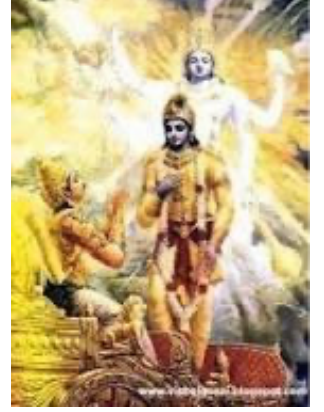


Bhagavad Gita Chapter 12, Part 4 dated 19/12/2020 by Swami Dayatmanada (Lecture delivered online from India.)

Subject: C12, Verse 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11. What is this Mind? What is meant by *Vritti* and *Pratyaya*? Classification of Desires: Negative Desires and related Emotions: Causes of Unhappiness: What do we mean by Emotions? Even the most wicked person has some goodness. The Mind passes through Four Stages in its Spiritual Journey.



Illustrations: Illustration of being Thirsty and Hungry: The Divine Lord looks after His wicked devotees as well. Examples are Hiranyakashipu, Kansa, Shishupala and Dantavakthara: Parable of Sri Ramakrishna - A Child feels hungry and runs to his Mother: The most beautiful five commandments of Shri Ramakrishna: Swami Vivekananda and Brother Disciples: Thomas Edison: Practices of Presence of God by Brother Lawrence: Allegory of The Chariot Katha-Upanishad: Mother Cow and calf:

Om Jananim Saaradam deviim, Raama-krishnam jagad-gurum

Paada-padme tayoh sriitvaa, prana-maami muhur-muhuh

ॐ वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम्। देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

Vasudeva sutham devam, Kamsa Chanura mardanam,

Devaki paramanandam, Krishnam vande jagat gurum

I worship Lord Krishna, who is the spiritual master of the universe, who is the son of Vasudeva, who is the Lord, who killed Kansa and Chanura, and who is the bliss of Devaki.

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो, दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः। पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता, दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

Sarvopanishado gaavo, dogdha gopala nandanaha|

parthovatsa: sudheerbhoktaa, dugdham gitamrutam mahat |

All the Upanishads are like cows. The milker is Krishna, the son of Nanda. Partha (Arjuna) is like a calf, while the drinkers are the wise ones. The nectar of Gita is the milk.

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिं। यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥

Mookam karoti vachalam pangum langhayate girim |

Yat-krupa tamaham vande paramananda madhavam ||

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls. His mercy turns dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.

Recollection:

We have been discussing the Bhakti Yoga 12th Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. This chapter has 20 verses.

- **This chapter opens with a question by Arjuna on behalf of all of us.** Arjuna asks, “Which is the superior path, the path of devotion or knowledge? The path of devotion means worshipping God with names, forms and qualities called *Saguna Brahman*. The path of knowledge is worshipping God without names, forms and qualities or worshipping God as *Nirguna Brahma*. Which is the superior path?”
- **The Divine Lord categorically answers,** “There is no superior path. Whatever path is best suitable for a person, that path is the most superior path for a person. That exactly reflects Shri Ramkrishna’s teachings. What do most Hindus do? They may not know the theories, but go and see every Hindu shrine. There will be pictures of all the Gods and Goddesses. At the same time, the Hindu says, “Your name is *Ananta Padmanabha*.” *Ananta* means the infinite, and from Lord Narayan’s navel comes out Brahma. Brahma represents the entire universe. So everything is in You, and You are in everything. Every Hindu knows and feels that - *Ekam Sat Vipraha Bahudha Vadanti* (Truth/God is one only. Sages call God by different names.) Shri Ramakrishna reinforces the same teaching. That is not a unique teaching. Bhagwan Krishna taught this to Arjuna several thousand years back and through Arjuna to all of us.
- The Lord says, “**All paths sincerely followed bring the spiritual aspirant to Me. However, *Jnana Marga* (philosophy of *Neti Neti*) is a difficult path.**” Why? The aspirants of *Jnana Marga* should not be body and mind conscious persons. Only such people are in a position even to intellectually imagine God beyond name, form and qualities. This has to be attained by people in a graduated manner. The majority of us are body and mind conscious. We have to start with *Saguna Brahman Upasana* by meditating on the personal aspect of God with name, form and qualities.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 12, Verse 5.

