

## **The Yoga of Meditation**

### **Chapter 6 (Part 2 of 2)**

Today we are going to continue with Chapter 6 of the Bhagavad Gita, The Yoga of Meditation. We are exploring the state of consciousness and the means of reaching the state of consciousness called meditation. This is when our conscious attention starts turning from an outward-oriented focus to an inward-oriented focus. This inward-oriented focus isn't just on mind, thoughts, memories, moods, and feelings. It is on something more essential. This chapter gives techniques for finding that quality of consciousness that lives us.

Due to the nature of consciousness, we were all born with a tendency to look outward. It is the inclination of consciousness to turn outward. And there is a self-reflective quality that every self-aware human being has. We put our attention on the thoughts associated with outward relationships, and the feelings that get associated with those thoughts.

(1:59) In order to turn the consciousness inward there has to be a motive, an indication, something inside of you that becomes aware of itself. As was described in the Gita, it is the process of dejection, discrimination, action, knowledge, and renunciation. This is a movement from the fascination with the world of mind, senses, moods, reactions, and feelings to that which is the source of those things. It doesn't happen naturally. If it hadn't been for the previous five chapters, the consciousness would not easily turn inward on the Self. It is not a natural movement. The natural movements are like the rest of nature—about the body, physicality, and material life.

The inclination of the human body and human programming is outward. We have to have some reason like dejection, suffering, and misery to withdraw from that. But we tend to become preoccupied with our thoughts and moods associated with suffering. So it has to be something other than suffering. Something has to awaken. Without that inner quality of being we wouldn't even know about meditation nor have any inclination towards it.

In order to meditate we are at a mature state of consciousness. The Hindus have two terms, Pravritti and Nivritti. Pravritti is the tendency of consciousness to grow and evolve outwardly, the inclination that takes one towards the objects of pleasure. Nivritti is the tendency of consciousness to turn inward and grow inwardly, the inclination that takes one away from the objects of pleasure.

(4:16) Nivritti is about returning to one's origin. The first technique the Gita gives us is sense control. If you don't make an effort to control the senses then the outward jumping of consciousness to whatever the senses signal runs us and meditation is not possible. Unless we restrain the inclination of the senses to jump outward to their objects and seek fulfillment we cannot do this journey. The outward orientation of consciousness is very unstable. Meditation is about becoming stable. When we develop enough sense control

then what happens naturally is the mind, the instrument of the five senses, automatically grows quiet. That is the beginning of the preparation for yoga.

When the mind starts quieting, the vital, the emotions, and the action drives start quieting. In the Gita, the path of quieting the mind is taking action without attachment to the outcome, without an investment with the results or the process. Training yourself how to act without attachment to the outcome purifies and quiets the vital. When the vital begins to quiet then what happens naturally is the nature of the Self reveals itself step by step. This is the Yoga of Knowledge. This knowledge gives us a sense of the quality of being which is more present and able to receive rather than get.

(6:55) When this happens the inclination to go outward starts quieting. Consciousness is ready to collaborate with an inward orientation through meditation. In the first session for Chapter 6 we talked about the first instructions for coming into a meditative state. Now we are going to expand on those instructions and speak more of the state of the Self.

*254. Yoga is that state when the yogi experiences endless bliss that results from a purified intellect but not from sense contact; once established in this state, the yogi is not likely to fall from the truth of the Self.*

*255. That is the real state of yoga after obtaining which no other gain is considered greater and one is not shaken even by profoundest sorrow.*

This state of endless bliss is the result of meditation. Endless bliss occurs when the outer self begins to move into relationship with the inner self. Bliss starts occurring. This is why meditation is so enchanting when the consciousness gets to a certain point. With sufficient self-discipline the consciousness starts quieting and becomes receptive and begins to experience its own nature. That experience of its own nature is bliss. So meditation is the means of taking the state of the point of no return and becoming more established in it. The point of no return was described in Chapter 5 as when the consciousness overcomes the pull of the outer inclinations and reaches its own orbit. It was wavering in a lower orbit but has reached a point where the world is not overtaking it as readily. It has returned to a state of detachment and witnessing more effectively.

