

Misconceptions regarding  
**Bhagavad Gita**



# **Most common misconceptions regarding Bhagavad Gita**

- Bhagavad Gita is for old age / old people
- The concepts of Gita are NOT practical these days / in the present day world. People leave their families, renounce the world after reading Gita
- Gita is confusing - there are so many texts and explanations by several authors / swamis
- I don't have a teacher

**Unfortunately, many people tend to believe what others say (most often), instead of the 'message / advice' of God - Bhagavad Gita**

# Bhagavad Gita is for old age / old people ?

- Most of us complete our formal education (Bachelors, Masters programs) before starting a career. We don't work first and then obtain education (after retirement from work) !
- Similarly, Bhagavad Gita should be read early in life (ideally during high school or college years) as it contains the “Principles of life”, which are extremely essential to face the problems / challenges in life
- Arjuna got the knowledge of Gita before the war and **not** after the war or retirement from work (renouncing kingdom- ‘Vanaprastha’)
- Bhagavad Gita is the most effective “**stress, work, time (life) management program**”

# Concepts of Gita are NOT practical these days ?

- A student in civil engineering program learns the principles of construction. If he applies those principles in his work / project, the construction (e.g. building, bridge,..) will be strong, safe and will have a very long life
- However, if he feels that the construction principles learnt in his college are NOT practical and doesn't follow the principles in the real life project, then that construction would be weak, unsafe and will have a very short life span
- Similarly, if we follow the principles of Gita, our life will be peaceful and meaningful. However, if we neglect / ignore the principles, then we will end up creating problems to ourselves, our family and to the society (best example: Dhritrashtra)

# Concepts of Gita are NOT practical these days ?

- The concepts and principles of Gita will help us in facing the most difficult situations in life (just as it helped Arjuna during the most stressful time of his life)
- The concepts of Bhagavad Gita are 'eternal' and applicable to everyone and at all times. Especially **chapters 14, 16, 17 and 18 are very practical**, i.e., these chapters help us in understanding the present day world and people also
- Reading Gita will improve our spiritual knowledge, clear doubts, provide emotional stability and guide us in finding solutions to our problems, which shall strengthen our belief / trust / faith and ultimately devotion to God

# Concepts of Gita are NOT practical these days ?

- Bhagavad Gita's emphasis on **selfless service** was a prime source of inspiration for **Mahatma Gandhi**. He said “When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and I see not one ray of hope on the horizon, I turn to Bhagavad Gita and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. Those who meditate on the Gita will derive fresh joy and new meanings from it every day”
- **Ralph Waldo Emerson**: “I owed a magnificent day to the Bhagavad Gita. It was the first of books; it was as if an empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us”
- **Aldous Huxley**: “The Bhagavad Gita is the most systematic statement of spiritual evolution of endowing value to mankind. It is one of the most clear and comprehensive summaries of perennial philosophy ever revealed; hence its enduring value is subject not only to India but to all of humanity”
- **Adi Shankara**: “From a clear knowledge of the Bhagavad Gita all the goals of human existence become fulfilled. Bhagavad Gita is the manifest quintessence of all the teachings of the Vedic scriptures”

# Gita is confusing - there are so many texts and explanations by several authors / swamis

- Bhagavad Gita contains only **700 slokas / verses**. The literal translation / meaning / **message of most of the verses is very straight-forward**
- Gita is one of the shortest texts compared to other spiritual / vedic scriptures. Valmiki Ramayana contains 24,000 verses and MahaBharata contains 100,000 verses. Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas contain many more...
- It is true that several spiritual leaders, philosophers, scholars have written translations of Gita along with their perceptions

# How to read / understand Gita

- Please consider the following analogy
- A student preparing for entrance exams (engineering / medical..)
  - has a single goal - to get a good rank / admission in the college
  - has **enthusiasm**, a very strong determination and focus
  - goes through several text books, study materials, guides, practice tests, attends tuitions, special coaching classes, ...
  - has discipline / study plan
  - reads the subject matter several times to understand the concepts and memorize the information

