas etc. can be accessed only by meditation. However, the Atma is always available to me, in all the different states of waking, sleep, dream and turiya. In what form is it available to us? It is available to us in the form of Consciousness. Every word I utter is creating thoughts in the person hearing me. Through out them all, there is one non-variable principle called Consciousness. It is the one aware of each thought rising in mind.

It is like the light that is pervading the hall. The people are coming and going; but in and through the arrival and departure of the people the one common factor is the light because of which I am aware of the arrival of people, as well as their departure. In fact, if there is one principle, which is ever available, that is consciousness.

**Consciousness is ever available in the most ordinary state. We just need to turn our mind to it.**

If we look at the hand, we will see lines in the palm, the nails etc. but we never say there is a light on the hand. In doing this we are turning our attention to this light, which is always there. We are looking at the ever-present light principle.

Similarly, Vedanta is not revealing a new Atma rather Vedanta is turning my attention to the already and ever- evident consciousness. And why should I turn my attention? At present moment my attention is in the thoughts that are occurring in the mind. Either I am worried about kama, krodhah, greed and so on. So instead of turning my attention to a particular thought in the mind I am turning my attention to the consciousness because of which I am aware of every thought.

This turning of attention can be done only if the mind is calm and without turbulence. Therefore, a lot of effort is required to enjoy a calm mind. An extrovert cannot listen. Self is Consciousness. Kenopanishad beautifully says that Atma is evident all the time. You do not have to go to a special meditation to experience the Atma. Just as I do not have to perform a special meditation to recognize the light, because the light is experienced in and through every experience, similarly, the Consciousness does not require any special state of mind, or any special meditation; it is available to us all the time.

If you ask a man with a relaxed mind, when is Consciousness evident, he will ask you back when is it not evident? This recognition has to occur in two stages.

**First stage is turn attention from thought to Consciousness. It is like turning the attention from hand to the light. Thus, we turn from changing thought to the changeless witness.**

**Second stage occurs when I recognize Consciousness, then my**

tendency will be to say, "I am the body, mind complex and I have consciousness that illumines my thought." Now Vedanta says that you have to train your mind and reverse the approach. Vedanta wants us to say:

**" I am the Consciousness principle and the body mind complex is an incidental instrument used by me". This is the biggest shift and most important shift. Meditation is meant to make this shift.**

Please remember the five points I have said regarding consciousness in the past:

- Consciousness is not a part, product or property of the body.
- Consciousness is an entity distinctive from the body, which pervades the body.
- The dimensions of the body do not bind consciousness.
- Consciousness survives even after the body goes; and the surviving consciousness cannot transact, not because it is absent but because the medium of transaction is not there, anymore.

This is the description of consciousness and that consciousness is my nature. We also know this from our day-to-day experiences. The end of transactions is not the end of my existence. If end of transaction is the end of existence; what will happen? During sleep, I am dead; but I know during sleep I am not dead; I am very much alive; even though I do not do any transaction. Extend this to death also. After death also, I do not transact but non-transaction is not non-existence. And therefore I exist all the time. I exist with and without transaction. End of transaction is not end of existence. Transacting instruments come and go, but I exist.



have the waking state experience, or dream state experience; when the body and mind are relaxed and resolved, I do not have waking and dream state. Therefore I do not have any transaction; but even without transaction; I continue to exist; and therefore body and mind are more an instrument than myself. And this attitudinal change, the change of identification, is called Vigyanam.

Only when this shift takes place, only when I shift my "I" identification from the body to atma, then alone my sense of limitation will go.

People may ask why should I know the Atma? Why develop a new identification with Atma? If you are comfortable with the body identity, Vedanta says good luck. Reality is, with body identity, I have fear of mortality, disease etc. It becomes a constant companion. We are also afraid of the death of our near and dear ones. Samsara is fear of death or old age or of disease. If I am OK with these fears then it is OK to identify with the body.

