The Three Energies

The Forgotten Canons of Health and Harmony

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The Three Energies. The Forgotten Canons of Health and Harmony.


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Inspiration for writing this book

Life itself is neither good nor bad: it is a reservoir of both good and bad, depending on what you make of it.

Michel de Montaigne

In September 2006 we travelled around South India. It was extremely interesting. We undertook a full panchakarma course (cleansing the body of slugs and toxins) and met incredible people – astrologists, yogis, gurus (spiritual teachers) … But the most amazing of all was that we met one well-known Ayurvedic doctor. He was 80 years old and looked incredible, full of happiness and peace.

All his life he studied and practiced Ayurveda and became very successful in it. Around his office were many awards and photographs with government letters of appreciation. He would look into men’s eyes, check their pulse, sometimes press different pressure points on the body and then give a correct diagnosis of the condition of different organs. Then he would give recommendations about diet and lifestyle. To some of us he gave special Ayurvedic medicine. He spent more time with the youngest among us. The doctor found several very serious diseases which the young man knew of already, for which other doctors had recommended surgery. But this Ayurvedic doctor told him that if he followed his instructions he would be cured in a few months. He prescribed some kind of herbs from the Himalayas which needed to be taken after boiling for several hours. This young man followed all the instructions and as a result the benign tumour, gastritis and urinary-genital problems disappeared. The Ayurvedic doctor gave him not just herbs but also the knowledge by which the herbs miraculously worked. If one follows this system from birth then there will be no need for any medical treatments.

After some days we met one famous astrologer that prominent politicians and businessmen consult; this was possible only with the
recommendation of one maharaja we knew. Meeting this Master was of great significance for me because he agreed to become my teacher. Over the next few days he taught me many important lessons. He amazed all of us by his deep understanding of life and different karmic situations and also by his psychic abilities. He also spoke about the knowledge by which the inauspicious influence of planets can be neutralized and even how to free one from the laws of karma. For ordinary people such knowledge can eliminate disease and suffering and shed light on how one can be happy, healthy and harmonious.

Both teachers looked effulgent because they had applied this knowledge in their lives; despite their old age they radiated health and happiness. They inspired me to write this book in a way that people living outside India can access this knowledge. In the past, Indian sages had this knowledge but nowadays few people know about it and even less realise how important and practical this knowledge is. I have seen so many times the phenomenal changes in people's lives when they start using this knowledge: eradicating different physical and psychological diseases; eliminating problems from their personal lives; becoming successful socially; developing powerful intuition; progressing rapidly in spiritual life. The most important transformation is the overwhelming contentment that develops independent from external circumstances. If you want these miraculous changes in your life too you should at least once read this book.
Yoga is not just a physical discipline but contains a wonderful practical philosophy of life and healing. For this it is connected to Ayurvedic medicine, the traditional natural healing system of India, and to Vedic astrology, India’s science of the stars and of karma.

Yoga philosophy has contributed many profound insights to world spirituality. Yoga sees the universe as a play of two primary forces, the power of consciousness or what is called the Purusha in Sanskrit, our inner being, and the forces of nature or what is called Prakriti or the primary power of creation. One of the main insights of yogic thought is its understanding of all the forces of nature according to three guṇas or primary qualities. The term guna means what binds the soul as the forces of nature easily become powers of attachment to the external world of time and space and draw us away from resting in our deeper eternal nature of the Purusha.

Each of the three gunas called Sattva, Rajas and Tamas has its particular qualities and roles in the cosmic order:

Sattva, which means the quality of truth or being, is identified with light, mind, consciousness, goodness, virtue, harmony and balance. Rajas, which means turbulence and agitation, is identified with energy, life, emotion, manifestation, assertion, disequilibrium and change. Tamas, which refers to darkness, is identified with matter, inertia, the unconscious, dullness, resistance, entropy and stability.

All three qualities have their necessary place in the world of nature starting with the three great cosmic forces of light (sattva), energy (rajas) and matter (tamas). Everything in the universe consists of various interrelationships and intertransformations of these three powers of light, energy and matter, as the great scientist Einstein revealed in
his equation $E=MC^2$ or energy equals matter times the speed of light squared. The forces of nature are constantly moving back and forth between all three qualities, which are not separate states but related modes of nature’s workings.

All three qualities also have their place in our own human nature as body (tamas), vitality (rajas) and mind (sattva), which make the three levels of our functioning. The body is the material component of our being, the mind our inner light, and our vital energy or life-force (prana in Sanskrit) the energy between the two. These three forces are not separate but rooted in each other and mixed together. Body, life-force and mind are part of a single continuum and constantly influencing one another.

Here Yoga introduces another important aspect of this science of the guans. The mind itself is the natural domain of sattva, requiring light, harmony, balance and clarity for its proper function. This means that when we take the standpoint of the field of the mind, then tamas and rajas, or the influences of the body and vital energy, can become factors of disturbance, with the bodily influences having the capacity to dull the mind, and the vital energy having the ability to disturb it. Rajas and tamas become ‘doshas’ or factors of disease at a psychological and spiritual level. Rajas and Tamas allow factors of agitation and dullness, or wrong imagination and wrong judgment that cloud how our intelligence works. This in turn leads to the main difficulties, maladies and pain that life can bring us, as well as preventing us from gaining the wisdom (sattva) to handle these.

For this reason, yogic thought always emphasizes the development of sattva guna as its primary principle of inner growth and development. Yoga urges us to resort to those types of foods, impressions, ideas, expressions and associations that promote sattva guna and avoid those that promote rajas and tamas. The prime principle of spiritual development through Yoga and Ayurvedic medicine and the proper understanding of karma in Vedic astrology is this science of the three gunas and the need to promote sattva guna as the prime value for the human mind and soul.

The three gunas provide us a wonderful and practical system for both classifying our activities and learning to promote those actions that lead us to higher awareness. Its emphasis on sattva guna is the basis of the yogic recommendation of a vegetarian diet, for example, and on ahimsa or non-violence as a prime behavioral principle. Indeed non-violence is the foundation of sattvic living and thinking, meaning that
we should not wish harm to others in any way not just to avoid violence but to foster peace and light within ourselves.

Yoga provides a system of values, exercises, emotional states, mental conditions, and practices of mantra, pranayama and meditation according to the three gunas. Even Yoga asanas are designed to promote sattva guna or the quality of peace and stillness at a physical level. Ayurveda, Yoga’s complementary medical system, similarly provides us with a detailed classification of foods, herbs and therapies according to the three gunas. Vedic astrology provides an understanding of the influences of the planets according to the three gunas. An understanding of the gunas is central to all the Vedic sciences.

It is important for students of Yoga or of any spiritual sciences to learn, and apply this system of the three gunas in their own daily lives. However, there are few books that deal with the subject of the gunas and show us how to use them in a practical way. Most examinations of the gunas are content to list a few common characteristics of the gunas and do not go beyond that. This often leaves the students in doubt as to how to really apply the gunas in a meaningful manner.

In this regard Rami Bleckt has brought out an important new book on the gunas in the Russian language that brings them into a clear perspective for the modern reader. His book serves a vital need and offers many useful tools of self-healing, self-understanding and self-realization that can be of great transformational value for their lives and for their awareness. Rami is a trained psychologist, yoga teacher, Ayurvedic teacher and astrologer, who brings to this study much experience and knowledge. His is not just an academic presentation but the result of many years of personal practice, teaching and counseling. He has learned how to adapt this eastern science of the gunas to life in the modern world and can relate it to the reader accordingly in a clear and simple manner.

As developing sattva guna is the key to the mind and, therefore to psychological healing, his book has a great relevance for all those looking for a more practical and spiritual approach to dealing with the mind and emotions. How we feel in our minds cannot be separated from the food we eat, how we use our senses, our breathing patterns and our associations. In this way the science of gunas can add many new dimensions to psychology in all of its forms. All psychologists should examine this approach and see how our emotional well-being can be changed by shifts in behavior that are in our control to develop and do not necessarily require drugs or chemical interventions.
As an author of thirty books in the yogic field over the last more than twenty years, it is heartening to see this deep knowledge spread to a larger audience in different countries in the world. I hope that the book meets with a heartfelt reception and that through it many more individuals can benefit from the tools of yogic knowledge, which are of relevance to everyone. We must thank Rami for his service and can only wish that he continues with additional contributions to the cause of the greater well-being for all.

Sattva guna has not only the ability to heal but to promote world peace and understanding. This is the need of our times. We cannot have peace unless we have a life-style that promotes peace. Peace must be rooted in our moment by moment action and awareness and in all our interactions with the world. It cannot be just an occasional concern or a mere political expediency.

Sattva leads us to Sat, which is the principle of pure existence allied with Chit, pure consciousness, and Ananda, Divine love and bliss. Through promoting Sattva we prepare ourselves to become a vehicle of the higher powers of the universe. May this publication increase that wonderful quality of sattva guna for all those who delve into its pages!

Dr. David Frawley

Author: Yoga and Ayurveda, Ayurveda and the Mind etc., Santa, Fe NM USA (www.vedanet.com), June 2008
Introduction

Major problems that face us cannot be resolved on the same level of consciousness on which they were created.

Albert Einstein

This book is about how to attract the energy of happiness, health, success and harmony into our lives, and how to simultaneously eliminate the energy of destruction, diseases and unhappiness. Everything in this world consists of different energies; modern science has also come to this conclusion. Thousands of years ago enlightened sages taught how to attract correct energies into one’s life. The term Ayurveda is currently associated with ancient medicine that can improve one’s health through the use of herbs, massage, cleansing procedures and diet. Although this is correct, it is also a limited perspective that is convenient for advertising and business purposes. Few know that Ayurveda is primarily a system of psychology that can free one from diseases quickly and simply at various stages of development.

In “Ashtanga-Hridaya Samhita” (one of the main Ayurvedic texts written by enlightened sages thousands of years ago) it is stated that there are six stages of illness:

1. Psycho-physiological (gunas).
2. Energy-informational, Ethereal (imbalance of energy, sensory and knowledge acquiring channels).
4. Endo-toxic (accumulating of the products of weak metabolism, toxins).
5. Manifested, symptomatic (appearance of clinical symptoms of diseases).
6. Terminal (death of the infected organ).

It is understood that in the first two stages a disease can be cured.
easily, at stage three and four it is also curable, at the fifth it is difficult to
cure and at the sixth it is incurable.

Modern medical systems usually deal with stage five and even stage
six. Most Ayurvedic clinics function at stage three and four and the ma-
jority of purgative programs deal with stage four.

A well known Russian researcher and author of the series, “Diag-
noses of Karma”, S. N. Lazarev, by seeing a person's energy field can suc-
cessfully diagnose at the second stage. But his system would not help a
person who is blocked at the first stage due to a predominance of igno-
rance and passion. For accuracy I should also mention that Ayurveda
also describes the karmic stage which underlies all of the above six stag-
es; it can be seen on the energy-informational, ethereal field of a person.
How to change the karmic stage will be explained in the second chapter
of this book.

This book explains the first stage and to some extent the second.
On these levels everything can be changed and improved and if one ap-
plies this knowledge, depression and disease will be forgotten.

I remember that I was amazed when I discovered that in ancient
India and China people were astonished when someone became ill and
doctors would be disgraced – “How could he let it happen?” The main
duty of a doctor at that time was to visit his patients to develop a per-
sonal relationship with them through discussing various philosophical
and metaphysical topics. He would also advise on lifestyle, diet and so-
cial interaction.

Interestingly the Russian language originated from Sanskrit and
belongs to the Indo-European group of languages, and has preserved
within it many Sanskrit words and terms. For example, the Russian
word for “doctor” developed from the Sanskrit word “to talk”. In ancient
times practically all Ayurvedic doctors were highly advanced spiritually;
famous doctors who founded various schools and systems were promi-
nent spiritual practitioners and gurus. This was also the case in other
cultures – doctors and priests were referred to as Magi in Slavic regions,
Rambam within Jewish communities and Avicenna within Arabic areas.

Unfortunately this knowledge is generally written in a complicated
way that many find difficult to understand; my main task has been to
translate what I have studied and heard from these great teachers into
more simple language. I have seen how this knowledge has helped many
people regardless of their spiritual orientation. I am confident that it can
help all of you!

The first part of this book is based on my introductory seminars
and is suitable for those who have limited understanding of this knowledge. We deliberately left the style of writing very close to the speaking style to make the subject more accessible. Our experience is that educated people can easily understand it. We have been pleased to receive warm feedback from people who are new to this knowledge as well as from those who have studied and worked in the field of eastern medicine and psychology for many years.

Even if your aim is not spiritual and you just want to be happy, healthy and successful then this knowledge can help you to achieve your goals in a practical way.
The scientific view on the subject discussed in this book

Science is making highly significant developments that have and will have a vast impact on our lives and which have the ability to completely alter our perception of the human psyche, pathology and perspectives of healing. Some of these major developments challenge traditional psychology and psychiatry and the Newtonian – Cartesian paradigm, which is the foundation of Western science. They can radically change our understanding of human nature, culture, history and reality itself.

Dr. Stanislaw Groff, Professor of Psychiatry and Director of the Psychiatric Research Centre, Maryland.

Modern science has come to a conclusion that refutes the materialistic view on life: matter in it’s essence is not material. The essence, the finest particles do not weigh anything. They are something else and more – information, movement, vibration, sound beyond the range of the human ear.

The characteristics of an object are determined by it’s inner structure. Many modern scientists, particularly physicists, came to the conclusion that all matter consists of only waves and nothing else.

There are two types of waves – corked, which refer to matter, and free, which refer to radiation or light. These scientific statements prove the ancient theory which explains that the foundation of the material Universe is simply a movement and there is no other source for the Universe except movement.

Anyone familiar with the latest scientific advancements knows that light is a rhythmical vibration or activity (irregular movements).

Light, activity and stability are three main types of movement which are not only components of all substances but also provide the
basis for the environment within which these substances exist.

According to modern science the characteristics of atoms and molecules depend only on their structure and in final analysis they are nothing more than different combinations of these three types of movement.

By studying physics and chemistry we can take any object and analyse its’ component parts in terms of movement – rhythmical movement, non-rhythmical movement and an absence of any movement.

In the chemical synthesis of any compound, for example DNA, if we add a radical in one place and take out one atom in another, the characteristic of the substance changes. Thus it is movement only can be considered as the foundation of the substance of the objective Universe.

The conclusions of eastern psychology and modern science are similar and affirm that movement appears to be the foundation of the physical Universe. The path is now open for accepting essential ancient teachings which define the basis of the Universe, both mental and everything that appears to be a combination of mental and physical phenomenon, as being a result of a purely mental or psychological manifestation.

“Whatever modern physics has discovered until now is described in full in ancient Indian Vedic texts, practically without formulas. There were and still are two ways of receiving knowledge of nature. One is represented by western science, which requires proof, experiments, etc. In the other, eastern, knowledge is received from an outside esoteric source, for example, the process of meditation. Esoteric knowledge is not taken, it is given to people. At some stage the esoteric path was lost and then another way was developed, extremely difficult and slow. In the last thousand years we have come to the knowledge that has been known in the East for over 5000 years ago”.

**Director of International Institute of Theoretical and Applied Physics Professor A. E. Akimov**

Despite the fact that not all of his colleagues agreed with this scientist, his statement is interesting. Certainly the further science progresses then more it validates what was understood thousands of years ago.

This book is dedicated to the “gunas”, the three main energies of the Universe, which determine the path of our lives.

In ancient ages, enlightened sages knew about these three energies and the three different types of movements. They stated the following:
“The physical world, observed in its objective aspect of atoms and molecules, is a field of activity of three types of movement, which by their endless variety of combinations develop a flow of material manifestations. If we analyse how the gunas manifest in different aspects of life we see that they have their roots in their own fundamental and special natures, which depend on three types of movement – harmonious, chaotic and static. Below are quotes from the book “Introduction to Yoga Psychology” by the great eastern psychologist I. Taimni.

“... Movement and nothing else is the structural foundation of the gunas. Actually, there are only three main types of movement. Movement can be rhythmical or non-rhythmical. The latter type is found in molecules moving in gas or liquid. Such movement is described by the Sanskrit word kriyā (which means an activity) and corresponds to rajas (passion). Movement can be rhythmical or harmonious, for example, light or sound. This is called prakasha meaning a vibration or light; light is a typical example of a vibration, enlightening a mind, where the movement of electrons is a “locked light”. Even sound vibrations evoke cognition of an object – the emitting sound can enlighten the mind. The third type of movement is a fixed condition and is called sthiti or stability. When we carefully study matter the “absence of movement” also can be considered to be a main type of movement which corresponds to tamas (ignorance), as prakasa corresponds to sattva (goodness).

One who has some knowledge of physics and chemistry can take any material object and analyse its composition in terms of rhythmical, non-rhythmical and static movements. Take water for example. What is the composition of water? Its’ mass consists of the chaotically moving molecules H2O. It is kriya. Each molecule contains two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, united together and separated by a fixed distance. That is sthiti. In each hydrogen and oxygen atom electrons spin with the speed of light, which we know as “locked light”. That is prakasa. Therefore, any object can be represented as a unique combination of these three fundamental types of movement or, using terms from yoga psychology, as a unique transformation of the gunas. The distinctive qualities of all objects depend on certain unique combinations or structures and change when the structure changes. In this way, only movement can be considered as the base and substance of the objective Universe. In this instance occultism and science are in agreement...”
PART 1
“THE THREE PRIMARY ENERGIES DETERMINING OUR LIVES”

AN INTRODUCTORY SEMINAR
Chapter 1

An Introductory Explanation of the “Gunas”

Definition of Guna

We are embarking on the discussion of an extremely important subject. If we understand and put the following ideas into practice, we can change our lives. Even a basic familiarity with these concepts can cause a change for the better. This knowledge can affect how successful, healthy and harmonious we are.

First we need to understand the definition of the word guna. There are two meanings – “thread” and “quality”, although these translations are somewhat superficial. The Yoga-Sutra, which is the foundation of Eastern psychology, gives a more exact, deep explanation – the gunas are that which lie at the core of all qualities.

According to yoga psychology, the gunas determine the internal as well as external qualities of everything. If an object is a combination of different components then the quality of this object will be determined by the quality of all its components.

Eastern psychology explains that the gunas influence all spheres of life. The three gunas are the basis of the manifested Universe, and determine the direction of all aspects of life and the condition of different types of objects. The Bhagavad-Gita states that while a living being imagines itself as the cause of all its actions, in reality all activity is performed by the three modes (gunas) of material nature; the living entity can only desire.

The American professor of psychotherapy Abraham Maslow demonstrated by research that ninety-nine percent of people lead a mechan-
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ical or unconscious existence. Only one percent adhere to the principles of Eastern psychology, although unaware of these principles, and thus lead a more mindful life-style. These people are more successful than all the ninety-nine percent put together. If you read and begin to put into practice the knowledge in this book, you can easily become part of the one percent – a healthy, happy and harmonious person who is no longer a slave to baser energies.

Everything is Decided by Subtle Energy

Everything we see in this world is a mixture of different energies. All people, places and things radiate some kind of energy. We all need energy to have healthy, creative lives. If certain forms of energy, such as oil or electricity, were to suddenly disappear, our modern civilisation would deteriorate within a few days.

There are different types of energy – gross and subtle, material and spiritual, good and evil. If we would receive a written message saying “I love you”, we would be delighted; but if the opposite would be written on the same paper with the same pen, it could be devastating. When a loving energy is replaced with a hurtful or malicious one, the same action can produce vastly different results. Similarly, when we enter a place where a quarrel has occurred, the atmosphere often feels strained and stifled, even though the people may be seated at work, or even smiling. If we live mainly in tamas and rajas (ignorance and passion), we may feel quite comfortable in such an atmosphere, even finding pleasure in it, and at times creating similar situations out of a peaceful environment.

Everything is decided by subtle energy. If our subtle body becomes even slightly active by practicing yoga and chanting mantras or prayers, we will start to see and feel this energy.

Energy: Origin and Categorisation

The Vedas state that God, Adipurusam, is the primeval Supreme Essence, the only Parabrahman from which all energies come.

The three main energies are:

1. Internal (spiritual)
2. Marginal (living entities, souls, living as we do in this material world)
3. External (material or illusory)
The spiritual or internal energy is divided into three types:

1. **Samvit** – knowledge
2. **Sadhini** – existence
3. **Hladini** – bliss

The external or illusory energy is also divided into three energies:

1. **Sattva** (goodness) – the energy of sustenance
2. **Rajas** (passion) – the energy of creation
3. **Tamas** (ignorance) – the energy of annihilation

**Four Steps to Understanding the Absolute Truth**

The topic of the three *gunas* will be examined in four main stages, according to the traditional system:

1. What are the *gunas*?
2. How do they act?
3. How do they cause unity?
4. How can they give liberation?

When a living entity enters the material world, he comes under the influence of the *gunas*. Absolutely everything in the material world is created by these energies. They are like the three primary colours red, blue and yellow; by mixing these, a wide variety of colours and sub-colours are created. The *gunas* are the force that gives all beings the opportunity to fulfill their desires, providing an endless variety of ways in which to do this. This arrangement is made possible by the Supreme Existence.

Knowledge of the three *gunas* is extremely relevant for us. If we understand it we can achieve liberation, or at least improve all aspects of our life, because these energies are present everywhere. *Sattva* is the most important energy, because it determines how happy and successful we can be in life. But it does not come to us on its own; we have to consciously choose it. *Rajas* and *tamas* come easily; our civilization welcomes *rajas* and its qualities of passion, activity and creativity.

The *gunas* are manifest everywhere – in our clothes, food, speech and even our thoughts. When people quarrel, this is a manifestation of the energy of *tamas*. When a man lusts over beautiful women, this is *rajas*. When a person meditates, performs yoga and wishes happiness for everybody, this is *sattva*. It is *tamas* when we are half asleep or inert, or if we show signs of this destructive energy by thinking negatively about...
someone or wishing them harm.

When we learn to see the gunas in everything and how to change from one to another, this allows us to control our life and our karma. We need to see through the eyes of knowledge to recognize the gunas everywhere and to choose the guna of sattva (goodness). The guna of goodness gives liberation from sins and bad habits and enables us to rise to the transcendental (spiritual) level. Conversely, it is possible to be engaged in spiritual practices and yet be in rajas and tamas. In this situation, even many years of spiritual practice will not bring enlightenment but only the opposite – we can destroy our own lives and the lives of those around us.

**Success in Life Depends on the Right Choice**

*I can always choose; but I should know that even if I don't, I have still made a choice.*

Jean-Paul Sartre

When we know the symptoms of the gunas and how they bind, we can determine which energy is controlling us. This can be compared to a map; you look at it and see where you are now and where you need to go. Without a map any journey can become difficult or lead to a tragic result.

By knowing what qualities are favourable for becoming a harmonious person, we are in a better position to make the right choice. If we choose the guna of goodness, it will enable us to become happy and successful in all aspects of life. According to Ayurveda, all psychological and psychiatric problems develop when rajas and tamas become active. The ultimate achievement of the guna of goodness is a swift purification and ascendance to the spiritual. At this stage we can become free from the influence of all the gunas and achieve real freedom.

Modern western society views itself as a free civilization, but from the perspective of enlightened sages, such a society is a society of slavery, of slaves to their baser energies. Everyone serves their senses, especially their tongue and sexual organs, and have a predictable reaction to everything – “if praised we are happy, and if criticised we are unhappy”. Recently we met an American man in California who seriously practises yoga and various forms of meditation. He sadly noted, “Here in America everyone is crazy about food and sex”.
The Functions of the *Gunas*

1. *Bind:* They pull down and hold all living beings, causing us to forget that we are actually eternal souls, full of knowledge and bliss. They encourage us to drown in the temporary illusory life of this world.

2. *Create variety:* Like the three primary colours – red, blue and yellow – that are the basis of all colours and sub-colours, the three *gunas* are the foundation of all varieties of manifestations, whose purpose is to attract our attention and keep us here in the material world.

3. *All pervasive:* Everything in this world is situated in the three *gunas:* our bodies, the air we breathe, words, thoughts, objects, etc… For example, clothing can also be in the three *gunas*. A dirty shirt made of artificial materials is in ignorance, whereas a clean shirt made of natural materials is in goodness. Thoughts, subconscious agendas and arrangements are also in the *gunas*. Lazy and aggressive thinking is in ignorance. Thoughts of various desires for food, sex, work and respect are in passion. Thoughts in goodness are calm, magnanimous, and focused on self-realisation and helping others to gain happiness. Such undemanding people attract others without any special effort. Even just a few moments of association with such a person, who thinks about God and how to serve others, can bring joy, peace of mind and tranquil breathing.

Our natural environment is also in various *gunas*. For example, a lake in *tamas* is dirty, stinking and barely worthy of being considered a lake; it is more similar to a swamp. A lake in *rajas* is usually in a city, surrounded by different man-made things; a place where lovers meet and modern music plays. A lake in *sattva* is surrounded by beautiful nature with clean water and wildlife, where one may be inspired to meditate and the air is filled with *prana* (living energy).

It is considered to be very difficult to overcome the *gunas* because everything is saturated by them; we need clear vision and consciousness to be able to see how they act and how to become free of their influence.
The *guna* of ignorance is very dangerous because it is destructive from beginning to end. The destructive power of *tamas* can be compared to radiation; it is invisible yet capable of destroying the physical, psychological and spiritual aspects of our lives when we come in contact with it. If we went to Chernobyl for a holiday, we might think we were enjoying ourselves, drinking, eating, etc… but at the same time we would be completely destroying not only our own life but whatever we touch. Although we would be unaware of the effect it has, this kind of trip would bring suffering for ourselves and others, even our own clothing would become contaminated.

**ANECDOTE**

*At the market:*

“Come and buy Chernobyl apples!”

“Hey there, are you crazy? What are you selling? No one will buy them!”

“No, on the contrary, they sell very well! Some buy for a neighbour, some for their mother-in-law…”

The *guna* of passion is any action performed with a desire to enjoy some result. Karma-yoga is the method for overcoming this *guna*: the act of renouncing the fruits of one’s labour and offering them to God.

The *guna* of goodness is any action which purifies our consciousness. When we clearly see where we are situated, we can go to the transcendental stage. That is why it is very important to become free from ignorance as much as possible, become well-established in passion and begin acting in goodness to achieve freedom.
Questions and Answers

Replacing Ignorance with Passion

Question: What exactly does it mean to “become established in passion”?

Answer: Tamas is inertia, laziness, sleepiness and filth. It has to go. There is a saying: “A brahman (teacher, priest) is not sorry for the time spent on cleanliness”. To begin with we need to become active and move away from apathy, to arouse curiosity and thirst for knowledge. People in rajas are very curious and active. This is what it means to manifest passion; to replace ignorance with passion and cut the ignorance in our life to a minimum.

Disadvantages of Television

Question: What guna is watching TV?

Answer: Predominantly in ignorance, as it makes a person passive. To a certain degree it is the same with computers, unless necessary for one’s job. Children in particular should be protected from the virtual world of TV as it gradually saps their intelligence. You will never meet a successful, active and happy person who spends more than one hour a day watching TV. One professor told me, “I got everything I have in life because I threw away my TV”. Despite this, some programs and films are in goodness and can be watched, such as those dealing with spiritual or philosophical subjects or about nature.
Chapter 2

Spiritual Life and the Gunas

“Men,” said the little prince, “set out on their way in express trains, but they do not know what they are looking for. Then they rush about, and get excited, and turn round and round...”

And he added:

“It is not worth the trouble... the eyes are blind. One must look with the heart...”

Antoine de Saint Exupéry
The Little Prince

To some degree we are all engaged in various types of spiritual practices and want to progress; otherwise we would not be interested in this kind of knowledge. But we need to realize that if we are situated in the lower gunas, it is practically impossible to attain higher spiritual levels, regardless of how many years we practice. This is why it is extremely important to understand the gunas.

Religious Practices in the Lower Gunas Do Not Purify

If a priest, rabbi or guru is not mainly in sattva, neither he nor his followers will progress. Just consider how the majority of problems and wars in this world have been started by so-called spiritual leaders who were confident that what they did was right. For example, during the Crusades Christian preachers used theft and violence to convert others to their faith; they did not consider it sinful to throw a pagan child into a bonfire.

If we are in rajas we think, “My religion is the only right one. I can increase goodness in the world by converting everyone to my religion”.
In *tamas* we think, “Violence is required and should be used.” In *rajas* we engage in service with the purpose of gaining some result or benefit for ourselves. This is why these religious practices are on the level of, “I will pray and God will help by fulfilling my needs”. This is very common in modern society. We often come across religious symbols being sold for money, with the claim that they can bring happiness. People often come to religion for recognition, power or wealth; people organise pilgrimages to holy places so that they can become rich and have a more comfortable lifestyle.

Many believe that Paganism is another form of worship, that of Polytheism. But at some point it becomes worship for material profit – “God, send me this, or save me from that”. In the imagination of such a mindset, if our desires are fulfilled – okay, God is good, but if not – He is bad; we might consider that Satan has won, or question, “What happened to God? What on earth is He thinking? How did He let this happen?” Only the *guna* of goodness can truly inspire us.

**A Combination of Passion and Goodness Can Positively Change Situations**

If we are situated in goodness we experience happiness and contentment and are highly intuitive; if we do not experience these symptoms, it means we are influenced by passion and ignorance. If everything surrounding us becomes situated in goodness then it will affect us too. *Ignorance and passion come easily into our lives, but for goodness to come, we first have to work and put some effort into achieving it*. In order to become elevated to goodness, we must learn how to be proactive, which includes anticipating things before they happen. If we are living in ignorance, we will always complain about unfulfilled expectations, but in reality have little interest in changing ourselves. To make changes and progress, *rajas* and *sattva* are required. This is important for all of us, not only those engaged in spiritual practices. There is a real life story that illustrates this:

*A bomber of the USSR North Navy crashed due to a failure of the navigation system. The coastal service had sent the airplane in the opposite direction of the coast. When the air crew understood that they had been sent in the wrong direction, they turned around but there was not enough fuel to return to their base. They abandoned the airplane, parachuted and landed in the Barents Sea. They had three rafts. The captain thought they*
would not make it due to being too far offshore and too cold, so he shot himself. The second pilot got drunk and after a few weeks was found frozen to death. The navigator, a young lieutenant, had a dear wife and baby at home. His intense desire to see them again influenced his decision to make it at any cost. He paddled on his raft for two days without any food or water, using only his hands. When he reached the shore he had to walk for many hours, finally losing consciousness within sight of a fisherman’s cottage. He was found and after regaining consciousness, was brought home to his family without any serious harm. This is the guna of passion (action, determination) combined with goodness (optimism, fearlessness) – together they can become a powerful force that can create miracles in all areas of our life.

When we are in passion we try to change things; when in ignorance we just complain about different ailments without a real desire to cure them. Most sick people on an internal level actually want to remain as they are. When in passion, one who is sick we will try first and foremost to relieve the symptoms by taking powerful conventional medicines. The symptoms can actually disappear (for example, some tablets can eliminate a fever in one hour) but damage is also caused to our body because each tablet has many side effects. But when in passion we do not consider this; our main concern is, “Now that it is gone I can get back to work”.

I have a relative who is in his seventies. When he was young he once read about how dangerous and harmful almost all chemical medicines are; as a result he stopped taking them completely. After a couple of years all his ailments had gone and today he is still healthy and physically active on his farm.
Chapter 3

How to Raise Children Harmoniously

Child Rearing and the Gunas

Don’t bother just to be better than your contemporaries or predecessors. Try to be better than yourself.

William Faulkner

According to Ayurveda, it is important to undergo various processes of physical and mental purification for at least one year before conceiving a child. It is also necessary to choose a suitable day for conception, to attract a pure and harmonious soul that will bring happiness to everyone.

A pregnancy in sattva can be a source of tremendous happiness and benefit; the mother can receive countless spiritual and psychological realisations. It is important for the mother to eat fresh and nourishing food – food in goodness allows the mother to stay healthy and helps the child develop properly. The best place to live is in the countryside, surrounded by nature; this makes it easier for the mother to remain relaxed and peaceful during the pregnancy. She should also associate with those who are loving and supportive, avoiding those who are heavily influenced by baser energies. Unfortunately, modern doctors are not driven by sattva. Recently one lady informed me how doctors had tried to dissuade her from having her child, saying she was too old (thirty-eight) to give birth, that the child might have defects such as Down’s syndrome, she would need to have serious medical tests done, and that the best option was to have an abortion. I know of many other similar cases.

If in rajas, a mother’s attachment to her job can have a negative effect. Many women work throughout their pregnancies, and some also
return to work as soon as possible after birth, although for a child to develop properly it needs to be breastfed for at least two years. In the worst cases children may grow up having little love for their parents, and leave them in a retirement home as they become older, as if for payback. This is often due to the influence of passion on the mother – rather than spending valuable time with her child, she had relatives care for them so she could immediately return to work, with little concern for their proper feeding or having a sattvic environment. But if children are raised properly they can bring great fortune to everyone. Even very busy parents need to find at least some time each day to focus on their child.

**Upbringing in Ignorance:** ignorance is the main influence when parents drink alcohol or take drugs, physically abuse each other or their child (it is considered that before the age of five, children should be treated like God and should never be subjected to physical violence, especially girls) or live in a dirty home. When parents play heavy music, watch pornography or horror movies, or when teachers use force on children or sexually abuse them, they are also influenced by ignorance.

**Upbringing in Passion:** if influenced by passion, parents focus on giving things to their child, or helping them to achieve some position. These days it is extremely common for parents to give their children very little feeling and warmth; their main goal is to materially support their kids (and themselves). They send them to impressive schools, buying expensive presents in an attempt to fulfill their duty as parents. This enables them to remain preoccupied with their jobs and social lives, but they forget that what children need most is their unconditional love. Their priority is for their child to become externally successful by obtaining some impressive position, status or rank; this shows that their child has become truly established. Parents are attached to their own children and indifferent to others.

Teachers in passion have no interest in developing the moral characters or spiritual qualities of their students. Their main concern is to provide as much information as possible to help them achieve better exam results. No one is interested in whether the said knowledge is at all valuable in real life, as long as the students can obtain a prestigious diploma. Competitive models of education have become very popular, and most schools are located in large cities.

**Upbringing in Goodness:** when a child is raised in goodness their home is clean and located in the countryside, with an atmosphere of mutual respect and harmony. Parents, particularly the mother, consider the upbringing of their children to be their primary duty or concern.
Chapter 3  How to Raise Children Harmoniously

Children receive ample love. When they make a mistake the parent’s reaction is “You have made a mistake”, but never “You are bad”. Parents nurture their child according to their individual talents and desires and not based on their own selfish motives, “My child must become a diplomat, celebrity, etc…” Their prime concern is to make sure that their child becomes a balanced, virtuous person.

Raising a child begins even before conception. Approximately one year in advance parents start to cleanse their bodies of toxins, purify their consciousness and subtle bodies from resentment, anger and other negative emotions. The act of conception is performed in a responsible manner – in a clean atmosphere, during an astrologically auspicious time, in an elevated state of consciousness and preceded by prayer.

During the pregnancy everything is arranged so as to allow the mother to stay in a loving and pleasant environment. It is understood that the pregnancy and the first two or three years of a child’s life are essential periods for their physical and psychological development. At this stage it is important to relate properly to the child, giving it plenty of time and affection. There are special methods for raising a child which we have only touched on here.

From the age of six to fifteen, parents should be somewhat strict with their child, because they know that during this period they need some restrictions. Otherwise, if they are given the freedom to do whatever they want, they would start to eat all kinds of junk food, and may even end up smoking, taking alcohol or drugs, watching pornography, etc…

From the age of fifteen parents should adopt a more friendly relationship with their child. By this point his character has already been formed, so it is generally unfeasible and utterly unnecessary to maintain a strict control over him.

When comparing Western systems of education, the English private school system used to have, and still has to some extent, a substantial element of sattva. For example, such schools were usually located in rural areas, surrounded by nature. Before the age of fourteen boys were disciplined very strictly, but once their individual characters were formed they were treated like gentlemen.

How to Ensure Success for You and Your Child

Taking care of children is an extremely serious matter; it is essential to understand that children are our future. They are our future both
directly and indirectly: directly they continue our genetic lineage and indirectly (on a subtle, energetic level) they increase our future energy. Our future is greatly affected by how we care for and relate to our children. Yet this potential power can be destroyed by over-indulgence or by excessive fear for them and their future. On the other hand, negligence can also be damaging.

For example, influenced by passion, a father who is absorbed in his work may only see his children when they are asleep or briefly at the weekend. Because he is working to supply all necessities for his family, he thinks that his wife is responsible for looking after their children because she is not working, and thus justifies his behaviour. But they also need their father’s love – the energy of the Sun (yang). He may experience success for some time despite ignoring this important part of his life. However his actions create a conflict which triggers nature's defensive system; nature does not forgive the neglect of children. As a result illness, depression and financial difficulties will come, and problems will arise in various relationships. Not only the individual and his family can be affected, but society as a whole.

The effects can be even worse if it is the mother that becomes overwhelmed by or absorbed in her career. Such women frequently come to me for consultations in Moscow. I met one lady, divorced and in her late thirties, who wanted a normal family and more children. But at the same time she was neglecting her child from her first marriage, although by sending him to the best school and buying him expensive toys she imagined herself to be adequately doing her duty. Why should nature give her more children?

A pleasant, pregnant woman used to work at one bank in Jerusalem where I had an account. She stopped working just a few days before giving birth and I thought I would not see her for a long time. But three months later when I popped into the bank, I was surprised to see her again. I asked her if she was okay and she joyfully replied, “Yes, everything is great, the baby is wonderful”. When I asked why she had returned, she explained that her maternity pay only covered the first three months and the bank would ask her to leave if she did not work. She worked eight to ten hours a day and most of her salary was spent on child-minding fees. Her main concern was whether she would get promoted the following summer. This shows passion in action.

Such is the life of many modern women, regardless of the assertion of modern scientists and psychologists that the longer a child is breastfed the healthier he will be, physically and psychologically. During one
of the Dalai Lama’s visits to America he was asked, “What is your main message?” People were stunned and confused when he replied, “Ladies, breastfeed your babies!” *Breastfeeding is in sattva.*

Recently one businessman came to me for a consultation. His company secretly inspects and monitors the conduct of babysitters when the parents are absent. He almost went bankrupt because so few people wanted to use this service. Parents were worried that if they found out the babysitter was unsuitable, this would affect their work schedule or their social life. Their main concern was that at least there should be someone to look after their children. Eighty percent of those who used his service decided to change their babysitter because they could see how badly their child was being cared for. This is passion – to leave a baby with a practical stranger rather than hinder their own enjoyment.
Chapter 4
Being Proactive

Life should be lived now; it can’t be put aside all the time.

