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## **Consequence of Self-restraint in Modern Era**

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### **Abstract**

*In the modern days of din and bustle man is suffering from anxieties, infusions and various kinds of frustrations and desperations. He is gradually losing his control over mind due to vaulting ambitions and desires which are at the root of all the sorrows and conflicts. To get rid of this, he needs to bridle his mind from all the mundane objects and earthly pleasures which are nothing but illusion of immeasurable sorrows. A man must control his mind by spiritual thinking. If he can't do this he will prone to earthly sensations and his mind which is the residence of the Almighty, will get quagmire as an inevitable consequence of it .Only spirituality or thinking about pure, omnipotent God a man can transcend his trivial material self and can attain the highest bliss- the happiness of mind. And in order to keep a man away from earthly pleasures, they should be thought the dangerous consequences of these from the very primary level. A man cognitively takes himself away from his real creator, the divine. The best remedy of this inevitable disease is meditation. Only contemplation can provide a man the required power to restrict his mind from materialistic pleasures and undaunted desires. Meditation brings the stasis in the mind of a man. He becomes able to control his ideas and thoughts as the natural outcome of persistent meditation. So, a man should undergo the process of consistent contemplation for the attainment of ultimate pleasure - the pleasure of spirituality and to get the touch of the divinity.*

***Key words: Cause of separation from bestial, Self Conquered, realization our real soul, causes of bondage, way to relief.***

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Self-restraint is the highest of virtues in this world. The entire gamut of Indian culture can be expressed in one word, 'self-restraint'. Only through self-restraint a person acquires the highest happiness both here and hereafter. Endue with self-restrained man sleeps in facility, awakes in felicity, and moves through the world in felicity. His mind is always cheerful. The man who is without self-restraint always suffers unhappiness. Such a man brings upon himself many calamities all born of his own faults. It has been said that in all

the four modes (Brahmacharyashram, Gçihasthashrama, Vanaprasthashrama and sanayasthashrama) of life self-restraint is the best of swears.

*Atta have jitam seyyo  
Ya cayam itara paja  
Attadantassa posassa  
Niccama sannatacarino.<sup>1</sup>*

One, who has conquered his own self, is better than all other people; not even a God could change into defeat the victory of a man who has conquered himself and always lives under restraint. Self-control separates us from our bestial instinct and the rest of the animal kingdom, thanks to our large prefrontal cortex. It is the ability to subdue our impulses in order to achieve longer-term goals. Rather than responding to immediate impulses, we can plan, evaluate alternative actions, and, often enough avoid doing things we'll later regret. The ability to exert self-control is typically called willpower.

The Upanishada speak of two Margas, or way— the way of pleasure and the way of self-control.

*Anyat ÷reya 'nyadyutaiva prey  
Ste ubhe nànrthe puruàm sinātaḥ<sup>2</sup>*

Discriminating between these two the sage chooses the path of good or self control, while the fool follows the path of the pleasure—

*Šreyašca preyašca manusyameta  
Stau samparitya vivinakti dhīrah /  
Sreya hi dhīro ' bhi preyaso vrnīte  
Preyo mando yogaksemāda vrnīte //<sup>3</sup>*

What is wrong to follow the path of pleasures, since the vast majority is blindly running after the pleasures of the senses? First of all, most of excitements and sensual pleasures lead to sorrow, suffering, old age, sickness and death eventually. Secondly, the thirst for sensual pleasures is an inheritance from the animalistic life, and the more we indulge in them, we live like animals and are unable to realize our real soul's nature is divine. It is therefore that all great religion have postulated moral principles which involve the restraint of our animalistic and sensual desires. In the second chapter of Bhagbat Gita Sri Krishna beautifully explains how a desire arise and how to lead to destruction.

*“dhyāyato viūayān pušsaḥ  
saīgasteūāpajāyate/  
saīgātsaḥjāyate kāmāḥ  
kāmāt krodhābhijāyate//  
krodhādbhavati sašmohaḥ  
sašmohāt smçti-vibhramaḥ /  
smçtibhraš÷àdbuddhi-nà÷o*

*buddhinà÷àtpraḍā÷yati”//<sup>4</sup>*

Says Lord Krishna When a man thinks of objects (vishaya), attachment for them arises, from attachment desire is born, from desire anger arises. From anger comes delusion, from delusion loss of memory, from loss of memory the destruction of discrimination, from loss of discrimination he perishes. Thus we see that the cause of thinking, or else, it is from the mind that the troubles start, as we find in Bhagbat Gita, where the mind is restless and moving by nature.<sup>5</sup> The human mind with its transitory nature and instability is personified here as a feature of nature. The unstable mind is not appropriate for a man to moderate his intention and self-control is not possible without possessing the fixity of the mind. The mind that remains same in every situation and in all conditions is referred a stable mind.