If not, change. There is no medicine to cure all these (death, disease and old age). Even gerontologists are old and many are dead. There is no medicine to provide immortality. Otherwise, go to Vedanta and find out that you are a higher being, ever free, ever beautiful etc. You have to discover the Atma. With that life becomes relaxed. There is no more fear of death, disease etc. They don't belong to "Me".

Who can get this knowledge? Only one who has mastered himself. He is unshaken by anything that happens in life. We can't predict our future. Some things are predictable but uncontrollable. Future is either unpredictable or uncontrollable. So any event can come as a shock. Sri Krishna says Gyanam is our Kavacham. The wise man is not affected by such incidents.

Marriage ceremony has a ritual that says, " May your mind be

strong enough to face all types of situations". The Girl is leaving her house and going to an unknown house. Unless one is strong it can be traumatic. Wiseman is able to withstand such traumas and is called a Yogi (man of wisdom). He enjoys an equanimous mind towards: a) Mud (of no value); b) Stone, of some value; c) gold, of great value. He has samatvam towards all the three. Does he see them all the same way? He sees them the same way because he is free from Raga and Dvesha (attachment and aversion). Why does he not have Raga or Dvesha? When does one get attached? When one gets happiness, fullness or it improves your situation it causes Raga. And when does hatred come in? When object reduces my security and happiness. For a Gyani, his fulfillment is not from objects, money, status etc. He is full by nature. If he is full, nothing can increase or decrease his fullness. It is just like the ocean. If things come it is good, if things go, that too is OK. We are happy when our children are dependent on us. When they are independent, we are unhappy that they are not dependent on us. So make your self psychologically independent.

### **Take away:**

Teaching us a practical technique to reach the divine within us, Swamiji tells us the following:

My normal tendency is to say, "I am the body, mind complex and I have consciousness that illumines my thought."

Vedanta wants us to say:

" I am the Consciousness principle and the body mind complex is an incidental instrument used by me".

This shift in perspective has to be practiced by all of us.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Bhagawat Geeta, Class 83: Chapter 6, Verses 5 – 7

Shloka # 5:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.5 ॥

**Elevate the self by the self; do not weaken the self. Self is indeed the friend of the self. Self-alone is self's foe.**

Continuing his teaching of Gita Swami Paramarthananda said, in the beginning of chapter six, Sri Krishna is dealing with the general disciplines to be observed throughout his transactions so that he will enjoy a mind, which is conducive to meditation. These disciplines are called samanya sadhanani or bahiranga sadhanam.

The first Bahiranga sadhana is maintenance of Samatvam of mind even when we go through many experiences. I have no control over the experience itself, which is a product of the external world. I don't even know how my family will react at any point in time. Even after fifty years of marriage a wife is not sure of her husbands reaction to situations. I can only control my response to experiences of life. This control is a Karma Yoga mind. So, having a poised mind is a first discipline. Such a mind is free of violent emotions and it does not get out of control. This capacity to recover from emotional trauma is called Samatvam. If we have that, we are reasonably healthy, psychologically. Psychological health is Samatvam. It is brought about by karma yoga in which the Lord himself plays

the primary help or role. So Lord is the backup. We talked of this samatvam up to the 4<sup>th</sup> shloka of this chapter.

In shloka # 5 Sri Krishna introduces another Bahiranga Sadhana called self-effort. Scriptures say human beings have free will. Plants don't have free will. Animals also don't have choice; as such they also don't have punya and papam. Many people however are fatalistic and don't accept concept of free will. They consider everything as pre-determined. It is difficult to argue with them. To them we say everything is destiny or Prarabhdam. Now, there are two types of prarabhdams, one is punya and other is papam.