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ॥

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥ 5॥

*kleśho 'dhikataras teṣhām avyaktāsakta-chetasām
avyaktā hi gatir duḥkham dehavadbhir avāpyate*

kleśhaḥ—tribulations; **adhika-taraḥ**—full of; **teṣhām**—of those; **avyakta**—to the unmanifest; **āsakta**—attached; **chetasām**—whose minds; **avyaktā**—the unmanifest; **hi**—indeed; **gatiḥ**—path; **duḥkham**—exceedingly difficult; **deha-vadbhiḥ**—for the embodied: **avāpyate**—**is reached**.

Translation: For those whose minds are attached to the unmanifest, the path of realisation is full of tribulations. Worship of the unmanifest is exceedingly difficult for embodied beings.

deha-vadbhiḥ—for the embodied: One who has got tremendous feeling that I am body.

- **Lest people might think Saguna Brahman is only an imagination of our mind.** What is the imagination I am talking about? Does God have a form just like a table, a man, a woman, a tree, and a tiger have a form. My dear sir, if you have attentively studied the 11th Chapter - *Vishvaroopā-Darshana*, it is God only who is manifesting in reality as this whole world. Swami Vivekananda used to say that a stone is God, man, a cat, a rat, and a mat is God. There is nothing which is not God. That is 100% truth. This understanding comes slowly. As long as we have body consciousness, we have to divinise everything. What is this? We do not make something non-divine as divine. We have forgotten that everything is Divine. And we are trying to bring back that vision through gradual purification of the mind.
- **And how is this purification done?** That is being said in the 8th verse, which we have discussed actually in our last class. But just to recollect,

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 12, Verse 8.

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥ ८॥

**mayy eva mana ādhatsva mayi buddhiṁ niveśhaya
nivasishyasi mayy eva ata ūrdhvaṁ na sanśhayaḥ**

mayi—on Me; *eva*—alone; *manah*—mind; *ādhatsva*—fix; *mayi*—on Me; *buddhim*—intellect; *niveśhaya*—surrender; *nivasiṣhyasi*—you shall always live; *mayi*—in Me; *eva*—alone; *ataḥ ūrdhvam*—thereafter; *na*—not; *sanśhayaḥ*—doubt.

Translation: Fix your mind on Me alone and surrender your thoughts to Me. There upon, you will always live in Me. Of this, there is no doubt.

Oh Arjuna, if you can do this, then you are going to live in me. I am going to live in you. We are going to live in each other. Later on we will discover there is no you, there is no me. What is, is nothing but God, Brahman. But that is the goal and we are far off from the goal. So we have to slowly start our journey. What is the way?

mayi—on Me; *eva*—alone; *manah*—mind/thoughts; *ādhatsva*—fix.

You try to direct every thought towards Me and fix your mind Me alone.

mayi—on Me; *buddhim*—intellect; *niveśhaya*—surrender:

Let your Buddhi/intellect enter only into Me. What does it mean? Your intention, goal and final resolution should be only towards Me. You enter your *Buddhi* into Me.

What are these two steps?

1. First, make your mind filled with Me.
2. Second, let your *Buddhi*, the faculty of determination (the faculty of reasoning and understanding) enter only into Me. There should be only one desire. One is what we call a bucket list. We should not have many desires on our bucket list. God should not be one among the many desires. No, there should not be any other desire except God to attain *Moksha*, *Mukti* or liberation.

What is this Mind?

[The **mind** is that faculty which thinks, feels, perceives, imagines, remembers, and wills. It covers the totality of **mental** phenomena, including (both) conscious processes, through which an individual is aware of external and internal circumstances, and unconscious processes, which can influence an individual without intention or awareness. The mind is the totality of psychological phenomena and capacities, encompassing both conscious and unconscious states.]

As we know, the mind is that faculty of human personality which deliberately goes on. Is it this? Is it that? It comes to a definitive knowledge aided by memory. Our eyes see something. The mind says, "Yes, yes, this is a tree. I thought it might be a human being in semi-darkness. But no, it's not a tree but only a human being. I know that human being because I distinctly remember. I have seen him many times, and I recollect." These cogitations before a definitive conclusion are the functions of the mind.

What is meant by *Vritti* and *Pratyaya*?