# How to read / understand Gita

- Similarly, we should have the same qualities for reading & understanding Bhagavad Gita
  - have **enthusiasm**, a very **strong determination**, **focus** and **goal** to read the 700 verses of Gita without fail (stopping in between) or interruption
  - have a **discipline / study plan** to read few verses everyday (e.g. **2 - 4 verses per day** or 10 verses/day), depending upon the time available everyday
- We may not be able to understand Gita completely in the first attempt. However, we must make **continuous efforts** to **read Gita regularly** and **contemplate on the verses (their message)** daily

# How to read / understand Gita

- When we are reading Gita for the **first time**,
  - It is advisable to read the Gita in our native language / mother tongue first, then in other language (English,..)
  - Select a simple book with just verses, word to word meaning and translation. Read the same
  - It may be better if we don't read the author's commentary / explanation during the first time
  - Read the 700 verses with just the translation, so that we can get the gist and have our own perception first
- **Note:** Our goal should be to **understand** and **implement** the message / knowledge of Gita in our daily life, rather than memorizing the 700 verses

# How to read / understand Gita

- After reading the 700 verses and their translation once, then we can read different books along with commentaries and explanations (from Gita Press, RamaKrishna Math, ISKCON, Chinmaya mission, several scholars and spiritual teachers all over the world). Several online resources (with text and lectures / videos) are available on Gita
- Just as a student reads the subject matter several times to understand the concepts and memorize the information, similarly, it is not enough to read the Gita once. We have to **read it (or listen) several times** (ideally, till the last day of life)
- Each time we read Gita, our understanding of the concepts will improve further (along with our memory and mental peace)

# Implementing the principles of Gita in our life

- In order to understand the concepts of Mathematics and Physics thoroughly, a student has to practice solving problems (just reading the text books of Maths & Physics will not be enough)
- Similarly, in order to understand the concepts of Gita, we have to **start implementing the principles of Gita in our daily life**
- We can start with
  - chapter **16** - tells about what should we avoid in life
  - followed by ch.14, 17, 18 - describe the 3 qualities in nature
  - Ch.2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12 - explain the concepts of work (Karma yoga), knowledge (Gnana yoga) and devotion (Bhakti yoga)
- Our **mind (thoughts & actions)** has to be **purified** and **prepared** to comprehend the message of Gita completely

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

- In order to understand Physics and Chemistry, practical work or experimental demonstration of the concepts is extremely beneficial
- Similarly, in order to understand the concepts of Gita, Ramayana and Mahabharata are very helpful
- While **Gita is the theory, Ramayana and Mahabharata are the practical lessons**
- They are also extremely helpful in **purifying** our **thoughts** and **actions**
- This can be further elucidated by considering few examples

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

- Gita emphasizes (in several chapters) about the importance of doing work (fulfilling one's own duties / responsibilities) without expecting the result (i.e., without any desire for the fruit / reward of the work)

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।  
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ Gita Ch 2 ver 47

You have the right / power, only to work (perform prescribed duties), but never at anytime, to the fruits / rewards (i.e., no control over the results / consequences). The desire for rewards must NOT be the motivation for performing activities (don't engage in work only for the sake of rewards / don't focus on results), neither should you be inclined towards inaction (not doing your prescribed duties). Also refer Ch 18 ver 13-16

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।  
तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥ Gita Ch 3 ver 9

Work must be performed as a sacrifice (selfless and dedicated to God); otherwise, it will cause bondage in this world. With that intention perform your duties efficiently, O Arjuna, being free from attachments (without desiring, fearing or hating the outcome)

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

- We have a very good example in Ramayana to understand the above verses - **Bharath**
- Although he was offered the kingdom, he rejected and requested his brother Rama to come back. But on Rama's request he had to rule the kingdom for 14 years
- He performed his duties (administration of the kingdom) as a '**service**' to Lord Rama
- Even after 14 years of work, he didn't develop any desire / interest for the throne / kingdom (or expect any position for himself). He only wished to serve his brother eternally
- Similarly, we should perform our duties as a service to God without expecting any result or fruit of the work. This is in fact **TRUE RENUNCIATION** (refer verses 2.51; 12.12; 18.9; 18.11)

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।  
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥

Gita Ch 3 ver 35

It is far better to perform one's own prescribed duties, even though imperfectly\*, than to perform another's duty perfectly. Even death while performing one's own duty is better / good; Performing others' duties invites danger and fear. Also refer Ch 18 ver 47 (\*tinged with errors / defects, deficient or devoid of merit as per the standards of materialistic people)

- The above verse could be understood by considering the actions of Dronacharya, who was the teacher for both Kauravas and Pandavas
- During the Kurukshetra war he fought on the side of Kauravas
- But as a teacher, it is NOT his duty to participate in the war. After counseling Dhritharashtra and Kauravas against their actions, he should have stayed away from the war like **Vidur**

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

- His participation in the war could have been justified (as a duty towards kingdom) if there was any external threat / attack by an outsider
- However, the war was between cousins. Moreover, it is NOT his duty / responsibility to protect Kauravas. As a teacher for both Kauravas and Pandavas he should have been neutral
- As we know, the consequences of his actions were tragic for both himself and his son Ashwatthama
- **Note:** This does not mean that we should stop helping others. We should definitely try to help the needy and deserving people. But we should evaluate if we are fulfilling other's duties while they are deliberately / lazily evading them

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।  
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ Gita Ch 18 ver 66

Abandoning / giving up all duties, take refuge in Me alone (completely surrender to Me). I will liberate you from all sins, do not grieve / worry

- This is one of the most famous verses of Gita
- However, this verse appears **contradictory** to the earlier verses as Sri Krishna is advising to leave all the duties / responsibilities and seek refuge (surrender) at His feet
- This verse could be understood by considering the actions of Vibhishan
- Vibhishan is one of the greatest devotees of the Lord and also considered as one of the immortals

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

- Vibhishan joins the side of Lord Rama and provides strategic help during the battle against Ravan. This might appear as if he betrayed his family and country (Lanka). As per his duties, Vibhishan should have tried to protect his family and country
- Vibhishan is regarded as very noble and pious in the entire family and Lanka. After several years of penance (tapasya) to please Lord Brahma, he only requests for the 'darshan' of Lord Narayana and devotion towards Him
- When Ravan abducted Sita and brought Her to Lanka, Vibhishan could foresee the impending catastrophic consequences to both the family and the country. He tried very hard to explain / convince Ravan to return Sita (to Rama)

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

- However, he was humiliated and literally kicked out of the court by Ravan
- So actually, Vibhishan did his best (to fulfill his responsibilities / duties) to protect his family, country and also uphold 'dharma'
- After failing in his attempts to change Ravan's mind, Vibhishan on his mother's advice, **abandoning his duties towards the family & nation, seeks refuge at Lord Rama's feet** (only to **uphold dharma**)
- During the war, Vibhishan reveals several secrets to Rama which lead to Ravan's defeat. However, **he was not touched by any sin**
- Rama anoints him as the King of Lanka and asks him to serve the people and guide them to the path of truth and righteousness

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

- Similarly, we should surrender at the Lord's feet and then try hard to fulfill our duties / responsibilities. Even if we are unsuccessful after repeated attempts, we will be protected by the Lord from all kinds of dangers, problems and sins
- Through the characters of Ramayana and Mahabharata, we can learn about all possible patterns of human behaviour, responses, thoughts and attitudes. Their actions and the resultant consequences teach us what is right or wrong i.e., fine differences between 'dharma' and 'adharma' (e.g., Bharath, Vibhishan, Arjun, Bhishma, Dronacharya, Karna)
- Mostly, the characters of **Ramayana** teach us on **how should we lead our life** and the characters & events of **Mahabharata** teach us about **what should we avoid in life**

# Practicals - Ramayana and Mahabharata

- Ramayana and Mahabharata teach us that an individual's honor and glory is never greater than the cause of 'dharma' and the interests / welfare of the society, country and planet
- Hence reading, listening or watching Ramayana and Mahabharata will be extremely helpful to understand Gita
- Several good translations of these epics by various scholars are available (as hard / soft copies and also online)
- Although several movies and TV serials are available, the Ramayan (by Ramanand Sagar) and Mahabharat (by B R Chopra) series produced in the late 1980s are good in terms of content. These were produced in Hindi and later dubbed in other Indian languages (both of them are available online)