If a person has got punya prarabdham meaning if he has a good destiny, that good destiny will influence the mind in such a way that he will accept the concept of freewill. And when the destiny is negative meaning papa prarabdham, the very destiny will influence the mind in such a way that he will not accept freewill. Therefore, we say, those who have got punya destiny will accept freewill. Those who have papa destiny, they will not accept freewill and Sri Krishna is addressing those people who have got punya and accept the concept of freewill. Shastra's want us to accept freewill as well.

Once you accept free will do you also accept destiny or do you think it is free will alone that functions at all times? Shastra's say both free will and destiny play a role in our lives. Fate is the result of our own past actions while freewill is the course of action that we choose to take because of our thinking or because of our buddhi. Between these two, which is more powerful, is it Vidhiya (fate) or Madiya (free will)? We cannot answer this question as we do not know when fate comes in and when free will actuates, as their relative strengths vary. Fate is determined by a particular action of ours and the intensity of this action will vary.

Thus, prarabhdha can occur as prabala (strong), madhyama

(middling) or as durbala (weak). So also it is with free will, the intensity of free will varies, as does the result.

**Prabal Prarabhda:** Free will is helpless. It can only ask for inner strength to face such a powerful fate.

**Madhyama prarabhda:** Free will can manage the prarabhda. It can reduce the impact of fate.

**Durbala Prarabhda:** Prayaschitam (as free will) can wipe out the Prarabhda karma.

So, fate can be changed depending upon its intensity. Citing an example, it is like going to a doctor. The doctor will never say, "I can or I cannot." He will desire to examine you first then pronounce his diagnosis. In some cases he will say it is curable, in some cases he will say it can be controlled and in other cases he may say medicine may not be able to help you. Thus, our future is neither controlled by fate or free will. Rather it is controlled by a resultant of the intensities of fate and free will respectively.

Therefore, freewill has got a contributory role in determining our future; and since the freewill has got a contributory role, an asthika purushah, one who follows vedic teaching, he always has an attitude that I can take charge of my life. This is the reason why our goals are called purushartah. Purushartah means goals, which are sought after by human beings; and the goals, which are accomplished by human beings.

Moksha is such a purushartah and it is to be chosen and accomplished by me.

Sri Krishna says, "And Arjuna, I expect you to be the chooser of your future; and once you believe in free will and you have decided to choose your future, I am ready to help you".

God can help only those who are willing to put forth the necessary effort. A guru can help only those students who believe in themselves. Therefore, first, you should have faith

and confidence in yourself.

Swami Vivekananda said that " I believe in a man who believes in himself". Such a man is an Astika.

So take charge. For whatever goal you have to accomplish, you have the same set of instruments i.e., body, mind and intellect complex. In shloka # 5, this instrument is called Atma. Success depends upon your instrument. If they are in decent shape, you can accomplish your goals. It is like a car, if it is in good shape, it will take you far. Katho Upanishad compares our body to a chariot. Just as musicians fine-tune their instruments before a concert so too should we fine-tune this body mind instrument. This is the instrument given to us for this life.

Many people spend a lifetime without knowing what they want in life. Our body and mind must function in coordination. Many organizations fail despite having great people. This happens often due to poor coordination. So, to succeed in life, our body and mind must be in coordination. This is called integration or Gyana Yogyatha prapthihi.

Question comes how do I fine tune my body mind complex? Sri Krishna says one has to use your own body mind complex to perform this fine-tuning.

So, integrate your instruments with your own instruments. Do not weaken your instruments. The most weakening attitude is " I cannot accomplish this". Get over such self-diffidence. Get over the inferiority complex. Be optimistic. This is called self-confidence and self-effort.

Your own Atma is your true friend. Scriptures and God can only contribute indirectly to your assistance. You alone can contribute directly. You alone are also your own enemy.

When you are a friend, the whole world is a friend.





And, therefore Arjuna, first develop self-belief in free will and develop the confidence that the future is in my hands. Then, with self-confidence, put forth self-effort. The first stage of self-effort is attunement of my own instruments (body mind complex). If you do this, rest will be taken care of.

