



# Aspire For The State Beyond Happiness

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Happiness is increasingly considered the proper measure of human progress and the goal of public policy. Consequently, many governments are beginning to acknowledge that people's well-being, and not just economic growth, ought to be the focus of their efforts.

Almost everything we do in life is motivated by the desire to be happy. For most people, however, the experience of happiness is temporary. This is because their joy is based on external factors that may not be in their control.

The Bhagwad Gita says happiness derived from the senses and objects ultimately leads to sorrow. Since the sources of such happiness, be they objects, senses, other people or circumstances, are impermanent, the joy they provide cannot last forever.

There is a state beyond happiness in which one does not feel any need for plea-

sure. One who has attained that blissful state is neither perturbed by sorrow, nor hankers after happiness. He simply is in bliss, says the Gita.

This state is attained by gaining full control over one's emotions and intellect and by meditating on the Supreme. The peace of mind attained therefrom is a pre-requisite to lasting happiness.

To attain mental serenity, the Gita advises renouncing the fruit of all action, taking success and failure in one's stride, and remaining detached while living in this world.

Spiritual knowledge about the soul, the Supreme Soul, and the law of karma, helps one to maintain equanimity in loss or gain, success or failure.

When we realise that we are immortal souls playing our role in this world, and that we create our destiny with our ac-

tions, we cease to see ourselves as victims of circumstances, and understand that our present is the result of our past, and we can build a better future for ourselves.

Our experiences are the consequences of actions in present and past lives, which are all recorded in the soul and which determine the quality of our future.

When we assume responsibility for our experiences, adversity no longer causes sorrow, as we recognise it to be the fruit of past actions, and feel happy that our karmic burden is becoming lighter.

Similarly, we are not swept off our feet by good fortune. Instead, it motivates us to keep doing good as that is the surest way to ensure a happy future for oneself. This kind of mental stability helps one become a detached observer of life.

Being detached means not being men-

tally affected by anything, and observing events as passing scenes in the drama of life. This allows us to see things as they are and take appropriate decisions. But when we become involved, we start questioning why things are the way they are, and why people behave the way they do. This can lead to dissatisfaction, frustration and anger, which can lead us to act in ways that bring sorrow.

When one lives with constant awareness of being a soul – child of the Supreme Soul – one leaves the cycle of pleasure and pain and reaches a blissful state that is independent of any sensory experience.

Bliss is the original nature of the soul, which is described as being 'sat, chit, anand swaroop', or the embodiment of truth, consciousness and bliss.

There are yogis who experience super sensual bliss, a spiritual experience that does not require any physical or material resource. (The writer is chief spokesman of Brahma Kumaris Organisation.)



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