





The Yoga of Action


The Bhagavad Gita
“The Song of the Lord”

4:18 The person is wise who sees the inaction in actions, and the action in inaction.

He or she is a yogi and can accomplish everything.

Commentary

- A yogi 🧘 appears to be doing things:
 - coming and going, accomplishing this and that.
- Sometimes she may even say she's doing things.

- But the yogi  perceives action from the state of inaction,
- at the same time enjoying inaction in the midst of action.

- In fact it's *Nature*, making things happen.
- The yogi is a constant witness to it all.
- That way she or he understands the secret of action (karma).

- The manifested universe, called *Prakriti* in Sanscrit, is controlled by the three *gunas*.
- Our minds and bodies are part of that *prakriti* which is constantly moved by these three *gunas*:
 - sattva (balance)
 - rajas (restlessness)
 - tamas (inertia)

- However, who are you really?
- You are the *Self*;

you are the *Knower*.
- You are not affected by *prakriti*.
- You are completely different.

- That's why you say,
 - “my mind” or
 - “my body.”
- When you say,
 - “my mind is disturbed,”
- You're really right.
- It's not you, but your poor mind that's disturbed.

- But if you immediately add,
 - “and I’m really unhappy about it,”
- that’s not right.
- That’s not the real you.
- However, you insist, “I’m unhappy because my mind is disturbed.”

- If you were unhappy, you wouldn't even notice that your mind was unhappy.
- An unhappy or sick person can't recognize another unhappy or sick person.
- Only the sane person can discern if another is insane.

- If your *knowing* itself were unhappy, you wouldn't be able to recognize the unhappiness of the mind.
- This means that the *knowing* is always sane.
- For you are the *Knower*, the awareness.
- You are aware of everything that is happening in your body and mind.

- This awareness never ceases to be.
- That is the constant, eternal, permanent *you*
— the *Self*.
- But unfortunately, you usually identify *yourself* with the mind or the body and talk in those terms:
- “I was so happy, now I am unhappy,”
and so on.

- The true you, which is the Self or the *Atman*, doesn't do anything ... or feel anything.
- The “*prakriti* you” (nature operating through the mind and body) does the doing.
- Here is action and inaction at the same time.
- Even though I (as mind-body) do this action,
I (as Self-*Atman*) don't do it.

- See? I *do* it and certainly I don't.
- This means two "I's" are there.
- The true "I" (the Self) knows that my little "I" (body-mind) is doing this action.
- Even though you see me (body-mind) acting, I (the Self) am not acting.
- Just my mind and body are doing. See — inaction in action.

- Do you understand this?
- If you can keep this in mind, it's surely very helpful.
- Even when you feel depressed, you can just pull back quickly and ask,

“Who's depressed? Certainly it's not me. I know someone is depressed. Who? My mind. Why? Well, I told it not to do all that mischief. What can I do for it now?”

- See how quickly you can separate away from identifying with your mind.
- It's very handy.
- You'll never get lost.
- You can rescue yourself from drowning in wrong identification.

- The very moment you separate from it, the agony is gone.
- It's like turning off the main switch.
- You become the person witnessing.
- Even with pain.

- You burn your finger, feel the pain, then quickly take it from the fire.
- Then you inquire:

“Pain? Where does it come from? Who is complaining of pain? Who got burnt? Who knows that?”
- As you start analyzing the pain, the pain disappears.

- But when you identify with the body and mind which experience the pain, you are in agony.
- The minute you separate from it and start analyzing, it no longer affects you.
- If you get this point, it's very useful in day-to-day life.
- There's no need to get lost in all the ups and downs. ...



Om, Shanti