



Healthy Living in Bhagavad Gita

Dr. Sundaresan P K^{1*}, Dr. Neena T S²

¹Ph.D (Social Science), Ph.D (Commerce), Research Scholar in Philosophy, Maharaja's College, Ernakulam, Kerala

²Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, Maharaja's College, Ernakulam Kerala

***Corresponding Author:** Dr. Sundaresan P K

*Ph.D (Social Science), Ph.D (Commerce), Research Scholar in Philosophy, Maharaja's College, Ernakulam, Kerala

E-Mail: drpksundaresan@gmail.com

Abstract

As a religious classic that provides direction in various areas of life, the Bhagavad Gita is recognized by humanity for its great potency. Health care is no exception.. When persons are free of illness and content with their lives, their loved ones, and their environment, we say that they are healthy. In light of this, those seeking health-related advice should consult the Gita. The Gita emphasizes the importance of moderation and discipline in all aspects of life for a healthy lifestyle. This call is further strengthened by the notion of Sattvikta (balance) that it offers for different ways of thinking and doing things. If you want to be healthy on all levels—mental, physical, and spiritual—the Bhagavad Gita has a scientific blueprint for you. It suggests that our spirits exist independently of our minds and bodies. Consequently, we may cope considerably better with our bodily ailments and psychological disorders if we raise our awareness to greater heights.

CC License

CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0

Key Words: *Satvik, Control of senses, Mind and Intellect, Work, Health*

Introduction

Among the many topics covered in the sacred text of Bhagavad Gita, which offers priceless wisdom in the field of mental health, are the many profound truths it contains. The central message of the Gita is that, with Krishna's help, we can achieve inner peace, control our tension, and triumph over emotional upheaval. Knowing one's own essence is Krishna's central message in the Bhagavad Gita. (Rama 19). He elaborates by saying that we are more than the sum of our physical forms; we are also the immortal souls who inhabit these bodies for a limited time. When people understand this difference, they are able to separate themselves from worries about the material world, which brings them peace and happiness. Krishna tells Arjuna to do his job without worrying about how it turns out. The idea behind Nishkama Karma is that people should do acts of kindness for the benefit of others without expecting anything in return. A great feeling of mental freedom might be one'sss when they release themselves from the need for approval from other people. Lord Krishna stresses the significance of self-control by comparing the mind to a restless beast that is difficult to rein in. One way to master one's thoughts and emotions is to practice mindfulness. Krishna likens the mind to an unruly wind, saying that it can be calmed with practice. Knowledge and wisdom are highly valued by Krishna in the Gita. He tells Arjuna that he may triumph over ignorance and pain by seeking counsel and then realizing himself (Jnaneswar 113). A person's mental development can't progress without learning and contemplation. Finding

contentment inside oneself is the pinnacle of achievement, according to the Bhagavad Gita. One can achieve mental stability even when faced with hardship by comprehending and adhering to Krishna's teachings. (Prabhupada 156).

The Bhagavad Gita provides detailed examples of how to live a healthy and virtuous life.

Satvik Nutrition

A person's mental and emotional well-being, as well as their character and the way they act, can be impacted by what they eat, according to the Bhagavad Gita. Sattvika nature enables sattvika knowledge, which in turn leads to sattvika deeds, and sattvika food fosters sattvika nature. After all, one's deeds reveal a lot about them and have a profound impact on their entire lives. Proper nutrition is the first step in this process; it's a seemingly insignificant matter, but it has profound ethical and spiritual consequences! (Nadkarni 295)

In Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 17 Verse 8 Shree Krishna says:

“Satvik preference is food that accentuate longevity, enthusiasm, mind-power, physical strength, health and happiness; (they want it to be) rasya, singdha, sthira and hearty.”

Vitality keeps the will to do action alive. When one's thoughts and actions are harmonious with all that promotes longevity, they are considered healthy. The ability to give the body long-term buildup is what Sthira represents. Being content with one's possessions is the key to a fulfilled life. The ripe, luscious, and juicy rasiya is heavenly. Love and oil are both contained in Snigdha. The definition of hearty food is that which is visually appealing, flavorful, and palatable (Mukundananda 741).