# How to find a spiritual teacher?

- It is true that it is very difficult to find a genuine spiritual teacher these days
- Gita is a gift to the mankind given by Sri Krishna, who is also regarded as the '**Jagadguru**' (teacher for the universe)
- We pray to God for wealth, health, job, success in exams and work, and other materialistic / worldly requirements
- Similarly, **to understand Gita** we should **pray to God to be our teacher**. If He can provide us all the necessities / comforts of life, He will also definitely help in understanding Gita (if our prayers and efforts are sincere)
- Once we **read Gita and start implementing the principles in our life**, He will also help us in finding the Spiritual teacher

# Ways to obtain the knowledge of Gita

- There are three ways to obtain the knowledge of Gita
- 1) **Directly from God**: e.g. Arjuna (and Hanuman on Arjuna's chariot) obtained the knowledge directly from Sri Krishna
- 2) **Indirectly from God**: e.g. Sanjaya (and other great sages like Vyasa Maharishi). Sanjaya was a shudra and charioteer of Dhritharashtra. However, he was very pious and has been blessed with divine vision (divya dhrishti) by Vyasa. Hence, Sanjaya could witness all the events of Kurukshetra including the conversation (Gita) between Sri Krishna and Arjuna and also the cosmic form (Virāt roop) of Sri Krishna
- 3) **From another person / book**: e.g. Dhritharashtra heard Gita from Sanjaya. So, Dhritharashtra is the first person to hear Gita from another person

# Ways to obtain the knowledge of Gita

- Hence, when we read Gita from a book or listen to a discourse (audio / video lecture), it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> way of obtaining the knowledge i.e., from another person
- However, when our intentions are pure and selfless; efforts and prayers are sincere (to understand Gita); when we start implementing the principles of Gita in our daily life; our mind and actions will get purified and we will rise to the 2<sup>nd</sup> level (like Sanjaya). God, who is present in every living being as 'Paramātmā' would grant us the 'divine vision' and give the knowledge of Gita transcendently
- We should always seek 'nischal bhakti' (unswerving devotion) towards the Lord like Prahlād, Ambarish, Janak, Bharath, Lakshman, Hanuman, Vibhishan and other great devotees

# Our Beloved Teacher for Gita



तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।  
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥

Gita Ch 10 ver 11

Indeed, to bestow My grace upon them (devotees who are **striving** to attain God), I, residing in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance with the radiant light of knowledge. Also refer verses 4.3; **7.1-3**; 9.1-2; 10.1; **10.10**; 10.32; 13.17/18; 14.1-2; **15.15**; 18.50; 18.64; 18.73

**God** residing in our hearts, **provides** the **divine knowledge and wisdom** transcendently, to those **who are sincerely and constantly trying to attain Him**

Vasudeva sutam devam, Kamsa chanura mardhanam,  
Devaki paramanandam, **Krishnam vande Jagadgurum !**

# Gnana Yagna

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् ।  
यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥

Gita Ch 18 ver 5

Acts of **Yagna (sacrifice)**, donation and austerity (tapasya) should not be abandoned / given up; they must be performed. Indeed, sacrifices, donations and austerities are **purifiers of the wise / noble people**. Also refer verses 4.30-32; 17.14-17; 17.20; 17.23-27

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।  
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥

Gita Ch 18 ver 6

But even these activities (**sacrifices**, donations & austerities) must be performed as duty (**wholeheartedly**), without any attachment and expectation of fruits / rewards. O Pārtha! This is My **decisive and best opinion**

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप ।  
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥

Gita Ch 4 ver 33

O scorcher of foes! the **sacrifice performed through knowledge (Gnana Yagna - studying / obtaining knowledge and spreading it to others for the welfare of the world)** is **better than the sacrifices performed with various materials**. O son of Kunti, in totality, all works / duties culminate in knowledge / wisdom. Also refer 4.10; 4.28; 9.15; **18.68-71**

# Worshipping God through Gita

- Sri Krishna shows us a way to regularly perform **Yagna** through **Gita**

अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः ।  
ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः ॥ Gita Ch 18 ver 70