**Take away:** Scriptures believe in free will and so should you.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

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## **Bhagawat Geeta, Class 82, Chapter 6, Verses 2 to 5**

**Shloka # 2:**

ॐ तन्मया शब्दं विदुः शब्दं विदुः शब्दं विदुः  
ॐ तन्मया शब्दं विदुः शब्दं विदुः शब्दं विदुः 6.2

**That which they call renunciation, know to be yoga, O Pandava Prince! None indeed who has not discarded mental constructions can become a yogin.**

Continuing his teaching of Gita Swami Paramarthananda said, I had pointed out in the last class that in the 6th chapter of the Gita, Sri Krishna deals with five important topics with regard to the dhyanam or meditation and those five topics are:

1. Bahiranga sadhanani or general disciplines to be observed throughout one's transactions, so that one can

practice meditation successfully.

2. Antaranga sadhanani or specific disciplines to be observed just before the starting of the meditation;
3. Dhyana svarupam, the actual process of meditation;
4. Dhyana phalam, the benefit of meditation;
5. Dhyana pratibhanda pariharau; obstacles to meditation, and their remedy.

Bahiranga sadhanani: are preparations before taking up dhyanam. If we don't have discipline during a transaction mind can be disturbed. Such disturbances, also known as Samskara's, can scar the mind. This Samskara will bubble up later when the mind is quiet. They are a like piece of wood held down under water that pops up the moment you release it. Our subconscious mind has many such Samskaras that can come up at any time the conscious mind is resting. During meditation the conscious mind withdraws then the subconscious impressions come up. Violent disturbances during the day can come up as well.

How to stop such disturbances from occurring in the mind?

Training the mind for Samatvam can stop this. Citing an example, a philosopher and businessman was told, "you have lost everything." He said in agitation, "What"? Calming down, later, he said, "So what?" This change from "what" to "so what" requires great training of the mind to maintain Samatvam. In Samatvam, the mind does not get too high or too low. Practice of Karma Yoga helps with Samatvam. Sri Krishna thus glorifies a Karma Yogi or a Grihasta. Chapter six begins with glorification of householder, and through this glorification God is glorifying Karma Yoga as well and thus Samatvam too.

We can say: Grihasthashrama=Karma Yoga=Samatvam.

How does Sri Krishna glorify? He says the householder is the real Sanyasi. He says regular Sanyasis are not the real

Sanyasi's. Then, again, Sri Krishna points out that a conventional meditator is not a real meditator. Who is a conventional meditator? It is one who has withdrawn from all the activities; taken to a quiet place, taken the proper posture; closing his eyes and keeping the body straight; such a person is a conventional meditator. Krishna says that conventional meditator is not true a meditator. Then who is a true meditator? Sri Krishna says, it is the karma yogi, the grihastha, who is a true meditator.

Shankaracharya, a champion of Sanyasis is disturbed by this criticism of Sri Krishna. He says, Sri Krishna does not want to criticize a Sanyasi rather he wants to glorify the Grihastha. He is using "Nahi Ninda Nyayaha", a process where you criticize something to glorify something else. So, the focus is on glorification. Sri Krishna is glorifying Karma Yoga.

In the second shloka he justifies why he calls a Grihastha a real Sanyasi. The Grihastha has after all not renounced anything. He has all kinds of possessions (house, money, land..), family etc. How can such a person be a Sanyasi? What makes him a Sanyasi?

Sri Krishna clarifies that Sanyasa means renunciation. The word renunciation does not always mean renouncing wife and children; or one's home and job. Sri Krishna says a Karma Yogi Grihastha is a renouncer because he has renounced concerns for the future. **Biggest concern of people is what happens in the future. One who drops such worry is a Sankalpa Sanyasi.**

Worrying versus planning. Planning is acceptable. It is a deliberate action at a stipulated time. Worry is not deliberate. It is a reaction or obsession that happens at any time. It makes us inefficient. Karma Yogi may plan but he does not worry, hence he is a Sankalpa Sanyasi.