(9:33) Meditation becomes a powerful tool for stabilizing the consciousness in its own orbit. One is not likely to fall from the truth of the Self once established in the state of meditation. The bliss that comes in meditation is more fulfilling than an outer bliss that carries temporariness and inevitable suffering. The Gita says, "*no other gain is considered greater and one is not shaken even by profoundest sorrow.*" In yoga, moving into relationship with that quality of being that we are is the fulfillment, is the purpose. This chapter is pointing to the individual state of the Self, the individual realization of being.

Our individual being is part of one aspect of a vast beingness. We are all individual expressions of the one being and we move in connection with our own beingness. We then begin to move into relationship with that beingness that is everywhere and in all things. This brings peace and bliss. It is also the beginning of the end of fear, desire, and anger.

Instead of being in reactivity, defensiveness, and fear with others you begin to move into empathy and connection with the being in others. You are not caught in that endless cycle of ego protecting itself or enhancing itself because you have found another Self to rest within.

*256. This state of sorrowless union is called yoga and one should practice this tirelessly with strong determination.*

*257. How to practice yoga? First, abandon all desire-prompted thoughts and control the senses by the mind.*

*258. Slowly dive deep into the state of tranquility by holding the mind under firm intellect. Immerse in the Self and remain there for as long as possible without inviting any thought.*

*259. Mind is by nature fickle, it wanders away and wavers; therefore, one should always bring the mind to the Self alone.*

(12:25) This persistent effort becomes very effective when the consciousness has matured. There will come a time when meditation is what you want to do. But the first indication of that is the ability to sit for twenty minutes, thirty minutes, one hour. To sit still takes effort initially. This strengthens the ability to detach from the outward world, the emotional nature, and inner thoughts. It brings you into a state of greater presence.

In meditation there is a series of stages. In the first stage, your thoughts will become apparent to you, where before you were your thoughts. In the second stage you will notice the restlessness that is going on in your body or the tendency to fall asleep. You will begin to notice the inability for you to stay present in your thoughts. When you become aware of your thoughts, you become aware of the misery of your thoughts. The inclination of thoughts is to drive you to action so you are not aware of being caught up in your thoughts. That is why self-control is so necessary so that you can just sit with the thoughts and not act on them, or project into the future, but keep bringing yourself to the presence. Without self-control you will be stuck in thought every time you meditate and you will either become so restless that you can't meditate or you will fall asleep and go unconscious.

(15:00) The bottom line is that an ability to control the thoughts and not go where they lead brings forward your authority, that quality of being that is applying the effort to go beyond the inclination of the ego. The more you apply this authority then the more ability you have to witness and be present with the thoughts. The uncomfortable quality that thoughts bring us quiets. We can start seeing thoughts passing through our field of consciousness with more detachment. This is a state of calmness. You move into a place where you can witness thinking going on and you have some say about those thoughts; whereas when they are closer to you, you don't have much say and have to endure them calmly.

Only by sitting long enough in meditation can you get some distance from them and authority over them; they are used to taking you down the rabbit hole. The more you sit the

more capacity you have to witness and to dismiss thoughts; to not go where they are likely to take you. Those who sit for an hour or so regularly usually can come to the state of calmness at some point. The very act of applying effort to sit still strengthens the capacity to move to calmness.

(16:58) As calmness strengthens you move into a state of silence. You will notice either there are no thoughts going by or if there are thoughts you are not noticing them. There is this overall sense of silence and it is easier to sit. You are not so sensitive to external noises. As silence deepens then there is a sense of peace, as if the quietude of your mind is sinking into your whole body. By the time peacefulness occurs, the consciousness is beginning to be rhythmic rather than restless. Silence and peace are maybe indistinguishable but peace is more in the body. Silence is more in the mind.

As peace deepens there comes an experience of bliss. When bliss comes you are getting established in the state of the Self. That is the goal of this chapter: to reach the state of bliss and stay in it as long as possible. This tends to take the perturbations out of your spiritual struggle and make it more effortless. It says to *"dive deep into the state of tranquility;"* so let your Self dive deep past the restless thoughts and into the silence. And rest in that state of tranquility by not letting the mind run off and take you out of that state. *"Immerse in the Self and remain there for as long as possible."* When you reach a state of calmness the best way to strengthen your ability to attain those states as part of your outward life is to stay in those states as long as possible.