Irvin Yalom

Being Proactive brings Success in Life

Sattva means that we act proactively in all aspects of our life, that we plan our lives in a conscious manner rather than carelessly reacting to things or being carried along by others. One of the most important areas of our life is how and what we eat – the eating process is connected to our mind and nervous system and is the first and most basic step to come to sattva. We should be thoughtful about what, how, where and with whom we eat. Of course, we can eat quickly or while walking around, paying no attention to the actual food and process of eating; this however will lead to disease and aggravate the nervous system. It is better to sit peacefully, to say a prayer before eating and spend a little more time if we want to eat under the influence of goodness. Many things in our lives are determined by the way we eat. If we eat properly, it will be significantly easier to establish ourselves in goodness and thus experience improved health and inner peace.

If we are considering marriage, we should spend a few years preparing for it – read relevant books, study how to develop harmony in family life and how to find a suitable partner. If we want to go to university to learn something new, we should research at least one year before. We need to understand why it is important to us, and if this will suit our nature, mission and goal in life.

Sleep is also important. We always have many things to do, and to go to bed at ten or eleven in the evening may seem impossible. This hap-
pens daily over many years and has a negative influence on our health. At the beginning, it may seem difficult to train ourselves to go to bed early because our mind tries to find excuses. But if we are determined, we will see how everything around us changes, even our relatives will suddenly begin going to bed early.

Regarding employment, we may complain that we find it difficult to work, are undervalued or do not get promoted. But we need to consider how much time we regularly give for self-education. According to statistics received by American researchers, if we spend at least one hour a day on training ourselves in our chosen occupation, by reading or taking relevant courses to upgrade our qualifications, a powerful energy is produced that increases our chances of success, causing unexpected things to happen. Suddenly we may get promoted, or interesting projects or job offers in good companies come your way. In order to make this happen, we must be proactive – this is exactly how successful people act.

Genuine self-education implies sattva. When in ignorance we open a book, but have no interest to read or understand it. When in passion we cannot concentrate, are distracted all the time, or else we spend five hours at a time studying and then do nothing for two weeks. It is better to study short periods as long as it is regular – for example, such studying is recommended for those training themselves in a new language. This is education in goodness.

**Politics and the Guna**

Today it is almost impossible to find a political or social system in sattva. They are mainly in passion: most politicians focus on winning an election and snatching lots of money from the state. Much effort is invested in looking good and putting on a show, for example, charity work is performed only under the condition that it gets huge publicity.

When in ignorance politicians physically abuse each other, engage in revolutions or rebellions. I remember once reading, “There are politicians and there are statesmen”; the difference between them is that the latter aims to serve his country and citizens. Statesmen put lots of energy into long-term projects and plan better for the future, which means that sattva is dominant.

While in New Zealand recently, I made contact with an old acquaintance that I had not seen for many years. He has lived there for a long time and told me how well everything is organised. Occasionally he
works part-time at a hospital as an interpreter and was surprised to see their approach to health care. For example, just after a patient has had surgery, someone is assigned to find out the cause of their disease: poor diet, social problems or something else. Then a medical specialist comes (dietician, social worker, etc…) to help solve the patient's problems. For patients recovering from surgery or some illness, a caretaker may go to their house and install handrails in the shower and other places. This is an intelligent approach: if this person falls down and is injured, it will cause suffering for him and unnecessary disturbance and expense for the state.

The Police there have established a department for overseeing multicultural issues, although there are no racial problems. They are trying to prevent such problems from happening in the future by educating people and monitoring potential racial issues. These and other signs (practically no corruption, an excellent educational system, sincere kindness) indicate that there is a strong influence of sattva in this society. Why is this influence so strong? Because these people are the most sattvic I have encountered.

**Physical Exercise and the Gunas**

If we want to be healthy and have no weight problems, we should engage regularly in physical exercise. *Ayurveda* states that we should choose a form of physical exercise according to our individual needs. Swimming, fast walking and hiking are good for both men and women. Rowing is good for men. Modern sports played at sub-professional level and higher are in passion and therefore can be harmful, not only physically but also intellectually. Many doctors can confirm this. How often do we think of the words “sportsman” and “intellectual” as synonymous? Bodybuilding is pure passion and can reduce sexual potency and vitality. Many bodybuilders drink artificial supplements and can have quite negative reactions when they stop exercising; they become flabby and look older than they really are. Large, attractive, artificially pumped muscles are not indicators of health and strength; however, if we are in *tamas* it is good to engage in sports as this helps prevent laziness.

The best exercise is *Hatha-yoga* because it enables our body to come quickly to a balanced state. In contrast to modern sports that cause us to feel completely shattered after two hours of training, a few hours of yoga will cause a feeling of elation, increase our energy levels and boost our intellectual abilities. Yoga in passion, by contrast, appears
comical and has little in common with what the great Masters teach. For example, nowadays, American companies organise yoga competitions or advertise, “We will open your chakras at $100 per chakra” or “Yoga will increase your sexual potency”.

To Be Proactive Initially Requires Effort

There is a good phrase in a book by Robin Sharma: “Diamonds get formed through intense pressure”. Beneficial pressure, however, is not such pressure that is in passion. It is important to develop a habit by doing an action and maintain it through constant and intense repetition; this is a beneficial condition of pressure. The terms ‘consistent’ and ‘maintain’ belong to the guna of goodness.

For example, getting out of bed early in the morning is difficult to get accustomed to at the beginning. If the Sun is has a weak influence in our horoscope, we will be inclined to get up late. However, if we shower after 9 am, our body will absorb toxins that were produced while sleeping, causing us to poison ourselves. Those of us who are categorised as ‘night owls’ become more active and productive in the evening. Nevertheless, a ‘night owl’ can become an ‘early bird’, but that requires substantial effort. Up to eighty percent of us can get up earlier if our horoscopes are reasonable and we have some desire to change; this can take a few months or sometimes years. The main thing is to have faith in ourselves and to change our outlook; thus our vitality and energy will increase with persistent effort.

When I raised this subject in one group, it generated a heated discussion; many were doubtful that it was possible to become an ‘early bird’. Yet several months later one woman from this seminar, who had always considered herself a ‘night owl’, started to gradually change her daily schedule and began to go to bed early so she could get up before 6am. She happily related to the entire group how this had improved her life and health.
Chapter 5

Seeing the Gunas in our Daily Lives

Everything in this world goes through three stages: creation (rajas), maintenance (sattva) and annihilation (tamas).

Conscious Choice of Gunas Can Help Establish Successful and Lasting Projects

If we want to create a solid foundation for any successful project, we need to consciously attract the appropriate energy.

To create something we have to be active; any kind of creation in this world requires activity – rajas. Although creating takes effort, it is even more difficult to maintain (sattva) what we have created, because it involves consistent effort on a daily basis. For us to destroy something, in most cases, little effort is required – destruction (tamas) often comes by itself. To produce a good car countless people need to labour for many years, but any inexperienced driver can demolish it in just a few minutes. The same applies to our lives; if the guna of ignorance enters, our life can be ruined in a moment. In the Vedas it is stated that Brahma is responsible for creation, Vishnu for maintenance and Shiva for annihilation. Each type of energy has a purpose and value; by understanding this we can make intelligent choices to help us in whatever situation we are in. We should consciously transfer ourselves to different gunas, to choose the guna whose energy we need at any given moment.

Passion is required for creative work, for example, to develop and start a new business project. This is not an easy task – passion means applying substantial effort. People who are mainly in passion are extremely energetic. Warriors (ksatriyas) must fight, and for battle they need huge amounts of energy. If we were to try to hold an ancient sword
in our hand, even for ten minutes, it would be practically impossible. In history books, we read that battles used to continue for many hours or even days. In modern society wars also require great physical and psychological strength, and without passion and energy it would not be possible to endure it. That is why in Vedic culture warriors were allowed to have a few wives, to eat fish and drink wine; all these things gave the warrior the passionate energy he needed.

But after creation comes the most difficult: maintenance. For example, if we started a new business which was beginning to successfully operate and develop, we would need to come to sattva to further maintain it. We would have to go to work on time, prepare to meet clients, file regular financial reports, provide good customer service regardless of the kind of people we have to deal with, not let up when the business is going well etc. For modern businessmen, who are mostly under the influence of passion, these things are incredibly difficult. According to statistics, out of the huge number of new businesses created annually, only a few stay afloat after the first five years.

England is considered to have the most beautiful lawns. Once a foreign journalist wanted to find out England’s secret of success so he enquired from some local gardeners. The answer was, “It is not difficult – the grass should be trimmed every morning at exactly 9 am and if there is no rain, it has to be watered.” “That’s all?” the journalist asked. “Yes, and do this for 300 years.” This is the nature of action in sattva.

How to Create Paradise at Home

If we want to keep our home in sattva, it is necessary to keep it pleasant, tidy and clean every day. It is essential to make our bed; a bed is considered to be in tamas and therefore if a bed is not made, it spreads ignorance. Even if we are very tired after coming home from work, we need to spend at least twenty minutes cleaning. It is difficult but you will feel how a completely different energy spreads around the home. If we top this off by taking a shower, we will be plunged into a completely different atmosphere. The science of Vastu (the origin of Feng-Shui) states that, “Even if your house is correctly built and organized, if it is dirty (ignorance) inside or outside, the energy of Rahu enters and quickly destroys everything”. The health and relationships of the inhabitants of the house are the first things to be destroyed.

To have family relationships in sattva, it is necessary to cook fresh food at home for ourselves and to come together to eat as a family at
least several times a week. Most processed foods contain passion and ignorance. If we want harmonious relationships at home, we must cook our own food, using fresh, high quality ingredients, and do it with love.

Modern marriages are usually established in passion as the main focus is sexual compatibility; as a result of this, they do not last. Sattva means maintenance: spouses respect each other, never complain or argue (particularly in front of children), the husband regularly presents flowers to his wife, and the wife makes herself look attractive for her husband and never directly contradicts him. It is said if there is peace in a family then the Goddess of fortune, Lakshmi, enters into the home.

Sages state that a woman is compared to a witch if she does not greet her husband with a smile when he comes home from work, speaks harshly or does not keep their home clean; she is considered to be stupid if she argues and disagrees with her husband rather than taking a more flexible and understanding position. If a woman argues with a man after he has expressed what he thinks is a most intelligent statement, even if she is right, this is a painful stab for his big, delicate ego and he will not forgive her.

This is not only true for marital relationships. A long time ago it was noted that the statement, “The truth comes from arguments”, was concocted by people in passion. As Dale Carnegie has so accurately described in this regard, “Only enemies come from arguments.” The more intensely emotional the arguments, the more enmity is created.

**Sattva and Modern Living**

An important question to consider is how we can stop our feelings from becoming agitated while living in the big city, driving in our car or going to work. If we live in a city, our first and main priority should be to choose a suitable house or flat; after all, most of our time will be spent at home. Before we make a choice it is good to find out about our neighbours. It is important to follow the basic rules of Vastu-Shastra (the original ancient Indian text and source of Feng-Shui). It is also essential to have a park or natural scenery nearby as that will help to make it more sattvic.

If that is not possible, then we can create a more sattvic atmosphere within our home. We absorb the energy of our surroundings; therefore the atmosphere at home should be sattvic by maintaining high standards of cleanliness, starting with washing ourselves regularly. A home is heavily contaminated by TV; if we have one, we should
try to choose shows that will lead to higher consciousness, although these are difficult to find.

When we travel around the city we should avoid looking at billboards, shop displays, etc. We can listen to classes, wish everyone well, be friendly toward others, chant prayers or mantras, even meditate, or think and make plans for the next day. Basically, we should be able to switch ourselves off from external objects. It is good to have an audio player in our car which allows us to listen to classes and audio books.

If we cannot keep our eyes away from advertisements, then in our mind we should at least try to create an objective picture. Try to remember that only two percent of all advertised products are actually useful. Generally it is better to try to avoid watching and listening to adverts; if this is not possible, we can remember that the advertised product in and of itself will not make us happy. For example, when we see cigarette advertisements, we should just visualise how these “happy” people are inhaling the tobacco smoke and how this black energy enters their lungs and entire body. Remember the story of the actor and model, Alan Landers: he was the face of Winston cigarettes during the 1960’s and 1970’s and died from throat cancer. Once his modelling career was over, he became even more famous as an activist for major anti-smoking campaigns.

A job should be viewed as a way to use our talents for the benefit of the whole world. Regardless of what kind of work we do, we should do it with all our heart.

It is important to carefully choose whom we associate with. It is better to limit how often we spend time with people in passion. We should completely avoid those who are in ignorance, refrain even from answering them and ignore them completely.

Try to be a channel for pure energies in this world and to give this to everyone you meet. Then a balanced and peaceful life is possible, even in a city. But even so it is still important to remember that cities do in fact take energy away from us, particularly large ones, as they are manifestations of ignorance and passion. Therefore it is vital to have a source from which the energy of goodness can be obtained. As we mentioned before, this can be from associating with exalted individuals, attending seminars, reading literature that contains wisdom and love, regular visits to the countryside, etc.
The Guna of Ignorance — Instant Energy of Destruction

Fire, diseases and debts should be dealt with immediately.

Ayurvedic Wisdom

The guna of ignorance is practically never needed and has to be avoided and ignored. Why does it have to be avoided? As previously mentioned, this energy is similar to a nuclear weapon: once under its influence, destruction and ruin immediately follow. Just consider how much time and resources are needed to manufacture, for example, a Mercedes or BMW. Huge institutions are involved in this – two hundred and fifty thousand employees work for BMW in Germany alone! And now, think of how much energy and time are needed to destroy a new car? One wise Ayurvedic doctor once told me, “Everything bad in this world happens quickly and unexpectedly”.

Recently I had a conversation with one acquaintance that lives in northern Israel. There was some trouble in his family: he had to go to hospital due to a bad cardiogram result, even though for many years he had enjoyed good health and used to work at least twelve hours a day. Even while being in hospital, while receiving phone calls from colleagues, he would talk only about his job. He was completely oblivious to the cause of his illness and had little interest in changing his lifestyle. This is the typical attitude of someone in passion, and if passion is not transformed to goodness it degrades to ignorance.

Ignorance in the form of diseases, scandalous break-ups in relationships, fire, burglary and accidents generally come into our lives quickly and unexpectedly. If we are wise and sattvic, we will be able to notice the signs that imply their approach, and avoid them easily through a proactive lifestyle and mentality. Even the situations that come due to karma and are unavoidable, we can accept with gratitude, tranquility and love; thus by the influence of sattva, we can come out from a bad situation as a winner. There have been many great politicians and military leaders who were able to turn their mistakes and losses into great victories.

One of the signs of ignorance is performing useless and meaningless activities: checking emails ten times a day, pointless chattering on the phone, watching the 384th episode of a TV series, as well as any aimless and meaningless activity and inactivity. “There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all,” stated
Peter Drucker, a management specialist.

Ignorance is dangerous and must be avoided at any cost. Even two minutes of association with an ignorant person can later cause one to unexplainably become aggressive, fatigued or seriously ill.

Despite all this, ignorance is also needed to some extent. For example, correct sleeping (sleep as a state of consciousness belongs to ignorance), demolishing old buildings, etc.

We are composed of an eternal spirit, souls that are beyond the gunas and transcendental in nature, yet we are within material bodies which are tamasic (ignorant) in nature. Some may find this statement offensive: How is it that my body or the body of my loved ones are in ignorance when we have such beautiful eyes, nails and hair? Undoubtedly, the eyes are the mirror of the soul and if a person is spiritually advanced, in sattva, then their eyes are truly attractive. But if they were to be plucked out and put on a plate, it would be impossible to enjoy them anymore. Regarding hair and nails – Judaism says that if a pregnant woman walks on nails, she will suffer a miscarriage. In Vedic culture it is believed that if a hair falls into food, all the food is contaminated and should be thrown away.

Just imagine what would happen to our body if we forgot to brush our teeth or did not wash ourselves for a few days. We would stink and our friends would pray that we keep our mouth closed. Similarly, if we are in tamas (selfish, jealous, greedy), even if we brush our teeth, we will still give off a foul odor when we talk. Modern research shows that if one lives for sixty years, twenty years of these are spent sleeping, four years going to the toilet and even more for eating. Our physical body requires all this time, and usually the lower our consciousness the more it requires; yet as soon as the soul leaves the body, the body begins to rot and decompose.
Chapter 6

Optimum Sleep – The Source of Health and Happiness

Ayurveda states that a woman’s health rests on three key principles: optimum sleep, optimum diet and healthy sex. In my opinion, these are no less important for men.

Sleep is ignorance, yet it is necessary for our body. The more we are in ignorance, however, the more we want to sleep. When in sattva we require less time for sleeping – it has been proven that even four hours of sleep is enough for our nervous system. If our life is interesting and has a defined goal, then we just will have no need for lots of sleep. Generally people believe that it is necessary to sleep at least eight hours; but if we sleep properly, we will need much less.

Sleeping is also affected by the gunas. Sleeping in sattva means to go to bed before 10 pm, or 11 pm at the latest. Sleep between 9 pm and 1 am is the most valuable, as this is the only time the nervous system rests and the long-term memory is not working. Everything in nature sleeps at this time; only modern tamasic-rajasic people are awake. One interesting point worth noting is that the concept of ‘night owls’ and ‘early birds’ only appeared quite recently. In the past practically everyone was an early bird. Scientists in Canada – a country with one of the highest rates of insomnia – are convinced that most problems with insomnia only appeared once people started to go to sleep later.

Preparing for Sleep

Two hours before going to sleep, it is necessary to prepare by doing the following:

1. Ayurveda does not recommend taking a shower less than two
hours before sleeping – it weakens the energy field of the body and aggravates the nervous system, especially if the shower is cold. If it is necessary for us to take a shower, it has to be warm.

2. Before going to sleep we should avoid eating; the food will not be digested and will turn into toxins and fat. It is best to take slightly sweetened warm milk at this time as it calms the nervous system and strengthens the intellect. The first rule for those looking to put on weight is – eat after 6 pm! And if the food is in ignorance-passion, like white bread or meat, then within a few weeks our friends will start to joke about our huge jelly-belly. In addition to getting fat, we will want to sleep more and more. If we are hungry, it is acceptable to take a small amount of steamed vegetables, nuts or bananas.

3. We should avoid watching or reading anything that causes excitement. It is better to read something spiritual (but not very philosophical), to meditate or say some prayers. Whatever we do or hear before sleeping enters our sub-consciousness; therefore it is extremely undesirable to count money at this time because it intensifies greed. If you lend money to someone at this time, be prepared to not get it back and that they will become your enemy.

4. The room where we sleep should be clean and well ventilated. We need to be especially careful in choosing the type of pictures and even books that are in our bedroom – whatever they represent leaves an impression on our consciousness and enters the sub-consciousness during sleep. It is desirable to have books in sattva, and it is very good to have some holy books near your head. Pictures should depict pleasant, peaceful landscapes. The TV should be in another room or even better, in another house.

**Practical Recommendations for Sleeping**

In Ayurveda it is stated that the duration of human life is determined by the amount of inhalations and exhalations we take – the more often the breath the shorter the life. Ayurveda recommends leading a sattvic lifestyle as it strengthens the immune system. Rajas and tamas are the opposite; they weaken or destroy our immunity and stimulate frequent and incorrect breathing. Breathing increases when we experience nega-
tive emotions like fear, anger or mental anxiety, during intense physical activity, sex and as strangely as it sounds, during sleeping. In a state of tranquil wakefulness, the length of exhalations within a half-hour period is 10,800 centimetres (108 metres), and 27,000 centimetres (270 metres) while sleeping. In this way, an extra 30 minutes of sleep results in the loss of three-quarters of an hour of life. When we suffer from serious illness, we breathe the same way as while sleeping, and at the time of death the last exhale is the longest. By coming to sattva we not only increase our health by strengthening our immune system, but also increase our duration of life by breathing less.

There is one more important recommendation – to avoid sleeping with our head facing north or north-east. Throughout our life we are all subjected to the influence of various energies and fields. Solar energy, the magnetic field of the Earth, the gravitational field of the Moon and the magnetic storms on the Sun – they all influence us. The human body possesses magnetic characteristics similar to those of the Earth planet.

The Earth’s magnetic field runs from north to south, as does the human magnetic field – from the head to the feet. As a result of this, if we sleep with our head towards the north, our magnetic field will be overcome by the magnetic field of the Earth. This can cause problems with blood circulation, an excessive heart rate and cause general deterioration of our health. You probably remember how two magnets act when the north poles are put together, face-to-face? They spin away from each other because they cannot stay in such a position. Now imagine what would happen to our aura if we were to sleep with our head facing north – the next morning it would be ripped apart, literally. After waking up, we would not feel rested and cheerful. But if we sleep in the opposite direction, toward the south, our magnetic field will interact correctly with the Earth’s magnetic field and we will feel fresh and full of energy when we awaken.

ANECDOTE

“A late evening in a posh restaurant, tobacco smoke spreads everywhere, and exhausted musicians play popular music. Behind a big table that is covered with various dishes and drinks, a rich man is sleeping with his head in a big plate of salad. Suddenly he lifts his head, slowly looks at everyone, smiles and says, ‘Life is beautiful!’ and his head falls back on the plate”.

What guna do you think this is?
It is important to brush our teeth and take a shower immediately after waking to get rid of the guna of ignorance. It is best to have a bowel movement before taking a shower. At night the body gets rid of toxins, and if we do not go to the toilet or take a shower before 9 am, then all the toxins are absorbed back into the body.

A. S. Pushkin said, “Blessed is one who moves his bowels every morning without any force”. One famous Ayurvedic doctor confirmed, “One of the main rules of good health is to empty the bowels in the morning; if this does not happen then soon disease will come”.

The guna of goodness means knowing the purpose of life, having a life that is stimulating and filled with goodness. In contrast to this, ignorance is destructive from beginning to end; the more our consciousness is influenced by ignorance, the more we want to sleep, watch TV series, associate in ignorance and passion.

We may ask, “But what should we do when we get up early?” The time of sattva is from approximately four to nine in the morning; at this time of day we feel absolutely no desire to drink alcohol, swear, watch movies or engage in similar activities. This time is designed for prayer, meditation, study, planning for the future – the long-term memory works at full power during this time. It is in these hours that we should receive a positive burst of energy for the whole day. In America there is a millionaires club, where one of the conditions of membership is that you have to get up before 5 am. They realised that without rising early it is very difficult to succeed.

One famous proverb says, “Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man happy, healthy and wise.” By understanding how the gunas work we can see the truth in this statement – during the early morning hours the energy of sattva (happiness and tranquility) totally saturates the atmosphere.

**Brahma-muhurta**

Masters of Ayurveda consider a proper daily routine to be a powerful form of therapy for improving health and have devoted the first chapters of their classic works to it. Dinacharya, or strictly following a standard daily routine, is one of the best ways to enable one to remain in harmony and to prevent and cure disease. Vagbhata in “Ashtanga Hridayam” begins his description of the daily routine with the following words: “Get
up from sleeping during Brahma-muhurta to preserve your health and life itself.” The word brahma can be translated as belonging to Brahman, saint, sacred, the divine; to sacred knowledge, prescribed by Vedas; sacred science, study of sacred texts and study of Vedas. Muhūrta means a moment, an instant, any short interval of time, or a defined period of time such as 48 minutes.

The time of day for receiving spiritual knowledge and happiness is known as Brahma-muhurta. According to Ayurveda, a healthy person needs to get up two muhurtas before sunrise, at 4.30 am to be exact – this is a calculation for South India when day and night are of equal duration. Depending on the geographical latitude of a particular place or the season of the year, the time of sunrise changes, but the duration of a sandhya always remains the same. Therefore, Brahma-muhurta always begins one and a half hours before sunrise, regardless of the place or season.

If we wake up during the Brahma-muhurta, this allows us to begin the day with calm and cheerfulness and maintain this state throughout. This is the time when sattva predominates, which itself brings harmony to all energies. Passion starts at sunrise. With the sunset tamas takes over. Before sunrise the atmosphere is saturated with sattva; this is the only time of day when this energy is dominant. At this time there is a positive flow of energy which creates the best conditions for meditation. Thus it is the most beneficial time of day. By getting up at this time, we can synchronise our rhythm with the rhythm of the Sun. Rising dur-
Brahma-muhurta increases and maintains the best qualities of our unique nature – svabhava – and allows us to be established in it. This condition is called svastha. Svastha is veritable health, the achievement of which is possible only when one becomes established in virtue and goodness. Brahma-muhurta is also the best time for us to pay respect to elders and gurus, offer prayers, meditate, read spiritual scriptures and chant sacred names. The Goddess of Fortune shuns us if we do not perform these morning rituals.

Sri Chanakya-niti-sastra (15.4) states: “He who wears unclean garments, has dirty teeth, eats like a glutton, speaks unkindly and sleeps after sunrise, although he may be the greatest personality, will lose the favour of Lakshmi”. In other words, prosperity, health, beauty and vitality leave us if we get up after sunrise, no matter how important we are.

We may wonder what time of day is more suitable to perform various activities – morning or evening. Undoubtedly the morning is more suitable; it is easy to experience how calm and blissful the atmosphere is in the morning. If we are in tamas (ignorance), we become more active at night and sleepier in the morning. Most crimes are committed at night. Darkness and gloom are characteristics of tamas, which is why night-time should be for sleeping. Almost everything in nature falls asleep when the Sun sets and awakens as the Sun rises. You will never see a bird or animal covering their face with a wing or paw from the light of the Sun as it rises. The nervous system rests from approximately 9:30 pm to midnight; if we do not sleep at this time, our rest will never be satisfactory, regardless of how much we sleep. According to Ayurveda one of the most detrimental things for our health is staying awake at night, particularly for night work. The World Health Organization’s research department announced the inclusion of night work in its list of factors most likely to cause cancer.

Morning is the time of goodness (sattva); our most creative ideas occur to us and our intuition is heightened at this time. There is a saying, “Morning is wiser than evening”. We should never make serious decisions in the evening, but wait until the morning. If we follow this rule, we will not have to waste energy fixing unnecessary mistakes.
Chapter 7
Association

Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else’s opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation.

Oscar Wilde

Our Life is a Theatre
Where Everyone Plays a Role

Eastern psychology says that we are similar to a chameleon; we take on the colour of the things we associate with. Our lives are determined by association because we absorb the qualities of environment we live in – such is human nature and nothing can be done to change it.

There was a famous experiment some years ago: some mentally balanced, successful students were selected and then divided into two groups. The first group was told they were prisoners and the second that they were wardens, and they would conduct themselves in accordance with their roles. After four days the experiment had to be stopped, although it had originally been intended to last for one week. The students in the prisoner group were starting to manifest signs of severe depression and other modes of behaviour similar to real prisoners. Those who were wardens became more aggressive and rude toward the prisoners, although they were friends in real life. One student warden even became physically violent. They had become completely immersed in the mood of prison life.

Even actors who play angry characters become angrier. There are also examples of actors becoming more harmonious and wise after playing the role of a saint. The lives of contemporary actors are often tragic as they rarely play roles of balanced, spiritually advanced people.
On a larger scale, life is a big theatre where we play defined roles, and how we play determines the role we take in our next life. Although we are eternal spirits, because we are embodied in this world, we play specific roles – men, women, French, Jewish, German, Ukrainian, engineer, teacher, boss, etc. It is interesting – we write our own life story, consciously or unconsciously creating the paradigms which govern how we think and behave. The more ignorance in our life, the more darkness and misfortune there will be. On the other hand, the more goodness, the more light and happiness we will experience; we will be more aware, our lives will be interesting and full of possibilities.

Would you like to play the role of a person who is angry, unhappy, bored, constantly criticizing others and demanding of everyone and everything? Why do we choose such roles?

Association must be Chosen

We need to consciously choose what roles to play and who to associate with. We have already been given some roles in this life; usually we cannot change our nationality, parents, relatives, or radically change the size of the body. But even within these limitations there is a wide range of possibilities and choices. If we want to understand who we are, we must look at the people with whom we spend most of our time and have the closest relationships.

Ayurvedic psychology states that correct relationships are the basis of our psychological wellbeing. It is important to be surrounded by harmonious people who assist us in our progress, bring emotional equilibrium and help to preserve our peace of mind. It is equally essential to avoid those who destroy our nervous system, cause degradation and reduce our mental composure. We should associate with such people only if and when they are willing to listen to our advice and are ready to make changes in their lives; otherwise, we should just pray for them and wish them well.

Regular association with people who encourage harmonious growth and love is more therapeutic and valuable than visiting a doctor. Even the mere presence of a wise person cools and calms the mind.

By thinking of someone we absorb their energy. This is why Eastern philosophy and psychology says, “Think of God, think of saints, and contemplate what the Holy Scriptures and enlightened personalities say”. These things will influence us with pure sattva – the transcendental stage.
**Chapter 8**

*Philosophy – the Basis of Psychology*

**How the Living Entity Descends To This World**

We will now discuss how the *jiva* (Sanskrit – living entity) descends to this material world and how it can become entangled there. We consider the *gunas* in terms of psychology because it can help us to develop proper personalities. At the present moment, the main problem of our civilisation is that the two *gunas*, *rajas* and *tamas* (passion and ignorance), have thoroughly penetrated the consciousness of many people. As a result, there is often no point trying to help someone if they have not been purified.

This table clearly shows how the *jiva* (living entity) descends to this world.
We are part and parcel of God, a spiritual substance which is united with Him. Initially living existence was situated in the spiritual world (in Christianity this is referred to as the Kingdom of God) – a place that is unrelated to materialism and where everyone is aware of their Union with God and full of eternity, knowledge and bliss. But living existence somehow (we will not now proceed to discuss this theosophical moment) falls into some kind of stew of material energy. This is the mahat-tattva – the great material energy which consists of the three gunas of material nature.

When the soul descends from the spiritual world, this first embodiment carries the energy of the transcendental world.

But regardless of which part of the material world we are born into, we have a body and begin to associate with others. Then the next step is to identify ourselves with the surroundings – “Now I am in this world. I am such and such, I am a yogi, I am a sage, I am small, I am great, I relate to this family or tribe; others have such qualities…” This is the beginning of self-identification with matter. Firstly the gunas penetrate the intellect and then this conditioning develops.

Degradation of the Intellect

At the first stage, the intellect understands that the soul is eternal, that one needs to live in a loving relationship with God. But the intellect becomes slightly contaminated and then ahankara appears (Sanskrit – “false ego”). With the appearance of false ego, we begin to identify ourselves with something that is not our true self: with the body, subtle body, intellect and mind. First of all we begin to identify ourselves with the senses and mind. Despite the mind initially being in goodness, it becomes contaminated through passion and begins to plan for sensual gratification. It overflows with passion and loses control over the senses, instead coming under their influence. Then the mind becomes engaged in material activity, despite seeing that this does not give satisfaction. Despite the mind being initially sattvic and mellow– for example, if we perform meditation and remain free of any attachments, then our mind is peaceful and happy – when the energy of the false ego is in effect, the mind becomes impassioned.

In this world there is always someone who is higher or lower than us. For example, our neighbour’s house may be better than ours, so we also begin wanting one that is at least as good. When our mind becomes absorbed in mediating on satisfying our senses, it becomes incredibly
powerful, even more powerful than our intelligence. As a result, it can engage the weakened intelligence in fulfilling our desires for gratification of the senses. Then the intellect also begins looking for different ways to satisfy the senses. If our intellect is developed, then it can plan many and varied forms to this end. In modern society, many possibilities have been developed for sense enjoyment.

The *gunas* (mainly, passion and ignorance) influence the mind and intellect through the sense objects – and the mind becomes infuriated because it cannot be completely satisfied with sense enjoyments. As a result the mind becomes more and more agitated. Have you ever seen a person walking the streets of New York or Moscow that is satisfied and peaceful? In large cities, the energy of passion is so strong that just by being there we will eventually start acting more passionately, we will begin to bustle around after only a short while of simply strolling calmly and peacefully. Cities are mostly absent of *sattva*, with only ignorance and passion. Goodness is found in more natural surroundings.

**An Agitated Mind Loses Control of the Senses**

By coming into contact with advertisements or something that attracts the senses, or by simply living in a modern metropolis, the mind becomes infuriated and wants countless things. Even if we live peacefully in the countryside, as soon as we come to the city, a desire to buy some object arises, then another, and another. For example, in some solitary settlements in Tibet tourists are prohibited from entering. The air in those places is saturated with *prana* (vitality) which causes the mind to immediately become peaceful; the locals are jolly, cheerful and very generous. But when tourists go there, they bring passion with them. Western people walk around and take photographs while being observed by the local youngsters, who then start wanting the same expensive stuff the wealthy tourists have. For the same money an entire village can be bought in those areas. The minds of the locals become disturbed and passion enters into their peaceful life; as a result, a small village can be completely degraded spiritually within a few years.

One spiritual teacher said, “The spiritual culture of India has not been destroyed by the English, nor by the Muslims. It has been destroyed by the Internet and TV in just a few years”. This is one of the consequences of the agitated mind, when it loses control of the senses.

I had a conversation, not long ago, with one paediatrician from Israel. He told me how children behave nowadays when they go to see
a doctor. For example, if an injection needs to be given to a child or if a small wart has to be removed, often the child begins to scream even before the doctor tries to do anything. When parents see all this, they often tell their child, “You don’t have to take this. If you don’t want it we won’t do anything”. This is the kind of attitude children are taught from a young age – there is no need to tolerate. But if we cannot tolerate then we automatically become a slave of our senses, lose control over them and fall under their control instead.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* (the “Bhaktivedanta Book Trust” edition) contains a good illustration of a horse-drawn chariot with a driver and passenger. The passenger is the soul. The driver (intellect) uses the reins (mind) to control the five horses (senses). If the senses, or horses, are out of control, they do not listen to the driver and can cause havoc.

It is impossible to satisfy the senses. For example, it does not matter how much we eat – tomorrow we will want to eat again. There is one psychological trick: to get rid of an addiction to sweets, we can eat ten kilograms of chocolate. It will make us sick, turning us off sweets for a while, maybe even for the rest of our life. The mind may even begin to intensely dislike sweets. But this method may not always be effective. When I was a kid once I ate a whole bag of chocolates in just one day, which had been hidden from me by my parents; but I still love sweets today.

**Sense Gratification Does Not Bring Happiness**

*What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal.*

Albert Pine

The senses cannot be satisfied. They always want to receive more and more. They are wild. And the mind cannot be peaceful as it is constantly being tossed about by these rabid horses, the senses. The agitated senses always want something and the mind loses the ability to control them. We believe we can become happy if we can gratify our senses, although deep down we know how false this idea is.

In Canada, for example, very few people go to church at the weekend; the majority go to the shopping malls where they enjoy buying different things for themselves and their children. Thus malls have taken the place of churches. In this way, the degradation of civilization takes place.
We live in the age of consumerism. The Kabbala explains that one needs to get free from ego in order to perceive our connection with the Supreme True Existence. But modern culture teaches us to identify ourselves with this body, with this bag of muscles and bones. What do we worship? In reality most of us worship shopping malls, material prosperity and stability. As one philosopher said “Comfort is the last stage of civilisation”.

**The Soul Becomes More and More Conditioned**

When the soul enters the material world, it begins to identify itself with its current body and temporary condition – “I am a yogi” or “I am a scientist”. It then becomes conditioned, “I have to do this”. The mind, which is overwhelmed with passion, takes the highest position. It takes control of the intellect, sending out a vast quantity of desires, and together with the intellect begins to plan how these desires can be fulfilled. For most people having prestige is even more desirable and important than gratification of the senses, but for those undergoing spiritual progress, having some important status in society is one of the biggest obstacles.

The mind and intelligence start to associate with the *gunas* through the sense objects. At this stage, the mind becomes so anxious about sense gratification that it loses control over the senses and falls into *tamas*. At this point we cannot dictate our life anymore; it becomes like an uncontrolled boat carried by the waves of a stormy ocean. When we lose the ability to control ourselves, we become more and more sinful and conditioned.

If we become a thief we will want to associate with other thieves – like attracts like. And the opposite happens when there is good association which can help elevate us; *tamas* becomes mixed with goodness and our inclinations will change for the better. In such a way we can progress.

In 1998 I was invited to give a talk in a Lithuanian prison. There I had a conversation with the person in charge of the educational department. He told me that the majority of prisoners were young people who had received 3-7 years in jail for very insignificant offences, like petty theft. They were mainly young men who came to the big city from a village and could not restrain themselves from taking some small item such as a mobile phone from a shop.

Once, during a training visit to Sweden, an incident occurred. There was a group of young people from Russia, who practiced Eastern
spiritual practice. It was the beginning of the 1990s, a difficult period. One of these young men went to a Swedish market where, compared to Russia, everything was available. His eyes went crazy but he did not have much money. He put some Adidas underwear into his pocket and tried to walk out without paying for it but was detained by security, imprisoned, fined and deported from the country. But before all this happened, he had been engaged in spiritual practices for five years when he prayed to God daily! Nevertheless, he had not managed to learn how to control his senses and could not understand that one can be happy even without Adidas underwear.

The Mechanism of Sin

Stealing is not the only sin. What is a sin? The Kabbala explains that there are seven levels for each commandment. Take for example “You shall not kill” – the first level refers to not killing a human. The highest level is to not kill love in the heart. From a larger perspective, all other types of murder are derived from the main sin of killing love in the heart. If love in the heart is destroyed – that is sinful. An uncontrolled mind constantly induces us to commit crimes against love, to live inharmonious lives, and to cheat ourselves and others.

Which emotion lies at the core of deception? It is fear.

A sin first arises in the mind, and then we commit sins to satisfy our senses. Even many great kings or extremely wealthy people could not feel satisfied and therefore happy, even though they had everything for satisfying their senses: wealth, vast dominions, many beautiful wives, good health, luxurious food and much more. Yet it is impossible to satisfy the senses. We should gratify our senses to some extent, and must avoid going to the other extreme – asceticism (particularly it is not recommended for women). But it is important to not become a slave of the mind and senses.

The main principle of modern civilisation is “everything can be bought for money”; if something cannot be bought for money, then it can be obtained for more money, and what cannot be bought for more money can be bought for ridiculous sums of money. Yet it is impossible to buy sages or spiritually elevated people. Brahmins are not for sale. In the past a real Brahmin would come to the king and tell the truth regardless of the consequence, even if they could be killed for it; for them the truth is more important. They live by love and truth; obtaining money
or staying alive is not essential for them.

Nowadays in India, there are many who wear the dress of a sadhu (saint, ascetic), but there are not many who are the genuine article. I have seen this, not only in India. There are still some genuine priests who are fully satisfied and filled with love of God. That is the highest stage. But those who are situated on lower levels engage in sinful activities and are punished very severely. They become caught up in more sinful activity which worsens their karma.

The recommended atonement for reducing such bad karma is to make sacrifices, which can purify even great souls. If our karma is severe and our aura is dark, then it is like having a millstone around our neck which prevents us from doing anything – we only become more and more entangled in sins. It is therefore essential to be purified first. All religions and Eastern psychology confirm this.

**Self-justification – Suffocating the Voice of Conscience**

When we commit some sinful actions we begin to justify ourselves. Our mind has the ability for self-justification. When I used to give lectures in prisons, among the audience were people that had committed murder several times over or other very serious crimes. But do you think they considered themselves guilty? Criminals are usually convinced that they are good people who were just the victim of unfavourable circumstances.

