



Self-Control

Bhagavan Sri Krishna tells the entire humanity in His gospel of wisdom teachings of the Gita: 'Strive to uplift yourself by your own Self' [Gita 6.5]. Under what circumstances can one succeed in doing so? He tells us: 'you can succeed if you put yourself voluntarily under discipline, if you purposefully, sincerely, earnestly train yourself with the conviction that in this lies your supreme good.' You can deceive yourself, but you cannot deceive God. If you are sincere, you consciously launch campaign of training yourself in self-control. The point is, one's own sincere efforts, *purusharta* is necessary to enable one to successfully raise oneself. It is only through voluntary self-discipline and by training yourself religiously to become the master of your sense, you would be successful in raising your life to sublime heights.

If the senses are not in your control, your senses become your own enemy, but the same senses become your best friends if you are able to keep them under control, if you overcome them. The senses are like five horses to which a chariot is hitched. At man is the owner of the chariot, the body is the chariot, and the intellect is the charioteer. The horses are very, very unruly and turbulent. These unruly and turbulent sense-horses are to be controlled by the intelligence. While the intellect is inward, the senses are outward, physical, biological. What is the connecting link? It is the mind. The senses act according to the *vrittis* arising in the mind, the senses. If the horses are not controlled, they may run amuck and it will be absolute disaster. If this body-chariot should ultimately take you to that grand and glorious destination of supreme spiritual perfection and blessedness, the charioteer has to take it on the right path. This can be done only if the charioteer has the horses under control.

Never allow even a single *vritti* to remain in your mind even for a single second. The moment you become aware that a wrong *vritti* has arisen in your mind, immediately take action and cast it out. Nip it in the bud. Don't allow it to assume the form of a big wave. A *vritti* spreads like a wave and becomes bigger and bigger, and soon it will overwhelm you, and then it will be too late. Beware of lack of awareness and vigilance right from the beginning itself. If the mind is pure, the sense will be pure in behaviour. If the mind thinks nobly, the senses will assist you in engaging you in noble selfless activity. As a man thinketh so he becometh. Your outer actions are merely the ultimate manifestation upon the physical plane of your thought, and *vrittis*.

■ Swami Chidananda