Shloka # 2: In the second shloka Sri Krishna says, "O Arjuna, by the word sanyasa or renunciation, I do not mean the conventional renunciation". Swamiji says Gita is a Grihastha book. Sri Krishna was a Grihastha as was Arjuna. Vyasa too was a Grihastha. So, he says, if you are a good Karma Yogi you will get benefit of both Grihastha and Sanyasa. So, if one has to become a Karma Yogi one has to renounce Sankalpa or our obsession with future. So, renounce worry.

### Shloka # 3:

कर्मयोगोऽसौ योगो ज्ञानयोगोऽसौ योगो  
कर्मयोगोऽसौ योगो ज्ञानयोगोऽसौ योगो 6.3

**Work is said to be the cause in the case of the silent sage who seeks to scale the peak of Yoga; as regards this very sage who has scaled it, quiescence is said to be the cause.**

How long should one follow karma Yoga? Is it an end or is it an intermediate step? Karma Yoga is not an ultimate sadhana. It only makes you Gyana Yogyata Prapthihi. It purifies the mind. Limitation of Karma Yoga is it cannot give liberation.

Some people claim Karma Yoga alone will give liberation. The other extreme is Karma Yoga is useless and should not be taken up. Citing an example one person says I will never enter the college; his argument is after all finally I have to come out, so why even enter?

Sri Krishna says, use Karma yoga then transcend and get liberation.

So, initially follow Karma yoga. In the shloka Yogam means Dhyana Yogam. No scripture prescribes meditation in the beginning. Sri Krishna recommends meditation only after five chapters. Patanjali recommends meditation only after sixth stage of Yoga. There are eight stages of his Yoga.

Without studying scriptures the only meditation recommended is

Nama japam.

Yama and Niyama of Patanjali, the Do's and Don't of Yoga, are the same as Karma Yoga. If one has to purify the mind he should perform Karma Yoga. Therefore, Vedas begin with Karma kandam. How long do you perform Karma Yoga? Once you have the necessary mental preparation then you grow out of it. It is like the life of a fetus in a womb, after nine months, nature will throw the baby out. So withdrawing from Karma Yoga can be done in two ways:

1. Taking to Sanyasashrama or Sanyasavidhi, a formal process. Just as the sacred thread ceremony is used for initiation, this process is used for withdrawal from life. Sanyasavidhi's goal is to get out of rituals and start the process of self-enquiry.
2. There is another form of withdrawal in which a person reduces the amount of activity remaining in grihastha ashrama itself. So, if he was doing rituals for many hours he now reduces the duration. Even mundane activities, he reduces, handing them over to someone else. This requires detachment. Thus, this is also a kind of a vanaprastha ash

Therefore, either by becoming a sanyasi or by taking to vanaprastha one withdraws. Both of them involve reduction of extrovert activities. Now, I spend my time in sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam.

#### **Shloka # 4:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.4 ॥,

**When the sage is no longer attached to sense objects and works; he discards all mental constructions; then he is said to have scaled the peak of Yoga.**

In previous shloka we learn that one should follow karma yoga also known as Pravrithi marga and then follow up with Gyana Yoga or Nivrithi marga. How do I know when to switch to Gyana Yoga? Swamiji said, for going to a college we have pass examinations that tell us our next step. Similarly nature also tells us the next step when it expels a baby from the womb after nine months. Unfortunately, the rate of inner spiritual maturity is not uniform for all. The rate of acquiring inner maturity is also not uniform for all. Some people become mature within short while other people even after 95 years of life experiences don't mature. Citing an example, a child asked its grandfather, are you ready to marry? He answered, who will give me a girl?