(19:15) That is how you train the habit of your restless consciousness to be more calm and tranquil. The more you are able to stay in meditation, in that state of peace, the more it carries into your life afterwards. If you come out of meditation in calmness you won't immediately go back into your thoughts. If you get into silence there will be an inclination to remain silent. If you get into the state of peace without any effort on your part there is an inward silence no matter what outward activity you are doing. If you reach the state of calmness you will have less thought in your life. If you reach the state of silence you will be calmer in your outer life. If you reach the state peace then you will be more silent in your outer action. And if you reach the state of bliss you will stay in peace even when you engage in outer action.

Meditation is a static activity. It gives time to connect to your Self and will leak into your daily life. Frequency of meditation in daily life is a means of coming to the state of stitha prajna, that stable intelligence that is capable of being present with what is arising. Then your attachment for action also quiets as a consequence of your ability to keep that connection with the Self. The mind is the obstacle of meditation because it is used to jumping into things. Your job is to catch your thoughts as they pull you away, and bring them back to that experience of calmness or silence or peace. The consciousness has to reach a certain maturity in order to have relatively long periods of meditation. And the more time you spend in meditation the more it is likely to achieve that state of consciousness.

*260. The yogi who is tranquil in mind and free from the perturbation of rajas and the impurity of tamas, dwells in supreme bliss and enjoys the delight of the Brahman.*

*261. Thus freed from the stains of passion and remaining constantly in yoga, the yogi easily attains the delight of the infinite bliss of the Brahman.*

*262. Such a yogi sees all in the Self and the Self in all.*

*263. One who sees Me in all and all beings in Me, to him I am always visible and to Me he is also always visible.*

This discipline is yoga. This practice of meditation is an action, an effort to restrain the inclination to do other things. Yoga is action that takes you to the goal of yoga. By disciplining yourself in order to meditate you have reached a state of very effective action. This ability to move into relationship with the inner being through meditation and to come to that dynamic relationship with that inner relationship with yourself no matter what is going on outwardly becomes the most effective tool up to now. When we move into relationship with the source of our beingness and existence, we automatically begin to move into relationship with the one being that we all are expressions of concurrently.

(24:19) When we meet the higher Self within ourselves we are also meeting the universal being, the Brahman. It is in moving into relationship with the universal quality that you become aware of it through your individual quality. Your individual quality of being connects you to the universal quality of being; that is what is being pointed to in this chapter. This is primarily occurring in the intelligence, the part of the awareness associated with the upper body. It is not yet integrated throughout the emotions and the rest of the body. It is the first place that we can establish a foundation in which we can deepen this ability to move into relationship with truth, with the essence of ourselves.

Everything that has happened before, like knowledge, strengthens your ability to relinquish those things in your life that are not true. Intelligent action takes you away from the inclination of reactivity and addiction. Each helps the other. Now at this point the yoga of meditation is the most powerful and effective yoga, superior to all the other yogas that have been described.

It takes time. You have to establish yourself in this state. You have to consciously strive to remain in this state, to bring it forward in your own experience, so that it is a tangible reality for you. Creating the right environment for yourself is important so that there are not undue distractions. You remove yourself from the world sufficiently so this state can integrate and become more a part of your life.

(27:15) The more it stays with you, the less likely you will be overtaken when you step out of your protected environment. Ultimately you will need to step out. Arjuna is going to fight a battle filled with horrific activity. For him to stay detached from the outcome, he will need to be firmly established in this state of yoga.

*264. The yogi who worships Me and loves Me as one in every being, without discrimination, is always present in Me, whatever may be his mode of life.*

*265. Arjuna, a supreme yogi views the pain and pleasure of others with empathy while seeing the same Self everywhere.*

In this chapter the being within is beginning to move in relationship with the being without. It is the beginning of this recognition of the universal from the individual. The individual is moving in relationship with the universal. *"One who sees Me in all and all beings in Me,"* the Me in this case is the universal aspect that Krishna represents. When you move into that in yourself you automatically move into relationship with the Krishna principle or divine principle or the Brahman. When you find it within yourself you automatically start seeing it elsewhere.