There are thoughts in the mind. In Sanskrit, thoughts are called *Vritti* and *Pratyaya*. *Vritti* means a circle. Why? Because a thought goes round and round like a circle. Like a bullock that goes round and round extracting oil. Our minds go round and round again and again like a circle. That's why it is called a *Vritti*. It is also called *Pratyaya*. *Pratyaya* means thought. Everything is a mentation, and every thought is nothing but the mind. Mind means thoughts. Thoughts mean mind. However, thoughts are of different varieties.

Classification of Desires:

First of all, there are tremendous desires. These desires can be broadly classified into three types. What are the three types?

1. The first type of desire is not a very intense desire. It is fulfilled, fine. But if not fulfilled, that's also fine. Such types of thoughts flit across the space of our mind, but they do not trouble us.
2. The second type of desire is a desire with medium force and intensity. It will be nice, not only nice, I must have it. But do I want it right now or do I want it later? Can I also postpone it? Can I wait for it for some time more? Yes, I can.
3. The third type of desire is a desire with full force and intensity. I must have it without any delay.

What do we mean by Emotions?

[Definition: An emotion is a feeling such as happiness, love, fear, anger or hatred, which can be caused by the situation that a person is in or the people you are with.]

There are emotions. What are these emotions? Emotions depend on the intensity of desires. A low-intensity desire, when fulfilled, creates an emotion of low-intensity happiness. A medium-intensity desire creates a little more happiness. A high-intensity desire, when fulfilled will give, for the moment at least, tremendous intense happiness proportionately. (Feeling happy is an emotion.)

An example of being thirsty and hungry:

Take the example of thirst and hunger: 1) So I am feeling a little bit hungry and thirsty. I don't care. I can wait for several hours. 2) Now, the intensity of hunger and thirst increases. I must drink and eat something. But I can still wait for a short time, maybe half an hour or 45 minutes. Hunger and thirst are troubling me. One part of the mind is thinking about food, and the other part (of the mind) can be free. 3) Now, the thirst and hunger have increased further. The mind cannot think of anything else except drink and food. My happiness also increases proportionally to thirst and hunger when I get drink and food.

Negative Desires and related Emotions:

There are other kinds of desires. Sometimes, an object, a person, a climate and a particular event are most unpleasant for me. There are three degrees of unwanted desires. They are less intense, a little more intense and very intense. We feel proportionately happy when these undesired events, persons or objects are not there.

Causes of Unhappiness are:

- 1) We do not get what we desire.
- 2) What we do not wish comes to us. Both result in unhappiness, but different degrees of suffering depending upon the intensity of likes or dislikes. These are called emotions.

The thoughts regarding various plans occupy our minds:

There are thoughts for our various plans. A plan to complete this study. I plan to become a master of some art. A plan to try for a job. These are only a few examples.

Even the most wicked person has some goodness.

Every soul is potentially Divine. Even the wicked person has some goodness. His goodness may be limited to his family and one or two people chosen from among the family members. This evil person can even sacrifice his life for the sake of his beloved. An evil person can have good ideas and sometimes many talents as well. A person without talent can never become a wicked fellow. Why? Even to become wicked - a person needs tremendous energy and intelligence. A stupid fellow can never become either a great thief or a murderer. If he tries, he will be caught immediately by the police.

All these desires, emotions, aspirations, ideals, and everything are different types of thoughts. The mind is nothing but these different types of thoughts going round and round at one particular point in time. Some desires and thoughts manifest, some thoughts will come now, and other thoughts will come in future.

The Divine Lord looks after His wicked devotees as well.

Examples are Hiranyakashipu, Kansa, Shishupala and Dantavakthara:

The Divine Lord says, "Even if a wicked person thinks only of Me, I will look after him and free him from the bondage of Samsara." Do we know any wicked person remembering God only? Yes, examples are Hiranyakashipu, Kansa, Shishupala, and Dantavakthara.

