



Lesson 44:

Revolutionary Thriving

Contemplative life and karma yoga [spiritually conscious action without attachment to outcomes] are one and the same and take one to the same destination. One who perceives this, sees things as they are. Yet abandoning action [action with attachment to outcomes] without yoga is difficult...One who practices yoga, and is thus able to control senses, conquers the mind and with purified intelligence is able to attain oneness with the Self. Such a person remains free and un-entangled even when engaged in action. –Bhagavad Gita 5: 5-7¹

Like the gurus in my lineage of kriya yoga before me, when I started teaching this way of spiritually awakened living, I turned my attention to how it could inform and support prosperous living. Could a mystical path of Self- and God-realization also show us how to prosper? Could it directly help people who are waking up spiritually with their everyday responsibilities? What could yoga philosophy offer as support for our work, relationship with money, and potential to thrive? Turns out that the teachings for realizing the spiritual truth of our being, point to that same truth as the root of abundance. From that insight, I coined the term “radical prosperity”—meaning prosperity drawn from innate wholeness, as well as the experience, and the expression, of it.

Radical means arising from the root—something that is fundamental, or basic. Our inherent ability to thrive is that. It arises from our essence; it is fundamental to our nature. When we engage with that inherent ability to thrive, cooperate with it, and express it, it also becomes radical in the sense that it is *revolutionary*—something that is far-reaching, groundbreaking, and favors innovative change. The most groundbreaking, innovative change I can see is the power we have to heal the so-called “split” between the spiritual life and material existence. When we do

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, Nightingale. Mini Gita edition (Keelathriuthangal: Srinivas Fine Arts, 2013-14) p. 225-228.



that, when we operate in accordance with spiritual laws for success as well as worldly success formulas, the prospering power of the universe becomes available to us. Not only that, we discover we can be content, joyous, and free, as we work.

Spiritually conscious, engaged, prosperity is not just imagining that our spiritual focus and practices will take care of everything, on all levels. Sometimes people think that if they only discover their purpose, find what is theirs to do, then the money and the resources will naturally show up. Thus, the expression, “Do what you love, and the money will follow.” I’ve known many spiritually aware people who found what they love to do, but lacked the necessary resources to do it, or support themselves or their families while they did. Success, even with spiritual awareness and principles, requires dedicated engagement in spiritual practice, perseverance, flexibility, and ultimately, surrendered devotion.

Two spiritual laws we can learn and put into practice that will help us thrive in this revolutionary way are: the law of nonattachment and the law of surrendered service.

The Law of Nonattachment

The opening quote from the *Gita* in this lesson address the law of nonattachment, which is the crux of karma yoga—the path of selfless action or service. The practice of nonattachment unfolds in several ways. First, we come to understand that we, in and of ourselves, are not the doers of action. Yes, we do act. However, we cannot control outcomes. Outcomes result from a combination of karma (the force of past causes), the influences of the qualities of nature, our intentions and efforts, and the presence of divine grace. If we imagine ourselves as the sole doer, the cause of what occurs, we are mistaken. Yogis go so far as to say, “It is all God”—meaning all that is occurring is a revelation of the Whole, of the One. How do we renounce doer-ship while remaining responsible for our actions? We see ourselves as cooperating with the Infinite, doing what we can to contribute to the highest good, the well-being of all.



Once we see that we cannot control outcomes, it gets easier to renounce attachment to results. The inspired principle behind this practice is to purify the ego. Who is it that wants a result? Who becomes unhappy when things do not work out as expected, or happy when they do? For one established in the unchanging Reality of the divine Self, results are not the determining factor. What is, then? What is the determining factor? What are we supposed to care about in this revolutionary way of thriving? We care about integrity. We care about being conscious and who we are becoming as we do what we do. Instead of being tossed about by the waves of so-called success or failure, every occasion becomes an opportunity to dive deeper into contemplation of right action in harmony with truth. That is indeed, revolutionary. It's a complete turnaround from the worldly based formula for success measures that are purely outer.

The Law of Surrendered Service

When I contemplate the laws of nonattachment and of surrendered service, I think of Paramahansa Yogananda's experience with designing and building his beloved Golden Lotus Temple on the cliffs of his property in Encinitas. The temple offered worshippers breathtaking, expansive views of the Pacific Ocean and the sky above and included a four-story observation tower. It was a manifestation of a beautiful, expansive vision for the glory of the One to be enjoyed by all, and it was Paramahansaji's dream and delight.

Paramahansaji offered services there, serving thousands of seekers of God. That is, until one day four short years later, erosion of the cliff below the temple foundation led to its destruction. Its magnificence and beauty were destroyed. All that remains today is the foundation step that led into the temple, and beyond it, the open-air expanse of ocean and sky. Was Paramahansaji disappointed? Devastated? Of course, he was. But through his abiding nonattachment, and the vision of surrendered service that continually opens the door to possibility, he realized and embraced that landslide as a new beginning instead of an ending to his dream.



From that seeming failure, he went forth to build many other temples in Southern California and to support the expansion of the work through meditation groups. He told his followers not to be afraid of the “landslides” in life but to see it all as the way in which we are being formed into our divine expression. This is the unfailing way of surrendered service: whatever comes, turn it over to God. Offer it to the Infinite and ask to be guided in the true way of service. Take the next step. Continue to thrive.

To support your practice, refer to:

The Jewel of Abundance, p 217-222