There is one very fine psychological mechanism. When we commit a sin, we develop a psychological imbalance; we have a guilty conscience, particularly at the initial period of such conduct, and seek to justify ourselves.

*I will narrate one classical psychological story that happened in real life. There were two brothers: one was very religious, a spiritually advanced person, and the other was a pure materialist. Their parents used to give them money when they were kids so they could give donations to the beggars at church on the way to school. The older boy did exactly as he was told. But the younger one was overwhelmed with desires and greed; at first he only donated some of the money and used the rest to buy something for himself. With time he would give less and less, until it came to the point that he started stealing money from one blind beggar. But despite the fact that he was able to fulfill his desires (eating ice cream, buying other good things, etc...) he began to*
feel a strong inner discomfort, and each time he felt worse. Also the preaching at church added to it, because he was hearing that God sees and knows everything. One day his classmate told him, “Here you go to church, but are you sure that there is a God? My parents are biologists – they have never seen God and He is not in space either. Because of this they are atheists and say that life is short and should be lived for oneself”. The younger brother delightedly accepted such an idea as it enabled him to justify himself. After that he became an atheist and noticed that it had become much easier for him to live. He found justification for his behaviour, having a scientific basis for his desire for pleasure instead of doing good for others.

To silence our conscience it is necessary to stop believing in God, to convince ourselves that whatever happens in this world happens accidentally, that we are a bunch of chemicals and our aim is to become slaves of our senses. When we commit sins our aura darkens, we become completely entangled in bad circumstances, begin to justify ourselves and continue to commit more sins. Even prison cannot change such a person. In Holland, Canada and other countries, attempts are being made to create prisons that are similar to educational centres, where priests, psychologists and teachers work. In this instance, a convicted person gets a chance to change.

But prison mainly has a negative effect because prisoners associate with similar people. Many of them even fabricate legends about themselves: how unfairly they were jailed or judged, and so on. It looks like schizophrenia, but prisoners face a choice: either to directly face the suffering of those they have murdered, robbed or cheated, or to fool themselves by justifying what they have done. This continues for many years, otherwise they would not be able to live. In this way, if we turn away from love, we become completely entangled in the problems of this world.

**Associating with Elevated Souls Brings Pure Sattva into Our Life**

I know some people who have been engaged in spiritual practices for a long time but are still unable to control themselves and justify breaking various rules and regulations (for example, by saying that sometimes it is necessary to get drunk).

What can help in this instance? Association is the key thing. Puri-
fication can occur because of association with elevated and pure souls, especially with enlightened personalities. Even a few minutes of association with a saintly person can completely change our consciousness. Without such association, we will become more and more degraded. Therefore, Eastern philosophy and psychology state that association is the basis of everything; it is essential to find the right association and always be careful about whom we associate with. We should not be afraid to limit or even completely stop associating with our friends if such association is unfavorable for us. Otherwise, if they lead us away from the proper path (even unconsciously), in addition to sinking ourselves, we will cause their karma to worsen as well. Therefore association which inspires and harmonizes our life is very important, because association allows us to begin to progress in life.

Holy Scriptures and books written by enlightened sages, like the Bible, Torah, Talmud, Koran, Bhagavad-Gita and others are sources from which we can receive supreme vigour and truthful knowledge. The Srimad-Bhagavatam is also recommended for our age, as it is suitable for people of any religion and can rapidly bring one to sattva, and even further to the ultimate goal – the love of God. Such books bear the energy of sattva and even the energy of the transcendental level.

Our Life Is What We Make of It: The Danger of Mental Conceptions

*The majority of people are happy as much as they have decided to be happy.*

**Abraham Lincoln**

It is not easy to sustain goodness in the modern world as it requires staunch efforts to conquer the mind. Once our mind and intelligence have accepted a certain idea, it is not possible to change our habits on the physical level.

A personal example of this is that it took me six months to become a vegetarian. I was brought up in Asia where meat is a main staple of the diet and anything else is considered to be supplementary. It is considered an offence to a guest (who in the East is accepted as a manifestation of the Divine) to not give them meat. It is essential for a host to give the best of everything to his guest, even if he himself has to do without. It is believed that food without meat is not food at all, and that it is impos-
In 1990 I decided to become a vegetarian. It was very difficult because in my mind the concept existed that it is impossible to live without meat. I tolerated it for one or two months, but did not feel well. Finally I could not endure it anymore and eat some meat, which seemed to make me feel better.

Then my friend, then also an officer in the Special Forces, came to visit me. On seeing my difficulties, he presented me with a variety of scientific information about the benefits of vegetarianism. The information contained many examples – elephants are vegetarian, also gorillas, which are 30 times stronger than humans. Many people that have had long and healthy lives were also vegetarians. For instance, meat-eaters have a 70 percent higher chance of getting stomach cancer and other forms of cancer, while vegetarians are practically free of heart disease. When I read all this, my mind became more settled, and the next day I became a vegetarian again and started to feel much better.

Each one of us has their own concepts; regardless of who may try to teach us how to live, until we change the false conceptions in our mind, we will not be able to succeed in life. First we must change our ways of thinking. As long as our mind believes that we need to sleep twelve hours a day, all attempts to get up early will not succeed – the conceptions in our mind will impede us. That is why it is so important to get rid of them.

It is the same with sleep. There is an institute in London where research on the subject has been carried out by well-known scientists. They discovered that four hours sleep a day is enough for the average person, six at most; women need seven hours and sick people eight. But if we are in ignorance, we may sleep twelve hours and will still not feel properly rested. If we are in sattva we will get up early and understand that we do should be sleeping so much. If our mind is convinced that something is possible, then we are able to overcome any erroneous habits. Our life is determined by how we think.

We live in a contaminated world, where approximately 90 percent of available products contain various chemicals, such as pesticides. Such food destroys not only the physical body but also the subtle body. We believe in such concepts that are likely to cause problems. Therefore in addition to considering our association, it is important to define what we believe in – not in terms of religious beliefs, but of the ideas or concepts we live by. If we believe that it is possible to live happily by satis-
flying our senses, then this kind of faith will lead to degradation. If we believe that we can become blissful and healthy by consuming any food we like and by sleeping ten to twelve hours a day, it will be impossible for us to escape countless problems.

**Avoiding Sense Objects Guarantees a Peaceful Life**

The object of our faith and the goal of our life are the first things we need to observe. Association also has an effect, whether it is listening to classes, reading books, watching TV or the Internet.

On this level we receive an opportunity to escape from the control of lower energies. Otherwise we will remain stuck in the cycle of striving for gratification of the senses, which will continue to force us to sin. On some level we will be aware that it is sinful, but we will be unable to stop. The senses are very powerful, particularly a woman's senses; they are practically impossible to hold back.

One spiritual teacher from America went to India with the aim of becoming a saddhu (saint). He wanted to stay there for good and fulfill all the necessary rules and regulations. But before embarking on his new life, he decided to first have a party and eat as much as possible for one last time, and from the following day onwards to become an ascetic. That is what he did, and after getting up at four the next morning, he started his meditation. But he knew there was a big plate with some sweets left near the altar from his feast the previous day. He started to convince himself, “I am a saddhu, and for me it is disgusting even to think about those sweets”.

He was chanting mantras, all the while still thinking about the sweets. Eventually he could not bear it and decided to go and check them out – maybe all the sweets were already gone and he had nothing to worry about. But the plate was still there. The new ascetic restrained him and he went back to chanting mantras, but thoughts of the sweets persisted in his head. He went back to the plate, and standing over it thought to himself, “At the end of the day, I am a saddhu, a saintly person. Nothing terrible will happen if I eat one sweet ball!” He ate one – and returned to chant a little more... In this way he finished the whole plate. He then sat down under a tree and started to cry, “Why could I not control myself? I wanted to be a saddhu, for this purpose I came to India! But here, all these stupid candies... Why did I look at
them?” Thus he sat and lamented until another monk came and started enquired why he was crying. So he explained why, and the other monk exclaimed, “Oh! You are a real saddhu! You tolerated and were able to chant until ten o’clock! As for me, after getting up at four I went straight to eat another plate of sweets. You are a saint!” And then the first monk calmed down and regained some sense of self-respect.

The meaning of this story is that the senses usually prevail. Similar kinds of tests usually force us to recognise when we suffer a setback. So it is important from the first step to protect our senses from their objects. For example, if we want to lose weight, we should not keep tasty, fattening food in our fridge.

At the same time, if we cannot control our senses, although we must learn not to justify our mistakes, we should also not put ourselves down – we should just simply accept the mistake we made and work on correcting it.

Questions and Answers

Feelings of Guilt and Temptation

**Question:** You said that it is natural for people to justify or defend themselves. And if we don’t do this, doesn’t that imply a feeling of guilt?

**Answer:** To feel guilty is another extreme – two sides of the same coin. The more we justify ourselves, the more the pendulum swings back and the more we will blame ourselves, as in the story with the sweets. We need to just simply calmly note our faults and work on them. It is important from the beginning to understand the nature of the senses. If we know there are sweets close by, then we should go to some place where we can meditate far away from them – in this way we will not have to blame ourselves later on. By the way, guilt is mainly in ignorance, because it has a self-destructive nature. Many manipulative psychological techniques are designed to make people feel guilty. Having a sense of shame and a readiness to accept our own and others’ mistakes and a resolute mood to engage in self-perfection, this is sattva.

**Question:** Does it mean to not tempt ourselves?

**Answer:** Yes, but not only ourselves but others too. Recently I read that some scientists have proven that when women walk on the streets
half-naked, it has a bad effect on the health of many men because their mind and senses become stimulated, which strains their nervous system. Seeing a woman in a miniskirt can awaken a man’s desires, sometimes even unconsciously. By his intelligence he can control himself, but as a result of his senses being active, certain hormones are released. It happens even in case of an unconscious glance. It is noteworthy that in societies where women dress modestly, men are almost free of diseases such as prostate cancer and other male diseases, and divorces are rare.

If you are fasting then it is not good to visit places or shops where food will be placed just next to you. Even simply looking at food while fasting is already harmful, because gastric juices will be produced automatically. Therefore it is actually better to not tempt ourselves, to stay away from the objects of the senses.

For Change, Passion is Required

*The only man who never makes mistakes is the man who never does anything. Do not be afraid of making mistakes – be afraid of repeating them.*

*Theodore Roosevelt*

**Question**: If we make a decision to change ourselves suddenly, would this decision be in passion? How should we live in this instance, how can this projection be applied in our modern life?

**Answer**: Thank you for this excellent question.

One of my acquaintances, after hearing a lecture about how beneficial it is to be a vegetarian, came back home and threw a freshly cooked chicken his mother-in-law had made through the window of their eighth floor flat, while telling her what he thought about those who eat dead bodies. Since that time they have been enemies. Such is passion, with some ignorance.

When such a person comes to the temple and begins praying, he can smash his forehead on the floor while bowing down. Changes should not be drastic. For example, “I used to sleep until ten, but now I understand that it is not good, so from tomorrow I will start getting up at five!” This is not a constructive approach. Perhaps for two days this person will get up at five, but on the third day he will be so angry that everyone will pray for him to go back to sleeping until ten. To act in a
sattvic way means making gradual changes: getting up one or one and a half hours earlier, changing the atmosphere in which you sleep, not eating at a late hour, etc.

Firstly we must try to change on the level of the intellect; decide what we want to change and how, and what kind of benefit we will get from it. It is necessary to consider for a day or two and only then to start gradually making changes. In sattva, the process of change is smooth yet persistent. At some point we may fall down even lower than before, but we still continue and move on.

At the same time, we do not need to be afraid of passion. If we want to radically change our life, passion is required. Passion is necessary for serious changes. Those of us who have the nature of a kshatriya (warriors, leaders) have strong willpower and can in just one day decide, “I will not eat meat and will get up early,” – and actually follow through with their decision. The horoscopes of such people usually have a very strong Sun, Mars and the house of identity. Passion is needed to inspire or motivate, mixed with a large amount of sattva. Then we can create miracles.

Generally, in this world all three gunas are needed. To some degree ignorance is also necessary – for sleeping or demolishing. For example, to build a new house the old one has to be destroyed. But for something to be changed, to recognise one’s goal in life and move towards it, the fire of passion is needed. If we do not feel that we have enough energy to change our life all at once, then we should do it gradually. Therefore we do not need to be afraid of passion – it is necessary for change. But we should avoid the combination of passion and ignorance (as in the instance of throwing the chicken out of the window).

The Influence of Sound and Speech

**Question:** What about music? What influence does music have on our consciousness?

**Answer:** Sound has the most powerful influence on our intellect and our subconscious. Music is able to generate a variety of emotions within us. But more sattvic music should be chosen, as this will bring harmony and happiness into our lives. Personally I prefer mantras, prayers or classical music, sometimes in contemporary arrangements. If more active energy is needed, then more energetic music should be used.

I remember the very first time I came to Toronto – I had not slept
for almost twenty-four hours because of the difficult journey, yet I had to give a lecture that evening, when according to my biological clock it was early morning. I greatly wanted to sleep, but it was not possible to cancel the lecture. So on the way I listened to loud rock music to stay awake. My nervous exhaustion was visible during the lecture and I cannot say that it went well. What saved me was that I was discussing eternal truths, and by the second part of the lecture the energy of *sattva* had begun to manifest.

Some scientists conducted an experiment. They found that if a glass of water is placed close to where classical music is playing (Bach, Beethoven, Mozart) or meditative mantras and prayers, then the water becomes literally full of life; when it is placed beside hard or heavy rock music, the water is transformed into a dead fluid which carries destruction.

The most detailed research in this area was conducted by Dr. Masaru Emoto from Japan, who discovered many amazing distinctions in the crystalline structure of water taken from different sources around the Earth. Molecules in the water from mountain springs and rivers were wonderfully structured geometrically, but molecules from polluted sources had broken and accidentally formed structures.

He researched further by examining the effects music has on water. He placed distilled water between two speakers for several hours and then took photos after this water had become frozen. He did the same thing with water that was placed into various jars, which had different words printed on paper that were glued to the jars.

As a result of his research he found that the water changed in every case, even reacting to thoughts and emotions. For example, rock music or the word “Hitler” caused the crystals to become substantially deformed, whereas classical music had the opposite effect – it formed crystals similar to those from fresh spring water. Prayer had the most powerful influence on water, and the words which purified the most were “love” and “gratitude”.

Hermes Trismegistus, the great ancient sage who is considered to be the “founder of all sciences”, said: “Sound is a vibration, colour is a vibration and light is even more so a vibration”.

Recently I read in one popular science book that some scientists have proven that the structure of the human skull is an ideal structure for a transmitting antenna.

In the Kabbalistic book “Zohar” it is written that the constellations themselves create music. Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato in his book “Adir
Chapter 8 Philosophy – the Basis of Psychology

ba-Marom” has written that the planets move by music.

Vedic sages, astrologers and Ayurvedic doctors have been aware of the power of sound for thousands of years. Sound therapy was one of the main methods of healing. Every planet has its own mantra; while chanting them we can easily harmonize the influence that that particular planet has on us. So the sounds that we hear, particularly music, as well as the sounds we articulate ourselves, define our lives.

My wife and I have trained for and taught various dance and music classes, because we have noticed that with the help of music and dance we can rapidly achieve change.

**Question**: Are our speech and words also connected to some guna?

**Answer**: Of course. There are the three types of speech.

A person in goodness is situated on a high spiritual level and can become physically ill when they hear someone being criticised or anything disgusting. They might feel like they are literally having dirt flung at them. Such a person always tells the truth in a pleasant way. They speak deliberately, and each word increases harmony in this world. Their speech contains lots of harmless humour; they are able to laugh at themselves and are practically always healthy and happy. To refrain from speaking foolish things or from being pulled into meaningless chatter can be difficult at first, but later on it becomes a habit and more natural.

People in passion are very sensitive when they are criticised. They can spend hours talking with great pleasure about sex, money, wealth, politics, shopping, affairs or gossiping about others. They usually speak quickly and listen inattentively, and often use vulgar humour connected with sex. At the beginning such conversations generally create a sense of satisfaction and excitement, but later cause emptiness and disgust (the higher the consciousness, the stronger these feelings). Such speech leads to degradation on all levels.

When someone in ignorance speaks it is full of insults, complaints, threats, swearing, etc. All their words are saturated with anger and hatred. When such a person opens their mouth, an unpleasant feeling or smell may arise in the room. They may even become sick if they hear something good about others. Such people usually provoke others, consciously or unconsciously, by trying to awaken anger, irritation, resentment or envy in them because they are tuned into such energy and are nourished by these low and destructive emotions. Their humour is dark, at the expense of making fun of others, and they enjoy the suffering of
others. They are in illusion from beginning to end. Such people can only learn through life’s hard punches and through disease. They can easily develop mental diseases. It is dangerous even to be near such people, much worse to associate with them.

[This subject is discussed more in my book “Ten Steps to Happiness” and also in the audio seminar “Ten Steps to Perfection.”]
Chapter 9

Choice of Gunas

“Eyes of Knowledge”

In the previous chapter, we examined a very complex subject – how the soul becomes conditioned in this world. Throughout this chapter, we will look at how to make our life harmonious and how not to fall under the influence of the lower gunas. To help do that we need to analyse the table below; by studying it, we should be able to clearly understand which level we are on. It is a way to see through the eyes of knowledge, which helps to see reality as it is.

Nature of Activity in Various Gunas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sattva</th>
<th>Rajas</th>
<th>Tamas</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worker (person) Bhagavad-Gita 18.26-28</td>
<td>Performs his duty with great resolution and enthusiasm, free from the influence of gunas and false ego, equally stable in success and defeat</td>
<td>Is attached to his work and the fruits of work, wants to enjoy the fruits of work, is greedy, envious, unclean and driven by joy and grief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension BG 18.30-32</td>
<td>Knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, what is binding and what is liberating</td>
<td>Cannot distinguish between religion and unbelief, between action that should be done and action that should not be done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sattva</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rajas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tamas</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Resolve BG 18.33-35</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Possesses unbreakable determination, which is sustained with steadfastness by yoga practice and which controls the activities of the mind, life and senses</td>
<td>Holds fast to benefits of religion, economic development and sensual gratification</td>
<td>Cannot move beyond dreaming, fearfulness, grief, moroseness and illusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Happiness BG 18.37-39, Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.29**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BG</strong></th>
<th><strong>SB</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the beginning it is just like poison but at the end is just like nectar, and awakens one to self-realization</td>
<td>It is derived from contact of the senses with their objects and appears like nectar at first but poison at the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comes from the soul</td>
<td>Comes from sense gratification</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Place of residence SB 11.25.25**

A forest | A city | A place of gambling |

**Influence on intelligence, mind and senses SB 11.25.16-18**

| **When consciousness becomes clear and the senses are detached from matter, one experiences fearlessness within the material body and detachment from the material mind** | **Excessive activity distorts the intelligence, the perceiving senses are unable to disentangle themselves from mundane objects, the working physical organs are in an unhealthy condition, and the mind is unsteady and perplexed** | **When higher awareness fails and finally disappears and one is thus unable to concentrate his attention, his mind is ruined and manifests ignorance and depression.** |

**Sleeping and consciousness SB 11.25.20**

| Alert wakefulness | Sleep with dreaming | Dreamless sleep |

**Value SB 11.25.9**

| Self-control and composure | Lust | Anger |

**Conditioning BG 14.6-9**

| A sense of happiness and knowledge | Fruitful, materialistic activity | Madness, laziness, sleeping |
## Chapter 9

### Choice of Gunas

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<tr>
<th>Sattva</th>
<th>Rajas</th>
<th>Tamas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increase of Influence of Gunas BG 14.11-13</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>All the gates of the body are illuminated by knowledge</td>
<td>Great attachment, fruitful activity, intense endeavour, and uncontrollable desire and hankering develop</td>
<td>Darkness, inertia, madness and illusion manifest</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Qualities SB 11.25.2-5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mind and sense control, tolerance, discrimination, sticking to one's prescribed duty, truthfulness, mercy, careful study of the past and future, satisfaction in any condition, generosity, renunciation of sense gratification, faith in the spiritual master, being embarrassed at improper action, charity, simplicity, humbleness and satisfaction within oneself</td>
<td>Material desire, great endeavor, audacity, dissatisfaction even in gain, false pride, praying for material advancement, considering oneself different and better than others, sense gratification, rash eagerness to fight, a fondness for hearing oneself praised, the tendency to ridicule others, advertising one's own prowess and justifying one's actions by one's strength</td>
<td>Intolerant anger, stinginess, speaking without scriptural authority, violent hatred, living as a parasite, hypocrisy, chronic fatigue, quarrel, lamentation, delusion, unhappiness, depression, sleeping too much, false expectations, fear and laziness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classes of society BG 18.41-44</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Brahmanas:</em> peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom and religiousness</td>
<td><em>Kshatriyas:</em> heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity and leadership</td>
<td><em>In passion and ignorance:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Vaishyas:</em> Farming, cow protection and business</td>
<td><em>In ignorance:</em></td>
<td></td>
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<td><em>Sudras:</em> labour and service to others.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Destination in next life BG 11.14,15,18, SB 11.25.21, 22</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>BG:</em> he attains to the pure higher planets of the great sages</td>
<td><em>BG:</em> he takes birth among those engaged in fruitful activities</td>
<td><em>BG:</em> he takes birth in the animal kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>SB:</em> elevated to higher and higher positions</td>
<td><em>SB:</em> continues transmigrating through human bodies</td>
<td><em>SB:</em> forces one to fall headfirst into lower and lower births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results of activity BG 14.16, 17</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pure, real knowledge develops</td>
<td>Misery and greed develop</td>
<td>Foolishness, madness and illusion develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satvā</td>
<td>Rajas</td>
<td>Tamas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austerity of mind, body and speech which is performed with transcendental faith by men not expecting material benefits but engaged only for the sake of the Supreme</td>
<td>Penance performed out of pride and for the sake of gaining respect, honour and worship. It is neither stable nor permanent</td>
<td>Penance performed out of foolishness, with self-torture or to destroy or injure others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity BG 17.20-22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charity that is given out of duty, without expectation of return, at the proper time and place, and to a worthy person</td>
<td>Charity performed with the expectation of some return, or with a desire for results, or in a grudging mood</td>
<td>Charity performed at an impure place, at an improper time, to unworthy persons, or without proper attention and respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renunciation BG 18.7-9</td>
<td>Renunciation BG 18.7-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activities performed without attachment or any expectation of result, as a matter of duty</td>
<td>When prescribed duties are given up as troublesome or out of fear of bodily discomfort</td>
<td>When prescribed duties are given up because of illusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BG: Knowledge by which one undivided spiritual nature is seen in all living entities, though they are divided into innumerable forms SB: Absolute knowledge</td>
<td>BG: Knowledge by which one sees that in every different body there is a different type of living entity SB: Knowledge based on duality</td>
<td>BG: Knowledge by which one is attached to one kind of work as the all in all, without knowledge of the truth, and which is very meagre SB: Foolish, materialistic knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeds and actions BG 18.23-25, SB 11.25.23</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BG: Action which is regulated and which is performed without attachment, without love or hatred, and without desire for results SB: Work performed as an offering to the Supreme, without consideration of the results</td>
<td>BG: Action performed with great effort by one seeking to gratify his desires, and enacted from a sense of false ego SB: Work performed with a desire to enjoy the results</td>
<td>BG: Action performed in illusion, in disregard of scriptural injunctions, and without concern for future bondage or for violence or distress caused to others SB: Work impelled by violence and envy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Knowledge is Realized Information

In the *guna* of goodness, we understand that knowledge is the most valuable thing in this world. Knowledge is not just information, but information that has been realised. For example, we may know that smoking is harmful for our health but we continue to smoke; this means that we just have some information about smoking being dangerous. If however, we do not smoke or have no interest in trying, that means we really know.

According to Eastern psychology and philosophy, only realised knowledge is genuine. On the other hand, we see that modern culture highly values mere information. For some, like business or military people, appropriate and objective information is essential, whereas for self-development it can be harmful. I think we have all met people who have gone through many books and attended countless seminars but have not become harmonious or happier as a result. Excessive information can sometimes even make them proud of all that knowledge and confident that they are always right.

I remember how impressed I was when I found out that many saints were not highly literate. If *sattva* is predominant and a person is sincere, without envy and selfishness, then even just one lecture of an advanced person or having an in-depth understanding of a single chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita or any other sacred Scripture can lift him to the highest level.
In the *guna* of passion a person is stimulated by greed and pride. They need knowledge only to get some position, to improve their material situation, to manipulate others or to show how intelligent they are. They may read a lot, even esoteric literature, but real inner (and consequently outer) changes do not take place.

In ignorance people become stupid and reckless and fall into illusion. They are confident that they know everything and constantly condemn others. As people get older (50 and up), they are more inclined to fall into *tamas*; they tend to consider that they know everything and that nothing can change them any more (which is true to some extent).

It becomes more difficult to change our habits or to be flexible as we get older. However, those who are able to do so can maintain a youthful vigour up until the point of death. When we stop developing, perceiving, striving for self-perfection, we are in some way giving a signal to the Universe, “That’s all, my life is over”.

**Correct Diet – the Basis for Physical, Mental and Spiritual Health**

Food in goodness increases duration of life, purifies existence, provides energy, health, happiness and satisfaction. Such food is juicy, buttery, healthy and pleasant to the heart, and is sweet. Sweetness is the taste in goodness because it is nutritious, pleasant, possesses harmonizing qualities and reflects the energy of love.

We need to be aware that white refined beetroot sugar is in ignorance and passion; it is very dangerous for the body. We can use honey (which is not exposed to thermal treatment), cane sugar, and unrefined palm sugar. Large quantities of sugar lead to *tamas*. If we eat a one-kilogram cake, even one made with good sugar, we will surely fall into a condition of complete dullness.

All dairy (cow) products are *sattvic*. Melted cow butter is an incredibly beneficial product, fully saturated with *sattva*. The longer it is kept, the healthier it becomes. Yogurt is slightly heavy so it is better to use it sparingly. Cheeses are also heavy and not recommended for constant use, particularly the yellow types.

Cereals and porridge from whole grains (oats, buckwheat, brown rice, etc.) are the main components of a *sattvic* diet. They are necessary for people who are engaged in heavy physical labour and who are highly physically active.

Fruits and most vegetables are *sattvic* and useful. Bananas facilitate
the formation of mucus and can cause a blockage of channels. Potatoes and sweet potatoes have a similar effect if they used in big quantities.

It is better to eat freshly cooked vegetables, especially steamed. Mushrooms contain a large quantity of *tamas*. If you cannot get along without them, then eat champignons. Cabbage is *rajasic* and assists in gas-formation. Onion, garlic and radish are in *rajas* and *tamas* and agitate nerve fibers connected to the sexual sphere.

Nuts and seeds are *sattvic* but should not be over-roasted or salty; they then gain *tamasic* qualities. They are quite heavy so it is better not to eat them in big quantities. Most useful are almonds, walnuts and pine nuts.

Food in passion is bitter, too sour, salty, spicy, dry, and hot – any food which is “too” anything. Passionate people like hot, spicy foods that assault the gastric senses. It is harmful to our health and provokes suffering and disease. One important point is that salty tastes intensify greed. White salt is extremely unhealthy; therefore avoid excessively salted items.

Food cooked more than three hours before eating is in ignorance. If you cook in the morning and eat it in the evening, then such food contains substantial elements of ignorance. People often prepare enough food for three or four days ahead; this is wrong because the subtle energy, *prana*, leaves such food and it becomes dead. Food without *prana* does not give vitality. Food that is tasteless, rotten or decomposed is also in ignorance.

All additives in pre-cooked or artificial food (colouring agents, flavours and particularly preservatives) are in ignorance and partially in passion. They poison and deprive food of vitality. Externally such food can seem attractive, which is usually the main concern of those in passion and ignorance.

Many modern people may attempt to misinterpret reports about meat, but it is a pure form of ignorance. It contains intense powers of *tamas*. It is obtained by the use of violence – not only are the animals mercilessly slaughtered but they are also doused with chemicals. One of the cruellest tortures in ancient China was to feed a person only meat, causing them to die after some time in great agony. In many restaurants, they know that if one eats meat, he will want to drink and smoke afterwards. From the energetic point of view, aggression and the lowest forms of passion and vice intensify if we take meat. *Ayurveda*, in some instances, allows meat eating (except beef and pork) for *sudras* (labourers engaged in heavy physical work), or when our *vata* (element of air) is imbalanced.
Coffee, black tea and all drinks containing caffeine are in rajas and tamas. They have quite a destructive effect on the nervous system and physical body. One famous American dietician, Paul Bragg, has written about this, and modern independent researchers have come to the same opinion.

Spices are an essential element of any diet, although many of them are rajasic. Sattvic spices are ginger, fennel, cardamom, coriander, cinnamon and turmeric.

Sattvic diet is for perfection of the mind. It harmonizes and opens the mind, stimulates the awakening of consciousness, calms, purifies and gives clear vision (intuition). Sattvic diet is essential for anyone who spends lots of time doing intellectual work or for those who want to make spiritual and intellectual progress. Such a diet has tremendous impact on the process of healing mental disorders, as it is conducive for restoring emotional balance and harmony. It rejuvenates and helps the renewal of tissues, which is particularly necessary during a period of recuperation or after cleansing procedures.

Proper Charity – the Basis of Prosperity

Charity in sattva is devoid of desire to gain something in return, is performed out of a sense of duty, at the proper time and place and to a worthy person. It is very important to know the correct methods for giving charity. Best of all is to further the cause of spreading authentic knowledge and Divine love. A person dominated by sattva regularly donates at least ten percent of their income. One of the main signs of performing charity in goodness is that the person never tells anyone whom they give to or how much they give.

When giving charity in passion a person always has a desire to gain some results, or he does it reluctantly, “Okay, I’ll make a donation, but will you write about me in the newspaper? Will it reduce my taxes?” On the other hand, passionate people are inclined to give bigger donations than are necessary. They may have hungry kids at home but donate their entire income, influenced by some preacher’s emotional lecture, and later regret it.

Charity in ignorance is at the wrong time and place, to an unworthy person, without proper attention and respect – for example, to a drunken beggar. At the end of the day, donations to street beggars are in ignorance. If you give donations to an unworthy person, you then take the karma of such a person or organisation. In passion or ignorance, it
is important to tell everyone about your donation.

**Actions in Different Modes**

*I not only act in accordance with what I am, but am in accordance to how I act.*

_Socrates_

**Action in sattva** is regulated, executed without attachment and hate, and without desire to receive results. Everyone has obligations, duties to perform as parents, spouse, member of a religious organisation, etc. It is important not to get attached to the fruits of action. If a person performs action as an act of sacrifice – that is the *guna* of goodness. Activity must also be regulated, not after the fashion of, “If I want, I do, if not, I don’t do”.

What is the difference between a human and an animal? The life of an animal is organised and regulated as controlled by nature. A dog cannot study the Holy Scriptures and consciously change its life for the better, whereas a human has a choice. This is the only species of life that has such an option. All nations and tribes have some regulated principles. People in ignorance also have sacred texts. One tribe in South Africa, for example, has a regulation, “You shall eat only old folks” – otherwise they could have eaten each other a long time ago!

**In passion:** an injunction for people in passion can sound like, “Donate a minimum of ten percent”. That means there are rules and regulations for each *guna*. A person in passion judges someone’s spiritual progress based on how strictly he or she follows different rules and regulations.

**In ignorance:** when the Jews, having been slaves, received the Torah, their level of consciousness became many times higher. The Bedouins used to live together with several generations of relatives in one marquee. When Mohammed came, one of his given sub-religious principles was, “Do not have sex with your mother”. Afterwards he gave higher principles, and by following them people became highly elevated. I recommend you to read the work of Sufi masters who followed Islam – you will find the profound truths that they perceived by studying the Koran.

The first disciples and followers of Jesus were fishermen and slaves. This shows that even illiterate slaves can rapidly progress if they receive instruction from a greatly enlightened soul and Holy Scriptures in sattva.

If we do not follow principles, then our destiny deteriorates and
diseases appear. Therefore it is important to eat properly, associate properly and read spiritual books. All this elevates us. Persons in sattva follow regulative principles without fail, but an ignorant person cannot understand the meaning of such principles, so there is no need to give him excessive rules and regulation right away. Here it is important not to fall into the other extreme – do not turn following rules and regulations into the main goal, as it will lead to religious fanaticism.

It is important to remember that the ultimate goal can only be the love of God, and following rules and regulations are only the means to achieve this aim.

**ANECDOTE:**
Moses came down from Mount Sinai where he had received the Commandments from God. He announced to the gathering crowd, “There are two pieces of news – one good, one bad. The good news is – we have got them down to ten. The bad news is that adultery is still in”.

**Activity in goodness** – offering the fruits of one's work to God without desire to enjoy the fruits, yet acting with great enthusiasm.

**Activity in passion** – activity under the influence of false ego for gratification of one's desires, which demands great effort. The main motivations are pride and a desire to enjoy the fruits. A person in passion works hard and for a long time, but at the end remains unsatisfied.

**Activity in ignorance** – activity in illusion, neglecting instructions, without concern for the consequences, under duress, with violence or causing suffering to others, with greed and envy as the main motives.

Such activity is similar in nature to the work performed by butchers. Psychologists have proven that those who work for over two to three years in slaughterhouses have serious psychic imbalances.

**Contentment in Different Modes**

**Happiness in goodness** is at the beginning like poison but at the end like nectar, inducing one toward self-realisation. For example, to get up early in the morning is difficult – it is like poison. At the beginning, when someone tries to get out of a warm bed, it is unpleasant. However, upon overcoming laziness and meditating in the morning, a sense of harmony is created that lasts the whole day; one's mood and health improve and that is nectar, although at the beginning it was unpleasant.

Another example is going for some party where the dining table is
full of wonderful food. If a person remembers that it is not good to eat too much in the evening and therefore eats just a little bit; that can appear as poison (great asceticism), but having a light stomach and waking easily the next morning is like nectar.

When people begin to learn a foreign language, it is not easy at the beginning. Money is spent on a tutor, one may have to travel, a lot of study is required – all this is like poison. Nevertheless, when they start to communicate in this new language it broadens their horizons, life becomes more interesting and the quality of life is enhanced – that is nectar.

Or when someone does yoga, goes swimming, takes care of his diet, while his friends, seeing his endeavours, invite him to go to chill out, relax, have a drink, watch football, etc., but he still continues to do his own thing although it is not easy. Who will be happier, healthier, more attractive, and live longer at the end – the person in goodness, of course! According to the laws of the material world, sattva is like poison at the beginning, such activity is difficult to perform, but later your life becomes harmonious; you manifest sattvic habits that transform your life into nectar.

Contentment in passion comes when the senses contact their objects. Such happiness is the opposite of that in goodness, at the beginning it is like nectar but like poison at the end. If someone sees something tasty, for example, a big cake, they become excited and forget everything else, they begin to consume it, feeling that they are the happiest person in the world. However, this is harmful for the body, and if they act like this regularly, soon they will gain extra weight, their health deteriorates, etc. In other words, they will have to deal with the poison.

The same happens with temporary sexual relationships. At the beginning, it appears as the highest manifestation of love to have sexual intercourse with a beautiful stranger, but later on venereal diseases come, abortions or even AIDS. Or a married woman starts a romantic affair with a colleague – she experiences what may seem the greatest pleasure of her life, but later her husband finds out about her adultery. Her family relationships are destroyed, her children suffer, and eventually the affair with her lover falls apart – and that is poison. Unregulated sex simply drains away our subtle energy.

Listening to passionate music will lead to degradation of consciousness. All these are examples of how the nectar of happiness in passion becomes like poison. It would be more appropriate in this context to change the word “happiness” to “pleasure”.

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Contentment in ignorance – blind to self-realisation, illusory from beginning to end, results in sleepiness, laziness and illusion. These involve drugs, alcohol, excessive sleep, etc.

A most important point is that we can taste happiness only when sattva is predominant. To invest some effort and follow rules and regulations is only difficult at the beginning. Later it becomes a habit and you hardly notice how you live and act in sattva. A sattvic person radiates contentment and tranquility.

Only Sattva Can Make Us Happy

We shape our own lives, so it is important to remember that only sattva makes us happy. Happiness, bliss, harmony – all these relate to sattva, and the more we have sattva the more we are satisfied and happy. In passion, there is only the satisfaction that we get from the five senses, but it is short and usually followed by suffering.

If we eat a white bread kebab and follow it up with strong drink just before going to bed at night, it may give pleasure, but by doing this we sow the seeds of future suffering and disease.

Sages affirm that temporary pleasure comes from without, whereas real happiness comes from within.

We have to choose sattva in everything, or at least passion. The combination of sattva-rajases is a very good combination. Such energy is present in many successful people in this world, whose lives cause much happiness to their surroundings. To create or achieve something, we need passion and activity.

In youth, passion is dominant; between roughly the age of 25 and 55 it is very important. At this time, a person must create and learn to maintain himself, his parents and children. He must fulfill his social mission. If he does not work for the benefit of society, then nature will punish him. To renounce everything and enter a monastery, control sexual urges with ease, and be driven by a particular spiritual mission – very few are able to do this, practically no one. At this age, tamas (laziness, excessive sleep, aggressive behaviour, etc.) is more punishable than during other ages. It is comparable to someone who arrives at work sleepy, does little work and is aggressive toward everyone. Such a person would inevitably be fired or punished. After the age of 55, one must gradually slow down, spend more time studying spiritual subjects and work on himself.
Qualities of Goodness, Passion and Ignorance

Qualities of goodness: control of the mind and senses, patience, an ability to discriminate, following prescribed duties, truthfulness, charity, study of the past and future, satisfaction, nobleness, renunciation of the objects of the senses, faith in a teacher, shame from illicit acts, compassion, simplicity, humility. Western psychology is predominantly in passion.

ANECDOTE
Two friends meet each other and one is asking, “Why are you so sad?” The other answers, “I am already 20 years old but I still wet myself at night”. First, “I know one psychologist, go and see him”. After some time they meet again and the second person looks happier. The first asks, “So did you visit the psychologist?” Second: “Yes, thanks a lot, it was very helpful”. First: “What, have you stopped wetting yourself?” Second: “No I haven’t, but now I am proud of it”.

Hereby, the modern psychologist’s help consists of helping one to get rid of a sense of shame or to conquer one’s inhibitions. People in ignorance do not have any sense of shame; they are ashamed of nothing. A person in sattva becomes ashamed even by just seeing others acting badly.

Qualities in passion: material desires, enormous effort, dissatisfaction even when there is success. There is the urge to gain more and more, even after achieving a certain goal. Eastern psychology refers to this as the “dog race”. Other qualities include false pride, struggling for material achievements, and striving to get better possibilities than other people have. Nowadays a common practice in different religions is to preach, “Go to the Church to pray and God will give”, “Visit the grave of such and such a saint and you will find a good husband”, “If you begin praying, money will start to come”, etc.

ANECDOTE
Near a church a Russian and Georgian are praying. The Georgian says: “Lord, help me to sell off my stock of oranges.” The Russian repeats again and again, “Lord, give me some extra income, I don’t have enough for food.” This visibly disturbs the Georgian, who finally turns to the Russian and asks: “Look here, how much do you need?” The Russian replies: “250 rubles.” The Georgian tells him, “Look, here are 500 rubles, just take it and
don’t bother God with your foolishness!”