This moving into relationship with the being both inside yourself and outside yourself will be the movement that takes the realization from the individual self to God. The spiritual journey has states from ego to Self, from Self to God and from God to truth. In these chapters we are talking about the journey from ego to Self. At the end of this chapter we are beginning the journey from Self to God. When one comes to relationship with the Self what happens is very magical. You change your paradigm. Your ability to experience the subtle vibrations of existence gets enhanced. Things like mantra, music, chants, or the ability to feel spiritual energy from others becomes available to you.

(30:01) You begin to start experiencing existence, not just through the five senses, but through a huge array of possible sources of experiencing the subtle worlds. When one starts to feel these subtle energies that is the indication that one has come to the Self. Through mantra and chanting there can be a sensation of energy felt in your heart, in your awareness, or in your body. If this has happened then you can know that the Self is awakened in you. You are beginning to experience the universe in its true quality, free of the limitation of the mind and five senses. This is basically energy. This feeling quality of energy, this awareness quality of energy, is the domain that you are now entering into at this stage in the Gita.

*Arjuna said:*

*266. Krishna, this yoga, which presupposes even-mindedness, appears to be an impossible proposition to me because my mind is so fickle.*

*267. My mind is so restless, turbulent, stormy and obstinate. It seems to me as difficult to control it as the wind.*

*The Blessed Lord said:*

*268. This yoga, Arjuna, may be difficult at the beginning, but through constant practice and dispassion one can be successful in it.*

*269. Yes, I agree, this yoga is difficult for him whose mind is not controlled, but if one strives hard with perseverance it is attainable.*

Arjuna has come forward with doubts about his ability to do it. He has enough self-awareness to know how his mind runs him. I meet so many people who talk about how they could never meditate, or sit still for ten minutes without getting restless. And even when they do meditate they feel it is unruly and uncontrollable. So Krishna is assuring Arjuna that through persistence and effort he will be able to conquer this inclination in his mind.

(32:40) There are two ways to come to meditation. One is the natural way where it is easy to meditate. The other is through effort. This chapter points out the necessity of effort. Whatever has come to Arjuna is not yet stable enough in his body. Meditation becomes the technique to embed it more deeply into him. The discipline of sitting still and becoming aware of himself as consciousness is a way to accelerate the quieting of his mind and system, but it takes persistence and detachment from the outcome. If you are in rajas, and you sit the first fifteen minutes, you feel so restless and it is impossible. That is when you have to apply discipline to keep sitting.

You have to not believe your mind's story that it is not working. There are times it will be easier, times when it will be harder, and times when you will just go unconscious, when you obscure yourself. These are the sattwa, rajas, and tamas states that we go through every day. Every two hours approximately we are cycling through these periods of time. When you are in sattwa, meditation is natural. When you are in rajas, you can meditate but it is a lot of work. In tamas you feel completely obscured—there is no connection, there is nothing. This is not the same as one who is receiving so much force that they lose outer consciousness and are in an altered state of consciousness in which their body seems to be asleep.

(34:53) For the most part, meditation comes more naturally in sattwa. But by controlling the senses there will be less domination by tamas. By restraining the impulse for action you will be converting the rajas into more sattwa. By giving time to the sattwa you will reduce the tamas and the rajas proportionally. When you take action aligned with sattwa, the rajas and tamas automatically reduce. *"But if one strives hard with perseverance it is attainable."*

*Arjuna said:*

*270. Krishna, what happens to a yogi who is not able to reach the goal due to his wavering mind, even though he has faith and interest in sadhana?*

*271. Is he likely to lose both worlds and, like a detached cloud, be blown over from the path of Brahman?*

*272. My doubt about this can be removed only by You; please guide me correctly on this point.*

Arjuna is speaking from the mental consciousness. His intelligence is aware of what Krishna has been describing to him but it hasn't become part of his experience. He is saying, "Will this really work? What if it doesn't work and I lose the world I have plus any other world that is possible?" This is the cost-benefit calculation of every ego. Is it worth the effort? It is attachment to outcome. All doubt arises from ego's calculations, thinking it is not worth the effort.