Yes, Hiranyakashipu was full of hatred, but for whom? His emotion of hatred was For Lord Narayana, not any Tom, Dick or Harry. Kansa was full of hatred and fear. To whom? Towards Krishna and Balarama. Their minds had only one thought - only of Krishna. I have to tell you something interesting. We should salute these so-called wicked people. They are the greatest Gurus. Hiranyakashipu, Kansa, Shishupala, and Dantavakthara, they are the manifestations of teacher-hood. Why do I say that? Because, answer me, day and night, what was Hiranyakashipu thinking? Day and night, what was Kansa thinking? Day and night, what was Shishupala, Dantavakthara thinking? We have to understand that they appear to be wicked. But they were unconsciously negatively thinking about only God in the form of fear, hatred, anger, and enmity. What can we learn from them? They are not thinking of anything else except God. What would happen to them? They are thinking of God constantly. They may be mistaking God as their enemy but because God is of the nature of Sat, Chit and Ananda, pure existence, pure knowledge and pure Ananda, therefore very soon their minds transformed into God, and they became God.

The Lord says, “Do you wish to become My devotee.”

The Lord says, “Do you wish to love me? Do you wish to become My devotee? Then slowly turn every thought of yours into Me.” That is the purpose of the worship of a Hindu, a Christian, a Muslim and followers of all other religions.

- In Islam, they worship God five times a day. Why do they worship five times a day? It should be every moment, but at least five times for the convenience of people. They do it loudly so that no one should miss it. Many devout Muslims, wherever they are, will stop. They spread a towel or a small piece of cloth. And kneel and bow down to the Lord, turning towards Mecca. That is a marvellous practice. And whenever you hear this call of the Muslim, immediately remember your own *Ishta Devata*/Chosen Deity.
- Take the example of the Christian worship. Christian worship is an elaborate worship with plenty of rituals. We may ask, what is the point? Every ritual is an action. Why so many actions? Our minds are restless. So, occupy every restless thought with a particular action. We should focus all our rituals on our Chosen Deity.
- Now, take the example of Hindu puja. We get up early morning. Why do we get up? Because we have to do puja. What do we do? We take a bath to clean ourselves. We put on fresh clothes to think of God. We go and clean the shrine room to worship God. Why do we gather flowers? We think of God. Why do you make sandal paste? We think of God. Why do you go on sitting for hours together worshipping? So, our restless mind engages itself only with the central thought of God. Let it be restless, but let it be restless in engaging itself only with the central thought of God. Slowly, we will move towards God. Sri Ramakrishna says, “*Sandhya* (means rituals) merges in *Gayatri*. That is worship. The *Gayatri* Japa merges in *Aum*. *Aum* merges in Samadhi.”

God makes us think about Himself. The Divine Lord says, “O, Arjuna, direct all your thoughts towards Me. Whether you eat, drink, breathe, blink your eyes, move hands or whatever you do, turn all of them towards Me.” *Buddhi*/intellect should support it. What does it mean? Unless we make a firm resolution that I want only God, let there be other desires. But go on intensifying, strengthening this *Sankalpa* that I desire only God, I do not want anything else. *Buddhi* means the faculty of determination. Eventually, the *Buddhi*/intellect understands through continuous practice that God alone is real. Our problem is we think that the world, the body and

the mind are real. That is why the Lord says, "Fill your mind with divine thoughts. At the same time, make the firm resolve that everything is unreal. God alone is real.

Parable of Sri Ramakrishna - A child feels hungry and runs to his mother:

Once this idea becomes firmly fixed, then the mind becomes restless. As Sri Ramakrishna says, "A child is busy playing with dolls. As soon as the child feels hunger, he runs to his mother." Here, "hungry" means *Buddhi*. When *Buddhi* of a devotee becomes firm and fixed in the Divine Lord/Divine Mother. The devotee says, "I have to go to my mother. She alone can remove my distress." Then the devotee lives constantly in God. What does it mean? He thinks, imagines, hears, talks about God only. He reads, writes about and speaks about and dreams about God only - God occupies his day and night. This is called living in the presence of God, living in God. As soon as we start living in God, God lives in us. The Lord says, "O, Arjuna, you do proper spiritual practices. You attain the state of mind when your *Buddhi/intellect* and mind live only in Me."

The Mind passes through four stages in its spiritual journey:

What do we mean by four stages? There are four stages to think about God.