Sri Krishna says **a mature mind is free from obsession of sense pleasures**. Here the emphasis is on obsession. Artha and Kama are allowed but obsession with them is wrong. Until mind is preoccupied with money and entertainment, you are not ready for Vedanta. The key is obsession. **If you don't get what you want, you should not be upset**. Preference is acceptable but not need. Craving after sense pleasures should not overwhelm me. Hating sense objects is also not good. This too can be an obsession.

Dayananda Swamiji said, when you are a child and play with marbles, one tends to be possessive of the marbles. Now, when you are much older, you don't have a problem of playing without attachment. Thus, playing and not playing both should be acceptable. This is known as Vairagyam. Artha kama (wealth and entertainment) are Sadhyam. Karma is Sadhanam. He is not attached to both. He is attracted to moksha purushartha's. Therefore sign of maturity is "detachment". Such a person is called Sarva Sankalpa Sanyasi. He is not obsessed with the coming and going of material things.

Security never depends on external conditions. It is an internal state of mind. Even possession of wealth can cause insecurity. So, better surrender to Lord. Such a person



reality, is only one of the factors. The other factor is our own free will or self-effort.

2. A mature mind is free from obsession of sense pleasures. Here the emphasis is on obsession. If you don't get what you want, you should not be
3. One who drops worry of the future is a Sankalpa Sanyasi. Worry is not deliberate. It is a reaction or obsession that happens at any time.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

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## **Baghawat Geeta, Class 81, Chapter 6, Verses 1 & 2**

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of Gita and the introduction to chapter 6, Swami Paramarthananda said, in last class we talked about the role of meditation for a Vedantic seeker. It is purely from point of seeking liberation. There are meditations meant for extraordinary powers as well. A Vedantic seeker is not interested in such powers. Extraordinary powers place one in bondage or in samsara. Such powers can lead to fights and jealousy. So, here we are only interested in Self-Knowledge and liberation. This does not require extraordinary powers. Thus, there are Gyani's without such extraordinary powers, while there are Agyani's with such powers. Rakshasas are a good example of Agyani's with extraordinary powers. Our

interest is only in purity of mind and assimilation of knowledge.

Thus, meditation has two roles. The roles are:

- Meditation before study of scriptures is called Upasana
- Meditation after study of scriptures is called Nidhidhyasanam.

The study process itself is called shravana mananam or gyana yoga. Study of scriptures itself is called sravanam. And therefore the entire spiritual journey can be presented in three stages: Upasana, Gyana yoga and Nidhidhyasanam.

**Upasana:** This upsana is saguna ishwara upsana. It is performed for Gyana yogyata prapthihi or for purification of mind.

**Gyana Yoga:** is consistent and systematic study of the scriptures for a length of time, under the guidance of a competent acharya and this study alone gives self-knowledge. If one does not get knowledge through scriptures there is no other way to obtain this knowledge. Scriptural study is the only means of knowledge.

**Nidhidhyasanam** meditation is meant for assimilation of knowledge. I would like to add a few more ideas with regard to the assimilation, because doubts do come up in this area.

After gaining knowledge one contemplates on the knowledge received that "That I am not the Body. I am not the mind. I am not the senses. However, I am the awareness which is aware of all of them ". This contemplation is not meant for converting knowledge into Brahman. Rather this meditation after scriptural study is for experiencing the Gyana phalam.

Scriptures point out that we experience Brahman all the time as consciousness. No special effort is required to experience the light in the hall. So also it is with consciousness. Everything else is evident to us because of consciousness.

Every word I hear now is due to consciousness. Consciousness is self evident and ever evident. It is Brahman. So, Brahman anubhavam is not an issue. Therefore meditation after scriptural studies is only for Gyana Phalam. The benefit that knowledge brings is shanti, tripthi and abhayam. This experience of peace, fullness, contentment, fearlessness and security is called assimilation or jivan mukti.

Sri Krishna will tell us how to meditate in this chapter. However an overview is as follows:

- Upasana Meditation is to purify the mind.
- Study of scriptures is to attain knowledge
- Meditate to experience benefit of knowledge, which is peace and fullness.