(37:04) What is different in this case is that Arjuna now has some faith in Krishna. He is saying, *"My doubt about this can only be removed by You."* What removes doubt? Faith. Faith is the ability to be connected to that which you are seeking even when there is no evidence. With faith comes trust and belief, but faith is first. Without faith this path is impossible. Faith arises from the quality of your being that in its essence knows the truth. So it is a movement from now to a future point that is known through being able to access your being. By connecting to your being you are moving into a relationship with the goal of your yoga.

Faith is knowing that it is true within yourself. When you are in sattwa, faith is strong. In rajas it is distracted. In tamas it has failed. Having access to your faith, in this case by having a Krishna, Arjuna is able to move outside of those veils and be reminded of who he really is. This quality of faith comes naturally more and more as we move into relationship with the inner being. Fewer assurances are needed; there is a greater recognition of the truth of what Krishna is revealing.

*The Blessed Lord said:*

*273. One who falls from the path of this yoga shall not be destroyed either in this life or hereafter because one who pursues the path of yoga never comes to grief.*

*274. A fallen yogi goes to the world of the righteous and dwelling there for long years he again takes birth in the family of the pure and prosperous.*

*275. Or he may be born again in the family of seers, full of wisdom and spirituality. Such a rebirth is rare in this world.*

*276. There he gets back the spiritual attainment of the previous birth and strives more intensely for perfection.*

Here Krishna is indulging Arjuna. He is responding to his ego, reassuring him that he will not be lost. Any action done sincerely in this yoga will not be lost. This is a restatement of the wisdom he gave in chapter two. *"In this approach there is no loss, nor fear of contrary result, nor is there any apprehension of incurring sin. Even a little progress saves one from great fear."* Why is that? Because there is intellectual clarity about the goal.

(40:40) There is intellectual clarity about the goal; where with other paths you may just be doing the techniques, or through your bhakti or spiritual experiences you may just be going any which way. If you follow a tradition where its only purpose is to keep you in the

tradition you will just move from what you think you should do or whatever energetic feeling you are having. You can be led in many different directions. Those traditions that have intellectual clarity can take you to the goal. In this yoga there is a purposeful direction that takes us beyond all these distractions.

Anytime you do this yoga sincerely you are not likely to fall. Even if you don't complete the goal in a lifetime, the Gita says in the second chapter, the soul is reborn. The very essence of our Self, our central Self, goes from one life to another, and the central Self evolves. Even if you fail in this lifetime you will recover what you have attained. It will come to you naturally in your next life. You will be born into a favorable circumstance for the consciousness to rise to a higher state of receptivity and recover itself. In astrology this is reflected in the Saturn return. The planet Saturn takes approximately 24 to 30 years to return to its original position. Astrologers say that until a person has had their first Saturn return they have not yet recovered all the qualities that they developed in previous lives. All those qualities have to come to their fruition before you go beyond your previous life.

(43:09) This is the same principle. Anything related to truth is not lost. Anytime you move into connection to your inner being you will be able to recover it more quickly. When you recover it there will be a greater vigor and purposefulness to recover it completely. There will be an aspiration and a motive. Any time a true seeker comes to me I can always tell that it is either in this life or their accomplishment from a previous life. I can see it in their aspiration. I can see it in the quickness of their ability to respond, their quickness to gather the information and their effectiveness to put it into practice.

We don't lose these qualities because they are the essential qualities of our Self, the consciousness of our Self. The ego does not forget that. The ego is nothing but the instrument for the being to express itself in this dimension. When the ego knows the being it doesn't forget it. It becomes more open, intelligent, receptive, and capable than an ego that never met the being. That is the assurance within these verses. You can look within yourself and see if this is the case for you. Being born in the midst of poverty, strife, cruelty, or ignorance would be obscuring environments. It doesn't mean that souls aren't born into those environments; they are the members of a family that breaks out with a startling capacity to create a positive life.

