Mind Control

Yastvīmindriyāṇi manasā niyamyārabhatērjuna
Karmēndriyaiḥ karmayogaṃ asaktaḥ sa viśiṣyatē (Bhagavad Gita Chapter 3)

O Arjuna! He who, with a mind filled with wisdom, restrains the senses while continuing to perform the actions without any aspiration, totally purifies his mind thereby obtaining Self-knowledge- said Lord Śrikrishna.

In this verse, the phrase- with a mind filled with wisdom (discriminative intelligence)- assumes prominence. Only a mind that is reined in firmly develops such wisdom. Such a person no longer rushes to hasty conclusions. After thoroughly studying the pros and cons of the idea, decisive conclusions are drawn.

What happens to those who refuse to control the mind? They land into troubles. Victories do not come to them. They are sunk into the bog of difficulties and will continue to remain sunk even in future times thereby filling their entire life with sorrow. Wilfully they are ruining their own lives.

Thus, retaining the mind under total control is always in one's best interests. Life then sails smoothly. When murky water is stored in a vessel, the mud gradually settles at the bottom leaving the clear water to float up. Similarly, when useless thoughts are abandoned and mind is stabilized, it turns pure.

A person with a stable mind easily crosses over hurdles. Bravely he faces the unforeseen obstacles that come his way and conquers them. Gentleness in behaviour (soumya) and mental peace comes to that person who controls the mind. Every deed taken up by him meets with complete success. He obtains the maturity to analyse the situation from every angle and to deal with it victoriously. Mind control helps him elevate himself and also reach out to the aid of others. The society only stands to benefit from such a person!

The righteous King Kushika had mastered absolute mind control. So had his wife. Let us learn about them. King Kushika's fame travelled in all directions and fell into the ears of Maharishi Cyavana. 'Does this king have in him the steadiness required to pass my tests? Has he truly reined in his mind and kept it tightly under control?'- the saint decided to personally gather these details.

Without any intimation, he suddenly arrived at the king's court and enquired, 'O King. How are you? Hope your family, retinue, ministers, citizens and those who have placed implicit

faith in you are leading happy, satisfied lives'. In great elation, the king worshipped the guest who had arrived unexpectedly. He then replied, 'O revered saint! Yes, everyone in the kingdom is happy and satisfied. I am extremely pleased with your visit. What is it that you seek from me? Please command'.

The saint replied, 'Your humility is laudable. So is your speech. The worship that you offered and your demeanour is appreciable. I have heard that all the citizens of this land are saintly in nature. Desirous of perceiving your greatness I have arrived here.

O King! Of late I am unable to restrain my mind which wavers continually. It runs as per its whims and is engrossed in useless thoughts. To rein it is totally beyond me. With the hope that in your presence it will develop stability I have arrived here. Hence, I plan to stay here for a while. During the period of my stay, I want you, along with your wife, to personally look into all my needs. You must attend to my call without even a momentary delay. You must serve me perfectly. Please let me know if it is feasible for you to meet these demands of mine. Else I shall leave forthwith'.

King Kushika and wife prostrated before the sage in all humility saying, 'O revered sage! Please stay here for as long as you desire. To serve you is our fortune'. The sage agreed and stayed on. The royal couple personally engaged themselves in his service.

Maharishi Cyavana had a sumptuous meal and then with a loud yawn said, 'I am retiring to bed. It is your duty to ensure that no fly or mosquito disturbs my sleep. So fan me while I am asleep'. Saying so, he slipped into deep slumber. The royal couple took up the vinjamara fans (yak tail fan) and personally fanned him and pressed his feet gently for 21 continuous days!

At the end of 21 days the sage suddenly awakened saying, 'Oho! In the forests the rugged surrounding and the shrieks of animals made it difficult for me to fall asleep. I am enjoying sound sleep. I wish to sleep longer'- saying so, he again slipped into deep sleep. Without any other thought the royal couple continued to fan him and press his feet without a momentary break. At the end of another 21-day period the sage rose from his bed saying, 'I am unable to overcome my drowsiness O king. In order to refresh myself I want to wander through the city. Please make arrangements'.

The sage mounted the chariot that was arranged. Just as the royal couple were about to mount the chariot in which he was seated, he sneered at them, 'Do you have any idea of

true hospitality? Have you learnt about it anytime? Is this the way people in your kingdom behave?' Petrified, the royal couple looked at the sage trying to figure out their mistake.

The sage then rudely commanded, 'Stop staring at me as if I am torturing you. What will your citizens think of me? I am not happy with the services being offered to me here. I want you both to pull the chariot. Do the needful to my satisfaction. That is the respect, reverence I seek from you. Only then will my drowsiness abate'.

Hearing this command, the royal couple were neither dejected nor humiliated. In great happiness, they released the horses and instead pulled the chariot unmindful of being watched by the citizens. Occasionally the sage stopped the chariot and enquired of the city's specialities. The king humbly answered the sage on every occasion.

Noone knew what happened, but the sage abruptly flew into a rage. Taking up a whip he mercilessly flogged the royal couple in public view till blood flowed from their bodies. All the while he was screaming, 'When will I ever reach my destination with this staggering walk of yours? I need to complete my worship and bathe in Ganga. I need to perform penance there. I am losing many precious moments due to your laziness'.

Unmindful of the blood gushing from their bodies, the royal couple swiftly dragged the chariot towards River Ganga. As the sage dismounted from the chariot, he scrutinized their faces closely. Pleasantness and happiness were explicitly visible. Using his transcendence, he read the thoughts within their mind. He observed that their minds were pure and freed from any thoughts or emotions. He now observed their heart. It was overflowing with devotion. Having observed them thoroughly, the sage was immensely pleased.

He then applauded them saying, 'You have won. I am deeply pleased with your services. You both are in total control over your minds. The tests that I imposed upon you were in reality lessons for future spiritual aspirants'. With great love, he then touched them. With his mere touch all their wounds vanished and their bodies turned robust. They began to illumine divinely. In abidance to the sage's orders, the next morning the royal couple arrived at the banks of River Ganga and bowed before him.

The sage said, 'Your peaceful nature fills me with total delight. Your demeanour is praiseworthy. Your sense control is unparalleled. Your degree of dispassion fills me with awe. You will be blessed with a grandson who will elevate not just your lineage but the entire universe itself! He will become a renowned Brahmarishi (highest class of sages).

When the Supreme Lord incarnates as Rama, your grandson will be His Guru. He will attain worldwide acclaim as Viśwamitra'. The sage thus profusely blessed them.

Learn to control your mind. Gentleness will become your way of life. A person with a gentle nature obtains all accomplishments and has all his desires fulfilled. There is nothing beyond the capacity of a gentle-natured person. He successfully accomplishes everything. Most supreme gains are obtained by him both in this world and the next.

May the grace of Guru Datta bless you with absolute mind control and the resultant supreme benefits!