1. ***Aneka Roopa Ishwara is the first stage.*** In the elementary stage, we think of God with form. He has got a form. He has hands and feet like us. He can adapt to the devotee's desire. He can assume any form, name and quality. That is called *Aneka Roopa Ishwara Dhyanam*. The spiritual aspirant enters into the second through consistent practice and tremendous *Shraddha*/faith.
2. ***The second stage is Vishwa Roopa Ishwara Dhyana:*** God not only assumes human forms like us. But God manifests in the form of this entire universe. We chant *Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava, Athithi Devo Bhava*. First, we divinise our most loving people. Second, we divinise people who protect us. The third group of people who give us knowledge. Fourth, everybody else who has got some exclusive quality. Eventually, the Sadhaka feels that everything is nothing but a manifestation of God. So, the first stage is *Aneka Roopa Ishwara Dhyana*. The second stage is *Vishwa Roopa Ishwara Dhyana*. Remember, Sri Ramakrishna used to visit famous talented people. When somebody objected to it, he said, "No, no, I have to visit because they are great people, and that greatness is of my Divine Mother. I am not going to see them. I am going to see my Divine Mother

manifesting through them.” How does the Divine Power manifest through them? Because they must have worked very hard. They must have done *sadhana*. It could be *sangeetha sadhana*, science *sadhana*, account *sadhana*. Whatever *sadhana*, they have done *sadhana*. That is the law. Nobody can get money, a name, a talent or special knowledge without doing *sadhana*. It is all the manifestation of God.

3. **The third stage is *Eka Roopa Ishwara Dhyanam*:** The **Sadhaka** feels all *devatas*, all *deva devatas*, any form, name, and quality, they all belong to one only that is God, *Ishwara*. That is called *Eka Roopa Ishwara Dhyana*. Wherever he sees - Oh, you are worshipping Shiva. He is my *Ishtadevata/ chosen deity*. You are worshipping Krishna, Narayana, Devi, Jesus, God, Buddha, and Allah. That does not matter. They are different names of my God only. God is only appearing in this particular form. That is called *Eka Roopa*. It means not one form, but seeing one God in every form is called *Eka Roopa Ishwara Dhyana*. It is a very highly developed stage. It is called *Savikalpa Samadhi/Brahma Akara Vritti* in the yogic language. See only Brahman. The person has reached the stage but this stage can only be attained by God's grace plus man's effort.
4. **The fourth stage is called *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*.** Human efforts alone cannot attain this stage. The Divine Lord must break that last *pratyaya*, the *vritti* of our *Ishtadevata*, *Saguna* Brahma. We need to understand here. When Sri Ram Krishna said to Totapuri, “I can remove every other thought but cannot remove the thought of Maa Kali.” There is a heaven and hell difference between our concept of Maa Kali and the concept of Ramakrishna. What was his concept? His concept of Kali was *Eka Roopa Ishwara*. That is a peculiar state, intellectually not easy to understand. The above three stages can be attained by human beings with the help of Guru, God and his effort. Beyond that, only God's grace must be there.

What is the essence?

- O Arjuna, O spiritual aspirant, to control your mind, direct it towards me.
- You acquire *Viveka*, *Vairagya*, discrimination, dispassion, control of the mind, body and sense organs.
- Gradually increase your desire for God's realisation.
- You practise the presence of Me/the thought of God. Let there be many thoughts, but connect them with God.

- You make the *Sankalpa*/firm determination that I want God and nothing else. That is called *Thevara Mumukshutvam*, an intense desire for liberation. They go hand in hand. That is the goal. The Divine Lord address those people who cannot fix their minds on the Divine Lord.

The Recording time is 28 minutes approx. Next Verse -

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 12, Verse 9.

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।

अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनञ्जय ॥ 9॥

***atha chittam samādhātum na śhaknoṣhi mayi sthiram
abhyāsa-yogena tato mām ichchhāptum dhanañjaya***

atha—if; ***chittam***—mind; ***samādhātum***—to fix; ***na śhaknoṣhi***—(you) are unable; ***mayi***—on Me; ***sthiram***—steadily; ***abhyāsa-yogena***—by uniting with God through repeated practice; ***tataḥ***—then; ***mām***—me; ***ichchhā***—desire; ***āptum***—to attain; ***dhanañjaya***—Arjun, the conqueror of wealth.

Translation: If you are unable to fix your mind steadily on Me, O Arjun, then practice remembering Me with devotion while constantly restraining the mind from worldly affairs.