In modern society, a common notion is that we should approach God for material benedictions; if He grants these desires, then He is a good God. This is often in evidence in American Christian churches, and it has also entered into American Judaism to some extent, as well as in most other religions. This is a modern form of idolatry.

A person in passion likes to argue, compete, mock others, and receive praise. They are inclined to sarcasm and love to subtly taunt others. Such a person is proud of his valour, proves his rightness by physical power and is always already to defend himself.

**Qualities of ignorance:** a person in ignorance is often angry and irritated. In general, even brief periods of anger can cause substantial damage to your health, because the biochemical processes that occur are very destructive.

It is said that one moment of anger can spoil ten years of friendship. Eastern psychology considers anger to be the basis of all other negative qualities. The following are further qualities of ignorance: non-recognition of authority of the sacred Scriptures, parasitism, hypocrisy, fatigue, grief, delusion, unhappiness, sleepiness, despondency and depression. It is very important to smile as often as possible, to carry positive energy. People in ignorance are sluggish and passive; for them fear, laziness and false expectations are typical.

**Presence of Intelligence – the Difference between Humans and Animals**

*God, grant me the Serenity of mind to accept that which cannot be changed, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.*

Freidrich Oetinger

If we accept this knowledge and start to bring more *sattva* into our life, then very soon our life will start to change for the better.

For that, it is important to have and use intelligence.

The main functions of intelligence are:

1. **Ability to distinguish**
2. **Memory**

We must distinguish in what *guna* is each object, thought, person, type of action, etc. The ability to distinguish allows us to make the cor-
rect choices in life. Purification of the intelligence occurs in goodness; if the intelligence is not in goodness, then regardless of how many informative books you read, you will not be able to progress or become successful and happy. For maintaining intelligence in goodness, it is important to limit contact with the lower gunas.

**Question:** Would you speak more about intelligence, as it is very significant in our life.

**Answer:** Yes, the importance of intelligence cannot be overstated. The quality of our life is practically determined by how strong and spiritualised our intelligence is. An extensive book could easily be written on this subject alone, in order to explore it in more depth.

Intelligence has the following functions:

1. **Cognition**
2. **Goal setting:** intelligence is capable of reaching a goal. The mind neither has the ability nor the desire to attain a goal, it simply reasons on the mental platform. If we ask anyone about anything, we will get varied responses, often quite clever and practical, but in most cases, such advisers cannot be called happy and successful. Therefore, in Eastern psychology the level of a person's consciousness is defined by their aims in life and what they have already achieved, how harmonious he is.

3. **Declaration of intent:** in Eastern psychology, the words “intelligence” and “determination” are practically synonyms.
4. **Creativity:** people with strong intelligence are capable of transforming their ideas into practical reality.
5. **Formation of a collective mind:** People with strong intelligence are able to unite and lead groups of people.

One whose intelligence is sick will praise himself but criticise and condemn others, as it gives him a possibility to imagine himself as great. A wise person praises others, as he knows that through this praise he gains their good qualities, and that when criticising one can obtain the bad karma and qualities of that person. If someone criticises us, that person takes our bad karma, our diseases and misfortune. The more egoistic a person is, the more he criticises and condemns others.

There are three types of intelligence:

1. **Strong intelligence (in goodness):** One can draw the proper conclusion after hearing the truth. Such a person learns from the mistakes of others. They have strong intuition, will power
and clear vision – from an early age or after starting to work on themselves.

2. **Weak intelligence (in passion):** Such a person is able to reach conclusions after hearing and seeing. They learn from their own mistakes. By the time they reach old age, such people can become quite wise, “beaten by life”.

3. **Unintelligent person (in ignorance):** Such people are incapable of learning, and can best be described by the statement – “He did not learn anything in his life”. Their own mistakes only embitter them; they blame everyone and everything but themselves. This is an animalistic level.

Thus, we have looked at seven important points:

1. How the *gunas* and material nature act.
2. The main functions of the *gunas* – how they bind, penetrate everything and create variety.
3. If we possess real knowledge, we can see the influence of the *gunas* in everyone and everything. We should learn to pay attention on a daily basis to how we act, with whom we associate, what we eat, what kind of TV programmes we watch, etc. Always remember that if the *guna* of ignorance is predominant in our life, then it will bring great misfortune in its wake.
4. If we put our knowledge of the *gunas* into practice, then we will not fall victim to the lower *gunas*.
5. Living beings become contaminated by the *gunas* because of confused intelligence. Therefore it is very important to spiritualise and strengthen the intelligence.
6. If our behaviour is in goodness, our actions will protect our intelligence. We will then be able to discern and avoid the influence of the lower *gunas* and can move to the transcendental level.
7. Such a proactive lifestyle must become natural for us. This lifestyle is in *sattva* (in distinction to the mechanical lifestyle of ignorance). Do not wait until disease and suffering come to you – begin to live properly right now.

When does one come under the influence of the *gunas*? When he becomes conditioned and begins to live according to “I” and “mine”. When we have some form of egoism, we are already under the influence of the *gunas*. Only in *sattva-guna* can one correctly see, hear, think,
draw conclusions or make decisions. Therefore, if any person gives you some advice, first pay attention to what *guna* he is in.

**How Our Mind Affects Our Lives:**

*We Become What We Think of Others*

We can change our *gunas* by our association. Firstly, it is important to associate with pure and inspiring people. The same applies to TV programs and books. Try to avoid books in passion and ignorance, which are very popular today. By choosing them, we are choosing the influence of the lower *gunas*. If we have some example of a saintly personality, then we need to try to keep that in our heart by meditating on and thinking of them. We become like those of whom we think.

**A PARABLE**

There lived one prostitute, and right across from her house there lived a brahmana (teacher, priest). Every morning the brahmana would perform different sacrifices, read Bhagavad-Gita, and chant mantras and prayers. While performing his daily duties he looked out the window across to the prostitute's house and thought, “How can she live like that, this is already the third client to visit her today”. At the same time, the prostitute was thinking, “What a pure saintly person my neighbour is. Now it is 11 o'clock and he has probably started his study of the Bhagavad-Gita; now he is most likely praying”.

Time passed and according to the laws of karma, they both died at the same time. When this time came, the Vishnudutas descended from the spiritual world. When the brahmana saw them he said, “Where are you going? I am here!” But they replied, “No, we came for this prostitute, but there are the Yamadutas (agents from the hellish planets) coming for you”. “How is it possible?” said the brahmana, “I was praying all the time and was following all the prescribed duties! But she is just a prostitute!” The Vishnudutas replied, “But you were thinking only about her all day long, condemning and indignant. Your mind was submerged in ignorance, blame and pride. You were thinking of yourself as very great. Whereas she was thinking of you and the elevated brahminical activities you were involved in. She was chanting the same mantras in her mind that you were chanting, always thinking of God and being humble. Therefore we have come for her”.

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This story illustrates how important it is where the mind dwells. It is important to see what kind of \textit{guna} is predominant in our mind. It is very beneficial to think of saintly people, to meditate on pure thoughts, to chant mantras and prayers, because everything begins with the mind. When ignorance and passion appear in one's mind, degradation begins.

I have acquaintances who complain about their problems and how they try doing something about it but nothing happens. I suggest to them to change their way of thinking, their diet, change their lifestyle a little at a time, but they say, “No, we cannot”. Then I say, “Okay, that is your choice. There is nothing left for you but acceptance of continual suffering. If you do not want to try to even make small changes, then do not complain”.

People in ignorance like to complain and consider themselves weak and unfortunate, but are not willing to do anything about it. They often go to several social institutions, try to receive social benefits, blame everyone and demand something from everyone. There is no point helping those who are ignorant and parasitized because they can even start to hate you and become more parasitized. Such people do not know what charity means. There is no benefit in feeling sorry for them; it is best to maintain a friendly distance, pray for them and wish them luck.

\textbf{Signs of Extended Sattva and Ways to Achieve It}

The false ego becomes stronger during association with people of a low spiritual level: \textit{kama} (desires, lust) appears, and afterwards anger, if desires are not fulfilled or fulfilled in a different way than expected, or when someone tries to prevent them or to take them away, etc.

Anger is the cause of falling into illusion and loss of intelligence. Therefore, it is most important for us to examine whom we associate with. The right choice of association can guarantee that our ego and material desires do not increase and we do not fall into anger and illusion. Therefore, we must think a thousand times before choosing our association and what kind of books to read, and limit our contact with the lower \textit{gunas}.

One Christian saint, Evagry Chernomorsky, said, “There is no such thing as righteous anger toward one’s fellow, for any anger is the way to perdition”.

Look at crows and swans. Crows live in flocks, croak loudly, fly around rubbish, and can peck their own mate if he takes their food. Whereas swans swim in clean water, live in pairs and are extremely de-
voted to each other, they do not shout, they drink and eat clean water and food, look very peaceful – they are sattvic, self-sufficient birds. The swan is one of the symbols of health, happiness, harmony and devotion. They are similar to people in sattva, whereas crows resemble people in tamas.

When we associate with someone we either give association or take it. It is important to give such association that will elevate the other party, not lower their consciousness by gossip, criticism, useless talk, etc.

In addition, it is necessary to learn how to avoid association, to be alone, by taking advanced knowledge from books, good TV programmes, lectures, etc. When our intelligence is purified, we will be satisfied and will feel good about being alone. We do not need to connect with lower vibrations or to feel shy about rejecting useless association and talk.

If we lower the consciousness of another who is engaged in self-perfection, then we make our own karma worse.

To live in a city, rajas and sattva are important. We must act in sattva and avoid tamas. Ignorance and laziness are always bad. In a city, being surrounded by the energies of rajas and tamas, we cannot live a completely sattvic life. At least it is important to live in rajas and sattva.

Many who are situated on a high spiritual level may operate in an active fashion, but they act for the benefit of the whole world, without attachment to the fruits of their work. A brilliant example is Mother Theresa. She used to work sixteen hours a day, saving sick people and helping lepers. Nevertheless, her activity was not in passion. The pushing power, as she used to say, was her love of Jesus. This means that her work was on the spiritual level.

One of the signs of extended sattva is increased humility and an absence of pride and envy. Then we become capable of seeing the good qualities in others. The ability to see only the positive in others is a very important quality. The more we are pure and sattvic the more we see purity in this world. But if we are contaminated, we will see more and more dirt around us.

A PARABLE

There lived one saint that saw only good. His neighbour got tired of this and so he brought this saint to the rubbish dump. They wandered around for a while, and then they saw one dead, dirty cat. So the neighbour asked the saint, “Here, see this dead, rotten cat. What can you say?” The saint said, “What beautiful,
white teeth it has!"

If we are at an initial stage in spiritual practice, we do not need to meet very elevated personalities regularly, because our ignorant consciousness might prevent us from seeing their elevated qualities, and may on the contrary find many faults. We must refrain from criticising great personalities.

At first it is difficult to be in goodness. But after a few months, we will get used to it and it will then be very easy. The beginning of spiritual life is similar to the start of a rocket – when it starts, 85 percent of the fuel is burned in the first few minutes during take-off. But once it begins orbiting the earth, it uses very little fuel. The most difficult and important thing is to become established in sattva; later we will get used to it and it becomes easy. Furthermore, we may even start to feel bad if we get up late or eat tamasic food. But first it is necessary to get to this level, and this requires certain effort.

It takes at least 40 days to develop a new habit. For example, if we decide to do yoga in the morning and persist in it for 40 days, regardless of how difficult it is, it will become a natural habit. Afterward we will feel that something is missing or wrong if we do not do it.

**General Thoughts**

If we do not know something, if we do not have knowledge, this is tamas. When we start to question, this is already passion. In this instance, there is no need to be afraid of passion – it is necessary to be inquisitive, to be curious, to learn and receive knowledge.

If we hear useless talk, self-praise or criticism we should ignore it; there is no need to listen such things or become absorbed in gossip, to become like crows on a garbage dump. It is very easy to get into passion, therefore in such instances one must stay aloof. It is important to strive to be where elevated spiritual subjects are discussed.

Passion should be present in small, regulated quantities. For example, it is necessary to have days of rest to counter passion. In Judaism, the day of rest occurs each week, and every seventh year is the Sabbatical year of rest. Another extreme is too much rest.

It is necessary to recognise the motives of our activity, which reside in the heart. Gunas always penetrate into intelligence. For the sake of self-praise or pride, a person can even become a great leader of some religious organisation, but the result will only be a swollen ego.

People in rajas are often interested in mysticism, glory, health
etc. That is fine, but it is important to move along to the level of sattva. When in passion, we embark on a spiritual life because of some kind of suffering, on beginning to understand that there is something wrong in our life.

The main indicators of tamas are boredom and inertia. The main emotions of passion are greed and envy. Sattva is happiness and knowledge.

Thoughts in sattva is when there is determination to think constantly of spiritual progress, never pausing in the search after the Absolute Truth.

If a guna penetrates the intelligence, then it is very difficult to get it out. We become dependent on some concept. After the age of 50-60, particularly if we have been teaching for some time, it is very difficult to move away from or change ingrained ideas.

Questions and Answers

Love Conquers Everything

Question: You consult different types of people; for sure you do not choose them…

Answer: To some extent I do. By our inner programming and attitude, we attract all the people who come into our life. My secretaries perform simple tests before registering someone for a consultation, and if they see that he is not ready, they recommend to first read particular books or articles.

Question: How do you cope with that, for all that takes so much energy? You need protection.

Answer: The protection is there. When the goal is to help others develop Divine Love, then to some extent, you begin to touch the Divine source of this Love. It is important to strive to give rather than to gain something, to develop the spirit of unselfishness.

Usually the people who come to see me are already on some spiritual path. If a person comes prepared, then energy is not lost, but on the contrary it is attracted, and in this way both the consulted and consultant are filled with sattva and often with Divine Love.

Working with people who are not ready can be dangerous.
At the last festival of stars of psychology, I had a training session with express-consultations based on seeing the subtle body of a person. Near the end, I started to work with one lad who came because his relatives had recommended him, although he had never worked on himself seriously. He looked like a good cultured lad. His complaint was that he had sore eyes and knees.

I said, “You have a big black spot, an energetic hole, on the left knee and a similar grey spot on the right eye”. He confirms, “Yes, that is where most of the problems come from”.

“However, you also have problems on the upper spinal column, and it is strange that you do not mention it.”

“Yes, lately I have been experiencing strong pain there too.”

“Now I see that is the main cause of all your problems, which will lead (if you do not care for it) to very heavy problems in the next two years, to the point of disability. The reason for this is a great pride, as a result of which is also criticism of others and the world at large.”

His relative, who was observing our conversation, nodded, “Exactly, he constantly criticises everybody. I have told him so many times that he should stop thinking of himself as Mr. Always Right!”

The youth became more serious and began to take down all recommendations. We agreed that he would attend another consultation in a few months, after reading my books and magazines and watching a training DVD. In my experience, if someone begins to work on himself before coming for a consultation, they can lighten their aura and only need correct direction on how to quickly restore the subtle body. This means that physical pains and diseases will quickly disappear.

After this boy and one other lady, I started to feel quite unwell. People nearby noticed that I had turned green, and I had trouble sleeping and lost my appetite for the rest of the festival. Usually I need a few days alone in a natural environment and lots of meditation in order to get myself back into proper shape. The more one has in his sub-consciousness envy, egoism, anger, greed then the more he looks like a black hole on the subtle level. Only saints can help such people in one go without becoming contaminated.
Question: But in daily life, like at work, we may be forced to associate with people who are harmful. What should we do in such instances?

Answer: First of all, a job has to be pious and serene. Try to cut association with those who have a negative effect to a minimum. At work, for example, do not let yourself get involved in discussions not relevant to the job, but still be polite. During a conversation, do not look into the eyes of the person but at the bridge of the eyes; when we look into the eyes, a powerful exchange of energies occurs. After work, always take a shower.

**Animals and Gunas**

Question: What animals are in sattva-guna?

Answer: Cows; this is why we must not kill them. They eat grass peacefully, and practically do not need any looking after. Moreover, they give us milk products. Everything that comes from them is penetrated with *sattva* and exceptionally auspicious. Even cow dung is useful as an antiseptic and fertilizer. Cow urine has medicinal properties. Dairy products are extremely necessary for us to maintain *sattva*.

Question: What *gunas* are dogs in?

Answer: In every animal, a certain *guna* predominates. In general, animals have more ignorance than people do. People with too much *tamas* and *rajas* are like animals. Regarding dogs, a German shepherd for example has more passion. Yet due to the main characteristics of a dog, devotion and loyalty, there is *sattva* too. Only in herbivorous animals, such as cows, can *sattva* predominate constantly.

If a dog only eats meat, it will become aggressive and angry. If you have a dog, then it should live outside; when a dog lives inside the house or apartment, it has a negative effect on the energy of the place. We should not eat when an animal looks at us.

Question: What about elephants?

Answer: They are predominantly in *sattva* and *tamas*.

**How to Help Relatives**

Question: What can you do if your closest relatives and friends live in *tamas*?
Answer: First of all, do not judge them. It is practically impossible to move from *tamas* to *sattva*, therefore firstly they need to get to *rajas*.

One woman told me, after listening to a seminar on the *gunas*, how she was rapidly able to pull her brother out from ignorance. He used to sleep fourteen hours a day, play computer games, eat meat and food that was not fresh—generally speaking, all the attributes of *tamas* were present. He would not even hear about any changes — bringing up the subject would make him aggressive. This situation had been going on for a few years.

So what did this woman do? She came to her brother when he was lying half-asleep on a sofa, as he usually did, and started to show him various colourful catalogues, with beautiful photographs of various goods from different companies, presented by good-looking people. She asked her brother what he would recommend her to buy for the house, or if he wanted something for himself too. He became excited and wanted to get many things. She softly said that if he wants something then he needs to do something for it and that she just happened to have a job for him now. At the same time, she started to cook for him with love and in *sattva* and maintained high standards of cleanliness in the house. That is a very powerful weapon: cleanliness and *sattvic* food cooked with love.

This lad started working and gradually changed and started to look after himself. He began wanting to live a good life and agreed to put some serious effort into getting it. Later he even came to see me and I taught him how to reach material goals and slowly add the energy of *sattva* to his life.

### Three Types of Disciples and Teachers

**Question:** In all spiritual disciplines, the importance of the relationship between teacher and disciple is mentioned. How can knowledge of the *gunas* be of use in this area, what do the Vedas say about that?

**Answer:** There are three types of disciple:

1. **Sattvic disciple A [gunpowder]:** These are very rare. They need very little work to attain perfection. Even though such people are on the highest level, they have been born again to undergo some small lesson, to correct small mistakes. In this life they have but to meet a teacher who will ignite the gunpowder.
**Sattvic disciple B [dry wood]:** This is a very spiritually advanced person, gifted from childhood with *vairagya* (Sanskrit – wisdom and detachment) and *viveka* (Sanskrit – the ability to discriminate false from true). Such a disciple knows that no magical formula for liberation exists, and experience is gained only through *sadhana* (Sanskrit – discipline). He does not follow anyone blindly and does not imitate the spiritual path. He asks questions and works on himself. He sees a teacher in all circumstances and in every person he meets. Such a disciple does not need a long personal association with his teacher to make a deep transformation of consciousness, for him it can be enough to meet his teacher for only a few hours in his whole life.

2. **Rajasic disciple [wet wood]:** Such a disciple generally teaches and preaches to others, but at the same time does not practice what he preaches nor follow the instructions of his teacher. He always reads a lot and tries to convert others to his faith, even though he does not have deep spiritual realisations. Often such disciples believe that a teacher has some magical formula. They think in categories – my teacher, my religion, my God. Such a person is unable to see God in everything. He has an emotional attachment to his teacher and is not capable of seeing beyond the form of his teacher. The *rajasic* disciple is usually interested in palmistry, astrology and other occult sciences. Fanatics are in this category, as are those who think of themselves as something special and knowing more than others. Such people should give more time to their own personal growth, unselfish service, meditation and control of speech.

3. **Tamasic disciple [green tree]:** Such a disciple is inclined to misunderstand all spiritual instructions and cause his spiritual tutors many problems. He loves pointless arguments. Most instructions do not have any effect on him. He does not use his intellect to consider spiritual subjects. He may use physical violence toward those of a different faith and anyone thinking differently than him. He does not follow any rules or discipline. He is interested in occultism and often consults various types of fortune-tellers, believes in amulets and black magic. Such a disciple is not careful about what food he eats and surrounds himself with all types of dirt (physical, emotional,
etc.). Such a person needs to do something active: clean or build temples, physically help preachers and talk less. Secluded meditation and other sattvic disciplines are not appropriate for him.

PROVERB

Once a teacher was riding on a horse and his disciples were following him on foot. The teacher dropped his glasses but no one picked them up. The teacher stopped and asked, “Why have none of you picked up my glasses and brought them to me?” The disciples replied, “We always write down all your instructions and follow them, but we cannot see it written that we need to pick up whatever falls down when you are on a horse.” So the teacher angrily told them to write down that they have to pick up and bring to him whatever falls down from the horse during their journey. After some time he heard his disciples chasing after him, shouting and waving a load of horse feces around on a tray. This infuriated him even more, and he instructed them to just watch the horse but to pay no attention to whatever may fall from it. When they passed through a village, some dogs attacked the horse, which panicked, threw off its rider and bolted into the woods. The disciples came to their teacher, looked in their notes but could not find any instruction to help the teacher if he has fallen down. On the contrary, it was clearly stated “not to pick up anything.” So they left the teacher behind and ran to catch up with the horse...

Even if a teacher asks his disciples who are in ignorance to do something, they do not do what he asks, but indignantly complain or completely misunderstand what he wants from them, and end up doing the opposite.

A disciple in passion can do something if asked properly. They are usually very inspired when they start to assist but after some time lose interest, or find some other service to do.

Disciples in sattva do not need to be asked to do something: they already do everything and their teacher is always pleased with them.

The three types of spiritual teachers:

1. **Sattvic teacher A:** His main disciples generally are the ones to spread his message, as most people are unable to understand his high status and objective. Such a teacher has attained the
perfection of self-realisation. He is free of hypocrisy. His life is living proof of his philosophy. He does not identify himself with his mind and body, and therefore is not affected by praise or criticism. He loves God completely and unconditionally.

**Sattvic teacher B:** He has realised God, and he grasps the essence and meaning of all Holy Scriptures. He experiences an inner peace and absolute love. Together with his disciples, such a teacher learns and advances. Such teachers see God in everything.

2. **Rajasic teacher:** He does not have disciples, because a disciple has to follow certain disciplines, but instead has followers that worship him. Sometimes they act fanatically. Often such a teacher behaves theatrically, putting on some external show for public appearance, or wears some special dress, so his followers can see how spiritual he is. He tries to control people's consciousness by taking hold of their emotions.

   Such a teacher rarely practises what he preaches. Often formal leaders of religious organisations are in this category. Such a teacher speaks at every opportunity about the great religious mission or spiritual organisation to which he belongs, and how important it is to be a part of it. He suffers when someone leaves this organisation. Often they glorify their own teacher or the founder of their organisation, but the motivation is self-glorification, “I am so great because I have such a great teacher”.

3. **Tamasic teacher:** This teacher completely distorts all truth. He can change everything for the sake of gaining his selfish interests. He may perform black magic, voodoo, etc. Even though he performs some sacrifices and rituals, he cannot understand that the main sacrifice is to overcome lust, anger, and greed. Gratification of the senses is his main aim.

### Three Types of Consultations

**Question:** The above applies to serious followers. What should a person do if they just need a consultation with a doctor or physiologist? How can one recognise those who are controlled by higher energy?

**Answer:** Consultations can also be in the three gunas.
Consultations in *sattva* help a person to improve his character and worldview, eliminate the psychological causes of disease, awaken one to think of higher values of life and live according to them. The *sattvic* doctor or psychologist also selects the correct diet and lifestyle for patients. One of the main goals of such consultations is to help one to get rid of egoism, calm the mind and begin to progress on the way of Unconditional Love, to develop humility and freedom from attachment.

Humility is the ability to see the Supreme Will in everything. *Ayurveda* states that the first step on the way to escape disease or finding the solution for some problem is an internal acceptance of it; this acceptance is manifest by a person avoiding depression, complaints, condemnation or irritation.

A proper consultation in *sattva* is able to change someone’s life. Serious disease can disappear in a few minutes, to the perplexity of modern doctors. At such a stage chemical medicine is not used; the preference is for mantras, prayers, a change of lifestyle and ways of thinking, herbs and other natural resources.

In the 2006 movie “The Island” we can see *sattvic* consultations. For those who are predominantly in *tamas*, such consultations cannot help but can even have the opposite result and make one cynical. “The more you feed milk to a snake, the more poisonous it becomes.”

A person influenced by passion attends astrological consultations simply to satisfy their curiosity, or to get some predictions. Medical consultations where the patient and doctor want to get rid of the symptoms of a disease quickly, without thinking of the cause, are in passion. The main aim of such a doctor is to get as much money as possible from his patients; the main aim of the patient is to be free of pain, get out of hospital, go back to work, have an active life and gain maximum sense gratification. Someone in passion will practice psychology to learn how to become famous, or to become familiar with different psychological tricks which will allow them to manipulate and exploit others; they will have little interest in bringing harmony into their own lives.

I know one talented psychotherapist who is passion personified. He performs training sessions for various businesses and charges huge fees, mostly in the former USSR. His main teaching is that you must learn how to exploit others, as if not then others will exploit you. He teaches company managers how to squeeze everything from employees, pay as little as possible and at the same time keep them happy. Spiritual practices and books are useful to him only if they serve such purposes. Such types of psychoanalysis are predominantly in *rajas*. 
Ayurveda considers that detailed analysis of psychological problems is not that important, because the cause is known anyway: the futility of searching for love in the external world, suffering from fear, feelings of loneliness and dissatisfaction with life that arise from the egoism that deprives us of real love.

Consultations in ignorance use magic, various amulets, or medical treatments that can cause harm to others. They can cure through the use of alcohol or drugs (although it is sometimes possible if used in small quantities), or often the doctor or patient swear, blame others or quarrel with each other. For example, “You have a black stain on your aura which is an ancestral curse and you will continue to suffer even more unless you buy this amulet from me or pay me for taking away this dangerous curse”. The price ranges from a few hundred to a few thousand Euros, depending on how much the doctor managed to scare his patient.

A few years ago, one woman came to me for a consultation in Jerusalem – she looked very scared and depressed. She had purchased an amulet for a few thousand dollars from one well-known fortune-teller, who had said that this amulet was so powerful that it would resolve all health and personal problems. However, there had been no improvements, rather the opposite. When she returned to this fortune-teller, she called her ungrateful and said she most likely had so many curses that even this amulet could not help. She then started to intimidate her by threatening to curse her entire family if she told anyone about this or complained about her unusual medicine and magical amulets. I know of many similar stories. Very often the threats are connected with children.

Here is another example: I remember around ten years ago, I gave blood for some medical test, and the doctor noticed that one of my fingers had a cut and started to lament that it had progressive gangrene. The conclusion was that I must pay for a private consultation and for expensive, “good” quality medicine from them. Threats are in ignorance.

When a patient is in a dirty hospital, when he tries to cure himself using some methods coming from his sick imagination, and when various powerful chemical preparations or alcohol etc. is used – such treatment is in ignorance.
Chapter 10

Business of the Third Millennium

There is nothing wrong with people possessing riches; the wrong comes when riches possess people.

Billy Graham

Business in Different Gunas

Business in ignorance is when a person’s primary thoughts are how to cheat and put down their competitors, and is willing to use any means to gain the desired result, including fraud, deception, intimidation, and blackmail. Their office is generally crude and dirty, their lifestyle causes problems for those around them and they constantly criticise and insult their competitors and clients.

Those in ignorance are usually involved with the sale of alcohol, drugs, meat, weapons, prostitution, kidnapping of children, abortion, pornography, assassinations, etc., although they can of course be found in any other industry too. Their ventures generally do not last long and they themselves usually become the victims of violence, die from severe diseases or become addicts.

Nowadays, business in passion is the most common. Modern society encourages the development of a spirit of competition from a young age; people are taught, “You must be better than your classmates, otherwise you will not be successful in life”. Young children are compared with others constantly, hearing that someone is better, smarter, etc. All this generates a mentality of shortage; many begin to imagine that some global shortage exists, and if they are not able to seize whatever they can, then others will.

Such attitudes generate many fears – fear of not becoming suc-
cessful, of not being able to preserve what they already have, and many more. These fears poison a person’s life, prevent wealth and prosperity from entering, and block intuition. In modern society, the words “business” and “competition” might almost be synonyms, but competition which is full of anxiety and fear makes us suspicious. Fear of failure blocks the channels of creativity and prevents us from using our potential and talent.

If a business person does not bring the elements of sattva into their life and activities, even though their company is successful, it will shut down after a short time or they will change their occupation. What do they achieve by working so hard, apart from exhausting themselves by constant stress and spoiling their health and personal life? They may be consoled by thinking, “But how else? Such is the price of winning.” But just consider: on their deathbed, if they will have any regrets, it will certainly not be that they did not spend enough time in the office...

People in passion are attracted by any type of business where money can be made quickly. Organising various nightclubs, various types of gambling, entertainment events such as beauty pageants, sports competitions, genetic engineering (this already contains some element of ignorance), production and distribution of wine, food products which look appetizing but have no nutritional value, stock markets, advertising firms, etc… rajas is dominant in these and similar ventures.

Nowadays, rajasic people can be seen everywhere. The tragedy begins when they move to business of a tamasic nature out of the desire to make more money, particularly businesses that are connected with drugs, slavery, prostitution and pornography. Because of their strong rajas, they can become successful quickly. But by doing this they doom themselves to a terrible future and cause a lot of suffering to those around them.

But if a business person in passion begins to add the element of sattva to their life, and engages in sattvic types of business, then they can start to progress quickly and benefit those around them.

If business in sattva becomes predominate in the third millennium, society will survive and progress in all aspects. Business people who do not reach this level will destroy themselves and will be instrumental in the degradation and destruction of society in general.

Business people in sattva understand that the only person with whom they should be compared is themselves. It is not important what pratishtha (Sanskrit – prestige, social status) they have attained as a result of their professional activity, but what kind of person they have
become in the process. They understand that actual success is not attained by achieving selfish goals but through personal growth; it is more important what happens to a person in the process of achieving their goals, that they become harmonious and are able to realise their talents and potential for the benefit of the world.

It is no less important for such people to create something that will be useful for others, that will help them achieve happiness and success in life and fulfill their hopes and wishes. Rather than accumulating more money, they understand that the higher the position in society, the more one should serve the world and the greater the responsibility, and that your happiness depends on how useful you are to others.

The motto of people in sattva is, “If you want to win, make sure that no one loses”. (This principle is described in Stephen Covey’s book ‘Seven Habits of Highly Effective People’). If you win – I win, or we have no relationship at all! They know that by giving, we actually gain. The intuition of such people is remarkable. I personally know the head manager of one international corporation who did not have a technical education. Notwithstanding which, when there is a serious incident in one of his factories and none of the specialists can understand what to do, they go to him and he simply examines their engineering drawings, identifies the problem and solves it. He makes decisions in other aspects of his life in a similar way. He lives and thinks mainly by the values of goodness. If you examine how large, successful long-term corporations work, you will see that sattva predominates there.

A person in sattva knows that the best decisions are made and inspiration comes when there is adequate rest and meditation, not through constant hard work. This is one of the reasons why they always allow time in their schedule for relaxing, spending time with family, for yoga, physical exercise, reading and self-education. Such leaders understand the importance of education (for themselves as well as for their employees), devotion to learning and maintaining cleanliness. They know that life is too short to spend time doing things that you are not suited to and to which the heart is not inclined.

Those in sattva work with constant enthusiasm, yet are not overly attached to the results. For example, they can lose everything, their long-term project can lose its prospects, but such things do not stop them. They understand that everything is in the hands of the Creator, and everything is temporary. If they suddenly become rich or famous, they will still remain as simple, free of pride, and peaceful as before and will continue to do what they love to do.
They love their employees, clients (and the whole world too) and take care of them. The main concern for such people are others, not money and possessions. Henry Ford said, “You can take all my factories and money, but just leave me my people and we will quickly revive everything.” Recently I read an article about his life and principles – they are very elevated and pure. He believed in reincarnation, was a vegetarian, and took great care of other people. Some even regarded him as a communist. One of his objectives was to provide every American with an affordable, good quality car.

Occupations in sattva include production and distribution of organic products that are free of chemicals or additives, food that has been produced naturally, dairy products (milk and ghee are the most sattvic products), imparting knowledge that is favourable for self-realisation, charitable work, etc. On a larger scale it can be practically any activity (except tamasic types of activity) that one performs in accordance with his nature and talents, from the heart, for the benefit of the world, and as a service to God.

Unfortunately, when those who are predominantly in ignorance and passion come to sattvic types of work (spiritual, educational, religious, etc.), it can be destructive for society. An example of this is when alcohol, cigarettes or even drugs are used to raise funds for the maintenance or construction of a temple. In some western educational institutions, teenagers are given sex education, somewhat resembling a practical pornography class, as if they would not be able to conceive a child without those lessons. No one teaches animals… Then people wonder why students do not want to learn, are sexually active from a young age, become hyperactive and behave inappropriately.

In 2007, scientists from Cambridge university did some research and came to the conclusion that promiscuity leads to poorer results in studying; the more sexually active the student, the poorer his learning. The most lecherous were medical students and the most morally stable were theology students.

For a long time I imagined that spiritually orientated people could not cheat or let others down. Such views caused me many problems. Now I know that it is better to do business or associate with ‘ordinary people’ who are predominately in goodness, than with people who have been engaged in spiritual practices for many years (and may even be religious leaders) but are still controlled by lower gunas.

Here is one example from my personal life – one person appealed to me for help, introducing himself as a spiritual person and capable as-
trologer. I helped him to come to Israel. But very quickly he disappoint-
ed everyone with his lack of culture and knowledge and his quarrelsome
character. People did not want to go to his lectures or consultations.
Then he opened a centre with almost the same name as ours, and started
to publish my articles in newspapers under his own name with invita-
tions to his consultations. Later he started advertising himself in maga-
zines where I have my own column, and when people phoned him he
would present himself as my teacher and friend. But when people would
go there he would slag me off. Many who approached him became dis-
appointed with spiritual life. He created a website where he started to
invite people for free online consultations, but only a few actually got
them for free. He also opened a shop to sell religious articles as a purely
commercial venture.

I have asked him why he is prejudiced toward me, as I do not hin-
der him in any way, do not sell anything… On the contrary, practically
all his clients were my own students. He replied that as far as he is con-
cerned I am currently his competitor which means he has to deal with
me in the way some modern business schools teach.

Just a few days ago one of my old friends, who has spent many
years in India learning from various yogis in the Himalayas, wrote to
me. He explained that the very same man had found out how he brings
people to India and what he teaches on his yoga courses. He had then
copied the same route and created commercial visits to India. At the
same time he has presented a very similar biography to my friend’s on
his website, passing it off as his own.


**Chapter 11**

**How Energy Influences**

**What is energy and when is it prominent?**

It is rare to meet a person who is always situated in the same guna. Usually we are controlled by mixed modes, or the mode which influences us changes rapidly. This change is greatly determined by the following factors:

1. **Social:** We choose our association at work or on vacation. For example, when we begin to talk to a passionate person, we can find that after a few minutes we are pulled into a discussion on some economic or political issue, although we previously had little interest in it.

2. **Environment:** It is difficult to imagine discussing spiritual subjects in casinos, night clubs, pubs or drug dens. If we are somewhere that is saturated by passion and ignorance, what we speak there will reflect the energy of that place.

3. **Time:** The time of ignorance is between 9 pm and 2 am. This is why the desire to go to places of ignorance, watch ignorant movies or discuss ignorant topics (or at best passionate topics) increases at this time.

There is one Russian folk saying, “The morning is wiser than the evening.” It has long been understood that in the morning we often feel sorry about what we said the night before, and that decisions made in the evening often seem questionable afterwards. In the morning everything is perceived in a different light. Therefore, we should follow a simple rule – we should never make any decisions in the evening, and speak as little as possible. By doing this, our life will be considerably
happier and we will avoid many problems. There is a reason that almost everything in nature sleeps at this time. Have you ever heard the birds singing at this time?

At the end of the week we can examine what kind of speech was predominant during the week. If it was in goodness, then it will easy to notice how harmonious and happy our life is. If it was in passion, or particularly in ignorance, then the result will naturally be disease, depression and unhappiness. At the end of the week we can reflect on which modes we have been predominantly influenced by. By considering the factors above we can look to make adjustments to enable us to gain more sattvic influences.

Two major laws

Law of change

All three gunas dwell in constant and dynamic interaction. Tamas and rajas are situated within sattva, sattva and rajas within tamas, and tamas and sattva within rajas. Pure sattva, rajas or tamas are practically impossible to find, particularly for longer periods of time. This material world is constantly changing. Everything changes every second: the weather, age, time, etc... But when change takes place, its effects last for some time. Spring, for example, lasts for a particular length of time before it is replaced by summer.

Law of continuity

The gunas have a tendency to remain in a predominant position for some time after becoming the principal influence. Although in the beginning it is difficult for tamas to become rajas, or for rajas to become sattva, when it happens the predominant guna will try to maintain this position for a certain period. An example of this is if we get into bad company, and start to smoke or drink and act in tamas. At first it can feel extremely unpleasant and we will have to push ourselves to do all these things, but in due course of time we will become accustomed to it, and will even start to feel awkward in a clean place where no one shouts or smokes.

Tamas and sattva usually last longer than rajas. The essence of rajas is impulsiveness and movement; therefore it cannot last for long and falls into tamas or becomes elevated to sattva. However, modern society demands of us to be in constant rajas. To do this strong stimulators are...
required, such as coffee, alcohol, gambling and association with passionate, active people. Due to such stimulators, we seize energy from our strategic reserves, which over time become exhausted. When this occurs, if we do not start to work on ourselves and intensify sattva in our life, we will plunge into deep tamas. The typical symptoms of this are extreme depression, loss of energy, lethargy, disease, dipsomania and an unwillingness to live.

It is incredibly important to understand that the assessment of the gunas is relative: what is tamas in one instance, may in another situation be rajas or even sattva. **Whatever raises the level of our consciousness is sattva for us, and whatever lowers it is tamas.** For example, if we start to smoke eight cigarettes a day instead of ten, more sattva has come into our life. But if after ten years of not having smoked and leading a harmonious life style, we begin smoking just one cigarette a day, then our life has become more tamasic.
As a rule, Ayurvedic treatment is a failure if a doctor is unable to properly examine the psychology of his patient and thus help him become stronger in following Ayurvedic recommendations.

Dr. D. Frawley
Chapter 12
Main Causes of Disease

Three Causes of Disease

Teachers of Ayurveda, particularly David Frawly in his book “Ayurveda and the Mind,” confirm that there are three main causes of disease:

1. **Karma** – the results and consequences of activities and types of thinking which have taken place in this and previous lives.