The first meditation is called upasanam. The second meditation is called nidhidhyasanam. The sixth chapter of the Gita is focusing on nidhidhyasanam, which I translate as Vedantic meditation. The sixth chapter is nidhidhyasana yoga or Vedantic meditation. This chapter can be divided into five main topics. They are:

1. General preparation for meditation or called Bahiranga sadhana. These are disciplines that have to be observed throughout the transaction. These are meant for day-to-day transactions or Samanya sadhanani.
2. Specific disciplines: Vishesha Sadhanani are disciplines to be observed just before meditation. They are also known as antaranga or vishesha sadhanani.
3. Dhyana swaroopam: What is meditation? The process of meditation? Is it concentrating on something or is it remaining thoughtless? Is it destruction of the mind or is it transcending the mind? All these points are clarified here.
4. Benefit of Vedantic meditation: Is it reading other peoples mind or predicting the future? All these points are clarified.

5. Obstacles to meditation: What are the obstacles and how to remedy them are discussed. Dhyana pratibhanda parihara, here pratibhanda means obstacles and parihara means remedy, are discussed. One such obstacle is sleeping during meditation. Sri Krishna describes such obstacles and how to overcome them.

A sixth topic is also discussed which Swamiji preferred to bring up later.

### **General preparation for meditation:**

Why have this preparation? We have only one mind for our day-to-day transactions and meditation. In our daily transactions we go through all kinds of experiences. Before meditation one must free one self from all these experiences and meditate with a fresh mind. The daily transactions leave strong impressions on us that affect meditation. Violent emotional disturbances adversely impact meditation. Both the winner and loser of Wimbledon cannot get sleep. One should learn the art of keeping a balanced mind. This does not mean an emotionless mind. An emotionless mind is like a wall. Rather it is a mind without violent upheavals. So, one has to keep a balanced mind or Samatvam and not get carried away by joys and sorrows. I should have mental mastery. It is one of the pre-conditions of meditation.

So, how to get Samatvam? Sri Krishna has talked about this extensively in chapters 2 and 3 respectively. A Karma yoga way of life leads to samatvam. It is the art of living for a balanced mind. What is karma yoga? It is a means for Dhyana yoga.

Swamiji said that while Sri Krishna has not classified the chapter into five topics, he has done so done to better present the information in the chapter.

### **Shloka # 1:**



Why? He is considered a sanyasi because he has renounced concerns for material growth. What can come out of such renunciation? Such renunciation may result in failure in the material world, nevertheless, inner growth will occur. Sri Krishna says for a karma yogi there is never a failure because he is growing inwardly, whatever be the external outcome of his actions. As such he has no anxiety. He accepts whatever is going to come as Ishvara prasadam or God's will. Each experience is considered a lesson, good or bad. Sri Krishna says such a person can also be considered a meditator.

**After all meditation is mind dwelling on a field. A karma Yogi is not agitated about past or worried about future. He is fully available to the present.**

He is not worried about result. He has a focused mind. He is practicing open-eyed meditation. He offers all his actions to god (see ch.3, shloka # 30 and ch.5 shloka #10). Every action is an offering to god. This is nothing but meditation. He is a karma yogi.

A sanyasi in ocher robe, while in meditation, is thinking about his foreign trip, number of disciples etc., he is only an external sanyasi. He is not a karma yogi. However, a householder who is active is a karma yogi, if his activity is focused.

**Shloka # 2:**

ॐ ऋषिर्ब्रह्मसूक्तं ॐ ऋषिर्ब्रह्मसूक्तं ॐ ऋषिर्ब्रह्मसूक्तं  
ॐ ऋषिर्ब्रह्मसूक्तं ॐ ऋषिर्ब्रह्मसूक्तं ॐ ऋषिर्ब्रह्मसूक्तं 6.2

**That which they call renunciation, know to be yoga, O Pandava Prince! None indeed who has not discarded mental constructions can become a yogin.**

In previous shloka we learnt that a Karma yogi is the real sanyasi and not the person in ochre robe. Here Sri Krishna justifies it.