The emphasis is on constant practice. Remember! In the 6th chapter, Arjuna says, “It’s extremely difficult to control the mind, O Krishna. It is like catching hold of the air.” Nobody can catch hold of air. The Lord says, “Yes, that is true. You can control the mind. How? Two things are necessary. One is constant practice and the other is renunciation. Swami Brahmanandaji told his disciple Swami Yudhiswaranandaji - Struggle, struggle and struggle, practice, practice and practice.

atha—if; ***chittam***—mind; ***samādhātum***—to fix; **to control the mind.**

na śhaknoṣhi— if (you) are unable to fix the mind; ***mayi***—on Me; ***sthiram***—steadily. An uncontrolled mind cannot be directed on anything, much less on God. A beautiful imagery is in the Katha-Upanishad.

Allegory of The Chariot: Katha-Upanishad

Verses 1.3.3–11 of *Katha Upanishad* deal with the allegoric expression of human body as a chariot.

- The body is equated to a chariot.
- The horses are the senses.
- The mind is the reins.
- The driver or charioteer is the intellect.
- The passenger of the chariot is the Self (Atman)/*Jivatma*.



The *Jivatma*/individual soul is the owner of the car. *Jivatma* travels with the help of the body and mind. Where is it travelling to? From ignorance to knowledge, from a lower truth to a higher truth. We are all travellers. We travel from God, in God and to God. As a Sufi saint puts it so beautifully. We are not able to understand, we cannot go beyond the realm of God. Wherever we go, the Divine Mother is sitting on a high tower meaning inside our hearts and watching everything. Bhagavan Krishna gives the secret - practice, practice and practice. There is nothing else. Most of us do mechanical practice. Whether we do meditation or japam, our thoughts go round and round in a small circumference, never trying to rise to higher levels. It is natural to everybody. Every saint, remember, was in the same state like us. How does a person become a saint? Through practice and through vairagya/ dispassion. How does this come?

Remember! The most beautiful five commandments of Shri Ramakrishna:

1. The First Commandment is to 'Chant the name of God all the time and talk of his Glory.'
2. The Second Commandment is 'Do *Satsanga*, *Sadhusanga*'. Go to Godly people, spend time with them, listen to their discourses, and spend time at places where people are engrossed in God's name, in *Kirtan*.
3. The Third Commandment is 'Spend time in solitude, and think of him'.

4. The Fourth Commandment is to “continuously discriminate between Right and Wrong, *Nitya and Anitya*’. God alone is true and permanent. Everything else is untrue and impermanent.
5. The Fifth Commandment is live like a maidservant in a rich man’s house.

abhyāsa-yogena—by uniting with God through repeated practice. How long should one practice? So long as we do not reach the goal. I remember a beautiful incident.

Thomas Edison:

Thomas Edison was trying to invent or discover a good fuse. He had a team of many scientists to assist him. Thomas already knew about the properties of electricity. He knew how to make a light bulb and experimented with several fuses. Thomas did 10,000 experiments. Unfortunately, he was not successful. He did not give up. Other scientists in his team got disheartened and approached him. They said, “Sir, let us give up this project because 10,000 times we have failed.” Edison brightened up. He said, “Gentlemen, now we know that these 10,000 ways did not work. Let us forget those experiments and try new means. And very soon, they were able to do so.

Practices of Presence of God by Brother Lawrence:

Brother Lawrence, in his practice of the presence of God, says, For 10 years, I struggled very hard, and many times I failed. He said, “Whenever I forgot to remember God, I only blamed God. I said, “Oh God, this happens if you do not hold me up. So take care. Do not sleep. Do not forget. Whenever your child is about to fall, be alert and protect me. If I fall, the fault is yours and not mine.”

tataḥ—then; **mām**—me; **ichchhā**—desire; **āptum**—to attain; **dhanañjaya**—Arjun, the conqueror of wealth.

The highest step is to think, feel and live in God. It is not easy to do this. Take the lower step. What is that lower step? Control the mind through constant practice. (Swamiji narrates.) Once, I complained to a senior Swami about this problem. The Senior Swami said, “Bhai, how much Japam you do?” I said, “I try to do 10,000, sometimes 15,000. How many times don’t you remember God?” “Many times, I replied. I realised that my lips uttered the name of God, but my mind was thinking something else. Senior Swami said, “So you increase the period of remembrance and then slowly, slowly, that remembrance part will increase and forgetfulness part

decreases.” That is the way we have to do.” There is no other way, unfortunately. No miracle. We have to do our level best.