2. **Excess of Rajas and Tamas** – this occurs in the mind and consequently in our life. Some amount of tamas and rajas is necessary to maintain harmony in this world and in our particular body – to perform certain activities, to destroy something useless or to sleep. But the higher our level of personal development, the less tamas and rajas we need. If they exist even slightly in excess of the proper measure, then they become the causes of disease and suffering.

3. **Imbalance of doshas** – the doshas are the main types of constitution in the human body. Usually imbalance comes as a result of one not living in accordance with the constitution of his type and/or external factors. (We will shortly discuss the doshas further).

These three causes are normally connected with each other. A doshas imbalance is usually a result of excess rajas or tamas, which in return reflects deeper karmic disharmony. Therefore, to neutralize the abovementioned factors, Ayurvedic treatment considers three options:

1. **Appropriate therapy for balancing the doshas** – this can involve specified lifestyle changes, change of diet, use of herbs,
massage with various oils, cleansing procedures, clinical therapy on the imbalanced *doshas* using opposite energies, etc. We will discuss in a special chapter how to use psychology to balance the *doshas*.

2. **Neutralization of rajas and tamas** – the main methods used on this level in *Ayurvedic* therapy and yoga are *asanas* (yogic postures), *pranayama* (breathing techniques), mantras (sound vibrations), meditation, *sattvic* diet and lifestyle. Practically this entire book is devoted to this subject;

3. **Minimizing karma or becoming completely free from it** – on this level Yoga and *Ayurveda* recommend *pujas* (religious rituals and ceremonies), mantras, prayer, serving a spiritual mentor and submitting to the Divine aspect found in all creation. But the prime necessity, without which all the above can even bring harm, is to become unselfish, free of dependence, and most importantly to develop Divine love. It is important to develop a correct philosophical understanding and attitude toward the world and to engage in selfless activity (karma-yoga). Some of the following chapters are devoted to this topic: how to change karma and purify the effects of karma.

These three treatments are used together to varying degrees, depending on the needs of the individual. Regardless of the level of treatment, the mind is the root cause of all disease. Therefore, in a separate chapter, we are going to review the different stages of the mind and how to put the mind in order.

**Imbalance of Doshas and Gunas are Cured Together!**

There are three main *doshas* or types of constitutions: *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. *Doshas*, like toxins, can accumulate negative emotions, for example: *Vata* – fear; *Pitta* – anger; *Kapha* – dependence. This is very well known by those who study *Ayurveda*.

*Vata-dosha* is particularly widespread throughout our physical body, because the mind is also under its influence and consists of the same main elements – air and ether. The problems associated with *Vata* are usually psychological – fear, uncertainty, vulnerability and anxiety. Treatment of *Vata* always consists of a substantial amount of psychology. Because any kind of pain causes *Vata* imbalance, the treatment of any pain must include a strong anti-*Vata* component. Stress also tries
first of all to imbalance Vata, which is why anti-stress therapies are aimed at reducing Vata.

But the other two doshas also have key components in psychology that cannot be ignored. Each patient has a particular psychological and physical energy, and to develop an effective plan of treatment, it is necessary to examine them.

The three gunas are associated with three main psychological factors: rajas manage the ego’s impulses; tamas creates emotional blocks, insensitivity or addictions. The influence of the gunas can complicate the treatments of the doshas because they can produce attitudes in a patient that prevent a treatment from being successful, even in external areas such as diet and herbal therapy.

One way or another, the doshas and gunas should always be looked at as a whole and treated together. An established dosha imbalance always means a certain amount of tamas, which reveals itself as an old injury, pain or weakness. A good Ayurvedic doctor must know how to examine all the conditions to determine which dosha is situated in a sattvic, rajasic or tamasic state. Knowledge of this is the foundation through which one can practice Ayurvedic psychology.

Negative karma mainly occurs as a result of long term imbalance of doshas and gunas within the senses, emotions and mind (pragyaparadha or Buddhi-dosha). This begins from rajas, meaning high-handedness and stubbornness. Also they indicate an excess of tamas, which deprives one of the ability to see, to recognise or change anything. The purpose of Ayurveda is to not only balance the doshas and bring us to sattva, but to also reveal the karmic causes and karmic components (samskaras) concealed in our behaviour. Vedic astrology is an important instrument that can help us find the karmic factors that affect us.

Ayurveda allows us to understand the psychology of the doshas and gunas, and how our karma manifests. Our mind plays the most important role; our body is simply the place where disharmony finds its shelter, where it reveals itself and causes disease.

**What are the Doshas?**

In 2006, my wife and I began two correspondence courses, The Basis of Ayurveda and Advanced Study of Ayurveda with the American Institute of Vedic Research. These in-depth courses are designed by Dr. Frawley and are considered to be the best Ayurvedic correspondence courses in the world. There was much attention given to the doshas,
but the relationship between the *gunas* and the *doshas* was not considered in detail or presented systematically. However this relationship was explained thoroughly on the course for yoga teachers at the Shivananda Swami’s ashram in California (I recommend everyone to take it – such courses are available in many countries). Several times a week there were classes given by well known masters of *Ayurveda*, Vedic astrology and Yoga. A few evenings were devoted to *Ayurvedic* psychology and the subject of “*Doshas and Gunas*”.

My wife had prepared and given a seminar on this subject in Israel. The next two chapters are a summary of her seminar.

*Dosha* is the vital power or energy which causes us to function physically and psychologically. When this energy becomes imbalanced it leads to disease on a physical and psychological level. Because of this the literal translation of the word “*dosha*” from Sanskrit is that which darkens, spoils and decomposes. This imbalance develops when we do not live in accordance with our constitution, in accordance with the *dosha* which is dominant in our nature.

The *doshas* consist of five basic elements – ether, air, fire, water and earth. These elements manifest in the *doshas* as energies or driving forces.

There are three main *doshas*:
*Vata* – made of the elements and energy of air and ether.
*Pitta* – made of the elements and energy of fire and water.
*Kapha* – made of the elements and energy of water and earth.

Our constitution is defined by the *dosha* which is dominant; the three *doshas* are always present but one is usually more prominent. The *dosha* which predominates generally determines our constitution when we are in a state of balance. There are ten types of body constitutions:

1. *Vata*.
2. *Pitta*.
3. *Kapha*.
4. *Vata-Pitta* (*Vata* is dominant although *Pitta* is also is present, and *Kapha* is there in a small amount)
5. *Vata-Kapha*.
7. *Pitta-Kapha*.
8. *Kapha-Pitta*. 
Chapter 12

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10. *Vata-Pitta-Kapha* (All *doshas* are equally present; this is the rarest constitution).

**Characteristics of the Doshas**

*Vata* – is cold, dry, light, most movable, hard, exciting and its taste is viscous and bitter.

*Pitta* – is hot, wet (liquid), oily, light, movable, sharp, penetrating and its taste is sour and spicy.

*Kapha* – is cold, wet, heavy, immovable (fixed and static), soft, smooth, flexible, slippery, slow and its taste is sweet and salty.

**Balancing the Doshas**

Ayurveda considers that similar strengthens similar; this means that a *dosha* can be reinforced by the same qualities that it possesses. For example, *Pitta* is hot in nature, and will intensify with spicy food and hot weather.

On the other hand, contrasting elements neutralize each other. In other words, a certain *dosha* can be reduced or neutralized by the qualities opposite to it. An example is that hot and excited *Pitta* can be reduced by a cold drink or cold weather.

A dried crust is dry, light and hard which is similar to the quality of *Vata*; as a result *Vata* can intensify after eating some crusts. It is possible to keep this in check by drinking warm milk because it makes the crust more moist, soft and warm. In this way, *Vata* becomes neutralized by its opposite qualities.

**Description of the Doshas**

*Vata* is the energy which moves and distributes everything in our body. On the physical level it controls the heartbeat, the intestinal tract and breathing. On the mental level it governs our nervous system – it regulates nervous impulses, controls our psychology, and drives the mind – our thoughts and feelings.

A *Vata* mind moves at great speed. By calming the mental airs (*Vata*) it is possible to calm the mind. Excited *Vata* gives an excited and uncontrolled mind, tranquil *Vata* gives a tranquil mind.

The nature of *Vata* memory is to quickly remember and quickly forget, to have good short-term memory. An example is when someone
studies for an exam, passes it and forgets practically everything within a few days. During sclerosis *Vata-dosha* becomes highly imbalanced, which causes short-term memory loss.

*Vata-dosha* types usually appear skinny, with an angular face and thin, protruding bones. It is difficult for them to put on weight. Their skin colour is darkish with visible veins, thin skin that is inclined to dryness. Their hands, feet and skin are usually cold. The hair is thin, dry and usually harder than other types, and the head is small. Their eyes are dark, small and dry, restless, with short eyelashes. The mouth is not big; lips are thin with a darkish tinge, and are dry and twitchy.

*Pitta is the catabolism energy of fire (the energy of metabolic breakdown of molecules). It is the energy of digestion and appetite on the physical level and the acquisition of information on the mental level. The energy of fire maintains body temperature by means of the processing of chemical energy the body receives from food.*

A *Pitta* mind is characterised by sharpness; it clearly hits a target and gets to the main point quickly. It gives concentration and purposefulness of mind.

*Pitta* memory is excellent: they can memorize and remember easily, and focus on essential information without unnecessary details.

*Pitta-dosha* types possess bodies of medium build and can lose or gain weight easily. They have well-developed muscles, with pinkish or reddish coloured skin, with birthmarks and freckles. They are more inclined toward skin problems, and have warm and normal skin, not dry or oily, but simply moist. In many cases, they have ginger or red hair. *Pitta-dosha* has a medium amount of hair that is soft and thin, with a tendency to become prematurely grey or bald. They have a medium-sized head. Their eyes are also medium in size, with short, thin eyelashes and a penetrating gaze. They have soft red medium-sized lips.

*Kapha is the nourishing energy of anabolism, giving stability and steadiness. On the physical level it is responsible for the construction of body tissues, giving elasticity and firmness to the body. It also lubricates and moistens, adding to the flexibility and softness of the body. On the mental level it gives stability, fortitude, kindness, forgiveness and a softness of character.*

A *Kapha* mind is stable and strong. Imbalanced *Kapha-dosha* causes mental passiveness and sluggishness rather than tranquility; all thoughts seem to go through the mind in slow motion.

*Kapha* memory is slow to retain information but will remember
forever. It provides good long-term memory and the ability to remember fine details.

*Kapha-dosha* types are usually fat and have difficulty losing weight. They have a round face and a solidly built figure, with firm, oily, smooth, soft, cool and pale skin. Their hair is thick, oily, stout and shiny. They have a large head, with large, attractive and light eyes and long, dense eyelashes. Their lips are smooth, big and full.

Disease comes when our constitution becomes disturbed, when one or more *doshas* become imbalanced. When we refer to the *doshas* being balanced, this does not mean that they are all present in the body in an equal amount (except when one’s constitution is *Vata-Pitta-Kapha*), but that they exist in the proper proportion for the particular person’s nature, in the constitution with which he possessed them at birth.

The *doshas* manifest not only in one’s physical constitution but also on a psychological level, in character, intellect and behaviour. At the same time physical and psychological *doshas* may be different. For example, physically someone may look like *Kapha*, fat with a solidly built figure, but psychologically they think like *Pitta*—are direct, act quickly, clearly and purposefully, are hot-tempered and are not ashamed to express anger. Kindness, softness and slowness, which are inherent in a *Kapha* constitution, are not present in this person’s thinking and behaviour, although he looks like *Kapha*.

Sometimes the physical constitution can balance or compensate for the psychological constitution. An example of this is if someone’s *Vata* becomes excited, they start talking excessively, cannot concentrate, moves in an excited or fussy manner and experiences nervous tension. As a result *Vata* also becomes excited on the mental level, which leads to excessive mental activity, causing tension of the nervous system, which practically cannot rest or relax. Such a person may suddenly gain weight and become slower, which on the physical level will look like *Kapha* constitution. In reality this external increase in *Kapha* is activated as a physical defence mechanism to slow the excited *Vata* on the internal, mental level. In this way, the mental excitement of *Vata* is balanced and compensated for by the external, physical heaviness and slowness of *Kapha*. In such a situation, *Vata* should first be stabilized on the mental level through meditation, relaxation, a *Vata* pacifying diet (sweet, fatty, plenty of liquid, etc.) and by developing a philosophical outlook and proper attitude toward life and stressful situations. At the same time it is necessary to cure *Kapha* on the internal level through proper diet for improving *Kapha*, a healthy lifestyle and special herbs for the harmoni-
sation of *Kapha* and maintenance of the nervous system, for which *Vata* is responsible.

*Vata-dosha* is considered to be the main and most important *dosha*, because it is the most changeable and becomes easily imbalanced. Usually it is the first *dosha* to become imbalanced in case of illness. Also, through it the other *doshas* work; it is like a substance through which they act, or a power and energy that directs other *doshas* – if *Vata* is imbalanced then the other *doshas* also become affected. Therefore during treatment to balance the *doshas*, it is usually recommended to first restore and cure *Vata-dosha*, and then the others. If *Vata* becomes stabilized, then the other *doshas* as a rule automatically get back to normal – provided of course that the condition is not serious or neglected.

*Vata* in other *Ayurvedic* contexts is also called *prana* – life energy. As long as there is *prana* in the body, there is life. Excess excitement of *Vata-dosha* leads to depletion of the vital energy of *prana*. If *Vata-dosha* is in order, the vitality in our body flows normally and we radiate energy, are strong in body and spirit and feel happy.

**How the Five Elements that Comprise the *Doshas* are Manifest in our Body and Mind**

Some of us may question, “How is it possible that there are five elements in my body? Where can I find fire or earth?” This is what we will now examine.

**Vata – Air and Ether**

Ether can be called the space which penetrates all things and in which everything is contained. Air is situated in ether. Air in motion is wind, a moving force. *Vata-dosha* is extremely important because everything is situated in it and moves with its help. *Vata-dosha* is like a wind that directs everything by its pressure. It is responsible for the coordination of body movements, balance, blood pressure, bones, joints, intestines, nervous system, nervous impulses and breathing.

Breathing is directly connected to *Vata-dosha*. By breathing the body is filled with oxygen and carbon dioxide is cleared out. This process happens on a cellular level. Correct breathing and breathing techniques can harmonise *Vata-dosha* on the physical as well as the mental level, by normalizing the movement of *prana* in the body. In the mental state *Vata* is manifested as a ‘wind’ from our thoughts. *Vata* drives the thought processes and senses. If *Vata* is excited the person becomes
restless and thoughts race through his mind; thus calmness of the mind and senses is connected to how balanced *Vata-dosha* is. By keeping the mind and senses tranquil, *Vata-dosha* and consequently all the physical processes for which it is responsible, will function properly.

In terms of character, *Vata* manifests as lightness, mobility and the ability to inspire others. Such people are creative and easily make progress, but can change direction as often as the wind – they can display inconsistency in their interests and attachments, but easily adapt to anything new.

If *Vata* becomes imbalanced, a lack of calm ensues and it becomes difficult to concentrate on any specific thing; spatial orientation and co-ordination become disturbed, and unconscious body movements are likely (for example, tapping a foot or a pen against a table when one is nervous, or in the worst case scenario, developing a nervous twitch). Such people find it difficult to make decisions due to anxiety; they may experience fear, doubts and apprehension or have disturbed sleep. They become more talkative, which wastes *prana*. Physical problems like irregular heartbeat, blood pressure, vertigo, swelling of the stomach, constipation, dry skin, bone and joint pain, diminished short-term memory and overstraining of the nervous system can develop. Aggravated *Vata-dosha* leads to an exhaustion of vitality or *prana*, causing increased physical and mental fatigue, despondency or depression. Mental anxiety is the first thing that can make *Vata-dosha* imbalanced and cause the physical side effects of *Vata* imbalance to appear.

**Pitta – fire and water**

Although it may seem that these are two incompatible elements, *Pitta* manifests as liquid fire. Imagine a liquid fire that is burning, sharp, transformative and divisive; during the process of burning the object changes as it burns. For example, *Pitta* is the gastric juice and enzymes that break down and digest food. Everything connected to the process of digestion and generation of energy in the body is a part of *Pitta*.

Each cell of our body produces energy. In this process an organic molecule (for example, glucose or fat) and oxygen is used. As a result, carbonic acid and energy are discharged. The same process happens when fire is burning; it is called combustion. In our bodies, energy is produced in the form of heat and motion, whereas in a burning fire it is produced in the form of heat and light. So we can imagine that in reality ‘fire’ is present in each cell of the body, but not in the form we usually
associate it with. It does not glow, rather it moves the body. It is similar to the process of burning fuel in a car engine – the fire is invisible, but there is heat and motion. While producing energy, Pitta maintains body temperature.

The blood is also governed by Pitta-dosha. It is warm and liquid, like Pitta. But Pitta is more responsible for the quality and structure of the blood. Plasma (the fluid portion of blood) is related to Kapha.

Pitta gives the mind sharpness, makes one astute and capable of understanding the essence of things. It also improves memory, and information becomes easier to acquire and process. Fire in a character causes quick temper, vitality, dazzle and qualities of leadership.

Those with a Pitta constitution have an excellent appetite. Pitta imbalance manifests as irritation, excessive temper, anger, hate, hostility, envy, resentment, vindictiveness, a deterioration of understanding and a false perception of life (a lack of objective information processing). On the physical level imbalance may appear as inflammation, infections, boils and spots, diarrhoea, heartburn, fever, metabolic problems, poor appetite and deterioration of the digestion or the quality of blood.

Pitta is also responsible for the smell of body wastes. If something does not get burned properly, it smells bad and releases toxins (unprocessed substances). An example of this is when we see a car with black, stinking smoke coming from the exhaust. This is an example of bad ‘digestion’ of fuel. So it is when something in the body is not digested correctly, this leads to the accumulating of toxins in the body which can cause an unpleasant smell.

Kapha – Water and Earth

We all know that there is water in our bodies. Our bodies consist of around 80% water, and it is in every cell of the body. But where is the earth element? Earth in this instance is a metaphor for solidity, elasticity and gravity. When earth and water are combined, a type of soft earth or compressed water is produced. Like clay, it can be fluid, or more dense, hard and smooth. Consequently, Kapha (earth plus water) in our bodies is responsible for liquids and tissue. Liquids are lymph, mucous membranes, plasma –the fluid portion of blood (the quality and structure is Pitta’s responsibility). Kapha also looks after the structure of tissue in the body, their lubrication and moistening; in this way it gives structure to the body. Kapha also includes fat; therefore people of such constitution are often heavy, although not always. Heaviness and increased
amounts of fat can also indicate increased stimulation of *Kapha-dosha*, even though the person might not have *Kapha* as their main constitution.

The element of earth in *Kapha* causes heaviness and density. Therefore the mind and character of such a person will be more slow, calm and stable. The water element adds softness, kindness and the capacity to forgive. Such people are men of good spirit. They have good long-term memory, including for small details, although they process information slowly. *Kapha* also gives physical strength, endurance and stability.

When *Kapha-dosha* becomes imbalanced and overly stimulated, the body becomes heavier and slower, the mind becomes dull and the process of acquiring information becomes slower. Greed, stinginess and excessive laziness arise, and the emotions become dull and unstable. Obesity, oedemas, an accumulation of mucus (cold or phlegm) and a feeling of mental and physical heaviness can appear on the physical level.

**Health Comes from Living in Harmony with Our Nature**

The natural individual balance of *doshas* that we are born with is called *Prakriti*. This also refers to the state of equilibrium of *doshas*, when we live according to our nature and can thus maintain a healthy condition.

*Vikriti*, the condition of disease, occurs when the *doshas* in our body become imbalanced or irregular due to living in a way that does not suit our nature or *Prakriti*.

To be healthy it is necessary to live according to our mental and physical constitution. We are discussing the psychological state because usually disharmony arises on the mental level first, and later moves on to the physical level. Therefore *Ayurveda* considers that to find a cure, one should first change his worldview and modes of thinking or feeling, bringing them to *sattva* according to his constitution.

It is also possible for a physical factor to cause mental imbalances. The most common examples are caffeine and alcohol, which excite and intoxicate. The worst are drugs that completely sever one from reality and from the state of “here and now”. On the other hand, medicinal herbs or spices exist that can have a positive influence on our state of mind. We can choose physical factors that can have a beneficial effect, provided we control what we eat and do not become slaves to our own stomachs. It is easier to deal with these physical things than with mental and subconscious attitudes.
Although we are not always able to choose the physical factors that affect us (like breaking a leg), we always have the ability to choose how we react. If we become depressed and start to feel sorry for ourselves, this will only aggravate the physical condition. On the other hand, if we continue to enjoy life and maintain a positive outlook, we can recover more quickly.

It is necessary to bring our mind to Sattva, which means developing the correct worldview that is favourable for inner tranquility and happiness. Choosing a sattvic diet, living according to our constitution, engaging in spiritual development and living in harmony with nature and the Divine are required to come to Sattva.

The doshas can also be influenced by the gunas. They can be in sattva, rajas and tamas. Sattva is the natural state of health and harmony, whereas rajas and tamas are deviations. We can harmonise the doshas according to our constitution, but if we do not simultaneously bring them to sattva, then we will not be able to reach the desired result; real physical and mental health is only possible in sattva. The best way to harmonise and rehabilitate our doshas is to elevate them to sattva-guna – only then will they be able to manifest their best qualities. Sattva can only manifest when there is harmony in the way we live and manage our health and our Prakriti.

**Doshas in the Three Gunas**

The following description of the doshas in different gunas is of tremendous practical value for the following reasons: it helps to clearly define what nature we have or which doṣha (or doṣhas) is most dominant; we can understand how to come to optimal health. If our doṣhas are in goodness, we are guaranteed good physical and psychological health, will experience a great sense of satisfaction in life and will be successful in our external life. Passion guarantees disease, accidents and a life of disharmony. Ignorance leads to chronic disease, disability and severe psychological disturbance.

No doṣha is more sattvic than any other; each can be manifested in all gunas. It is more desirable to elevate the doṣhas to sattva, because they manifest their best qualities in sattva. As doṣhas mix, creating for example a Pitta-Kapha constitution, so the gunas are usually present in some combination. Absolutely pure sattva is the state of complete enlightenment, which we must aspire to.
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**Vata in sattva**

People with *Vata* in *sattva* are quite vigorous, positive and optimistic. Their mind works very fast, they are smart and have a good memory, yet at the same time their mind is focused and calm. They like to improve their life and move forward. They are full of enthusiasm, sociable and capable of inspiring others with good ideas. They see unity everywhere and feel themselves as a part of this unity. They are peacemakers and anti-racists. Their sense of creativity is highly developed and they easily adapt to any situation, being incredibly flexible and mobile.

Those with a *Vata* constitution like to start new things; they are good at taking the first step. But those with a *Pitta* constitution become leaders. *Vata* can be a good leader, but the best leader is *Pitta* in *sattva*. *Vata* types can take on the role of an inspirer or someone who generates ideas, whereas *Pitta* types take charge of the situation. *Vata* is air and *Pitta* is fire; as we know, fire cannot exist without air – *Vata* “sets *Pitta* on fire”.

**Vata in rajas**

*Vata* in *rajas* is different from *Vata* in *sattva*; as *Vata* is air, people with this constitution easily experience nervous excitement. If *Vata* in *sattva* is a light pleasant breeze, then *Vata* in *rajas* is a whirlwind. Such people are hyperactive, fussy, nervous, and make many unnecessary actions and movements, constantly worrying about something. Because of this their perception of reality is not very accurate and they tend to be highly neurotic people. While taking care of their child or worrying about someone dear to them, they often put ideas into their own heads by imagining what might happen. If a door slams suddenly, they jump because they are scared of sudden sounds. Their knowledge is shallow and they forget quickly. If they come for a consultation, they will restlessly question the counselor, speaking more than he does, mostly about unnecessary points. They are talkative and interrupt others frequently; they are bad listeners because they are afraid to forget what they want to say. This happens because of the excessive, constantly generating thoughts and feelings, which they think should be spoken. These people are irresolute and hyper, which makes it difficult for them to make a decision or causes them to jump from one idea to another. In a shop they have difficulty deciding what to buy without a shopping list; they can forget to buy necessities, or in desperation not buy anything or spend a lot of money on useless things.
For *Vata* in *rajas* it is extremely difficult to concentrate. Often they create unnecessary fuss around themselves rather than concentrating on important things. They are impatient and want to do everything quickly, trying to do several things at once and often not being successful in any of them. They are also the noisiest creatures – not only because they talk too much but because of the amount of things they drop, trip over, break, etc...

They are not reliable, not because they do not want to fulfill promises or because they are unethical, but because they simply forget or do not have enough time due to fussing or doing unimportant things. They are easily excited; this is not always a bad thing, for example, their being overjoyed can be like a stormy flash. A simple example is a dog that has been shown a leash and has heard, “Let’s go for a walk!” The result is a rush of positive emotions and a wagging tail – this is *Vata* in *rajas*. If *Vata* in *sattva* is full of enthusiasm and inspiration, then in *rajas* such enthusiasm becomes affected, false and at times mercenary.

For those with *Vata* in *rajas* it is difficult to be themselves, because their mind is always anxious. When they are left alone, they do not know what to do; they begin to aimlessly dash around the room or try to find something to do with something as a way of escaping reality. Sometimes they fuss around simply trying to keep themselves busy. The main tragedy of *Vata* in *rajas* is that rather than trying to solve the problem, they run from it. Because they cannot escape themselves, they unwillingly start to act against themselves by taking something like alcohol, to try and escape reality. If they do not start to try to improve themselves, in due course of time they can develop psychological problems, and will be pulled down to *tamas*. This type is most often exposed to psychological disorders. They are emotionally sensitive and unstable, easily excitable but also easily calmed down. They often want to lie down and rest because of using up a lot of energy unnecessarily; the tiredness and loss of energy come because of mental and nervous tension. If they find it impossible to relax, to nourish the mind they start using stimulants, beginning with a spoon of honey or chocolate. Later they move onto using coffee, cigarettes and other things to stimulate the nervous system, which in reality only drives *Vata* further into *rajas* and intensifies *tamas*. These people are the most inclined toward self-destructive activity.

**Vata in Tamas**

*Vata* in *tamas* signifies psychological abnormality. Such people not
only worry excessively but possess numerous fears and phobias; this fear can be so extreme to cause a psychological stupor, a frozen condition. An example of this is if a door slams, they are not simply scared but become frozen and paralyzed with fear, and may imagine that a thief has entered their house. All types of phobias and paranoia are the result of Vata in tamas.

Such people are very dependent. They are always searching for someone to lead them, someone who is capable of solving their problems, because they themselves can only run away from them. To some extent they are inclined toward a slave mentality and serve the people they depend on. Often they can be irritable, dishonest and secretive and are less talkative than Vata in rajas. They often keep to themselves and suppress many things within themselves. The development of the majority of psychological complexes occurs when Vata is in tamas, including nervous twitches. Those with Vata in tamas develop common emotional disturbances. They are incredibly shy, have numerous hang-ups, are irresolute and afraid of getting negative feedback; this often leads to depression. Generally Vata in tamas are more inclined toward depression than others and are most likely to commit suicide; they run away from problems rather than trying to solve them, and suicide for them is one way to solve their problems.

Such people cannot protect themselves; they are not inclined to fight or resist, allowing themselves to become more and more absorbed in their own problems. They let their problems build up within themselves, which leads to psychological deviations. According to statistics, most people who go insane are those with Vata in tamas and rajas.

To calm the mind or cheer themselves up, they often resort to taking intoxicants like alcohol, cigarettes or drugs, and become dependent on them. This is why the majority of drug addicts and alcoholics are Vata in tamas.

**Pitta in sattva**

People who are pitta in sattva make the best managers. They always go forward and guide others. They are independent, brave, honest, impartial, punctual, decent, warm-hearted and friendly people. They are natural protectors and therefore become the best leaders, managers and military soldiers. They are receptive and have the ability to think clearly and discriminate effectively. They have a sharp and astute mind. They can understand, retain and remember things easily, always giving more
attention to essentials than to secondary details. They can grasp the essence of things, even in areas in which they are not specialists.

By nature they are intelligent and clever, with a highly developed intellect. They are organized, possessing remarkable organizational skills. They have fine speech, and can be good orators. They like their workplace to be always neat and well organised.

They are careful to never judge, blame or criticise others, and avoid all types of violence. They are consistent and fearless. Leaders with such Pitta are highly respected and loved; they do not need to shout, scold others or use violence – they prosper in life and work without having to resort to such force.

**Pitta in Rajas**

The energy and thoughts of Pitta in rajas are strongly directed toward the external world. They look for happiness in the external world and because of this their lives are focused on pursuing sensual gratification. They try to find satisfaction through material gain, prestige, and different pleasures – in anything but the here and now, and definitely not within themselves. Their happiness depends on external conditions. To become elevated to sattva, they need to transform the energy inside themselves, avoid happiness which depends on the external world and develop compassion.

They are proud and want to stand out, to look better than others. Due to being competitive, they try to be better than others or to at least create such an impression. They have a strong desire to control everything and everyone around them. Because of their need for control, when anything does not go according to their plans, they begin criticising themselves. Or if something is not right, they try to find someone to blame.

According to their worldview, they control everything and if something goes wrong, it is their fault. They are critical and demanding of themselves and others. “Everything depends only on me – if you want to do something properly you have to do it yourself. We have complete control over our destiny” – all these kinds of statements come from those with Pitta in passion. Often they have dictatorial inclinations; they like to manipulate, give orders, control, blame others, but at the same time they are not well organized themselves. They are extremely ambitious, sometimes even beyond the limits of common sense, and try to find a profit in everything.
Those with *Pitta* in *rajas* are shallow; while those with *Vata* in *rajas* have a shallow knowledge of things, those with *Pitta* in *rajas* are superficial in their assessment of things. They judge according to external appearance or social position, and look to make acquaintance with those who are wealthy, avoiding those who are not, and make little effort to know more about those they meet. This is true in other areas of life as well; they have a critical outlook and a hierarchical type of mind. As result of this they judge: this is good, this is bad, this one has a higher social status and this one is lower. They like to build a certain hierarchy in their mind and are inclined to classify everything according to it, quickly assigning labels to everything. They are impulsive, hot-tempered, angry and irritable. They can be wicked and aggressive; *Pitta* in *rajas* and in *tamas* can be dangerous as they are always ready for a fight, even when there is no need. Thus associating with them is not the most pleasant experience.

**Pitta in tamas**

They have an inflated sense of self-control and pride; therefore they do not accept any help. If there is a problem, they are confident that they can solve it themselves; when something does not go according to their plans or desires, they look for those responsible, always accusing others and accepting no blame themselves. They think that it is always someone else that must answer for whatever misfortunes happen to them.

They are angry, spiteful, vindictive, disruptive and hurtful, hating everyone and everything. They give the impression that they are literally saturated with bile. Hot-tempered and aggressive, they may even enjoy using violence and are inclined to carry weapons with them. *Pitta* in *tamas* types have a criminal mind and habits. They can be completely reckless, allowing anger and fury to pervade their consciousness. According to statistics, most people in prison – such as murderers, drug or weapon dealers, pimps or rapists – are *Pitta* in *tamas*. They are the most dangerous kind of people and it is better to stay far away from them. They like to torture and humiliate other people as well as animals. Normally, those with *Pitta* in *tamas* and *rajas* have problems with their liver and gall bladder. If impatience is the quality which quickly pulls *Vata* away from *sattva*, for *Pitta* irritation and inner resistance to a situation is the cause. It is considered that to be a good doctor you need to have a *Pitta* constitution, but it has to be in *sattva*. There is a saying in India, “People with *Pitta* bodies are either the best or the worst…”
**Kapha in Sattva**

These are the most good-natured people as they feel compassion and sympathy for everyone, and are always ready to help and support. They are incredibly peaceful, steady and tranquil and although they can be quite active, they do things calmly, effectively and thoroughly without rushing; thus their work is usually highly productive. They are exceptionally patient. *Kapha in sattva* are peace-loving, kind people. By nature they have a great amount of love and compassion and thus it is easy for them to develop Divine love.

Their faith is strong and they are extremely stable. They clearly see a situation; to abuse their kindness and all-forgiving nature is not very easy. They have an excellent memory and rarely forget things. They can remember what happened a long time ago, such as a phone number they had not used for many years. Their body weight is normally higher than average and they are devoted, tolerant people, capable of forgiveness. If you have such a friend, they will be your best friend – someone who always understands you, will always listen and offer a supportive shoulder to cry on.

**Kapha in Rajas**

Unlike *Vata* and *Pitta* in *rajas*, which become more excited, energetic and active, *Kapha* is completely the opposite – it becomes slower. The more *Kapha* moves away from *sattva* to *rajas* and *tamas*, the slower and more inhibited, passive and lethargic it becomes. Such people try hold onto past emotions and feelings. They like to keep and accumulate old things; even when they get new things, they do not get rid of the old. This causes sluggishness. For example, if a person with *Kapha* in *rajas* goes shopping and sees a pie, they will start to think, “Oh, this pie looks like one my Mum often makes for me, and this other pie is my favourite one, similar to how my Granny used to make them. But I haven’t seen this other pie before – it would be nice to try it too”. Such thoughts and emotions cause a mix-up, causing the decision making process to become painfully slow. As a result they do not like to make decisions and do not like to be pushed to move faster. The more they are pushed, the more they resist, manifesting incredible stubbornness.

They do not function in this way to be spiteful, it is simply the way their mind works. They cannot understand how it is possible to make a decision when there are so many choices. To make a decision they need to think things through thoroughly. If someone tries to push or hurry
them, it will only impede and slow down the decision making process. If they get rid of these illusory thoughts and come back to reality, they can be elevated to sattva. For this they need to let go of the past (like getting rid of old belongings), develop strong resolution, boldly make decisions, be persistent in implementing plans and develop detachment.

Kapha in rajas are highly materialistic, greedy people. They are like pitta in rajas who strive to control everything, but those in Kapha do this for the sense of the security and comfort it brings rather than for the sake of controlling. Sensual pleasure is especially important for them. They are morose and sentimental. Their sense of pity is well developed but is not real compassion. Their idea of suffering is discomfort, the inability to enjoy, and everything that is connected with physical and emotional suffering.

They can also sympathize and empathize, are always ready to help anyone even without being asked. They think that others are suffering and need their help. In reality they are too caring, they ‘chase and do good’ and others get tired of their interfering need to help the whole world. Some may abuse such qualities and use them only for their selfish interest. The ‘benefactor’ becomes drained from such situations and angry toward those he was trying to help. Despite all the ‘kind’ activities of Kapha in rajas, in reality they act selfishly without even realizing it.

Kapha in tamas

Kapha in tamas are completely passive and inert. They move as little as possible and are usually excessively overweight. It takes a while for their dull and slow mind to digest information; movement is practically absent from their body and mind. They are slow, lazy, apathetic and stagnant. They are mostly caught up in their own world; they can spend long periods of time at home and are inclined to isolate themselves from society, not because they are introverts but because they are too lazy to go out, preferring to sit at home and do nothing. Kapha generally tends to create its own small world which is safe and comfortable. Therefore active association with others can strain Kapha in tamas. Often they do not want to associate with anyone except family and relatives, no one comes to visit them and they do not visit anyone, having very few friends or none at all. They are greedy, accumulate things and may be inclined toward stealing as a result. They think being seated in front of the TV with some junk food and watching some sentimental programme to be the ideal way to while away the time. Their homes are
dirty and only sexual pleasure can force them to become active. Despite their sentimentality, they are not compassionate and sensitive toward others’ misfortunes; they may feel something but never actually do anything to help. They take care only of their loved ones. They can develop depression, but unlike Vata which becomes depressed due to running from problems, for Kapha it is due to laziness, inertia and idleness. They do not see meaning or an aim in life. It is better stay away from them because their condition is contagious to some extent – when you sit on their soft sofa, you can become influenced by this tamsic energy. The main qualities which drag Kapha from sattva are laziness and inertia.

**Recovery on the Karmic Level**

As we described before, diseases develop in three stages. The karmic stage is the main one. If we do not work on improving our karmic level, then sooner or later, if it is predetermined by our past thoughts and actions, disease will come. On the other hand, if the karmic level is pure, then neither epidemics nor hereditary influences will have any effect on us. In modern medicine huge importance is attached to hereditary factors and the research of genetic codes. This code is like a computer program of the physical body, and by examining it we can see what diseases we have inherited. But special training is required to read and understand this code. Modern medicine does not go further than the body and its genetic codes; it has no idea that there also exists a karmic code, which shows how the soul is programmed in this and in future births.

If we take the example of siblings, although they may have similar genetic codes they are incredibly different in many ways because of the difference in their karmic codes, which are determined by subconscious programs (samskaras). First of all, it is written by astrological language – this is the natal chart, the most important document in our life. It is quite complicated and can only be read by masters of Vedic astrology. Other types of astrology are not capable of giving such an in-depth reading. A Vedic horoscope represents the karmic code; in addition to the genetic code which only deals with the physical potential, it also shows our spiritual potential and hidden abilities and most importantly, when different events are most likely to happen to us.

All of us, by our thoughts and actions, strengthen auspicious or inauspicious influences that different planets have on us. This is a vast and advanced subject; below we will give the essence of how to understand
Influence of Planets on Our Health and Destiny

In India it has always been the case that Ayurvedic doctors would have a reasonable understanding of Vedic astrology and that Vedic astrologers would be familiar with the upaya (ways to neutralise inauspicious factors in a horoscope) and perfectly know Ayurveda; as it was considered that it is impossible to cure a disease without knowing its karmic cause. A Vedic astrologer, on seeing a person’s karma (destiny), would feel a natural desire (which is usual for elevated souls) to help him and would use the intricate system of upaya, which includes changing paradigms or worldviews, wearing of certain stones, reading mantras, and applying Ayurvedic principles.

Our Relationship with the Planets

Most of us underestimate the influence the planets have on our lives, and many do not believe that they have any influence at all. Even though we know about magnetic storms and days of solar activity when the number of accidents increases and heart problems escalate, we still remain sceptical. This simply emphasizes how distanced we have become from nature.

From the perspective of modern science, time is not just some kind of hollow continuum, serving as an external frame for events. It is represented as a force field, depending on the power of gravity of different objects situated within it. The main objects that affect those of us living on the Earth are the Sun and the other planets within the solar system, which possess powerful magnetic fields.

The planets are the shining centres of a vast power grid, woven from thin power lines, binding the whole solar system into a single organism. Although the planets seem to be a great distance away, their energetic fields are able to reach the Earth and influence its life structures, including our bodies and souls; as they move along their orbits each of them absorb and emit energy, transmitting energy of specified wavelengths that are necessary to maintain order within our solar system. This energy generates the continuously transforming energetic structures from which the fabric of life and of all creation is weaved.

From the theosophical perspective, the Creator fulfills the creation by using the planets. The power of cosmic intelligence is reflected in the movement of the planets, which governs everything by virtue of the
power of time.