Regulating the Senses

Science strives for precise causes and cures when it examines diseases. Over the last century, this strategy has paid off handsomely. An illustrious period in medical history is the eradication of communicable illnesses that caused the deaths of millions of people. Changing the lens to non-communicable diseases yields the same results. But the track record isn't as impressive because the exact causes of diseases like arteriosclerosis, cancer, and mental illnesses are still a mystery. Accordingly, the search is continuing with a heightened level of intensity (Valiathan 310).

Smoking causes lung cancer and coronary heart disease, yet more and more people continue to smoke; drinking causes cirrhosis of the liver and other maladies, but people continue to drink more and more liquor year after year; and chewing tobacco and lime causes oral cancer, but many still chew. This is a long and discouraging list (Valiathan 311)..

"I know what should be done but cannot do it; I know what should be done but cannot help doing it." This is a common human problem that people constantly face. Problems with mental regulation are at the root of this illness. In the process of disease onset, the mind is active even at great distances. As a result, the mind becomes an influential component in illness etiology or, to use a famous expression, the original cause of all!

Loss of mental control and ultimate devastation are depicted graphically in the Gita as a result of a series of activities.

Shree Krishna says in the verses 2.62 and 2.63 *“When a man thinks of objects, ‘attachment’ for them arise; from attachment ‘desire’ is born; from desire arises ‘anger’...”* (Verse 2.62)

“From anger comes ‘delusion’; from delusion ‘loss of memory’; from loss of memory the ‘destruction of discrimination’; from destruction of memory, he ‘perishes’” (Verse 2.63)

A person's attachment to an object develops into an intense want to own that object when the attachment occurs via the improper mental pathways. As a result of the emotional disturbance brought on by the inability to obtain the object-of-desire, the individual loses all sense of proportion and connection to the world around him, and goes into a furious rage. As a result, the ability to discriminate or conscience is lost when a misguided brain disregards cultural dignity. When man's conscience is numb, he turns into a helpless, destructive biped. So, it has been said that all evil stems from the mind's fixation on sense objects. (Chinmayananda 169)

How should one escape from this fatal chain? The Bhagavad Gita gives the answer in the Verse 2.64 as follows: *“But the self-controlled man moving among objects, with his senses under restraint, and free from both attraction and repulsion, attains peace.”*

A person can achieve equanimity by learning to manage themselves while still appreciating sensory objects, which involves disciplining one's senses and letting go of strong preferences. At that point, he has reconciled himself to the universe. While he is in that state, his suffering (Dukhah) ends. In Ayurveda, dukha is a term for illness and encompasses all forms of illness. Maintaining command of one's senses is, thus, a crucial tenet of health (Radhakrishnan 58).

Mind-Intellect Collaboration

Intellect assists the mind in many industrial applications by planning and organizing extensive economic activities. It makes no difference if they cause immense human suffering and environmental destruction. Businesses and their profits must continue. It would appear that this is the fundamental credo of contemporary businesspeople. (Narasingha 78)

In this context, Bhagavad Gita says in Verses 3.10, 3.11 and 3.12

“The Prajapati (the Creator), having in the beginning (of creation) created mankind together with sacrifices, said, “by this shall you prosper; let this be the milch-cow of your desire – Kamaduk” (the mythological cow which yields all desired objects)”. (Verse 3.10)

“With this, you do nourish the gods and mythose Devas nourish you; thus nourishing one another, you shall, n attain the Highest Good”. (Verse 3.11)

“The Devas, nourished by the sacrifice, will give you the desired objects. Indeed, he who enjoys objects given by the Devas, without offering (in return) to them, is verily a thief.” (Verse 3.12)

It is not sufficient to just offer offerings in the fire as a sacrifice or yajna. The battle that Arjuna's yajna was fighting at Kurukshetra was "terrible," as he put it. Sacrifice, according to Gandhiji, stands for labor of several types - physical, mental, organizational, and industrial (41). The independence movement was seen by him as a form of sacrifice. The deities, who consist of millions of humans, animals, and plants, demand undivided devotion from those who perform the labor if it is to be considered a sacrifice. Working for a living is not inherently bad, but it shouldn't be the entire motivation for an individual's actions (Nair, 129). The body's billions of cells serve as unspoken blueprints for proper function. In addition to constantly ensuring its own existence, every cell also helps the entire organism develop and thrive. No living thing could function if, like malignant cells, every cell in the body was out for its own survival. This includes the heart, lungs, and kidneys. In nature, the two aspects of work, which are specific to the task at hand and more broadly applicable, are inseparable. Our work would take on a new character and get the blessing of nature when we incorporate this philosophy into our everyday lives.(Bhatia 131)