And one who studies this righteous / sacred conversation of ours (Gita), is worshipping Me through Gnana Yagna (sacrifice performed with knowledge). This is My opinion

- Sri Krishna clearly mentions that the conversation between Him and Arjuna is 'Dharma'- text of righteousness
- Hence, studying Gita is the **best way of worshipping Sri Krishna** and also **Ganesha**\*

श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः ।  
सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभल्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥ Gita Ch 18 ver 71

And even one who listens (our conversation / Gita) with faith / attention and without envy is also liberated (from sins) and attains the auspicious worlds which are obtained by people who have performed righteous / good acts

\*It is believed that Lord Ganesha wrote Mahabharata / Gita while being narrated by Vyasa Maharishi

# Repetition of verses in Gita

- Several verses appear to have been repeated in Gita (as a reminder), which emphasize the importance of their message; and also requiring our special attention

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।  
मामेवैष्यसि युक्तवैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥ Ch 9 ver 34

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।  
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥ Ch 18 ver 65

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।  
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥ Ch 3 ver 35

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।  
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ Ch 18 ver 47

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।  
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥ Ch 3 ver 30

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।  
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥ Ch 12 ver 6

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।  
बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥ Ch 18 ver 57

# Verses with similar message

- **Karma-Yoga:** 2.38-40; **2.47-51**; 3.4; 3.7-9; 3.14-15; **3.18-22**; **3.30-31**; 4.19-23; 4.38; 4.41-42; 5.2-7; 5.10-12; 6.1-4; 6.17; 7.28; **8.7**; 8.27-28; **9.27-28**; **11.55**; **12.6**; 12.10-12; 16.24; 17.11; 17.23-27; 18.5-6; 18.9-14; 18.23; 18.26; 18.45-46; **18.56-57**; 18.68-69
- **Dualities of life:** **2.14-15**; **2.38**; 2.45; 4.22; 5.3; 5.20; 5.22; **6.7**; 7.27-28; 12.13; **12.18-19**; **14.24-25**; 15.5
- **Causes of sin / problems:** 2.33; 3.16; **3.37-40**; 16.4; 16.7-18; **16.21**
- **Get rid of desires, anger, fear:** 2.55-56; 2.64; 2.71; 3.34; **4.10**; 5.23; 5.26; **5.28**; 6.18; **6.24**; 15.5; 16.21-22; 18.53
- **Controlling the senses & mind:** 2.41; 2.45; 2.53; 2.57-59; **2.61-65**; 2.67-71; **3.6-7**; 3.34; 3.41-43; 4.21; 4.26-27; 4.39; **5.20-28**; 6.4-8; **6.10-26**; **6.35-36**; 8.5-14; 9.14; 12.2-4; 12.8-9; 12.13-19; 13.7-11/8-12; 15.3-5; **16.1-3**; **17.14-16**; 18.33; 18.36-37; 18.49; 18.51-54; **18.57**
- **Gnana-Yoga:** 2.46; 4.23; **4.33-39**; 4.42; 5.16-29; 6.8-9; 6.21-23; 6.27-32; 6.46-47; 7.1-3; 7.14; **7.16-19**; 7.24-30; **9.15**; **13.7-11/8-12**; 13.18/19; 13.24/25; 15.15; 16.24; 18.18; 18.20; 18.30; **18.50-58**; 18.68-73
- **Bhakti-Yoga:** 6.31; 6.47; 7.17; 7.28; 8.14; 8.22; 9.13-14; **9.22**; 9.26; 9.29; **9.32-34**; 10.8; 10.10-11; 11.54; 12.2; 12.8-9; **12.13-20**; **14.26**; 15.19; 18.54-55; **18.65**; **18.68-69**
- **Surrender to God:** 4.10; 7.1; 7.14; 7.19; 7.29; 9.32; 15.4; **18.56**; **18.62**; **18.66**
- **The number before the decimal refers to the chapter and number after decimal refers to the verse/s. The first verse (Arjuna's query) in the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter is not counted in several versions of Gita. Hence, two numbers have been provided for each verse of 13<sup>th</sup> chapter. The above compilation is meant to provide few examples and is not exhaustive.**