As the lords of time, the planets are also the conductors of karma (destiny). They indicate the cosmic energies which we can develop in the course of our life, the level on which this development occurs, and any negative forces to which we may be subjected.

We all live in a vast ocean of cosmic influences, where the planets are the transmitters. Without real knowledge of what controls us, we can at any moment be subjected to the blows of fate, which could have been avoided with proper knowledge. Negative clashes with cosmic energies manifest in our lives through various types of injuries or difficulties: diseases, conflicts and death are a few examples. On a collective level, they are visible as wars, epidemics and natural disasters. But if we become spiritually developed, we would be able to avoid most of these problems. Ancient Indian astrology can help us develop an inner vision that will allow us to navigate across the stormy ocean of life.

One of the main rules we need to understand is that any action or thought comes under the jurisdiction of one of the planets, and depending on its character and activity, it will either improve the influence of this planet, bringing us good luck and happiness in the particular aspect of life for which it is responsible, or it will make it worse.

Enlightened sages affirm that nine planets influence us. Seven of them have physical forms and two are shadow planets; although we cannot observe them through a telescope, in many instances their influence is stronger than that of the visible planets.

There are seven major energy centers (chakras) in our body, and each of our thoughts and actions either causes some of the chakras to work more harmoniously, which makes us healthier and happier, or causes imbalance, which leads to serious emotional states that are the basis for disease. The seven visible planets are like energy centres, the work of which is the basis of all the processes which occur in the Universe and human life. They are the conductors of the laws of karma, and any action or thought will increase either their auspicious or negative influence on us.

If a planet has a strong, favourable influence on some area in our life, then this area will flourish, bringing lots of happiness with a minimum of effort on our part. On the other hand, if a planet has a powerful negative influence, there is little we can do to improve the situation. I have seen examples of this so many times: a married couple may have difficulty having a child although doctors say there should be no problems. This couple will not have a child until they can eliminate inauspi-
Planets in gunas

There are three gunas of material nature, three basic energies, which create the entire Universe and penetrate everything: thoughts, words, deeds and activities. Everything in this world – physical objects, subtle bodies, thoughts, activity – is situated in these three gunas: ignorance (tamas), passion (rajas) and goodness (sattva).

The influence of any planet is affected by the three gunas. But we can always choose things that can change our karma by selecting which guna we are influenced by. If we live in ignorance and passion then our karma quickly gets worse. But if we live in goodness and harmony, even if a planet may have had a negative or weak influence at the time of our birth, it begins to manifest auspiciousness, bringing health, happiness and success.

The influence of any planet in our horoscope is situated in one of the three gunas. The classical translation of the word “guna” is rope or quality. It is impossible to define in which guna a planet is in from the astrological chart, because it is determined by many conditions, and mostly a person himself by his behaviour chooses the guna which will influence that planet. It is precisely this influence that clearly shows how auspicious or inauspicious the planet’s effect will be. The position of the planets in the gunas can be described only roughly. If a planet is weak and afflicted then it is usually in ignorance. A person can be born with the influence of this planet on them in ignorance, but if a planet is strong and well-situated then it is usually situated in at least the guna of passion from the beginning.

If a planet is completely in ignorance it is extremely important to at least elevate it to passion, which means to develop in ourselves the qualities of this planet in passion and then gradually cultivate sattva.

It can be that the strong planets, particularly harmful ones, can bring a lot of disaster to the owner of horoscope and through him to
others. Therefore it is often recommended not to strengthen the strong inauspicious planets in *kendra* (corner houses of horoscope), because they will surely be manifested in one’s character. For example, Hitler had strong and cold Saturn and powerful Mars and Sun in his *kendra*, which by defeating and oppressing Venus and Moon, gave him huge rigidity.

Initially the Sun, the Moon and Jupiter are in goodness, Mercury and Venus are in passion, and Mars, Saturn, Rahu and Ketu are in ignorance. It is beneficial to temper the planets which are in ignorance and passion, particularly if they have a strong influence in the chart, and strengthen and sustain in *sattva* the *sattvic* planets.

It is also important to remember that each planet can be in a different *guna*. Moreover, the influence of planets is usually mixed; it can vary even during the course of one day, depending on our thoughts, deeds, environment etc… The more we are situated under the *sattvic* influence of a planet, the more harmonious, happy and healthy our life becomes. But if even one planet is mainly influenced by ignorance, it can ruin our lives, bringing much disease and suffering in its field of influence.
Chapter 13
How to Reduce Disease with the Help of Divine Medicine

Health begins with Preventive Measures

People in the guna of goodness have constant enthusiasm and are proactive. Proactivity is very close to “prevention”. For example, Ayurveda is a medical science in goodness, and focuses primarily on preventing diseases, where 99% of western medicine is aimed at curing already manifested symptoms of disease. A person in goodness does not wait until he becomes sick, but takes preventive action: leads a proper lifestyle, exercises, follows a correct diet. But being proactive requires effort, enthusiasm and an absence of laziness. This applies not only to health but also to work and other aspects of life.

It is interesting to consider that according to world statistics and the World Health Organization’s data, a person’s health depends only ten percent on medicine, fifteen percent on heredity and the rest on the person himself.

Fundamental Principles of Modern Medicine

If an examination has shown that a person is healthy then it was improperly performed. [Medical folklore]

1. **Human existence is separate from nature.** Since the time of Newton and Descartes, materialism has become the predominant worldview. According to the modern perception of the world, our existence is not dependent on the Universe nor it on us. Although the classical treatises on physics and chem-
istry that laid the foundation for the development of medical science have long been refuted by the works of Albert Einstein and his contemporaries, modern medicine persistently continues to remain loyal to the views of Newton and Descartes. Moreover, the idea that the world consists of objects that are independent from human consciousness contradicts the theories of quantum mechanics and the observed facts.

2. **Preserving health is a fight of doctors (!) for the patient’s health.** In modern medicine over 99% of all time and effort are spent on treating already existing diseases and less than 1% on preventive medicine.

3. **For a doctor to heal a patient, he needs to make a diagnosis, namely by categorizing the disease, and then define the methods to fight it, generally using some chemical preparation.**

4. **Diseases are enemies that prevent us from deriving pleasure.** It is necessary to constantly invent ways of overcoming them in a continuous process. Progress in medicine is determined by the creation of more advanced means for battling disease, chiefly consisting of chemical remedies, various instruments and other devices.

**Fundamental Theories on the Road to Recovery**

If a person decides to become cured, then medicine becomes useless.

1. **We do not live independently from the world around us; we are part of it.** Our relationship with the Universe is the same as that of a cell and an organism.

2. **The human body is a self-regulating system where everything is interconnected.** What is necessary is not to cure the external aspects of imbalance in an organism, namely the illness, by consuming multiple medicines, which in their turn suppress the organism’s ability to self-regulate (the immune system), but on the contrary, it is necessary to reinforce this system. Because an illness is a violation of the organism’s wholesomeness, a systematic approach should be used to eliminate this separate disorder. An ancient Japanese doctor, Kan Funayama, said, “If you do not think that a person is an indivisible whole, then your way to success is closed.”

3. Health is a balance between our way of existence and the
world around us. Health is dependent on the balance between opposite energies in the body – acid and alkaline, heat and cold, absorption and elimination, etc. (balance of doshas). The basic principle of life is maintenance of homeostasis, or dynamic balance. Every organ strives for homeostasis. A healthy organism is where there is homeostasis.

4. **Illness is the sign of disruption of natural balance.** We need to be attentive to the signals our body gives. Disease is the external reflection of our thoughts and action. There are only two types of diseases that we bring with us from a previous life in the form of karma: genetic (karmic) diseases or some certain kinds of traumas. The rest we get as a result of what we do in our present life. Disease is a signal from our subconscious that we are doing something wrong; that our behaviour and the way we react to certain events are harmful for us; this is our defence from some particular harmful activity. This is how the Universe tells us that we have deviated from our Path, although sometimes even disease is a part of that Path.

5. **We are able to influence our thoughts, emotions and behaviour, and thus are able to influence our subtle and physical bodies as well as our surroundings.**

6. **We can disrupt balance and create disease by our actions, thoughts and emotions, at the core of which is an improper worldview.**

7. **Diseases restore the balance which has been broken by us.** Disease is the manifestation of the curing potency of nature. To avoid disease Ayurveda recommends moderation in everything – work, rest, etc. It is important to pay attention to one’s diet, exercise regularly, breathe clean air and get proper sleep.

8. **The body itself strives to restore its broken balance.** Recovery is a natural process. In some cases, if there is a large imbalance, we might require some external help.

9. **A doctor’s task is to help the patient by using the healing power of nature to restore balance, to teach a person how to be healthy.**

10. **It is important to understand why an illness has come and which imbalance in our worldview and lifestyle it indicates.** What is the cause of this imbalance – diet, thoughts, behaviour or daily routine? To actually change our feelings, to effect real change in all aspects of our life; it is necessary to accept
responsibility for our life and our diseases. That means that we cannot blame our sickness on doctors, relatives or anyone else, including ourselves. Complaints about anyone need to be avoided.

11. The highest manifestation of harmony is love for God. The world renowned professor, Dr. Max Luscher, wrote, “My experience, accumulated from decades of theoretical and practical research, has proved what I have always believed: the true meaning of all worthwhile behavior is harmony.” He expressed the concept of love as harmony, and he saw the highest demonstration of harmony in the first commandment of the Gospel of St. Mark: to love God. All enlightened healers and sages the world over have always thought the same.

Of course, we should not be extreme and reject the genuine achievements of modern medicine, especially the help of dentists, surgeons, and other doctors during the treatment of infectious diseases. But a consumer outlook and greed for gain are slowly bringing to naught the achievements in this sphere.

It is necessary to remember that our harmonious way of life can minimize the number of visits to modern doctors, consumption of chemical remedies, and spending time in hospital.

**Disease Can Be a Good Teacher**

Modern doctors are often interested in treating rather than curing. And that is understandable, as their main aim is to make a profit (as we said before, modern medicine is mainly concerned with dealing with a disease that has manifested rather than preventing it).

It is important to understand that disease is a result of accumulated ignorance in the body. Although it may sound strange, sometimes the body needs to get sick. Particularly when a person is in passion, is overly active or negligent, they can exhaust their body. Disease brings ignorance to one’s life: a person experiences pain and becomes passive. Because he does not have the ability to keep things clean or take a shower he becomes dirty, and it becomes difficult for him to do intellectual work or to be engaged in spiritual activities. But sometimes it is good to be sick, so that the person can slow down, think about where he is running to and fro, and whether it is needed at all.

In Buddhism the second essential condition for spiritual progress
is physical health. *Ayurveda* asserts that disease, fire and debts need to be dealt with immediately. But on the other hand, the great master of yoga and *Ayurveda*, the saint Shivananda Swami, said that a hospital is the best training school for spiritual development. Most people are situated in passion and ignorance, and in some instances only heavy disease and pain can force them to think about the eternal values of life.

As a rule diseases start to develop at the spiritual, karmic level, then on the psychological and later on the physical levels. They are very closely interconnected and how to get rid of them will be described in the next chapter.
Chapter 14

Methods of Curing Psychological Problems and Diseases

The Connection between Disease and Ego

The line between consulting a psychologist and consulting a medical practitioner is very fine. The main cause of most diseases has a psychosomatic nature and a good doctor should be expert in seeing it. Psychological problems appear with the growth of false ego – when we identify ourselves with the body and consider ourselves as merely physical beings.

Dr. David Frawley writes: “The cause of disease (doshas) is an imbalance in the way the external mind and intelligence functions, which is caused by the ego. Ego gives the mental doshas, rajas and tamas, to the mind, in the form of negative thoughts, emotions and impressions. It pushes us to use our senses, emotions and intellect to satisfy egoistic pleasures rather than to develop higher consciousness. Unbalanced intelligence (buddhi) is the main factor of a disease, because it is buddhi that directs how the mind and senses are used”.

Sattva Brings Harmony
Rajas and Tamas Bring Disease and Suffering

Ayurvedic treatment’s primary aim is to reinforce sattva. This applies to the treatment of diseases of the body as well as the mind. Sattva is a state of balance and is responsible for true cure and health. Ayurveda states that a sattvic body and consciousness are far less exposed to suffering and disease.

Rajas and tamas are the cause of diseases. Tamas is responsible for
Chapter 14  Methods of Curing Psychological Problems and Diseases

accumulating toxins, stagnation and on the psychological level, negative thoughts and emotions. *Rajas* is agitation, waste of energy, pain, particularly sharp pain and generally all acute diseases. Due to overuse of energy, exhaustion develops and then *tamas* takes over, which destroys the immune system.

On the psychological level, *rajas* manifests as huge emotional tension, which after some time (usually not long) leads to *tamas* – mental sluggishness, despondency and various types of depressions. It is important to remember the way a pendulum works: the more you move it to one side, the more it will swing to the other side when you let go. *Rajas* and *tamas* are the two extremes that lead us away from being balanced.

*Sattva* contains a balance of *rajas* and *tamas*. In *sattva*, the active energy of *rajas* and passive or heavy energy of *tamas* are harmoniously united. Health is cultivated and maintained thanks to a *sattvic* lifestyle, because health requires a state of balance and harmony. Reinforcement and development of *sattva* first and foremost involves living in accordance with nature, our real self. For that we must control our feelings, eat proper food, keep our organism clean and cultivate cleanliness in everything: in our thoughts, speech, deeds, clothes and in life in general. We also need to maintain clarity in thinking, tranquility, non-violence and kindness.

Three Types of Therapeutic Treatment

*Ayurveda* operates its healing facilities in different *gunas* depending on the level of consciousness and condition of the patient.

1. 1. **Sattvic** – uses Nature, healing herbs, vegetarian diets, meditation, mantras and prayers for the gradual purification of the body. It also involves creating a calm and pure atmosphere, and most importantly, the development of unconditional love, which is beyond the three *gunas*.

2. 2. **Rajastic** – stimulation, application of strong medicine that can act immediately, surgery. *Rajas* helps to get rid of *tamas*.

3. 3. **Tamic** is rarely used in *Ayurveda*, usually only when extreme *rajas* needs to be pacified. For example, during intense hysteria, strong sharp pain, etc. In such situations strong medicine with a soothing effect is used, because the influence of *sattva* might not be enough.
Three Steps from Tamas to the Highest Level

The psychology of Ayurveda, Vedic philosophy and yoga explain about the gradual elevation from tamas to sattva and even further to the transcendental state.

Step 1. To eliminate tamas, rajas must be strengthened and developed.

That means to get rid of laziness, passiveness, inertia, and depression, and to begin to act. One must learn to set specific goals for oneself (on this level they are still egoistic) and to reach them. Such a person cannot be advised to engage in secluded meditation or prayer (or any other sattvic passive activities) because he can fell asleep and bang his head. Such a person needs to work actively – the best thing would be to construct a temple or some other spiritual centre; he should not allow himself to criticise or offend others. He can repeat positive affirmations such as, “I am capable of doing things! I am talented!” It is good to do dynamic sports or yoga, shower every day, and try to smile and laugh as much as possible, even if it is artificial or stiff at first. Try to avoid being morose and sad, which are qualities of tamas, and ensure your home and clothes are clean.

Rajas is needed not only in activities but also in thoughts. It can be very favourable to move to a new place, change jobs, travel, etc. It is important to live in such a way that will ensure a more active lifestyle.

At this level, the help of modern psychologists can be very successful. But because they cannot elevate people to the higher level of sattva, they do not give them a chance to experience higher values of life or to live accordingly. They do not show the real meaning of life nor do they direct people toward it. As a result, many may fall into tamas again after some time, in many cases even lower than before, or become not just ignorant but passionately ignorant and begin to destroy their own lives and the lives of others.

Step 2. Soothing rajas and developing sattva.

On this level it is important to remember the following:

— the overly active, busy lifestyle of modern people goes against the laws of nature, and deprives one of good health and happiness;
— chasing egoistic goals is the way to degradation and physical and psychological disease;
unselfish service and giving of oneself to others is the source of health and vast, constantly increasing happiness.

It is very important to be engaged as much as possible in altruistic activities (at the same time without telling anyone), to learn to see another’s pain and to develop compassion. Mental and physical activity has to be reduced. Yoga exercises, mantras, prayer and positive visualisations are favourable and should be done in a calming way.

Out of the more active physical exercises, brisk walking, swimming, jogging and aerobics are recommended and should be done smoothly, without overloading yourself. At the same time, learn how to be in a meditative mood and/or perform pranayama (for example: try to see the condition of the body and mind, try to be here and now, concentrate on your breathing, repeat mantras in your mind, pray or wish well for others, etc.). It is also good to listen to sattvic music or lectures, which promote a sattvic state.

To develop sattva, it is important to think over your actions and to plans beforehand rather than being a servant of an impulsive mind. Usually a rajasic person, after reading similar literature, decides, “Okay, from tomorrow I will become sattvic and by the end of this week will be the most sattvic person in my city”. He may even last for a few days, annoying others around him, but after some time he sinks even lower than before and becomes very disappointed.

It is important to remember that sattva means – gradually, systematically and consistently.

The cultivation of truthfulness and compassion (not to be confused with pity, an ignorant and egoistic emotion) and service to others is very important. Other powerful factors which should be considered are exposure to nature, creative work, daily routine and sattvic diet in accordance with your type of constitution.

Step 3. Establishment in sattva and development of pure sattva – crossing to the transcendental stage (nirguna).

On this level, one always has to be here and now and seriously engaged in spiritual practices. Then he does not need psychology or psychotherapy. At this state, a person develops a deep relationship with God, with his real, highest “I”. He can see more clearly that everything in the Universe is connected. On this level one lives in ever extending, unconditional Love, which is an important feeling to steadily cultivate. Regular and long engagements in various types of meditation on this
level are natural.

This book is meant mostly for the first two levels; therefore we are not going to give many details about the third level. Specific literature that explains and gives instructions for this has been compiled by elevated personalities and saints.

The main goal at this stage is to not stop at *sattva* but rather to transcend to higher levels and become free from the influence of the *gunas*. In various spiritual and religious traditions, several expressions are used to convey this idea, “To go back to the spiritual world and continue to serve God in a particular *rasa* (relationship),” “Perceive the Kingdom of Heaven”, “Merge into Brahman (to become one with God)”, “Dissolve in Nirvana” etc. Some souls, existing in a liberated condition, consciously descend to this world to help conditioned souls to progress spiritually.

The best and practically the only remedy for psychological problems, as far as *Ayurveda* is concerned, is to associate with people who are harmonious and situated on a high spiritual level and are full of love, as practically all problems arise from a lack of love. Conversely, a lack of such association is the main cause of psychological troubles. Therefore on all levels, it is important to have association with spiritually advanced people.

Dr. Frawley writes, “To get rid of all sufferings, it is necessary to recognize our real ‘I’; any psychotherapy becomes more effective through even the smallest contact with our true nature”.

Chapter 15
The Mind Gives or Takes Away Happiness and Health

The soul, when purified by following the Laws of God, creates the conditions that allow the mind to perceive reality as it truly is.

The last quotation of Evagry Chernomorsky

The Mind and the Gunas

The mind is by nature sattvic. Only when it is situated in its original constitutional condition of tranquility and clarity, are we able to perceive the truth, to be focused, happy and devoted. Rajas and tamas are the factors which cause psychological disharmony, cause us to develop an unhealthy imagination, prevent us from perceiving reality and increase anxiety.

Rajas causes us to identify with this world and with our body, to think they are permanent and all important. As a result, we become overwhelmed by the excitement of this temporary world and the urge to fulfill our insatiable desires. Many of us sacrifice our lives to achieve some position and status, to gain endless pratishthas (illusory achievements). Rajas brings anxiety, emotional disorders and intense desire into our life.

The influence of tamas brings ignorance, which manifests as distorted egoism, the feeling of loneliness or isolation from the world around us. We become more materialistic and our ability to perceive is considerably diminished; our consciousness becomes faded, dull and limited.

It is extremely important to remember that we are very rarely under the influence of only one guna. Every day the energies that influence
us change constantly – for example, the morning is controlled by *sattva*,
daytime and evening by *rajas* and night by *tamas*.

**Five Stages of the Mind**

Yoga psychology describes five states of the mind, which are influenced by various *gunas*:

1. **Mudha** is a dark, slow, dull state of mind, like during sleep, or when addicted to alcohol or drugs. In this state our life is almost like a dream where we are more or less completely influenced by *tamas*. In this state we may read a book without picking up what it means, and our mind is uncontrolled and without feeling. A normal person should only experience such a condition during sleep.

2. **Kshipta** is when our mind is under the influence of *tamas-rajas*. In such a scattered condition, it wanders to and fro, making it extremely difficult to concentrate.

3. **Vikshipta** is a relatively calm state of mind, although there is still a degree of excitement. Our mind is under the influence of the active energy of passion, conditioning us to act on ambition, vanity or egoism. Such a state is typical of workaholics who are completely absorbed in their job, or when we get captivated by an interesting movie.

4. **Ekagra** is when our mind is completely concentrated; at this level we are situated in the here and now. It is only at this level that we are capable of loving others in a real way.

5. **Nirudha** is when our mind is completely calm and controlled. We can perceive past, present and future and the *siddhis* (mystic power) become available. This is the level of pure *sattva* which is practically super-consciousness.

There is one practical and important rule: *when the mind is completely concentrated on an object, it will automatically gain knowledge of the object*. Meditation is the process of focusing on something. That is why in Eastern psychology the ability to concentrate is one of the most important factors for achieving material and spiritual success. It is difficult to imagine someone who cannot concentrate being successful in any kind of activity.

Furthermore, the power of the mind is defined by its ability to concentrate, to hold its attention on something. These days mental concentration occurs mostly as a result of the senses being drawn to strong
external stimuli: bright advertisements, movies which constantly keep us in a state of tension, captivating computer games, etc. Most of us are always engaged in things that stimulate our minds – current affairs, scandals, parties, nightclubs or TV. But all this leads to miserable consequences because one of the laws of nature is, “Excessive stimulation of the senses leads to depression”. When the effect of artificial stimulation wears off, there is an anticlimax, a weakening of energy, and one may seek more powerful stimulators such as alcohol, drugs, action movies or a more active lifestyle to compensate.

A PARABLE

The son of the elevated sage Vyasa was sent to the King to study. The sage’s son was named Sukadeva and he was a highly advanced soul. When he arrived he was asked to wait at the gate, but they forgot about him for three days. After three days Sukadeva was brought to the King's hall, where a feast was being held. However they did not offer him any food or water, but asked him to walk around the hall seven times, holding a full cup of milk. He performed this task without spilling a drop and without a trace of resentment or dissatisfaction on his face. His mind was not distracted by the surroundings, because he would not let the world influence him. The King received Sukadeva warmly and sent him back home saying, “Return in peace. You have realized the truth so there is nothing I can teach you”.

How the Gunas Influence the Mind
(This chapter has been co-written with my wife)

Our mind is pure and calm by nature, but due of the influence of the lower gunas we taint it, exciting it by our thoughts and emotions. As a result we lose the ability to assess situations clearly and realistically and to make proper decisions. Positive and negative thoughts and emotions excite the mind equally. Even when something good happens and we become overwhelmed by positive emotions, this also makes it difficult for us to concentrate, to control our mind. If we hear some incredible news or meet a dear friend whom we have not seen for ages, usually our mind and emotions take over. This causes us to slip out of the state of Here and Now and to lose a sensible or realistic vision of the situation. Negative emotions and thoughts fill us with fear, hostility, frustration, depression and hatred, making it impossible to see clearly. We begin to see the world through our contaminated mind which causes us to make
assumptions about our surroundings; as a result we are controlled by our mind and bound by our emotions. It is not surprising that we often make mistakes when we come under the influence of positive or negative emotions.

An ideal state of mind is when we are not under the control of thoughts and emotions. Such a tranquil and concentrated state of the mind can be reached when we are in *sattva*; only then will we be able to control our mind and emotions, rather than being controlled by them.

Happiness is our natural condition, but our thoughts and emotions divert us from achieving it and obscure it from us. If our mind is calm we feel happiness. Tranquility and happiness are the main characteristics of *sattva*. We might ask what the connection between happiness and mental tranquility is. When we get a pleasant surprise or when a dream comes true, when we completely focus on what has happened and do not think about anything else, we experience a sense of happiness. This satisfaction is not simply from receiving a present or having a wish fulfilled, but from the sense of happiness that comes when our mind is silent. But if whatever happened were to happen regularly, our delight and sense of happiness would diminish each time, because our mind would become more actively involved, “Oh, he’s giving me diamonds again, why don’t I get flowers for a change”. When our mind is involved and becomes disturbed, our feelings begin to reflect our thoughts.

Our mind can become quiet or calm in various situations. An example is when we get rid of a problem, like being in debt; our mind becomes calm because it does not have to think about the problem anymore. We experience satisfaction, knowing that the thoughts that had caused anxiety will not disturb us anymore. But happiness can be experienced even if we have debts or other problems; for this we must focus on resolving the problem rather than on worrying about it all the time. We create our thoughts ourselves and can control them, and we can choose what we want to focus on.

**Happiness means to be here and now** rather than focusing on something we want to attain – if I can do this or get that, then I’ll be happy. When we buy something desirable, after a short time we forget about it and do not think about it anymore, our mind calms down for some time until we find something else we want, that we think we need in order to be happy. In our mind we make our happiness dependent on something else. We think we will be happier when we leave school, go to university, get a job, have a family; the cycle is endless until we realise
that real happiness is not dependent on anything. In this way we fool ourselves. If our mind can be quiet and peaceful, only then it is possible to live in constant happiness instead of striving towards it.

Usually our mind is filled with various desires and whims – we want this or that, to go there, to be with a certain person, have more money, etc. All these desires are natural and it is fine to have them, and at times they are even useful, as they supply energy that pushes us forward, if they are directed properly. But our happiness should not be dependent on these desires and whims.

Real happiness is not dependent on any external factor. We have to understand that anything can happen at any time; no matter what we want. Maybe we will not get what we want, maybe we will lose what we have, but regardless of what happens our internal state should not be affected. Happiness is here and now, it is independent; only our mind can prevent us from experiencing it.

When we become attached to something and involuntarily find ourselves thinking about it, such thoughts disturb our mind. Our mind is directly connected to our emotions. First we think about something, and if such thoughts do not go away, they increase in intensity, affecting our emotions. As can be expected, if such thoughts and emotions are connected with unfulfilled desires, we will feel unsatisfied and unhappy. Therefore it is important not to become dependent on our desires or emotionally involved with them; to make this possible, we must work on making our mind peaceful, which will bring emotional tranquility. A completely calm and peaceful mind gives a feeling of happiness. It is usual for the human mind to judge everything, to split everything up into good and bad. But absolute good or bad do not exist, there is only our mind's perception of what is good or bad, our prejudiced view based on incomplete knowledge. We possess limited judgment and our intelligence cannot identify the precise reality.

The Mind and the Gunas

Ayurveda states that the main cause of disease is insufficient wisdom. This means we do not know or understand how to live harmoniously and adapt to life. We do not understand how to be in natural harmony with ourselves, Nature, the Universe and the Divine. This happens because our mind becomes dull due to the effects of rajas and tamas.

All gunas (sattva, rajas and tamas) are needed in this world. For example, tamas personifies the energy of destruction, decomposition and
disintegration. It may seem to be repulsive, but just imagine what would happen if nothing would ever dissolve or decay. The flow of energy would stop, because it naturally moves from creation to maintenance to destruction, and then again to creation. In this world everything passes through the stages of development, which are connected with the gunas of material nature: sattva is the energy of maintenance, rajas the energy of creation and tamas is the energy of annihilation. All living things are created, remain for some time and are finally consumed or decay, thus becoming food for another plant or animal, creating a new life. This cycle continues eternally.

**Mind in Sattva**

*Sattva* is the stage of enlightenment or clairvoyant vision. It is the ideal condition of the mind – calm, concentrated and clear.

Just imagine the mind to be like a pond where the water is clean and calm, allowing anything reflected on its surface to be seen clearly in the same way we can see our reflection in a mirror. The surface of this pond shows the reflection without any distortion. This clarity is inherent in *sattva* and is the natural condition of the mind which is pure by nature, like the water in the pond.

When the mind is calm and balanced, we are in the here and now, not distracted by thoughts of the past or future, and the reflection of reality in our mind matches actual reality. We can perceive the world
around us correctly, without distorted or false notions. When our mind is pure and tranquil, it is not engaged in constant jabbering and not polluted by unnecessary desires, ideas and fears; thus it can reflect reality. In such a condition we can soberly see the situation we are in and make correct decisions. Therefore *sattva* is also the light or energy of clarity, when the mind is not perverted and sees reality, which allows us to experience a state of deep peace, satisfaction and happiness.

The qualities of *sattva* are harmony, tranquility, balance and satisfaction. When we are in *sattva*, we can constantly experience happiness, think positively and avoid seeing the problems of life as some form of punishment. We endeavour to find the cause of our problems so we can resolve them and thus learn the lessons life is trying to teach. We see our entire life as a learning experience. If we become sick we do not try to suppress it or blame others for our problems, but find the cause and cure ourselves by working on it.

The main functions of ego are identification and recognition. A person in *sattva* realises that he is a part of the Universe and does not identify himself only with his body and property. Such a person's ego does not underrate nor overrate him; he has a real sense of his value and place in life and thus treats himself and others with equal respect.

The present time is the only true reality. If you are absorbed in thoughts of the past or the future, you live in illusion. The past and future are in your thoughts, which keep your mind occupied. But the present is nothing like that, because the past has gone and the future has not yet taken place. If you really want to see the world for what it is, if you want to be able to correctly assess events, then you need to live in the present, to be here and now. The ability to be in such a state of consciousness is one of the main qualities of *sattva*.

The same can be said about fear – it is an illusion which is created in the mind. It does not exist in the present, but we think, “What will be if such-and-such happens…” and in this way we scare ourselves although all the while nothing is actually happening to us. A *sattvic* person is fearless as he is constantly situated in reality, in the here and now, living in the present moment rather than in illusion.

*Sattva is the state of balance and harmony.* *Sattva* is, in a sense, a balance between energy and stability. For example, a person driving their car toward a certain destination has to use up some type of energy to move forward. By following traffic rules he travels steadily and peacefully, without distractions, to reach his destination without any detours or problems. People in *sattva* are capable of setting targets for
themselves and can calmly reach them without getting distracted. This happens because the mind in *sattva* is peaceful, fixed and unexposed to excessive vibrations. When the mind is situated in such a condition, thoughts are focused, allowing significant and steady advancement toward its goal. Then work can be done quickly, effectively and easily.

Humility and adaptability are also important qualities of *sattva*. If a *sattvic* driver meets some obstacles on a road, he maintains his inner calmness, finds a way to overcome them and moves onward. *Sattvic* people are humble; they accept all situations and can maintain inner tranquility while actively dealing with and resolving difficulties. This quality gives a *sattvic* person flexibility, inner calmness, concentration of mind, and the ability to move forward without being irritated by any obstacles. Some people have a distorted understanding of what it means to be humble. They think that acceptance means to give up and be simply carried along by the current, regardless of where it brings you. While such an approach can be acceptable at times, in most cases it is meekness in *tamas*. When one is not humble and is tries his hardest to swim against the current, this is *rajas*. In *sattva* one also swims with the current, but at the same time he does not lose control of his senses nor of his objective view of the situation. For example, when sailing in a boat if one sees a rock in his way, he does not try to move in the opposite direction, as this will not help avoid a collision. Instead he calmly navigates around the obstacle and continues on his way. This is an example of how by keeping internal tranquility and staying ‘in the flow’, one can find solutions to any external situation. When confronted with a similar situation, a *rajasic* person will try to swim in the opposite direction to the rock, but will still crash into it, or will waste lots of energy trying to avoid it. A *tamasic* person will just give up, thinking that everything may somehow be okay, and will usually end up crashing into the rock. It is true that if he has good karma he might get away, but this is not the best way to use up good karma.

*Sattva* is the balance between tension and relaxation. In modern people tension is dominant, which regularly leads to exhaustion – this is the way nature forces us to relax. For example, after an intense day you come home and having spent your energy sink into the sofa. This is not *sattva*. This is a person worn down by excessive *rajas*, who falls into *tamas* so he can relax at last. To be able to avoid such states, we can learn how to be internally relaxed even while being externally active. In other words, the ability to maintain the balance between the energy of activity (*rajas*) and passivity (*tamas*) is *sattva*. This is possible only when
the mind is tranquil.

The constant churning which goes on in our mind, forces us to use up vast quantities of subtle and physical energy. When this ‘mixer’ is not turned off, we become exhausted. In reality the main tension develops in our mind, not in the world around us – any external situation depends on our attitude and our reaction to it. If we strain ourselves because of some event, then the mixer is turned on in our mind and begins to mull over and sort out things, even without any conscious wish to do so – it comes of itself. According to our thoughts we begin to act and fuss about, which leads to not only mental but physical tension too. Such intellectual processes are the cause of such emotions as dissatisfaction, irritation, despair, etc.

To understand how our mind works and how to make it calm, it is necessary to observe it from the side. Then you will learn how to be free of its influence and to avoid unnecessary stress. When you monitor your thoughts and senses, you automatically move away from them and no longer identify with them, because at this moment you have become a distant observer. Become a witness to an event, rather than being part and parcel of it. Witness from your body, which is given to you for that purpose, but do not identify yourself with it. You are situated in your body in the same way a driver is in a car. The body is an instrument and is separate from you.

If it is not very clear how to be relaxed and tense simultaneously, then the following example may help. Just imagine a 60 watt light bulb that uses 220 volts of electricity. If we use 100 volts then the light bulb will glow very little, if 150 volts a bit brighter. At 220 volts, it will shine to its best capacity. But if the electricity rises to 300 volts or more, then the light bulb will be destroyed.

Everyone has a particular point at which he can shine or act most effectively, letting through the maximum amount of energy without being burned and staying in a relaxed and calm condition. But if the voltage becomes more than required, the person becomes exhausted and overstrained. It is similar to stretching a violin string; it gives the best possible sound at the right tension. If it is too tight, it can break. If there is not enough tension, it will produce a bad sound. In sattva a person finds such a point of balance between tension and relaxation, where he can act in the best possible way without being overstrained. At the next stage the sattvic person adapts and moves further by learning how to raise the balance point, so that he can remain relaxed and calm even at a higher level of tension. In this way even a 60 watt light can eventually
develop into a huge floodlight.

A good method for learning how to find a balance between tension and relaxation is to practice yoga asanas. By doing certain asanas one strains particular muscles that are necessary to keep the body balanced, while relaxing the other muscles. Therefore yoga is a helpful tool for those who want to overcome stressful situations. It is difficult to imagine a real yogi experiencing anxiety or stress.

To experience harmony one must live according to one’s nature and purpose. If a person tries to take a position that goes against their real nature, he cannot be completely happy. Sattvic people are always self-sufficient and satisfied. To learn how to live in harmony with ourselves and our surroundings is a major reason for our coming to this world. By realising harmony with himself and the world, by accepting and loving himself and this world with all its inhabitants as they are, a person will be able to experience the love of God much more easily. Real love can be developed only in sattva, because true love is unselfish, and unselfishness is the quality of sattva.

The ego of a sattvic person perceives himself and others as equal parts of this Universe. He is respectful to himself and others and is unselfish in his thoughts and deeds. Such a person understands that happiness is already within himself and therefore does not chase after it. Sattvic people radiate happiness and share it with others. Another sign of sattva is cleanliness. It can be external (your home and body) or internal (pure thoughts and pious activity, full of selfless and loving motives; a pure mind which is not polluted with needless thoughts and is situated in the present). Because external and internal levels always affect each other, it is important to maintain cleanliness in one’s external environment to stop unclean energy (tamas) from entering the internal level.

To summarize what sattva means – it is the condition of enlightenment, harmony, balance, health, tranquility of mind, unselfishness and humility, with a correct and clear worldview.

**Mind in Rajas**

In rajas, the mind is no longer in its natural state of clarity, tranquility and harmony, and it begins to function in an agitated and stormy manner. Just imagine the pond we mentioned before as a metaphor for the mind, but this time a person standing next to it is throwing stones into the water and the water ripples. Because of this the reflection on the water becomes disturbed. The bigger the stones or the more there are,
the less calm the water.

Each stone thrown into the water is like a thought that arises in the mind. The more thoughts, the more the mind is agitated, the more our worldview is changed. When our mind is excited it is more difficult to see reality, because its perception passes through some kind of mental filter.

In *rajas* one looks at the world through a film which obscures the reality. It is like a light bulb covered by a red cloth – there will still be light, but it will have an unnatural red tinge.

In *rajas* the ego acts in such a way that a person can still see the world and himself in it, but his view is perverted and therefore he places himself in a higher position and want to stand out. The ego does not identify itself with God nor with the soul; its attitude is, “There may be a God but I can survive without Him”. Such a person does not see himself as an integral part of the Universe, but considers himself to be a creature separated from the world.

Ego in *rajas* creates a sense of separation from the surrounding world by generating an illusion of isolation, considerably reducing the feeling of unity with the Universe. A person identifies himself with his body and everything pertaining to it, thinks in terms of ‘I and mine’ – my body, my family, my country, etc. Whatever is not ‘his’ does not interest him. The self-esteem of such a person can oscillate up and down,
inconsistent with reality. Usually in \textit{rajas} self-worth is exaggerated and ego is puffed up. But whatever is over-inflated can be easily burst. Such people often overestimate themselves and their abilities and set themselves unfeasible or unrealistic targets.

People in rajas are overly active and tend to carry out action that can be avoided.

From a \textit{rajasic} person’s point of view happiness is somewhere else. While a \textit{sattvic} person understands that happiness is within, a \textit{rajasic} person looks for happiness in the external world and endlessly chases after it. Ego makes one dependent on external conditions and his misleading desires, “If I possess something then I can be happy”. But in reality this is an illusion, because at any moment we can lose whatever we have; happiness should not depend on something that can be so easily lost. The happiness of a person in passion is dependent on them achieving their different aims and dreams, which are also illusory – because our insatiable mind and senses can never be content – after managing to get one thing they want something else, they always demand new experiences. As a result of this a \textit{rajasic} person develops many goals and hankers after new things he wants to possess, thus turning his life into a never-ending chase. Even before achieving his first goals, he can be easily distracted by still other things, draining his energy in the process. This is similar to a driver who travels from A to B but gets sidetracked at all the stops on the way; this slows him down, making it increasingly harder to reach his destination.

In his search for happiness, a person loses sight of his life’s destiny, instead embracing some fantasy, thinking that some activities or possessions will make him happy. He assumes that happiness is only possible after attaining some social status or performing some kind of social work – happiness does not exist here and now.

Because of such illusory ideas, in chasing after happiness, one gets away from his real nature and destiny, which can be very dangerous, because failure to live in accordance with one’s destiny can cause serious problems in life. Because people in \textit{rajas} perceive reality in a perverted way, they do not understand why fate has dealt them a blow, and try to blame others rather than attempting to sort themselves out and understand the real cause of their problems.