What is renunciation? Sri Krishna wants to say that external renunciation can never be considered a real renunciation; because self-knowledge is not connected with the external body rather self-knowledge is connected with the mind or intellect. So by making a few external changes if the mind continues to be the same what is the use? External renunciation is not real renunciation. Many take sanyasa and regret the decision, as it is a one-way traffic, one cannot go back to grihasthashrama again. For real renunciation, one needs to be free from concerns about future. What will happen to me? What will my wife do? If wife dies, what will I do? Most of our time is spent in planning for the future. Until one gives up thought of the future, you cannot have meditation. This is true for Sanyasi as well as Grihasta. Renunciation of the worry regarding future is true renunciation. Such a person is a karma yogi and a sankalpa sanyasi (one who has given up worry about future).

Now worrying about future is different from planning for future. Planning is a deliberate action. Worrying, however, is impulsive and can happen at any time. While planning is acceptable worrying is an obstacle. Worrying makes one inefficient. **One who does not worry is a Sanyasi.**

#### **Take Away:**

1. Meditation is mind dwelling on a field. Thus, anybody, performing any activity, totally immersed in it, is in meditation and as such a karma yogi.
2. A Karma Yogi is not agitated about past or worried about future. He is fully available to the present. One who does not worry is a Sanyasi.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Dharma

Dharma is a unique Vedic statement with immense hidden meaning. The word Dharm is derived from the root Dhru – which means that supports, protects, sustains, holds, – “Dhrayathe yat dharmaha”.

Dharma is that principal which protects sustains the cosmic law and order. There is no single equivalent English word, which justifies the full and complete meaning of Dharma. So a combination or a set of words are used to explain it. Righteousness, Morality, Religion, Sathyam, Charity, Character, Law abiding, Duty bound, Luck, Punyam, Swabhavam (abiding in real nature) etc.

Dharma has to be understood according to the context in which it is used

1. Dharma is the first of four Purusharthas (human goals): Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. The Artha (security) and Kama (Entertainment) are the goals for experiencing in this life. Dharma in this context is called Punyam and it is a goal for the next life. According to Law of Karma, every action invariably produces a result (Phalam) – either favorable or unfavorable. The Karma Phalam thus generated can be experienced partly or wholly in this life or carried forward to the next life. The Phalam that is experienced in this life is called Drista Phalam (visible result). If it is favorable result, then it is sukam and if it is unfavorable, then it is Dhukkam. The Phalam that is generated but not experienced in this life is

transferred to the next life. This is called Adhrista Phalam (Invisible result). The results of noble activities of this life are accumulated to be experienced in the next life are registered as Punyam. Similarly the results of evil activities of this life are carried to the next life as Papam. This concept is very important for Hindus who believe in Punarjanma.

“Arthae Gruhe nivartante Smasane mitra bhadhavaah

Sukrutham Dhuskrutham chiva Gacantham anu gacchathi”

“At the time of death, all wealth is left at home.

Only thing that the departed carries with him is the Punyam and Papam one accumulates in this life”

So the accumulation of punyam in this life is the goal of dharma purushartha.

2. Dharma maintains and protects universal harmony. Whenever Dharma declines and Adharma escalates, the cosmic harmony suffers. Unless the Universal harmony is re-established, serious consequences ensue.

The process of establishing dharma is two fold:

1. Parithranaya Sadhunam (Sista Rakshana) – By promoting dharmic population by spreading values through teaching.
2. Vinasaya Dhuskrutham (Dusta Sikshana) – Converting the adharmic people to dharmic people through teaching if that fails to eliminate them.

By the above two methods dharma is re-established. Lord Krishna accomplished these goals by giving out Gita and also by eliminating the wicked.