# Core message of Gita

- Life is full of **dualities** - happiness and sorrow; success and failure; profit and loss; victory and defeat; honor and humiliation; pleasure and pain. These are **unavoidable** and **seasonal**, i.e., they come and go just like the seasons

मात्रास्पर्शस्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।

आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ Gita Ch 2 ver 14

O Kaunteya (Arjuna), the **experiences of happiness and sorrow (the dualities of life)** are indeed caused by the sense perceptions i.e., contacts of the senses with their respective objects. These experiences are transient, which come and go like the continuously changing seasons of cold and hot temperatures. O Bhārata! **Tolerate / bear them patiently**. Also refer verses: 2.15; **2.38**; 2.45; 4.22; 5.3; 5.20; 5.22; **6.7**; 7.27-28; 12.13; **12.18-19**; **14.24-25**; 15.5

- Unaffected by the above dualities, one should always strive to perform his/her prescribed duties (responsibilities) with utmost dedication (always **strive for perfection** at work) & courage

# Core message of Gita

- A person's primary duty is to take care of his/her family and serve (protect the interests of) the country. Family includes parents (and in-laws), spouse, children, grand parents, siblings, followed by close relatives like uncles, aunts, cousins..
- In order to take care of the family, we have to earn money and hence have to do some work. We choose a profession based on our interests, capability and availability
- However, we have to be extremely careful that our **professional work upholds 'dharma'** i.e., **our work should not be detrimental to the society, country and planet**
- Moreover, we should be **compassionate towards others (humans & all living beings)**

# Core message of Gita

- Many **basic necessities** of our life are **provided by the nature and society**. Hence, it is also our **responsibility to contribute something back to the nature and society / country**

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।

छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ Gita Ch 5 ver 25

Sages (noble people) whose sins / impurities have waned away (who are purified), whose doubts are resolved (by knowledge), who are self-controlled (senses and mind are controlled and focused on God) and **who are dedicated to the welfare of all beings** attain liberation by uniting with Brahman / God. Also refer verses: 12.4; 3.20; 3.25; 6.32

- We may choose to serve humanity by volunteering and/or donating for
  - Providing basic necessities such as food, clothing and shelter to orphan children, homeless elderly people and the poor
  - Providing education and healthcare for the needy
  - Protecting children, women, elderly, poor and destitute from neglect and all kinds of abuse

# Core message of Gita

- We could serve nature by volunteering and/or donating for
  - Protection / conservation of forests (**Reforestation**) and water bodies (ponds, lakes, rivers,..); planting trees
  - Protection of wild life (from abuse & poaching), taking care of sick, injured, stray and old animals
- Since we may not have the time and resources to contribute in all the areas, we could **select one or two areas** and serve accordingly
- **Everyone can serve nature by**
  - **NOT wasting natural resources - food, water, energy (electricity & fuel), paper (trees) and Time !!**
  - Reducing pollution via **segregating and recycling waste materials** - paper, plastic, glass, metal (old machines, devices), converting bio-degradable waste into compost and also **educating others**

# Core message of Gita

Duties & responsibilities	Work	Time
	Taking care of family	- 30 - 40 %
	Professional work	- 40 - 50 %
	Work for society/nature	- 10 - 20 %

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ Gita Ch 9 ver 27

O son of Kunti (Arjuna)! **Whatever (work, duties) you do**, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you donate, whatever austerities you practice, **do them as an offering to Me**. Also refer verses: 3.30; 12.6; 18.5-6; 18.57

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भूक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।

निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥ Gita Ch 11 ver 55

O Pandava (Arjuna), **one who performs duties for My sake**, considers Me as the supreme, is devoted to Me, has abandoned attachments and is free from malice towards all beings (without hatred towards any being), that person **reaches Me**

# Core message of Gita



सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्ब्रपाश्रयः ।  
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥ Gita Ch 18 ver 56

Even while continuously performing all the duties / works, **one who takes refuge in Me (completely surrendered to Me)**, by My grace, attains the eternal, imperishable state (abode of God / spiritual liberation). Also refer 4.10; 7.19; 7.29; 9.32; 18.62; 18.66; **9.22**

**We should perform all of our duties / fulfill responsibilities as a service to God (without expecting any fruit / reward of the work)**