When a person is perpetually chasing after happiness, he sets himself too many objectives and becomes extremely ambitious. He is always trying to reach something, but instead burns himself out. And as a result of being exhausted and tired, diseases develop such as headaches, gas-
Chapter 15 The Mind Gives or Takes Away Happiness and Health

ulcers, cardiovascular diseases and the like. These are the sort of diseases that can be cured. But unlike people in sattva, who try to find and sort out the root of all problems within themselves and learn lessons in the process, in rajas people blame others and try to pin their problems on someone else. They cannot see that in reality they are themselves creating all their problems by maintaining an incorrect worldview and lifestyle. They lay all blame for their troubles on others or circumstances.

In rajas the mind constantly labours for something – it becomes attracted to sensory objects, which give birth to some particular emotion, fed by thoughts. For example, we are peacefully walking down the street when we suddenly notice something nice for sale that we would like to buy. A thought immediately comes in our mind, and then emotions related to the object we want; we become attached to it, or hate it if we cannot buy it. Then in the lake of our mind waves arise from the excessive unnecessary thoughts and emotions related to the object we want. This prevents us from perceiving the situation in a normal way, and instead we view it in a distorted manner. Our thoughts and emotions are not in the 'here and now', but are attached to a certain object, and we make our decisions based on emotions, senses and desires. These can also be ambitious aims or goals, because the rajasic condition is an active one that requires energetic activity. A person rushes to achieve his aim, fuelled by this energy. But because his view of reality is distorted, all these targets in rajas are illusory.

Love in rajas cannot be sincere – it has some taint of selfish egoism, and in reality is just an attachment. For example, in passion one says, “I am so happy with this person. I cannot live without him, which means I love him”. Whereas in sattva, one will say: “I can make this person happy and I am happy to be with him, and we want to be together, which means we love each other. But if he will not accept my love, then I will let him go as long as it makes him happier”. In rajas, love originates from concentrating only on one’s desires, and if partners do not transfer their relationships to the sattvic level, then between them there will be only temporary passion. In sattva, one concentrates on not only pleasing himself but also his partner.

The majority of modern Western society lives in rajas.

The characteristics of rajas are excessive activity, vitality, unpredictability, absence of tranquility, running about, bustle, agitated mind, imbalance, instability, and erroneous aims. A person searching for happiness in the wrong place, somewhere outside rather within himself, is considered to be in rajas.
Mind in Tamas

In *tamas* there is no energy. If something happens it is only passive and lethargic. The mind in *tamas* is able to think, but thoughts move extremely slowly. You might remember such a condition – it happens after overworking, when you don’t want to think about anything and just want to lie down and stare at the ceiling. This should not be confused with having a tranquil mind. In reality there is still anxiety in the mind in this state of exhaustion. It is just that the mind has become frozen due to a lack of energy.

If we again compare the mind to a pond, when in *tamas* the water is dirty and dark, and no reflections can be seen in it. Dirt and scum fill the pond as our minds are full of dirty, dark thoughts, desires and emotions; these completely control us and overshadow our ability to clearly perceive the world.

The most dangerous thing about these thoughts is that we might not even notice that they exist; they can be deep inside our consciousness and they control us from there. Therefore it is important to learn how to track our thoughts and the way in which they appear.

Dirt and scum also represent the toxins we pollute ourselves with. They confuse us so that we cannot perceive things accurately. Some examples are drugs, alcohol and caffeine. They are like a pile of rubbish thrown into pure water, thus polluting it. We use these things to run
away from reality if it does not suit us. But the true problem is not with the reality, but with how we receive it, and that completely depends on us. Therefore by using drugs or alcohol we might temporarily switch off from the present reality, but we are in fact only trying to run away from ourselves, and that is impossible.

What do those in *tamas* do when they get exhausted or drained after a busy, *rajas*ic day? They try to relax by taking stimulants such as alcohol, coffee, cigarettes and drugs. In *tamas* they think they derive pleasure from doing so, but in reality they are slowing down their mind even further. Taking coffee makes the mind more disturbed. In *rajas* and *tamas* it is difficult to concentrate because the mind is dulled. Due to looking at life through a dirty window, they cannot see things properly nor make proper decisions. As a result fear, suspicion and uncertainty arise.

For those in *tamas* it is impossible to sort out any problems. They often cannot even see that problems exist. If their leg becomes sore, for example, they will probably complain about their life and blame everyone around them, without even trying to do something about it. Those in *sattva* will start to take some action to cure the problem, try to learn from the situation while accepting how things develop; whereas those in *tamas* will not even go to a doctor.

*Tamasic* people do not know how to look after themselves: despite having liver problems (which is quite common for this type), they will still eat fatty fried meat and drink beer because this satisfies their senses. They think that whatever is good for their senses is also good for them.

Those in *sattva* or even *rajas* understand that such conduct is ridiculous, whereas those in *tamas* only aim to satisfy their senses. They ignore the fact that it might hurt them later, or they may even be completely ignorant of it. Usually those in *tamas* suffer from severe or chronic diseases. In *rajas* diseases are like a spark which can be extinguished, while diseases in *tamas* can be compared to a glowing wick which is difficult to put out.

*Tamasic* people are not inclined to take responsibility for their lives – they swim with the current, giving up easily and go wherever they are carried.

In *tamas* the water of the pond does not reflect reality. Those in *tamas* cannot see the world as it is or themselves as a part in it, because their ego only identifies with itself and nothing else.

**Self-evaluation in *tamas* is never accurate** – they either overrate or underestimate themselves. The clinical stage is megalomania.
**Tamas** is similar to a lamp covered with a blanket – the light cannot be seen or pass through. They constantly live in darkness, in their own imaginary reality. It is therefore common for *tamasic* people to have psychological disorders.

There is no love in *tamas*. There is hate, envy, gain, egoism, despondency, depression, unhealthy attachments, immense greed and insane attachment to money.

*Tamasic* people usually live by their instincts. Their life involves satisfying bodily necessities and whims – this is the animal level of life.

*Tamas* is the condition of inertia, when thoughts are frozen in the mind and mental dirt completely obscures the reality.

### The Mind as a Pile of Playing Cards

We can compare the mind and how it is influenced by the three *gunas* to a stack of cards. The cards represent our thoughts. In *sattva* our mind is similar to a neat stack of playing cards – the mind is focused and our thoughts are concentrated on one thing at a time.

In *rajas* the mind becomes active. The thoughts going through our mind are like a pile of playing cards being thrown up in the air. Concentration and clarity is lost, and it becomes impossible to keep track of our thoughts, as there are too many of them and it is difficult to focus on only one.

The messy fallen cards are like the mind in *tamas*. There are too many thoughts but no energy, it is impossible to concentrate and the mind is trapped in a dull daze.

To put in order (*sattva*) the scattered (*tamas*) cards, the energy of action (*rajas*) is needed. Therefore it is not possible to go from *tamas* directly to *sattva*. One must go through *rajas*, which will push away *tamas*. *Rajas* will activate the mind, providing it with stimulation and curiosity – only after that it is possible to concentrate the mind in *sattva*.

For example, to arouse a lazy person from his idleness it is necessary to motivate him with some advantage. To go and work, he must be reminded of the benefits involved, which provide him with a chance to gratify his senses.

Meditation is the best way to realize one’s mind, to observe it and to learn how to calm and concentrate it, endowing it with clarity. But if the *tamasic* person will try to meditate, then he will just fall asleep instead of making his mind calm. Therefore first it is necessary to get elevated from *tamas* to *rajas* and then to *sattva*.
Chapter 16

Love is the Principal Remedy for All Problems

Love is our inherent nature – as an awakening and as an award. Love is a synonym for God. It can change people and events and we will be forced to go under its banner... Every soul is the celestial rising star of another soul. I lived... How can I seek atonement or pardon, or pay you for me being alive? Life is given to me not as a show for others, but that I should live with it. The sky is vast: there is space for all kinds of love, for all kinds of valour. Why do you need to fuss and listen in the face of truth? The great love always is given to the great heart.

Emerson

Different Levels of Love

Once I had a consultation with a woman who was very emotional and thought she had attained the level of universal love. Although she tried to demonstrate this in different ways – smiling constantly, talking about sentimental spiritual subjects – it was not very pleasant to be with her. She did not at all radiate a loving or pleasant energy. Her personal life was also not harmonious: she was not taking good care of her children and could last long at one job. Furthermore, after associating with her some people would lose any desire to develop unconditional love. Many of us know such people who misunderstand what “love” means; nowadays it is often understood as lust, sentiment or agitated emotions – in fact anything except the real meaning of unconditional love.

We will quote some statements from people in different gunas as a way to illustrate love in different modes.
From people in ignorance:

- If you will not love me I will kill you or myself.
- We have been prevented from loving each other, so let's kill ourselves!
- I love myself, therefore I eat and sleep as much as I want. No one should dare stop me, otherwise they will regret it.

From people in passion

- Love is when “I really want you!”
- Sex is when a woman pleases a man and he gives her money or buys her presents as payment, and the word “love” was invented by people to avoid paying money...
- I love him/her for this, but not for the other.
- I have to learn to love unconditionally so I can get rid of diseases.
- Love your co-workers, your clients, and as a general rule add as much love as possible to your life, and your business will prosper.
- I love everyone and everything that gives me pleasure, but hate those that take it away from me.
- If someone says he loves me, then he must need something from me.

The more society deteriorates (when the predominated rajas gets mixed with the tamas more and more) the more common have become same-sex “love” and even “love” toward animals. At a recent Cannes film festival there was one film shown about an animal farm (they are growing rapidly nowadays) where people interact sexually with animals. Such people have some special “tender and elevated” love for animals. People in passion-ignorance often idolize such forms of “love”.

Love in goodness

- I love everybody but am committed to only one person.
- To love means to accept a person and the world as it is.
- When love is directed toward something temporary, it is an attachment, but when love is directed toward eternity, it becomes devotion.
- I will not eat or live in tamas and rajas (overeat, eat artificial, old food with added chemicals such as preservatives, eat while walking, etc.) because I love myself.
– Everyone has their own good and bad qualities, but there is no reason not to love them.
– How wonderful this world is; there are so many opportunities for love.
– I love all children the same way I love my own.

A Parable about “Love”

There was one beautiful, spiritually elevated girl. She was the disciple of a saint who had reached the highest enlightenment. The girl lived at the edge of a village and spent her days and nights in meditation, without paying attention to the pleasures and opportunities of the mundane world.

People called her The Beauty and many men wanted to marry her. From time to time she would go to the village to get some shopping. Many young men from the surrounding area would come to see her, but she would not pay any attention.

Many things were said about her – some blamed her for being distant, some insisted that she would change and eventually get married. Many men got tired of waiting and married other girls. But there was one boy who sincerely loved this girl. He had been rejected by her many times but still would not give up.

Years passed by. All the young men had gotten married and started families except for one – he became haggard and sick from love for The Beauty. Over the years his love never waned but became stronger.

The next time he came to ask her to marry him, seeing his sad condition, she suddenly agreed to become his wife, but under one condition – he could not see her for one month and must meditate on his eternal nature. Overjoyed by his good luck, the young man started to meditate.

Everyone in the village was looking forward to seeing such an extraordinary situation – The Beauty in the role of a wife. Many made bets, forecasting the outcome of such a marriage. In the meantime The Beauty started to take large quantities of laxatives and emetics. She collected all the discharged fluid into pots. As a result of taking such remedies, this beautiful girl became as skinny as a skeleton; her skin became dark and her beautiful eyes sunken. When the month was up her fiancé came and knocked on her door. When an old woman opened it, the boy was taken aback. He thought it was the wrong house, but after reassuring himself that it the right one, he asked for The Beauty.

– What did you say? I can’t hear you properly, said the old lady.
– I am looking for The Beauty, I am her fiancé.
– My love, I am The Beauty. Can’t you recognise me?
Only then did the boy recognise in this old lady the woman he loved. He fainted, falling to the ground.
The girl brought him back to consciousness. The boy got up, asking with tears in his eyes: “But… where is your beauty? Where is your young body?”
“My beauty, my youth? Come with me and I will show you.” She then brought him to the pots of excrements.
– Here it is, this is what you loved and wanted. Take it, it’s all yours. Just as the leaves fall from the trees and turn into dust, so too the human body passes away. Only the spirit is immortal and lives on.
The young boy understood everything. He repented and asked the girl if he could become her disciple.

**Ego is the Origin of False Identification, Which is the Source of All Distress**

For those who have a desire to get rid of the lower energies of ignorance and passion, who want to do away with different psychological problems and to start living a harmonious life full of love, it is important to read and realize the following.

The main tragedy of modern people, who are mainly in ignorance and passion, is that they are incapable of receiving or giving love. There is a saying about such a person’s love, “There is one step from love to hate”. The main cause of this is egoism. The bigger the ego the more *tamas* in life, because ego corresponds to the grossest layers of our consciousness; our physical bodies are the physical forms of ego. It is this that leads us to set ourselves as distant from the Universe and eventually to self-destruction.

**The Ego is the only root of all personal and social problems.**

Egoism can be seen when we identify our inner essence with various external objects and qualities, and affirm, “This is mine” and “I”.

In Sanskrit it is called “*ahankara*”. Because of the manifestation of ego we lose the sense of unity with the world and all living creatures. In Eastern psychology ego is often called “false” because it is temporary. Our personality constantly goes through changes. It is important to not confuse the false ego with our real “I” which is situated beyond the limits of mental and physical forms.

Because the ego is limited and appears as an isolating factor, it in-
evitably brings distress. We experience pain by losing objects which we became identified with (money, glory, relationships, our house, etc.). The same happens with the objects which we consider not related to us. For example, having contact with people of a different nationality, being in another’s home or even simply observing property of others or their achievements, an egoistic person becomes envious, which is the most powerful self-destructive emotion, bringing lots of suffering in its wake.

**Ego is the primary subconscious response that suppresses the consciousness.** The basis of egoism is ignorance (*tamas*) and confusion (*rajas*). In this way, if we get rid of the influence of these *gunas* that provide a fertile soil for the flourishing of ego, it will become considerably weaker and consequently our ability to love will greatly increase. When this happens, fear and greed, the main enemies of love, will be replaced by tolerance and consideration.

**Ego is the seed of darkness. It is the ignorant part of consciousness, because it corresponds to the element of earth and the thickest layers of consciousness.** Ego is the source of all attachments and emotional problems, which cause pain and distress. Ego is the isolating principle that brings duplicity, diseases, death and a feeling of separatism from the soul, from other living beings and from our surroundings.

**The Main Aim of an Authentic Evolution is Escape from Egoism and the Sense of Separation**

We can escape from egoism and a sense of separation by realizing that we have a spiritual nature. The soul returns us back to unity, whereas ego causes separatism. The soul is an eternal, conscious entity, an individual part of the Supreme Spirit. The soul is the source of all vital power and energy, physical and as well of psychological. In Sanskrit the soul is called “*jiva*” or “*jivatman*”. This is the real individual.

Everything in Nature has a soul. In sages who attain self-realization, it reaches full consciousness; whereas in common people the soul is trying to wake up, in animals it is asleep and dreaming, and in plants it is in deep sleep. The soul is not some sort of emotional notion, but the highest state of consciousness, free from all prejudice. It does not need to be saved, but rather itself brings salvation. It transcends all limitations of ego, mind and body.

**We can feel the experience of the soul, the highest and deepest emotions, only when we can experience unconditional love.**
Modern healers give numerous examples of how a person can receive the highest energy, which can cure any disease, simply through them feeling Divine love.

Reaching the level where this energy exists is the basis of any healing. This energy gives us creative abilities, intuition and unlimited, everlasting bliss. Realization of our soul is the most powerful form of healing, which allows us to access our inherent healing ability.

The soul is the greatest healer for it is connected with God, and possesses all the Divine powers and abilities.

**Different Levels of Samadhi**
(Perceptions of Contentment)

In April of 2007, I gave some seminars in Moscow to a wonderful group of people, who made rapid progress. But when I started to talk about the soul, I began to feel that I was losing my connection with them. “Yes, egoism is bad; one must be altruistic…” Everyone has heard all these sentimental things many times.

Then I changed the method of teaching and made a statement, “The false ego, which creates the feeling of separateness of self, is the cause of distress; we can experience happiness only when we are absorbed in something that allows us to completely forget ourselves”. The group became curious.

When I asked what samadhi meant, some responses came: it is immersion, the ultimate aim of yoga, the stage of supreme bliss, and so on. One girl read, “Samadhi is the ability of consciousness to merge into the object of perception”. Some people had never heard of samadhi, which is somewhat widespread in esoteric circles.

I questioned again, “For consciousness to become one with something and derive pleasure from it, the ego and the sense of separateness must be rejected; isn’t that so?” Everyone tried to understand what I was driving at.

Now we will examine how samadhi (the feeling of happiness) manifests in the three gunas.

1. **Samadhi in ignorance** – this is the condition of sleep, coma, or any drug or alcohol induced state. In these conditions one forgets who he is.

2. **Samadhi in passion** – this is when the mind is carried away by external feelings or activities to the extent that one forgets
himself. In the modern world this manifests mainly when one is completely engrossed by work. Workaholics are in this category of people, as are sports fans.

Television and movies also fall under this category, but to a certain degree also to ignorance, because they involve passive tamasic perception. It can also relate to the mind that constantly is occupied with some tragedy or pain, mulling over it and harbouring complaints in his head. There is also some kind of enjoyment in this negative meditation. Any intense emotion, including aggression, keeps the mind concentrated and submerging it in one of the forms of samadhi.

Any intense emotional experience can be related to this category of Samadhi in rajas. Therefore if someone is dominated by rajas, they have to be constantly attached to someone, have some affair or experience strong emotions. For such a person it is boring to live without some relationship issues. Being stuck on this level, people can become slaves of their sex drive, tongue and all other senses, which in turn leads to degradation. This type of samadhi drains one’s energy and as a rule leads one to tamas.

“Suicide is directly connected to unfulfilled desires to enjoy more and more in this world. American psychologists have discovered a direct connection between suicide and sex. The more one tries to satisfy his lustful desires the more chance there is that he will try to end his life. According to statistics, the younger one begins his sex life the more often he gets depressed, the more he feels unhappy and the higher his risk of suicide”.

V. Ruzov, Russian psychologist

3. Samadhi in sattva – it is considered to be the highest achievement in western cultures. It is submerging into the process of creativity, when one completely forgets himself. These are the revelations and achievements of scientists and philosophers, poets and writers. Various types of mysticism and religious trances, which are usually spontaneous and short-lived, may also apply to this category.

If a person does not cultivate sattva constantly, does not engage in spiritual practices, and does not have a proper goal in life, he will not be able to remain on this level and will fall to rajas or tamas. Mental activities, as well as intellectual
or philosophical speculation, exhaust sattva. Such a person justifies himself by saying that to sustain his creative genius, he needs to occasionally take some alcohol or even drugs, or engage in some depraved activity. If he has a large stock of energy and good karma, he can create masterpieces for a long time between parties. In modern culture, particularly among creative people (artists, poets, etc.), the following template of a genius often emerges as an example to follow: a man who typically does not follow any moral principles or rules, who is dirty and capable of wild escapades.

Samadhi in sattva can arise in any person who performs his duty creatively: without becoming attached to the results of his work, desiring to bring good to the world, out of love and taking pleasure in the process itself. I have seen it even in such occupations as cleaners and salespersons.

Many founders of various religious sects and cults lived through such a condition, but because of egoism, insufficient inner love and an inability to maintain a pure consciousness, they proclaimed themselves as prophets,Messiahs or avatars (incarnations of God).

For people who are on the level of samadhi in sattva, it is very important to pray, meditate, chant mantras, engage in selfless activities, practice yoga and breathing exercises. This helps to get to a level of consciousness that is based on love, peace and wisdom.

The main principle is that we can feel pleasure only when we are cut off from the ego, forgetting all things connected with it. It is no coincidence that the most severe form of punishment for most people is solitary confinement. In normal life, we each run away from our ego according to our level of consciousness: either by making our mind dull (alcohol, TV, etc…), or by living an intense emotional and physical lifestyle. Only when some flashes of sattva appear in our consciousness do we begin to understand that we do not enjoy these pursuits; we are merely attempting to run away from enduring even worse, from confronting the cold, dark, fearful and stressful ego.

At that point we begin to understand that it is necessary to appeal to the true “I”, the soul, which is everlasting and full of knowledge and bliss. Through even slightly dipping into
one’s true self and appealing to it, great pleasure will result, regardless of where we are, and will open vast creative abilities and talents.

The Main Condition For Attaining Constantly Increasing Bliss

All religions speak of the importance of sacrifice. Yoga states that without yajna (sacrifice) it is impossible to change karma and attain perfection, and that nobody can ever be happy without it.

A common misconception exists that sacrifice is when a lamb is thrown into the fire or when some other ritualistic ceremonies are performed. But the real aim of sacrifice is to reject egoism, to annihilate ignorance and come closer toward Divine love.

We always have a choice: to donate, to give away, to thank, to show respect, or to grab for ourselves, to act as a user, to complain, to forget about showing the necessary respect to one’s fellow.

One student told us that recently he had stood on a man’s foot while on London underground. The guy whose foot he had just stood on simply looked at him and excused himself, smiled and happily continued on his way. This is also a form of sacrifice, the sacrifice of one’s ego and pride. Imagine if this person was full of pride, he could have reacted angrily, “Watch where you’re going, stupid foreigner!” But he chose not to spoil his or someone else’s day. As a result of this incident, the student became more careful and polite.

Another example of a sacrifice is when, although we are hungry and are seated at the table, we first make sure that everyone is present and that they all feel comfortable, and serve them food to their full satisfaction. We also say a prayer and only then do we proceed to eat ourselves. That is also sacrifice.

Even if we simply smile to the people we meet and show a sincere interest in their lives – that is sacrifice on a certain level. Egoistic people are always absorbed in themselves, and therefore are always morose – this is understandable, because these poor guys have so many problems… Even if they smile it is not from the heart, and they show interest in someone only if and when they want something.

Whatever we do can either come from the soul, in which case it is selfless in nature and full of love, or from the false ego, which is full of fear and acts with the aim of using or gaining in mind. Ayurveda as well as all forms Eastern psychology and philosophy say that all our suffering
comes from ego, from the desire to take more than we give. Interestingly this is also the pattern of a cancerous cell.

The Primary Source of Suffering

*Birds sing after a storm; why shouldn’t people feel as free to de-light in whatever sunlight remains to them?*

R. Kennedy

Just imagine walking on a street in a happy and carefree mood, when suddenly you see a car you really like, and you begin craving for it – whatever peace you had is lost. On a subtle level you connect with this car because the mind and ego have become attached to it. There are no limits to what our subtle body can become attached to. When we think of someone or something, we become connected with this object on the subtle level. If such a connection is based on a strong emotion (attachment, hatred, etc.) then this connection becomes much stronger.

To return to the example of the car: we lose all our calm, we cannot imagine how we could have ever lived without this car, we begin working hard to raise enough money for it. After getting the car we spend a lot of energy maintaining it, and if anything happens to it, we experience intense distress because we have identified so closely with it. If someone hits it, we react as if they have hit us personally. The same applies to anything we become attached to – clothing, a house, relationships, etc. Our ego spreads to whatever we strongly believe is “ours”. If anything happens to something that is “ours”, our ego suffers so much.

Attachments cause us intense psychological distress. Every time we want to take without giving in return or without acting for the benefit of others, it causes tension. This is the way of this world: when we want to take something for ourselves and use it for egoistic purposes, tension is created in the world around us. This tension is fertile soil for disease and psychological problems.

For example, two men simultaneously see a washing machine standing in the middle of a quiet road. Their egos become attached to it, at once they begin to imagine bringing the washing machine home to their wives. But the problem is that there is only one washing machine. Then they start to worry, “What if I will not get it?” Both of them want the machine and tension builds up between them; only five minutes before they had been happy with their lives and were good friends.

The next moment the real owner appears, takes the machine and
leaves the two friends with nothing. They are not happy with the situation and become embarrassed with their own behaviour. Now they are full of negative emotions toward each other and toward the owner of the washing machine.

But just imagine if these two friends were harmonious people – when they saw something left on the street that apparently did not belong to anyone, they would say, “Oh, thank God! You should take it, my dear friend”. “No, you take it, yours is quite old”. This would go back and forth for some time before deciding that they should check if it belongs to anyone before taking it themselves.

If the owner appeared they would respond with humour, “Oh, we almost took it! We can help you to bring it in. That is a good machine which you will surely be happy with”. No one would be upset, simply happy to go their own way in a joyful mood. Therefore, if we are generous and free of greed, we can live peacefully and happily, understanding that “God gives and God takes”. Everything is temporary and there is nothing to be afraid of. Regardless of where we are, we have the opportunity to give and serve others, and therefore be blissful.

**Purpose of Sacrifices**

The mind of a giving person is open and peaceful, as at that moment he merges with Dayanie that continuously creates all of existence, for which everyone is come into this world, for which we are called by God.

M. Momot

**The essence of material life is to inflate the ego and acquire as much as possible; whereas the essence of real spiritual life is to give to others, become happy and learn to love.**

When we give something away, it creates a vacuum that draws something inside to fill it. One who does not perform yajna, self-sacrifice, cannot feel inner peace and his life becomes useless.

The perfection of sacrifice is when we become giving people. Sacrifice frees us from attachments. It is necessary to give up the things we are attached to.

Vedic culture is a culture of yajna (sacrifice). In the past when a child was born, people would perform a particular type of sacrifice; the same is the case with marriage ceremonies. Even cooking food is considered to be a yajna.

If a ritual is performed in sattva, it can be very beneficial to all involved. Such rituals are recommended in many religions.
Sacrifice with pure intentions gives an opportunity to:

1. **Display gratitude.** This is our way to thank God. Gratitude and respect are the first steps toward love. Ingratitude, in Eastern psychology, is considered to be a most atrocious quality, which instantly blocks the heart chakra and takes away our ability to love.

2. **Get rid of attachments or things we are dependent on.**

3. **Get rid of sins and mental dirt.** Eastern psychology says all problems are caused by either physical, verbal or mental dirt.

4. **Enter into a spiritual atmosphere.** Spiritual consciousness is available to us when we understand the inner meaning of *yajna*.

5. **Attain happiness and satisfaction.** Eastern psychology affirms that wealth is determined by how satisfied we are with what we have, and poverty by the levels of grief and greed – “I have lost so many chances... why do they have it better than me?” and the like.

Demonic cults and black magicians also perform various sacrifices, but for their own benefit. Such *yajnas* are performed in ignorance with some passion.

**Everything Harmonious in This World Has Its Other Half**

*Do not criticise your wife, because it may be these faults that prevented her from choosing a better husband.*

**Academic A. Valyavski**

We might think that all this is more theoretical knowledge. But if we start using these rules in our life, we will see how practical it is and how it relates to all parts of our lives.

In one of the previous chapters we discussed the subject of personal relationships, how to make relations in our family everlasting and happy. First of all it depends on the woman – how much she is able to create a *sattvic* atmosphere at home, because only in such an environment can there be space for love.

The main mission and duty of a man is to make money, provide protection for his wife and children, give presents to his wife and be responsible for her. The first responsibility of a man is to look after the
woman’s mind and direct her spiritually. A man should be determined, sometimes even strict, but not rough. Subconsciously a woman will relax, thinking “Thank God, he is a real man!” For women it is important to feel she has a shelter. If a man is always soft and submissive, the woman subconsciously stops respecting him.

For a woman, it is important to create a sattvic atmosphere in her house – firstly, keeping the house clean, to be tranquil, show respect to her husband (even if in her opinion he is not worthy of it), cooking food with love (preferably using sattvic ingredients). These are the foundations for a woman to create “love space”. When she has created such space, then her life, particularly her family life, becomes a source of happiness and health for the entire household.

Once in class I told some stories about people I and some other Ayurvedic doctors in Russia had helped. These stories show that when a good atmosphere is created at home, the husband can change dramatically: in a few months they can give up drinking, or become honourable and successful people in society.

Some ladies in the class were sceptical about this. Then one of the students, who is a consultant in Vedic astrology and Chinese medicine, also confirmed that she knew many similar stories, and told one that happened recently with people she knows.

The husband in this family had a drinking problem and everyone told his wife to leave him. But she kept praying and stayed. After some time his mother came to stay with them. She was a skilled woman who had had a long happy marriage. Life changed: when the husband came back from work, the house was clean with the dining table nicely arranged. The children were trained to treat their father with love and respect, regardless of his behaviour and condition. All this went on for six months. This took constant (sattvic) courage and exceptional effort (rajas – creating something new) on the part of the wife. The seventh month brought amazing changes – he stopped drinking and went back to university. Now he is a wonderful family man working at a worthy job.

All this can be related to any family, even if the husband does not drink. The main goal for a man is to build a house, whereas the main goal for a woman is to create a sattvic homely atmosphere. If relations are based only on sex, regardless how great it can be, after seven to ten years the marriage will fall apart. Ignorance, even in a small quantity, can bring lots of misfortune. Practically all violence happens in families where some form of ignorance is present: cursing, rough disrespectful
talk, criticism of each other and everyone else, betrayal, watching pornography and violent films, eating food which is in ignorance, alcohol, cigarettes, etc...

In passion no marriage can last for a long time and be happy, although some passion is also necessary. Only the energy of sattva can give a stable, happy and long-lasting relationship. For example, the husband is required to give regular (sattva) compliments to his wife, to arrange some romantic vacations and dates (rajas). This is unnecessary only for those who are very advanced spiritually, for those who are happy simply with fasting and prayer. But very few such people exist.

In order for a woman to radiate sattva, she needs to understand that no woman can be happy if she is independent.

The power of a woman is her chastity (loyalty), absence of criticism in her husband and faith in him.

If a woman manifests her feminine nature, she will always find a man with masculine qualities. In nature everything has its other half: all birds and all animals. Only modern people who do not know the basic rules of how to live in sattva are deprived of such facility.

PROVERB

– John, oh John, please tell me – do you love me?
– Why are you harassing me? Have you forgotten I told you 30 years ago that I love you!

A Level Higher Than Sattva

The sattvic level differs from the transcendental in that one still looks at things from the perspective of “I” and “mine”; he identifies himself with the material. Being in sattva one can understand the next level, the transcendental outlook on Love, and easily move there.

“The entire Universe is built from an Infinite Ocean of love. This infinite love manifests in the material world as human love. While in the material world this infinite love becomes smashed and restricted by something smaller like family, friends and relatives and not the love which relates to everyone and everything as the parts of Entire Creation. such love is called finite. Finite love is always united and acts with its opposite – hate. In infinite love, when the soul realises God, there is no space for hate. Gravitation is an attraction and is also love. The stars stay together because of gravity, which is the manifestation of
great magnetism. There is love between atoms that creates molecules. Actually yogis consider the entire creation as the waves of a single Great Ocean of love. Love stands behind every desire, and God is Love. Understanding of such Love and unity with God is Real Consciousness”.

Vishnudevanada Swami

“For him who constantly meditates upon My (God’s) presence within all persons, the bad tendencies of rivalry, envy and abusiveness, along with false ego, are very quickly destroyed”.

Srimad-Bhagavatam, 11.29.15

“Indeed, I consider this process—using one’s mind, words and bodily functions for realizing Me (God) within all living beings—to be the best possible method of spiritual enlightenment”.

Srimad-Bhagavatam, 11.29.19

Mother Teresa saw Jesus Christ in everyone; Srila Prabhupada saw God in the falling bombs during the war; Shivananda Swami, when asked if he had ever seen God, answered that he sees God constantly in everyone.

A PARABLE
One monk on the way to his monastery saw one man biting another. Humbly he tried to stop the fight but instead was bitten very severely. After some time the other monks found him unconscious and brought him back to the monastery to take care of him. When he returned to consciousness, the senior monk gave him milk and asked if he could recognise him. The monk replied, “The One who bit me is the One who feeds me”.

So why can we not love completely, unconditionally, without exception? There are three reasons:

1. We cannot perceive nature as one entity and therefore discriminate: human, dog, tree and etc.
2. We extract from something that is already extracted, some fragment or feature.
3. Man within himself is also divided into many parts, which in most cases control him.
**Final Practical Advice**

for Those who Want to Have a Sound Mind in a Sound Body

This article is the final chapter of the book: “Three Energies. Forgotten Canons of Health and Harmony.” Everyone can find many useful things in it. Even if you have already read this book, we are confident that it will be helpful for you to read it again.

*If you want to meet someone who can fix any situation you don’t like, who can bring you happiness in spite of what other people say or believe, look in a mirror, then say this magic word: ‘Hello.’*

Richard Bach

First of all, we should have a strong desire that the energies of goodness and harmony increase in our lives. If you really wish something, this is at least 90 percent of success. Consider all the benefits that *sattva* dominance will bring into your life: health, happiness, peace, intuition of a higher order, prosperity and a happy personal life, ability to realize the most profound spiritual truths. But most importantly, *sattva* is the basis that makes it possible to truly love and be loved. If *sattva* does not dominate, then only a small dollop of love can enter our life. However, to develop unconditional love one must also wish it; the existence of *sattva*’s dominance alone does not ensure bringing love into one’s life.

Now the culture of proper imagination, working with the subconscious, the use of right brain hemisphere, etc. are being revived. Murphy, Silva, Robert Stone and others have shown how all this works and proved that people can quickly change their lives and achieve their goals.

Then why does this technique not help everyone, to say the least?
Because it operates at full capacity only when a person is dominated by *sattva* (goodness energy), when he is capable of complete relaxation and has a minimum of selfishness.

Pay attention to with whom you associate: friends, books, internet and television. Without any regret give up communication with ignorance and increase *sattvic* influence through books, lectures and studies. It is desirable to at least once a week visit communities and circles in which the communication is pure and sublime. Do not hesitate to break with a friend who constantly complains, lives at ignorance level, creates trouble for everybody, and does not listen to your advice, just being a parasite. Those with whom we used to play in sandboxes as children, went on hikes in school or studied together in high school do not have to be our close friends for our entire life. “I'd rather starve than eat whatever food shows up, it's better to be single than with just anyone,” - said the famous Sufi poet and philosopher Omar Khayyam.

So we now have come to food. Food is important not only because it provides us with calories. Fundamentally, we derive some certain energy from food, so not only what we eat is important, but also the atmosphere, who shares our meal, etc. It is desirable to eat quietly, not to the roar of the TV or on the run. Try for one month to eat quietly, chew your food well, always praying before eating, preferring *Sattvic* foods, and you’ll be amazed to see how your life will change for the better, how you yourself will change.

Keep cleanness, internal as well as external. Internal cleanness means conciliation, thoughts that are full of love, unselfish, creative and positive. Winston Churchill said: “The price of greatness is responsibility.”

Everything in this world begins with a thought. Keep track of your thoughts. They will show you what will happen to you tomorrow: whether you are healthy or sick, successful or ruined.

Buddhism teaches: “If you want to stop suffering you need to monitor your thoughts.”

If our thoughts are filled with jealousy, envy, resentment, greed, revenge, sense of injustice, etc. then this is the end of us. Of course, eating the right *sattvic* food postpones this moment, but cannot permanently avert it. *Ayurveda* says that a restless mind is the main cause of our illnesses.

Internal cleanness also implies visceral purity. A modern man pushing forty may have about 10 kg of pressed mass in his intestine.
It may be a lot of bile, mucus, etc. It’s all the same to a modern man as long as he looks well on the outside, this means influence of Passion energy. But how can such a person be healthy? I have recently read in a newspaper about results of British scientists’ studies; they concluded that 95 percent of diseases occur because of chemical waste and toxin accumulation in the intestine. Ayurveda concludes much the same result. To avoid this, it is necessary to eat right, exercise, and periodically cleanse the stomach, intestines, liver, kidneys, etc. There are many books explaining the various cleansing procedures.

External cleanliness is the tidiness of your body, clothes, house, etc. What do you think, which energy or guna influences pigs: Goodness, Passion or Ignorance? Of course, Ignorance. Pigs love a dirty environment; they even eat excrement as if it were a freshly baked pie. To sleep in a pile of rubbish is like a five star hotel for them. At the opposite edge we have heavenly beings and angels. So we should decide to whom we want to be closer. It is important to take a shower at least once a day (women with long hair can wash their hair more rarely), change underwear and socks daily, and change trousers and shirts not less than once every three days.

It is necessary to make sure your house is clean, especially the dining room. If you do not spare enough time for cleaning, then do not be surprised why your surroundings and the Universe play the hog with you. You can wear clean clothes, but if you live in a filthy apartment or house, your aura will contain a considerable amount of tamas energy.

What is also important is clean speech. Obscene speech means Ignorance. Even one word can have an impure effect. You can hear just five words by a beer stand, but what combinations... It is very important to speak thoughtfully and honestly, in a way that is pleasing to surrounding ears, and as a rule to speak little.

Many people may shudder at the comparison with pigs. But then you may ask yourself, do you want to be an aristocrat or plebeian? Aristocrats are people of high culture, but not those who suddenly became rich. They are polite, quiet, they spend a lot of time to intellectual development, they live surrounded by nature, are as good as their words, etc. That sattva dominates such people is obvious, and they are guaranteed success in any society. That is why aristocrats and Divine priests were annihilated during the Soviet times, because they knew that no matter how much they were covered with dirt and deprived of material re-
sources, they would become leaders, because *sattva* energy is the energy of success.

Many people think that when they earn more money or become famous everybody will respect and love them... In reality if character traits remain the same and Ignorance dominates, then such a person simply becomes a plebeian with money, who may destroy his life and the lives of people around him.

Meditate, practice yoga and *pranayama* (breathing techniques), relax. Become accustomed to rise early.

Be in nature as often as possible.

It is very important that everything done for development is done regularly. *Sattva* is permanence. It is better to do less but constantly.

It is very important to be able to relax and not to feel stress when it is not required.

There are several levels of relaxation: mind relaxation, nerves relaxation, muscle relaxation. If you regularly practice relaxation, it will prevent the loss of energy and help to build up *prana* (vital energy). From whom should we learn to relax? From animals and children.

From children we should likewise learn to laugh. The more ignorance, the more one becomes sullen and despondent, he stops laughing and even smiling. A child of six laughs merrily and smiles about 300 times a day. An adult smiles or grins roughly 15 times a day. How many times do you smile? If less than 100 times (a grin does not count), it means that your mind is dominated by *rajas* and *tamas*.

These recommendations would not be complete without the recommendation to practice mantras and prayers. *Ayurveda*, as well as the entire Eastern psychology, teach about the exceptional importance of sound therapy.

The worldwide recognized author (86 books, many of which were printed in a million copies and now out of print) as well as teacher of positive thinking and art of attracting wealth and success in life, Ph.D. Robert Stone, in his popular book “Life without limits” wrote:

“The stronger you will keep in touch with the Creator, the more productive will be your life. This also is true in case of comfort, pleasure and health.”
“There are no more positive thoughts than thoughts of the Creator.”

“If you start to think with love about the Creator, you will strengthen the connection with the sphere from which Divine assistance emanates.”