Similar to how an organism's survival limits the growth and proliferation of individual cells, the spirit of sacrifice would entail limitations on personal desires and development. When unrestrained, a person is no different from a cancer cell, which devours nourishment, multiplies rapidly, and eventually destroys the entire organism. The only way for the planet to continue existing is to put an end to our insatiable greed for wealth and consumerism. (Valiathan 316)

Integrity in work:

The last example of the Bhagavad Gita's health guiding principle is work where one's head and intellect remain in the background and philosophy takes a back seat. In this state, work is a prerequisite for advancement and continuation (Jnaneswar 59). Disuse of organs is a root cause of many diseases. Joints get unpleasant and stiff when not utilized, muscles atrophy, lungs lose their ability to ventilate, heart function decreases, and brain function becomes impaired. Use it or lose it; that's the rule of biology (Vrajeshwara.111)

The Bhagavad Gita is eloquent on this aspect of work according to Verses 3.5 and Verse 3.8.

“Verily, none can ever remain, even for a moment, without performing action; for, everyone is made to act helplessly, indeed, by the qualities born of Prakriti.” (Verse 3.5)

“You perform (your) bounden duty’ for, action is superior to inaction. Even the maintenance of the body would not be possible for you by inaction.” (Verse 3.8)

No matter what happens, the effort that is required is relentless and never-ending. Fewer individuals will be sick, and fewer years will be ruined by disability and death, when this notion forms a society's work ethic (Tapasyananda 89).

Conclusion

The teachings of the Bhagavad Gita provide real-world strategies for dealing with the stresses that people encounter on a daily basis. Action and inaction are further explored in the Bhagavad Gita. When a sick person believes that his treatment is not going according to his wishes, this conversation offers helpful information and advice. Finding harmony, meaning, and health in one's life are themes that the Bhagavad Gita explores at length. It covers the mental, emotional, and spiritual components of healthy life in addition to the physical ones. To get a complete picture of what it means to live a happy and healthy life, consider these important ideas from the Bhagavad Gita: The Bhagavad Gita offers new advice for people with many kinds of interests,

including those looking for ways to live a healthy life. For those seeking a life that is both healthy and righteous, the Bhagavad Gita serves as a constant source of inspiration, just like the changing seasons and the snow-capped Himalayas do for poets.

Work Cited

1. Balakrishnan Nair, G. Srimad Bhagawad Gita Shivaravindam Mahabhashyam, 7th Edition, The State Institute of Languages, Kerala, 2015
2. Bhatia Prem. Bhagavad Geeta for a Purposeful Life – Vol 1, Xpress Publishing, 2019
3. Chinmayananda, Swami. The Holy Geeta, Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, 2008..
4. Gandhi Mahatma. The Bhagavad Gita According to Gandhi, North Atlantic Books, Berkely, 2000.
5. Jnaneswar Maharaj. Jnaneswari, Bhagavad Gitayude Jnaneswari Bhashyam, Jnaneswari Geetha Pracharana Prathisthan, 1995.
6. Mukundananda Swami. Bhagavad Gita The Song of God, Westland Publications Pvt Ltd, 2021.
7. Nadkarni M V. The Bhagavad Gita for the Modern Reader, 2nd Edition, Routledge, 2019
8. Narasingha, Swami B G. Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna's Illuminations on the Perfection of Yoga, Gosai Publications, 2019.
9. Prabhupada, Bhakthivedanta Swami (2009) Bhagavad – Gita As it is. The Bhakthivedanda Book Trust, Mumbai
10. Radhakrishnan C. Bhagavad Gita, Modern Reading and Scientific Study,, 2nd Edition, Hi-Tech Books, 2017.
11. Rama, Swami. Perennial Psychology of the Bhagavad Gita, Himalayan Institute India, 2016.
12. Tapasyananda, Swami. Srimad Bhagavad Gita, the Scripture of Mankind, Adhyaksha, Sri Ramakrishna Math, 2015.
13. Valiathan Dr M S. Gita for Good Health. In Bhagavad Gita and Modern Problems, Compilation of Papers presented at the International Seminar on Gita, Gita Swadhyaya and Bharathiya vichara Kendram, 2000
14. Vrajeshwara Swami. Science of Bhagavad Gita, Hamsa Ashramam, 2014.