(45:03) They usually bring with them a positive attitude, an ability to not be so overtaken by environmental factors. They are able to overcome adversity, difficulties, and limitations much more quickly than other people in the family. We see this a lot in the West because the West is at a level of prosperity, security, and comfort unheard of in other times. We live like kings and queens, princesses and princes. It is an extraordinary time where material prosperity is greater than it has ever been. This allows consciousness to develop possibilities for growth and maturity far beyond what would happen if you were born in Somalia or a place of great strife and poverty.

Many people who come to me are fallen yogis, in either this life or past lives. Learning how to not fall is part of yoga. And falling creates dejection because one part of you knows what you have lost and there is an aspiration to recover it. In the whole cycle of dejection you can

see that dejection is a recognition of your bondage. That means that something in you knows what is not bondage, otherwise you wouldn't know and it would just be bondage.

*277. Such a fallen yogi will be driven to the path of yoga by the force of circumstances due to his previous practice and goes above the range of scriptures quickly.*

*278. That yogi pursues the path of yoga with diligence and sincerity and is purified from all karmas accumulated in the course of several births, finally culminating in the highest state of bliss.*

*279. A yogi is superior to an ascetic, greater than a scholar and also superior to a man of ritualistic worship. Therefore, Arjuna, be a yogi.*

*280. Of all the yogis, however, one who is ever linked with Me in heart and for Me has love and faith, him I consider to be the greatest and most dear to Me.*

*Thus ends the sixth chapter of Gita entitled The Yoga of Meditation.*

This completes the first part of the Bhagavad Gita, the first of the three phases that the Gita has. The first six chapters is the movement of ego to the Self; the second six chapters is the movement of the Self to God; the third six chapters is the movement from God to Truth and Truth to manifestation. These first six chapters are the effort part. This is where we break down our identification with our separate egoic existence and shift in our identification to that which lives us, to the being. This is an individual realization. It is a realization of the individual Self.

(48:54) This state of consciousness is an extraordinarily different state of consciousness than what we live as a bound human being where we are ruled by body, mind and senses. It is a shift into a state of awareness and presence, of receptivity to gather information from other sources than just the mind and senses. It is the opening of the individual into its potentiality to actualize itself as a universal being. One who has come to this state often feels they have reached the individual realization and that there is nothing else to get. But they are still pulled by their human nature. They can still be overtaken by hidden vital drives. It is not yet established. They don't know that they can cause their own downfall by indulging in human nature.

One who has come to this state is more able to enjoy life and is more capable of understanding how to gain power and have control over others than normal humans. So the drives that are still inherent can get enhanced if one is not paying attention in the state of the Self. This state cannot be lost, but it can be veiled. That veiling can create karma and the karma can create a great deal of pain and suffering. The pain and suffering of a being who has come to the Self is in many ways greater than the suffering of an ordinary human being.

(51:00) We hear about many teachers who have come to this state who fall, who get caught up in sex and power or other perversions. They are beings that have realized this state but

they have not yet conquered their lower nature. This will only come when the consciousness links to the universal being and connects to something greater than itself in its awareness or its heart that allows it to stay true. It is a resting point, a true resting point in the involution of consciousness where there is this platform where you can put your attention on the human life or turn your attention to what is next.

The tendency in the Western culture with its dominance of mind and senses and sense pleasure is to take one in this state and distract them endlessly in the world and not allow them to stay connected to that which is greater than itself. The next chapters will talk of the nature of one who has come to this stable relationship with the Self. If one is graced to have a teacher or a teaching that points to a higher state of consciousness then one can make it through this resting point and continue on in the journey. Without that, it is a crapshoot. This whole existence is a crapshoot. You never know what is going to happen.

If you don't reach the full state, then next lifetime you could get overtaken. Things might not go so favorably. One little event could go wrong, and you would lose that lifetime as a chance to go further. To try to complete this journey in one lifetime should always be the goal of any aspiring seeker, because you never know what is going to happen in the next life. With that cautionary note we have completed the first six chapters of this instruction manual in consciousness.