He advises to do this using “repetition of God’s names” as half of the earth’s population does it too. But in modern civilization, especially among Judeo-Christian circles, it is left off, on the contrary it is used as an expletive: “God, what a nightmare!” “Lord Jesus Christ, what a scorcher!”, etc.

This basically started in the twentieth century. Catholic monks as well as ordinary laity always had beads. Protestants praised the glory of God at their every meeting. Orthodox Christians always attached great importance to the repetition of God’s Name.

Here is a fragment from a famous and highly recommended book that is useful to everybody (“Frank notes of a pilgrim to his spiritual father” by an unknown author):

“Monastic elder took my request kindly and asked me into his cell. “Come in, I will give you a book of the holy fathers, from which with God’s help you can learn about prayer clearly and in detail.”

We went into his and the monastic elder began to speak: “The continuous interior Prayer of Jesus is a constant, uninterrupted calling of the divine Name of Jesus with the lips, in the spirit, in the heart, while forming a mental picture of His constant presence and imploring His grace during every occupation, at all times, in all places, even during sleep. The appeal is couched in these terms: “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me!” Those who accustom themselves to this appeal experience as a result so deep a consolation and so great a need to offer the prayer always, so it will continue to voice itself within them of its own accord.”

The great saint, professional therapist and yoga teacher Swami Sivananda in his article “Spiritual path to health and happiness” wrote:

“The mind vibrates inharmoniously due to the rajas (passion) and tamas (ignorance) influence: sympathy and revulsion, lust, greed, hate, fear and jealousy. How can you expect true happiness and health to come when such a state dominates in the organism?”
“Basic components of healthy and long life are prayers, *japa* (solitary repetition of mantras and prayers), *kirtan* (chanting the Holy Name), meditation, tranquility, Cosmic Love, moderation, restraint, regulated life, fresh air, regular physical and breathing exercises (*pranayama*), sunbathing and a healthy, balanced diet. Practice the presence of God. See Him in all persons, every being, and every form. See Him everywhere. You will enjoy real peace, health and happiness.”

Here is a fragment of another remarkable article by him “The Divine Name”:

“God and His Name are identical. They are inseparable. God dwells where His Name is chanted. The atmosphere becomes sanctified. Peace, happiness and purity gain the upper hand. His Name carries a message of love. His Name frees the soul from grief, anxiety and addiction. His Name does not know any barriers and limitations. His Name refines the vicious lower “I”, elevating it to the grandeur of the universal consciousness, and leads to God.”

Another great saint, statesman, scientist and teacher, Srila Bhakti-vinoda Thakura in his excellent book “Sri Chintamani Harinama” wrote:

“There is no knowledge more pure than the Holy Name, and there is no more powerful vow than a vow to repeat the Holy Name. There is no more effective form of meditation than meditation on the Holy Name, and there is no practice bearing more fruit than repetition of the Holy Name. There is no greater self-denial than glorification of the Holy Name, and nothing can give greater conciliation than the Holy Name.

There is no more pious deed in the world than an appeal to the Holy Name, there is no purpose higher than the purpose achieved by repeating the Name, because the Name grants supreme liberation, supreme peace and the supreme abode. Pronouncing the Holy Name is the highest form of devotion, the purest impulse of living creatures; pronouncing the Name is the highest expression of love and the highest means of remembering God. The Holy Name is the cause of all causes, it is indistinguishable from the Supreme Lord and therefore revered as the supreme Master and Savior.”

So wherever you are, whatever you do, get used to repeating or listening to the Name of God. This habit can quickly lift any person from the level of Ignorance up to Goodness and in case of extreme desire to the transcendental level.
God has innumerable Names. You can choose the one that is closer to you: Jesus, Allah, Buddha, Jehovah, Krishna, etc. Basic Vedic mantras are “Om Namo Narayana”, “Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya”, “Om Namah Shivaya”. The most powerful and effective mantra for our epoch according to all Vedic teachers, including Swami Sivananda, is the Hare Krishna mantra (Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare). This prayer calls forth luck and contains an appeal to God. Its approximate translation is this: “O Supreme One, please engage me in Your service!”

In Northern Buddhism the main mantra is “Om Mani Padme Hum”. There are many different understandings and approximate translations of this mantra. The main ones are: “Jewel on the lotus” and “The whole Universe is like a precious stone or crystal that is in the center of my heart, or in the heart of the lotus, which is me; it is apparent and shines in my heart”. There is entire book by Lama Govinda devoted to the explanation of this mantra.

In Christianity: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us!” (this is a modern version).

The Quran says: “Mention the name of your Lord morning and evening, and during the night prostrate to Him and exalt Him a long [part of the] night” (Quran 76:25, 26).

A major prayer (some kind of a mantra) in Islam and Sufism is: “Allah Akbar” (meaning: there is nothing that can be compared to God or oppose Him, and God transcends any idea we may have of Him) and “La Illah Illa Allaah” (“There is no deity except God, who is One, and only One”).

Of course, while discussing the views of the main theological schools, we cannot avoid touching upon Judaism.

Jewish sages explain that the ladder seen by the Patriarch Jacob in his dream, with God’s angels “ascending and descending upon it”, is also a symbol of prayer. By showing Jacob the ladder “standing on the ground and reaching the skies”, God shows Jacob that prayer is like a ladder connecting earth with heaven, a person with God. By uttering words of prayer with feeling, the good results achieved by prayers become angels that ascend to God, and God sends other angels bearing blessing in return. That is why Jacob dreamed of angels “ascending and descending”, in that order, although the reverse would seem logical.
Final Practical Advice

At whatever “rung” a person is, he should be immersed in sincere prayer; whether standing on the lower steps (the level of material survival, immersion in the acquisition of material wealth) or standing on the higher steps (selfless service to the world, conciliation, freedom from attachments).

Many people imagine that Judaism does not allow God’s Names to be repeated and pronounced. This has not always been the case.

Around 3500 years ago God enjoined Moses: “Thus shall you say to the children of Israel: the Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob has sent me unto you. This is My name forever, this is My mention from generation to generation” (Exodus 3:15; see also Psalms 135:13).

God’s name was revered, as it represented and characterized God Himself. As God Himself divulged His name and called upon His people to say it, all the more so in the Jewish canon of the Bible this Name appears over 6800 times. However among devout Jews it is considered disrespectful to pronounce God’s proper name.

Concerning this ancient rabbinic enactment, which came into effect in the post-Biblical era, Rabbi A. Marmorstein, in his book “The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God”, writes the following:

“Once this prohibition [to pronounce God’s name] was absolutely unknown to the Jews… Neither in Egypt nor in Babylonia, they neither knew nor practiced any law against pronouncing the name of God, the Tetragrammaton, in everyday conversations and greetings. But between the third century BC and the century AD such a prohibition was already in existence and followed to some extent.”

However, as A. Cohen says, “in Biblical times, people boldly pronounced [God’s name] in everyday speech.” In Genesis 12:8 it is said that Abraham, the patriarch of the Jewish people, “called upon the name of God”. All those who wrote the Hebrew Bible used God’s name freely yet at the same time respectfully, until the latest books were written in the fifth century BC (See for example Ruth 1:8, 9, 17).

Where did this prohibition of proclaiming God’s name come from? Rabbi Marmorstein writes that this was due to Hellenistic influence, which opposed practice of the Jewish religion, as well as that of apostate priests and nobles. In ardent zeal to prevent saying the Lord’s
name in vain, they suppressed any attempt to use this name. This how-
ever caused the danger that people may overlook what distinguishes the
ture God from all other gods. [Indeed, the true pronunciation of the
Tetragrammaton is today largely forgotten, and there is no consensus
regarding it among traditional Jewish sages, nor among academic schol-
ars and researchers.] The current practice is therefore not to pronounce
the Tetragrammaton in any form, but to substitute the name “Adonai”,
meaning “Lord”, which is found over 100 times in the Bible as a name of
God in its own right.

Interestingly, for the first thousand years after Moses received the
Torah on Mount Sinai, Jews would pray in their own words, from the
heart. The beginnings of a fixed text for daily prayers appeared at a
much later stage.

In my opinion, we should use both canonical prayers, especially
those written by enlightened sages, and also of necessity pray from the
heart, in our own words. We should be very respectful to the Name of
God, while not abandoning its use entirely in speech or writing.

One of many favorable aspects that a person receives from repeat-
ing God’s Name is that he ceases to concentrate on himself, on his body,
and becomes absorbed in a Higher Reality (as each sound has a certain
form), assumes divine qualities that are the basis for good health, hap-
piness and success.

Focusing on ourselves increases selfishness and causes many suf-
erferings; concentration on our body strengthens Ignorance. We become
what we think. Body, as we have said above, is in Ignorance.

We are living in an amazing time, when an average person, if he
only wants, can understand these truths and live according to them. In
previous eras it could sometimes take hundreds of lives.

On the other hand, it is also very easy to lapse in such a time, due
to drugs, improper use of the Internet, and modern culture in general,
but it is not desirable even to think about it.

The Sages praised our age for this opportunity for speedy progress,
as well as for the fact that the main means of achieving Divine love is
very simple in our age, by repetition of the Holy Names of God.

“Sukadeva Goswami continued: My dear King, the chanting
of the holy name of the Lord is able to uproot even the reac-
Final Practical Advice

...tions of the greatest sins. Therefore the chanting of the Sankirtan movement is the most auspicious activity in the entire universe. Please try to understand this so that others will take it seriously.”

Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.31

I know good psychologists, who advise patients to repeat mantras, perform selfless acts, keep a more sattvic lifestyle, and soon those wretched people, who had been wallowing in depression and suffering, become like the sun and a source of joy and inspiration to others, completely getting rid of their problems. The main thing is not to become a fanatical follower of any dangerous sect, cult or religious organization during the transition stage. Although sometimes (very rarely) this may also be necessary to experience on the way to a harmonious life.

May peace of mind, the absence of selfishness and consequently the ocean of Love be with all of us!

Be happy, healthy and successful!
APPENDIXES
Dear readers!

Talking about gunas I have used some examples and anecdotes in passion to help you to understand the subject of this book particularly those who are not familiar with this topic and also I cannot say that I am a person in whom sattva prevail all the time.

This is why in appendixes we place the original sources by reading which you will get in touch with the transcendental and will fill with the pure sattva.

My apologies to the all religious people that are following these scriptures for taking some of the chapters and make emphases only on those which are related to the subject of this book.
Three Energies of Nature and Above

SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM
CANTO 11, CHAPTER 25

TEXT 1

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O best among men, please listen as I describe to you how the living entity attains a particular nature by association with individual material modes.

TEXTS 2-5

Mind and sense control, tolerance, discrimination, sticking to one’s prescribed duty, truthfulness, mercy, careful study of the past and future, satisfaction in any condition, generosity, renunciation of sense gratification, faith in the spiritual master, being embarrassed at improper action, charity, simplicity, humbleness and satisfaction within oneself are qualities of the mode of goodness. Material desire, great endeavor, audacity, dissatisfaction even in gain, false pride, praying for material advancement, considering oneself different and better than others, sense gratification, rash eagerness to fight, a fondness for hearing oneself praised, the tendency to ridicule others, advertising one’s own prowess and justifying one’s actions by one’s strength are qualities of the mode of passion. Intolerant anger, stinginess, speaking without scriptural authority, violent hatred, living as a parasite, hypocrisy, chronic fatigue, quarrel, lamentation, delusion, unhappiness, depression, sleeping too much, false expectations, fear and laziness constitute the major qualities of the mode of ignorance. Now please hear about the combination of these three modes.
TEXT 6

My dear Uddhava, the combination of all three modes is present in the mentality of “I” and “mine.” The ordinary transactions of this world, which are carried out through the agency of the mind, the objects of perception, the senses and the vital airs of the physical body, are also based on the combination of the modes.

TEXT 7

When a person devotes himself to religiosity, economic development and sense gratification the faith, wealth and sensual enjoyment obtained by his endeavors display the interaction of the three modes of nature.

TEXT 8

When a man desires sense gratification, being attached to family life, and when he consequently becomes established in religious and occupational duties, the combination of the modes of nature is manifest.

TEXT 9

A person exhibiting qualities such as self-control is understood to be predominantly in the mode of goodness. Similarly, a passionate person is recognized by his lust, and one in ignorance is recognized by qualities such as anger.

TEXT 10

Any person, whether man or woman, who worships Me with loving devotion, offering his or her prescribed duties unto Me without material attachment, is understood to be situated in goodness.

TEXT 11

When a person worships Me by his prescribed duties with the hope of gaining material benefit, his nature should be understood to be in passion, and one who worships Me with the desire to commit violence against others is in ignorance.

TEXT 12

The three modes of material nature—goodness, passion and ignorance—influence the living entity but not Me. Manifesting within his mind, they induce the living entity to become attached to material bod-
ies and other created objects. In this way the living entity is bound up.

TEXT 13

When the mode of goodness, which is luminous, pure and auspicious, predominates over passion and ignorance, a man becomes endowed with happiness, virtue, knowledge and other good qualities.

TEXT 14

When the mode of passion, which causes attachment, separatism and activity, conquers ignorance and goodness, a man begins to work hard to acquire prestige and fortune. Thus in the mode of passion he experiences anxiety and struggle.

TEXT 15

When the mode of ignorance conquers passion and goodness, it covers one's consciousness and makes one foolish and dull. Falling into lamentation and illusion, a person in the mode of ignorance sleeps excessively, indulges in false hopes, and displays violence toward others.

TEXT 16

When consciousness becomes clear and the senses are detached from matter, one experiences fearlessness within the material body and detachment from the material mind. You should understand this situation to be the predominance of the mode of goodness, in which one has the opportunity to realize Me.

TEXT 17

You should discern the mode of passion by its symptoms—the distortion of the intelligence because of too much activity, the inability of the perceiving senses to disentangle themselves from mundane objects, an unhealthy condition of the working physical organs, and the unsteady perplexity of the mind.

TEXT 18

When one's higher awareness fails and finally disappears and one is thus unable to concentrate his attention, his mind is ruined and manifests ignorance and depression. You should understand this situation to be the predominance of the mode of ignorance.
TEXT 19

With the increase of the mode of goodness, the strength of the demigods similarly increases. When passion increases, the demoniac become strong. And with the rise of ignorance, O Uddhava, the strength of the most wicked increases.

TEXT 20

It should be understood that alert wakefulness comes from the mode of goodness, sleep with dreaming from the mode of passion, and deep, dreamless sleep from the mode of ignorance. The fourth state of consciousness pervades these three and is transcendental.

TEXT 21

Learned persons dedicated to Vedic culture are elevated by the mode of goodness to higher and higher positions. The mode of ignorance, on the other hand, forces one to fall headfirst into lower and lower births. And by the mode of passion one continues transmigrating through human bodies.

TEXT 22

Those who leave this world in the mode of goodness go to the heavenly planets, those who pass away in the mode of passion remain in the world of human beings, and those dying in the mode of ignorance must go to hell. But those who are free from the influence of all modes of nature come to Me.

TEXT 23

Work performed as an offering to Me, without consideration of the fruit, is considered to be in the mode of goodness. Work performed with a desire to enjoy the results is in the mode of passion. And work impelled by violence and envy is in the mode of ignorance.

TEXT 24

Absolute knowledge is in the mode of goodness, knowledge based on duality is in the mode of passion, and foolish, materialistic knowledge is in the mode of ignorance. Knowledge based upon Me, however, is understood to be transcendental.
Residence in the forest is in the mode of goodness, residence in a town is in the mode of passion, residence in a gambling house displays the quality of ignorance, and residence in a place where I reside is transcendental.

A worker free of attachment is in the mode of goodness; a worker blinded by personal desire is in the mode of passion, and a worker who has completely forgotten how to tell right from wrong is in the mode of ignorance. But a worker who has taken shelter of Me is understood to be transcendental to the modes of nature.

Faith directed toward spiritual life is in the mode of goodness, faith rooted in fruitive work is in the mode of passion, faith residing in irreligious activities is in the mode of ignorance, but faith in My devotional service is purely transcendental.

Food that is wholesome, pure and obtained without difficulty is in the mode of goodness, food that gives immediate pleasure to the senses is in the mode of passion, and food that is unclean and causes distress is in the mode of ignorance.

Happiness derived from the self is in the mode of goodness, happiness based on sense gratification is in the mode of passion, and happiness based on delusion and degradation is in the mode of ignorance. But that happiness found within Me is transcendental.

Therefore material substance, place, result of activity, time, knowledge, work, the performer of work, faith, state of consciousness, species of life and destination after death are all based on the three modes of material nature.
TEXT 31

O best of human beings, all states of material being are related to the interaction of the enjoying soul and material nature. Whether seen, heard of or only conceived within the mind, they are without exception constituted of the modes of nature.

TEXT 32

O gentle Uddhava, all these different phases of conditioned life arise from work born of the modes of material nature. The living entity who conquers these modes, manifested from the mind, can dedicate himself to Me by the process of devotional service and thus attain pure love for Me.

TEXT 33

Therefore, having achieved this human form of life, which allows one to develop full knowledge, those who are intelligent should free themselves from all contamination of the modes of nature and engage exclusively in loving service to Me.

TEXT 34

A wise sage, free from all material association and unbewildered, should subdue his senses and worship Me. He should conquer the modes of passion and ignorance by engaging himself only with things in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 35

Then, being fixed in devotional service, the sage should also conquer the material mode of goodness by indifference toward the modes. Thus pacified within his mind, the spirit soul, freed from the modes of nature, gives up the very cause of his conditioned life and attains Me.

TEXT 36

Freed from the subtle conditioning of the mind and from the modes of nature born of material consciousness, the living entity becomes completely satisfied by experiencing My transcendental form. He no longer searches for enjoyment in the external energy, nor does he contemplate or remember such enjoyment within himself.
The three Gunas of Material Nature

BHAGAVAD-GITA
CHAPTER 14

TEXT 1

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Again I shall declare to you this supreme wisdom, the best of all knowledge, knowing which all the sages have attained the supreme perfection.

TEXT 2

By becoming fixed in this knowledge, one can attain to the transcendental nature like My own. Thus established, one is not born at the time of creation or disturbed at the time of dissolution.

TEXT 3

The total material substance, called Brahman, is the source of birth, and it is that Brahman that I impregnate, making possible the births of all living beings, O son of Bharata.

TEXT 4

It should be understood that all species of life, O son of Kunti, are made possible by birth in this material nature, and that I am the seed-giving father.

TEXT 5

Material nature consists of three modes—goodness, passion and ignorance. When the eternal living entity comes in contact with nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, he becomes conditioned by these modes.
TEXT 6

O sinless one, the mode of goodness, being purer than the others, is illuminating, and it frees one from all sinful reactions. Those situated in that mode become conditioned by a sense of happiness and knowledge.

TEXT 7

The mode of passion is born of unlimited desires and longings, O son of Kunti, and because of this the embodied living entity is bound to material fruitive actions.

TEXT 8

O son of Bharata, know that the mode of darkness, born of ignorance, is the delusion of all embodied living entities. The results of this mode are madness, indolence and sleep, which bind the conditioned soul.

TEXT 9

O son of Bharata, the mode of goodness conditions one to happiness; passion conditions one to fruitive action; and ignorance, covering one's knowledge, binds one to madness.

TEXT 10

Sometimes the mode of goodness becomes prominent, defeating the modes of passion and ignorance, O son of Bharata. Sometimes the mode of passion defeats goodness and ignorance, and at other times ignorance defeats goodness and passion. In this way there is always competition for supremacy.

TEXT 11

The manifestation of the mode of goodness can be experienced when all the gates of the body are illuminated by knowledge.

TEXT 12

O chief of the Bharatas, when there is an increase in the mode of passion the symptoms of great attachment, fruitive activity, intense endeavor, and uncontrollable desire and hankering develop.
TEXT 13

When there is an increase in the mode of ignorance, O son of Kuru, darkness, inertia, madness and illusion are manifested.

TEXT 14

When one dies in the mode of goodness, he attains to the pure higher planets of the great sages.

TEXT 15

When one dies in the mode of passion, he takes birth among those engaged in fruitive activities; and when one dies in the mode of ignorance, he takes birth in the animal kingdom.

TEXT 16

The result of pious action is pure and is said to be in the mode of goodness. But action done in the mode of passion results in misery, and action performed in the mode of ignorance results in foolishness.

TEXT 17

From the mode of goodness, real knowledge develops; from the mode of passion, greed develops; and from the mode of ignorance develop foolishness, madness and illusion.

TEXT 18

Those situated in the mode of goodness gradually go upward to the higher planets; those in the mode of passion live on the earthly planets; and those in the abominable mode of ignorance go down to the hellish worlds.

TEXT 19

When one properly sees that in all activities no other performer is at work than these modes of nature and he knows the Supreme Lord, who is transcendental to all these modes, he attains My spiritual nature.

TEXT 20

When the embodied being is able to transcend these three modes associated with the material body, he can become free from birth, death, old age and their distresses and can enjoy nectar even in this life.
TEXT 21

Arjuna inquired: O my dear Lord, by which symptoms is one known who is transcendental to these three modes? What is his behavior? And how does he transcend the modes of nature?

TEXTS 22-25

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O son of Pandu, he who does not hate illumination, attachment and delusion when they are present or long for them when they disappear; who is unwavering and undisturbed through all these reactions of the material qualities, remaining neutral and transcendental, knowing that the modes alone are active; who is situated in the self and regards alike happiness and distress; who looks upon a lump of earth, a stone and a piece of gold with an equal eye; who is equal toward the desirable and the undesirable; who is steady, situated equally well in praise and blame, honor and dishonor; who treats alike both friend and enemy; and who has renounced all material activities—such a person is said to have transcended the modes of nature.

TEXT 26

One who engages in full devotional service, unfailing in all circumstances, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman.

TEXT 27

And I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman, which is immortal, imperishable and eternal and is the constitutional position of ultimate happiness.
The Divisions of Faith

BHAGAVAT-GITA
CAPTER 17

TEXT 1
Arjuna inquired: O Krishna, what is the situation of those who do not follow the principles of scripture but worship according to their own imagination? Are they in goodness, in passion or in ignorance?

TEXT 2
The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: According to the modes of nature acquired by the embodied soul, one’s faith can be of three kinds—in goodness, in passion or in ignorance. Now hear about this.

TEXT 3
O son of Bharata, according to one’s existence under the various modes of nature, one evolves a particular kind of faith. The living being is said to be of a particular faith according to the modes he has acquired.

TEXT 4
Men in the mode of goodness worship the demigods; those in the mode of passion worship the demons; and those in the mode of ignorance worship ghosts and spirits.

TEXTS 5-6
Those who undergo severe austerities and penances not recommended in the scriptures, performing them out of pride and egoism, who are impelled by lust and attachment, who are foolish and who torture the material elements of the body as well as the Supersoul dwelling within, are to be known as demons.
APPENDIXES

The Divisions of Faith

TEXT 7

Even the food each person prefers is of three kinds, according to the three modes of material nature. The same is true of sacrifices, austerities and charity. Now hear of the distinctions between them.

TEXT 8

Foods dear to those in the mode of goodness increase the duration of life, purify one’s existence and give strength, health, happiness and satisfaction. Such foods are juicy, fatty, wholesome, and pleasing to the heart.

TEXT 9

Foods that are too bitter, too sour, salty, hot, pungent, dry and burning are dear to those in the mode of passion. Such foods cause distress, misery and disease.

TEXT 10

Food prepared more than three hours before being eaten, food that is tasteless, decomposed and putrid, and food consisting of remnants and untouchable things is dear to those in the mode of darkness.

TEXT 11

Of sacrifices, the sacrifice performed according to the directions of scripture, as a matter of duty, by those who desire no reward, is of the nature of goodness.

TEXT 12

But the sacrifice performed for some material benefit, or for the sake of pride, O chief of the Bharatas, you should know to be in the mode of passion.

TEXT 13

Any sacrifice performed without regard for the directions of scripture, without distribution of prasadam [spiritual food], without chanting of Vedic hymns and remunerations to the priests, and without faith is considered to be in the mode of ignorance.
TEXT 14

Austerity of the body consists in worship of the Supreme Lord, the brahmanas, the spiritual master, and superiors like the father and mother, and in cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy and nonviolence.

TEXT 15

Austerity of speech consists in speaking words that are truthful, pleasing, beneficial, and not agitating to others, and also in regularly reciting Vedic literature.

TEXT 16

And satisfaction, simplicity, gravity, self-control and purification of one’s existence are the austerities of the mind.

TEXT 17

This threefold austerity, performed with transcendental faith by men not expecting material benefits but engaged only for the sake of the Supreme, is called austerity in goodness.

TEXT 18

Penance performed out of pride and for the sake of gaining respect, honor and worship is said to be in the mode of passion. It is neither stable nor permanent.

TEXT 19

Penance performed out of foolishness, with self-torture or to destroy or injure others, is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

TEXT 20

Charity given out of duty, without expectation of return, at the proper time and place, and to a worthy person is considered to be in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 21

But charity performed with the expectation of some return, or with a desire for fruitive results, or in a grudging mood, is said to be charity in the mode of passion.
TEXT 22

And charity performed at an impure place, at an improper time, to unworthy persons or without proper attention and respect is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

TEXT 23

From the beginning of creation, the three words Om Tat Sat were used to indicate the Supreme Absolute Truth. These three symbolic representations were used by brahmanas while chanting the hymns of the Vedas and during sacrifices for the satisfaction of the Supreme.

TEXT 24

Therefore, transcendentalists undertaking performances of sacrifice, charity and penance in accordance with scriptural regulations begin always with oà, to attain the Supreme.

TEXT 25

Without desiring fruitive results, one should perform various kinds of sacrifice, penance and charity with the word tat. The purpose of such transcendental activities is to get free from material entanglement.

TEXTS 26-27

The Absolute Truth is the objective of devotional sacrifice, and it is indicated by the word sat. The performer of such sacrifice is also called sat, as are all works of sacrifice, penance and charity which, true to the absolute nature, are performed to please the Supreme Person, O son of Pritha.

TEXT 28

Anything done as sacrifice, charity or penance without faith in the Supreme, O son of Pritha, is impermanent. It is called asat and is useless both in this life and the next.
TEXT 1
Arjuna said: O mighty-armed one, I wish to understand the purpose of renunciation [tyaga] and of the renounced order of life [sannyasa], O killer of the Kesi demon, master of the senses.

TEXT 2
The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The giving up of activities that are based on material desire is what great learned men call the renounced order of life [sannyasa]. And giving up the results of all activities is what the wise call renunciation [tyaga].

TEXT 3
Some learned men declare that all kinds of fruitive activities should be given up as faulty, yet other sages maintain that acts of sacrifice, charity and penance should never be abandoned.

TEXT 4
O best of the Bharatas, now hear My judgment about renunciation. O tiger among men, renunciation is declared in the scriptures to be of three kinds.

TEXT 5
Acts of sacrifice, charity and penance are not to be given up; they must be performed. Indeed, sacrifice, charity and penance purify even the great souls.
TEXT 6

All these activities should be performed without attachment or any expectation of result. They should be performed as a matter of duty, O son of Pritha. That is My final opinion.

TEXT 7

Prescribed duties should never be renounced. If one gives up his prescribed duties because of illusion, such renunciation is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

TEXT 8

Anyone who gives up prescribed duties as troublesome or out of fear of bodily discomfort is said to have renounced in the mode of passion. Such action never leads to the elevation of renunciation.

TEXT 9

O Arjuna, when one performs his prescribed duty only because it ought to be done, and renounces all material association and all attachment to the fruit, his renunciation is said to be in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 10

The intelligent renouncer situated in the mode of goodness, neither hateful of inauspicious work nor attached to auspicious work, has no doubts about work.

TEXT 11

It is indeed impossible for an embodied being to give up all activities. But he who renounces the fruits of action is called one who has truly renounced.

TEXT 12

For one who is not renounced, the threefold fruits of action—desirable, undesirable and mixed—accrue after death. But those who are in the renounced order of life have no such result to suffer or enjoy.

TEXT 13

O mighty-armed Arjuna, according to the Vedanta there are five causes for the accomplishment of all action. Now learn of these from Me.
TEXT 14

The place of action [the body], the performer, the various senses, the many different kinds of endeavor, and ultimately the Supersoul—these are the five factors of action.

TEXT 15

Whatever right or wrong action a man performs by body, mind or speech is caused by these five factors.

TEXT 16

Therefore one who thinks himself the only doer, not considering the five factors, is certainly not very intelligent and cannot see things as they are.

TEXT 17

One who is not motivated by false ego, whose intelligence is not entangled, though he kills men in this world, does not kill. Nor is he bound by his actions.

TEXT 18

Knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower are the three factors that motivate action; the senses, the work and the doer are the three constituents of action.

TEXT 19

According to the three different modes of material nature, there are three kinds of knowledge, action and performer of action. Now hear of them from Me.

TEXT 20

That knowledge by which one undivided spiritual nature is seen in all living entities, though they are divided into innumerable forms, you should understand to be in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 21

That knowledge by which one sees that in every different body there is a different type of living entity you should understand to be in the mode of passion.
The Perfection of Renunciation

TEXT 22

And that knowledge by which one is attached to one kind of work as the all in all, without knowledge of the truth, and which is very meager, is said to be in the mode of darkness.

TEXT 23

That action which is regulated and which is performed without attachment, without love or hatred, and without desire for fruitive results is said to be in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 24

But action performed with great effort by one seeking to gratify his desires, and enacted from a sense of false ego, is called action in the mode of passion.

TEXT 25

That action performed in illusion, in disregard of scriptural injunctions, and without concern for future bondage or for violence or distress caused to others is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

TEXT 26

One who performs his duty without association with the modes of material nature, without false ego, with great determination and enthusiasm, and without wavering in success or failure is said to be a worker in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 27

The worker who is attached to work and the fruits of work, desiring to enjoy those fruits, and who is greedy, always envious, impure, and moved by joy and sorrow, is said to be in the mode of passion.

TEXT 28

The worker who is always engaged in work against the injunctions of the scripture, who is materialistic, obstinate, cheating and expert in insulting others, and who is lazy, always morose and procrastinating is said to be a worker in the mode of ignorance.
TEXT 29

O winner of wealth, now please listen as I tell you in detail of the different kinds of understanding and determination, according to the three modes of material nature.

TEXT 30

O son of Pritha, that understanding by which one knows what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, what is binding and what is liberating, is in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 31

O son of Pritha, that understanding which cannot distinguish between religion and irreligion, between action that should be done and action that should not be done, is in the mode of passion.

TEXT 32

That understanding which considers irreligion to be religion and religion to be irreligion, under the spell of illusion and darkness, and strives always in the wrong direction, O Partha, is in the mode of ignorance.

TEXT 33

O son of Pritha, that determination which is unbreakable, which is sustained with steadfastness by yoga practice, and which thus controls the activities of the mind, life and senses is determination in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 34

But that determination by which one holds fast to fruitive results in religion, economic development and sense gratification is of the nature of passion, O Arjuna.

TEXT 35

And that determination which cannot go beyond dreaming, fearfulness, lamentation, moroseness and illusion—such unintelligent determination, O son of Pritha, is in the mode of darkness.
TEXT 36

O best of the Bharatas, now please hear from Me about the three kinds of happiness by which the conditioned soul enjoys, and by which he sometimes comes to the end of all distress.

TEXT 37

That which in the beginning may be just like poison but at the end is just like nectar and which awakens one to self-realization is said to be happiness in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 38

That happiness which is derived from contact of the senses with their objects and which appears like nectar at first but poison at the end is said to be of the nature of passion.

TEXT 39

And that happiness which is blind to self-realization, which is delusion from beginning to end and which arises from sleep, laziness and illusion is said to be of the nature of ignorance.

TEXT 40

There is no being existing, either here or among the demigods in the higher planetary systems, which is freed from these three modes born of material nature.

TEXT 41

Brahmanas, ksatriyas, vaisyas and sudras are distinguished by the qualities born of their own natures in accordance with the material modes, O chastiser of the enemy.

TEXT 42

Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom and religiousness—these are the natural qualities by which the brahmanas work.

TEXT 43

Heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity and leadership are the natural qualities of work for the ksatriyas.
TEXT 44

Farming, cow protection and business are the natural work for the vaisyas, and for the sudras there is labor and service to others.

TEXT 45

By following his qualities of work, every man can become perfect. Now please hear from Me how this can be done.

TEXT 46

By worship of the Lord, who is the source of all beings and who is all-pervading, a man can attain perfection through performing his own work.

TEXT 47

It is better to engage in one's own occupation, even though one may perform it imperfectly, than to accept another's occupation and perform it perfectly. Duties prescribed according to one's nature are never affected by sinful reactions.

TEXT 48

Every endeavor is covered by some fault, just as fire is covered by smoke. Therefore one should not give up the work born of his nature, O son of Kunti, even if such work is full of fault.

TEXT 49

One who is self-controlled and unattached and who disregards all material enjoyments can obtain, by practice of renunciation, the highest perfect stage of freedom from reaction.

We recommend to purchase these books from BBT International.
Resources

This book was written based on the following classical Vedic scriptures:

— Bhagavad Gita
— Shrimad Bhagavatam
— Upanishads
— Charaka Samhita
— Sushruta Samhita
— Ashtanga Hridaya Samhita
— Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra

... as well as statements of teachers of Sufism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism and modern thinkers.

Books, lectures and workshops following Teachers and Doctors:

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— Michael Mamota
— Swami Rama

Courses:

— Ayurvedic healing course for health care professionals and Vedic astrology in the American Institute of Vedic Studies.
— Yoga psychology and training in Shivananda Ashram
About the author

Dr. Rami Bleckt is a teacher and adviser of Eastern Psychology, a philosopher and writer.

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Rami holds a PhD in Psychology. The topic of his dissertation was “The Ancient Wisdom in Retrospective. Scientific Experiment”. Also Rami is a Doctor of Philosophy in Alternative Medicine – Ph. D. (A. M.) and has a Master Degree in Alternative Medicine – M. D. (A.M.). He is a Bachelor in Pedagogy.

In 2004 Rami was selected as the Best Teacher in the 5th International Festival of Psychology and Psychotherapy Stars. In 2007 he was granted the International Award of Alchemy as “The Person of the Year in Workshop Trainings”.

On the basis of ancient knowledge of pure soul sages and on the basis of latest achievements of modern science, Rami developed several unique personal courses and workshops, which he has conducted in Russia, Israel, the USA, Germany, Canada, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Latvia, Great Britain, etc. He has great experience in personal consulting and teaching, including at universities and colleges.

Rami is the president of the International Association of Eastern Psychology. Also he is the editor-in-chief of the international journal “Thanksgiving with Love”.

Rami has written very interesting, useful books that changed lives of many people: “Fate and I”, “Ten Steps on the Way to Happiness”, “Three Energies. The Forgotten Canons of Health and Harmony”, “How to Make a Deal with the Universe or the Planets’ Influence on our Fate and Health”, “The Alchemy of Interpersonal Relations. The Art of listening and being heard.”. Most of his books have been already translated into 6 languages.
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We invite you to visit the personal site of Rami Bleckt.

bleckt.ca

*It happened to see your website while searching for certain information. The posted information is very good. I would like to be a regular reader of your articles. You are doing a wonderful job. Let the almighty give you all strength that required.*

Thank you,
Spiritually yours,
S. Gouri Shanke
Other books of Rami Bleckt on english

The Alchemy of Interpersonal Relations

“This is one of the best books about communicative psychology.”

Dr. Ludmila Travkoff
director of a psychology clinic

“This is one of the best books on communication psychology I have ever read. According to the British Psychological Society, psychology is the scientific study of people, the mind and behaviour. This book is really about people, mind and behaviour as well as happiness of understanding and communication. The author is dropping all sorts of knowledge on the reader from every angle. It is super-well-written and covers a LOT of grounds. It covers my favourite themes: the unconscious, spirituality, the limits of rational thought as well as limits of language. It is an easy reading for a psychology lover who will read it for pleasure. If you study psychology, this great book can supplement your studies being one of the best choices to deepen your knowledge of psychology. I am very grateful to Rami Bleckt for this new brilliant book and cordially recommend it to everyone”.

Elena Korotaev
Life Coach, Toronto
In their cognisance of the world, the ancient highly developed civilizations relied on specific knowledge, which had been given to them by heaven, and, so, they lived in harmony with nature.

If we live according to this knowledge, the stars will be on our side, the Universe will become our best friend, and each new day will bestow upon us health, success and happiness. And how you can achieve this, how you can to find your place in this world, and how you can come to an agreement with the Universe is available to you in this book.

“I recently began to notice that I can feel the energy that radiates from people, although, for the time being, I cannot define what I am feeling: I am simply at a loss for words in my own language to describe what is happening with me. Now, I understand better what you meant, that man doesn’t exist, but energy does. I would like to mention that it has become a lot easier to rid oneself of habitual labels, which we like to pin on each other when we are communicating. This happened after having read your book “How to Make a Deal with the Universe or the Planets’ Influence on our Fate and Health”.

Thank you so much for it! It is simply stunning! I am using it as a textbook and a reference book. The information which is gathered in it is structured to such an extent and presented in an accessible way that one can only praise it.

As a teacher, I like the book very much. The identical formats used in presenting the information with regard to each planet and explaining the material are very good, thereby creating a logical structure in the conscious that becomes firmly anchored in our memory.”
10 Steps on the Way to Happiness

In every bookshop you’ll find a huge number of books that are devoted to the topic of how to be successful in life and become happy. But, for some reason, the number of happy and healthy people is not increasing.

The reason for this is that studying such books does not bear fruit. The people’s character and the view of the world are not changed.

Apart from practical advice, this book presents deep thoughts in simple words and, when you read it, you can get rid of conscious and unconscious negative programmes, internal complexes, hurt feelings, fears, and everything that prevents us from being happy, healthy and successful.

“I am very happy that this book has been published. It asks fundamental questions about the destiny of man and how to find it. Rami Bleckt’s profound analysis permits people to become highly effective in achieving their goals, giving them a taste of the richness, harmony and integrity of life. Whoever wants to achieve both results in his life must definitely read this book.”

Oleg Gadezky, the best psychologist-coach of the 3rd International Festival of the Stars of Western and Oriental psychology
Dear Rami,

I have just finished your book. It is fantastic. I could not decide which chapter is my favourite, because all chapters are very important and useful. I think, everybody should read your book. To tell the truth, when you gave me the book, I was a bit skeptic. I have seen many books on management and spiritual bestsellers, I have read some of them, but something was always missing. Your book gave me a lot. Actually, it systematized my thoughts. I have heard and known the information mostly, but now everything seems very clear, and I know, I can build in my life.

Moreover, this is very important to use the knowledge. Before, when I read a book about happiness or wellbeing, I agreed with a lot of things, but couldn't use in my life, because after some days or weeks I forgot to use the rules. Now I realized that the problem was that the books could not give a deep impression, could not touch my heart so deeply, like your book.

When I was reading your book, in every minute I felt the changes in my life. I can say it is natural and easy to follow your advice that is why it works for me. You really caught the essence and the aim of the life. I think I will read your book more and more. Congratulations and thank you for giving me such a big support.

Dr. Lily

Hungary
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Dr. Rami Bleckt

The Three Energies

The Forgotten Canons of Health and Harmony

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