The Lord says, “If you are unable to fix your mind steadily on Me, O Arjun, then practice remembering Me with devotion while constantly restraining the mind from worldly affairs.” What should we do if this is not easy for us to do?

The Lord says in the next Verse.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 12, Verse 10.

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।
मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥ 10॥

*abhyāse 'py asamartha 'si mat-karma-paramo bhava
mad-artham api karmāṇi kurvan siddhim avāpsyasi*

abhyāse—in practice; **api**—if; **asamarthaḥ**—unable; **asi**—you; **mat-karma paramaḥ**—devotedly work for Me; **bhava**—be; **mat-artham**—for My sake; **api**—also; **karmāṇi**—work; **kurvan**—performing; **siddhim**—perfection; **avāpsyasi**—you shall achieve.

Translation: If you cannot practice remembering Me with devotion, devote yourself to My service. Just try to work for Me. You perform and render devotional service to Me, and you shall achieve perfection.

Swami Vivekananda and Brother Disciples:

Swami Vivekananda started the Ramakrishna Mission soon after he returned from the West. Many brother disciples opposed this. They said, “We do Japam, meditation and study of scriptures. We are quite happy.” These brother disciples used to get up at 3am. After washing their face, feet and hands, they used to sit for meditation. They were reluctant to get up even after twelve hours. Swami Ramakrishnananda used to do puja, go out and beg. Sometimes, he did tuition to earn a little money to feed his brother disciples. He would procure all the ingredients and then make simple food. The brother disciples were so intoxicated that they would not budge from their seats. He used to catch hold of their cheeks, forcibly open their mouth and put the balls of food inside their mouth. How could they do that? Because Ramakrishna gave them that capacity. Ramakrishna used to

say, "There are some plants where first comes flowers, then comes fruits. There are some other plants, where first come fruits and then slowly flowers will come." It is true. What does it mean? Some people get a glimpse of God first and make it their own through constant practice.

Dedicate all your actions in service of the Divine Lord:

The Lord says, "Oh, Arjuna, if you cannot practice remembering Me with devotion. That means that your mind is restless. Let it be restless, but engage it in activities. You devote yourself to My service. Just try to work for Me. You perform and render devotional service to Me, and you shall achieve perfection."

Let's discuss this in a bit of detail.

- Why do we go to work? To earn money - think that we do this for the Divine Lord so we can buy provisions to offer to the Divine Lord.
- Why do we want to cook? Because we want to offer to the Lord. After offering to the Divine Lord, we eat the Prasad. Eating the Prasad is also to please the Divine Lord.
- So you see, going to work, buying provisions, and cooking are indirectly for God. Offering food is also for God. We should offer all our activities to the Divine Lord. All activities of a devotee should be to please the Divine Lord.
- The Lord says, "If you cannot think of Me with a controlled and focused mind. Remember! Direct all your activities towards Me. You will attain perfection by rendering your services to Me." It is a wonderful idea.

The Essence is:

We should talk to people with goodwill and with prayer for their welfare. Suppose that person doesn't like us, and he abuses us. What should we do? We should thank him. He allows us to develop qualities like forgiveness, forbearance and prayer. If we wish well for those who love us, there is no wonder and greatness in it. But if we desire well for those who hate us, torment us, if we can bless them, that is great. Jesus Christ says, "If somebody abuses you, bless them. If somebody harms you, pray for them. If they slap you on one cheek, offer the other side. Then if they take away your shirt, offer your coat also. Forgive them." The Divine Lord

sends them for your own sake. That is the fast track. That is Karma Yoga. We should perform all our actions for the pleasure of the Divine Lord. The Divine Lord gives us nothing else except Himself. We move toward the Divine Lord and live in Him. Let me explain this point with the help of a few illustration.

A beautiful building:

Supposing there is a beautiful building two miles away. You like it, and you want to go near it. The building is not coming or walking towards you. You walk towards the building. Then what happens? The more you get nearer to the building, the building is nearer to you.

You see a loved one:

Extend this analogy. Suppose you see your friend whom you love. He is two miles away. You walk towards that person. What does the other person think? You will feel as if that person is also walking very fast towards you.

Mother cow and calf:

When a child walks towards its mother, the mother automatically runs towards the child. I narrated one story in my past classes. I was at Cherrapunji. There was a dairy. A cow gave birth to a calf. The next morning at about 7 o'clock the cow was let out to graze in the nearby hills after feeding her calf. I went at about 9, 9.30 am. By this time, the calf was hungry. The calf cried, "Maa, I am hungry. I want food." This cow was far away from the calf, and there was no way it could hear the cry of the baby. But I saw it running with haste, eyes transfixed on the calf, towards its baby. The mother cow went straight into the cow shed and went and stood joyfully near its calf. The calf started suckling the Divine Mother. What is that? *Ya Devi, Sarvabhuteshu, Matru Rupeni Sansthita.*

The essence is: If we walk one step towards God, God will come running a hundred steps towards us.

So, He is telling us, even if you are not able to do or direct your mind and perform actions connecting me for my sake, then there is something else there.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 12, Verse 11.

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥ ११॥

***athaitad apy aśhakto 'si kartum mad-yogam āśhritaḥ
sarva-karma-phala-tyāgaṁ tataḥ kuru yatātmavān***

atha—if; ***etat***—this; ***api***—even; ***aśhaktaḥ***—unable; ***asi***—you are; ***kartum***—to work; ***mad-yogam***—with devotion to Me; ***āśhritaḥ***—taking refuge; ***sarva-karma***—of all actions; ***phala-tyāgam***—to renounce the fruits; ***tataḥ***—then; ***kuru***—do; ***yata-ātma-vān***—be situated in the self

Translation: If you are unable to even work for Me in devotion, then try to renounce the fruits of your actions and be situated in the self.

The Lord says, “Arjuna, if you are unable to do everything for My sake, for My pleasure. If unable to do Karma Yoga then try to renounce the fruits of your actions.” There are two parts:

1) *athaitad apy aśhakto 'si kartum mad-yogam āśhritaḥ* We should do everything for the pleasure of the Divine Lord. If we cannot do this and we forget then the next step is -

2) *sarva-karma-phala-tyāgaṁ tataḥ kuru yatātmavān*. The next step is to offer the results of our actions to the Divine Lord. Let Him give me whatever He thinks is the best for me. But whatever we do, we should do it to the best of our ability, with intelligence and full alertness. We should say, “Oh God, I did my best. I offer everything to You. Whatever You decide to give me or not to give me, I will be happy with that. We should sincerely surrender the fruits of all actions and take refuge in the Divine Lord.

Steps of Spiritual Progress:

1. The highest step is to live in God.
2. If you can't do that, try to direct all your thoughts, meditations, and determinations towards the Divine Lord.

3. If you are unable to do that, then practice Karma Yoga. The body-mind will not keep quiet. Turn your actions into Karma Yoga. What is Karma Yoga? It has two parts. The first part is ***Ishwara Arpana Buddhi***. Whatever I do, I offer it as my worship and offering to God. The second part is ***Ishwara Prasada Buddhi***. Whatever happens afterwards, that is the Prasada, the grace of God. Is He giving happiness? That belongs to Him. God is gracious. He gave it to me. Is he giving unhappiness to me? That is also infinite grace. Holy Mother said, "Misery is the gift of God." That is also the grace of God. With this idea, whatever we do, that goes by the name of Karma Yoga. Swami Vivekananda propagated this idea - ***Shiva Jnana Jiva Seva***.

Suppose you forget to express your gratitude and remember it later, you say, "Oh Lord, I forget to tell you whatever I have done, I offer it to you. Please accept it. You gave me the body and the mind. You gave me the faith, energy and prana. Everything belongs to you. Unnecessarily, I am only assuming that I am the doer. Please help me to understand this. Please accept." And what do you think? A child gathers a few fruits and gives it to his mother. What do you think the mother will do? Swallow them? No!! She gives more and better fruits to the child. And the only fruit God gives is Himself. We will discuss the rest of the beautiful points in our next class.

Vasudeva sutham devam kamsa Chanoora mardhanam,
Devaki paramanandam Krishnam vande Jagat Gurum.

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् ।

देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

May Shri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda bless us all.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

Kind regards

(Mamta Misra)