Mind is the cause of our bondage, but it might also cause of our liberation. How does mind become cause of bondage? A mind, which is full of desire, is an impure mind. The impure mind is the cause of bondage and the pure mind leads the jiva (individual soul) to freedom or Moksha. The Bhagbat Gita also said—

*“uddhared àtmanàtmànāṣ nàtmànāmava÷àdayet/  
àtmaiva hyàtmano bandhuràtmaiva ripuràtmanāḥ”//<sup>6</sup>*

A man must elevate himself by his own mind, not degrade himself. The mind is the friend of the conditioned soul, and his enemy as well. In order to be able to use it as a friend, it is important to understand the mind’s nature. If we use it as our friend then it is very important for us to understand its nature. Our mind works at four layers. When it makes thought, we call it Manna or the mind. When it explains and determines we call it Buddhi or intellect. When it forms an attachment to an object or a person we call it Chitta. When it becomes proud of things like separate respective entities of mind; rather they are the four slaps of working of our mind. So we many call them completely as the mind or as the mind – intellect-ego or as the mind-intellect-Chitta-ego. Many books analyses the mind in one of these four ways with the intention to explain the concept presented here. They actually all indicate the same internal equipment within us that is called antakarna or the mind. As we find in Panchadhasi, it describes these four altogether as the mind and elaborates that it is the cause of material bondage. Shree Krishna in Bhagbat Gita several times tells about the mind and the intellect as being to things and give emphasis to surrender both to God. In Yoga darsan we find the analysis of three entities – mind intellect and ego. Again Sankaracharya differentiates the mind into four categories – mind, intellect, chitta and ego. So to Shree Krishna the very much of higher mind is very much necessary to elevate the lower part of the mind. In another way we can say in order to control the mind the intellect plays a very important role.

A mind full of vasanas, desire for sensual objects, is called the impure mind. Such a mind leads to bondage and misery. The question naturally arises, what is the cause of desires and how do they arise? Sri Krishna mentioned that thinking is the cause of desires. But what causes the thinking in a way that it ultimately results in acts leading to misery, ill-

health, old – age and premature death? First the world is full of tempting objects and the Young ones are not taught what to do when confronted with them. They acquire bad habits such as drinking, smoking, taking drugs, etc, generally imitating older students in school. Hypnology shows that young people as a rule are very susceptible to suggestions. If in our schools the students were clearly taught about the dangers of smoking etc, these dangerous habits could easily be avoided. Some socially accepted customs and habits may be bad influences on the younger generation. For example, at festive occasions such as birthday parties and marriages (in western countries) people drink and often the young drink too. It is true that a few glasses of beer or wine taken rarely will not spoil the liver or kidneys considerably, but the perceptible change in the behavior which shows the impact of the poison on the brain and the nervous system is generally disregarded. While we might not pay attention to the small damaged caused to our vital organs by alcohol or similar drugs, we cannot disregard the poisoning of the mind and building up a dangerous habit, and here both our modern psychiatry and the ancient science of yoga speak the same language. Every sense contact produces an impression on our mind (engram or samaskara). These impression or samaskaras, after their stay on the conscious mind descend to the level where they are stored up. They can be revoked by a new sense contact or by memory alone. Every repetition of such sense impression builds up what we call a habit. And habits from our second nature, or more correctly, “Habit is second nature, it is first nature also, and the whole nature of man, everything that we are the result of the habit”.<sup>7</sup> The question now arises: how to prevent the formation of wrong habits and how to get rid of the already formed and harmful ones? As most of the so-called bad habits were formed by sense contacts, the science of yoga advises the control or withdrawal of the sense from their respective objects. This is called *pratyahara*<sup>8</sup> by the yogis or *Dama*<sup>9</sup> by the vedantins. Meditation only removes all obstacles both big and small. While meditation is often relegated to the energetic, spiritual, or religious worlds – it is in fact quite scientific. The science goes well beyond just stress relief, lower blood pressure, and more.

There are various methods of meditation. They can be divided into two groups: mental and psycho-physical. The most prominent of the first group are meditation on the self and making the mind blank, thoughtless. In the second group are the *Nada-anusandhana* or listening to the inner sounds or *Anahat-Nad*<sup>10</sup> and some *Mudras* of Hatha Yoga. Mind cannot be controlled by any imaginary way but only by methods which had stood the test of time. Some examples:

The simplest is to sit in a relaxed posture but with the spine straight and to watch the thoughts like a witness or observer, without identifying with them. The next higher method is a similar, but in addition one tries to more strongly identify himself with the witness part of the mind, or to be conscious that he is a *purusha*<sup>11</sup> – a soul, and that the thoughts come, as it were, from the outside or from Nature-*Prakriti*.

If one successful in these methods he can start killing the thoughts, making the mind blank, thoughtless. One must be very vigilant and the moment a thought appears or tries to appear he must kill it on the spot. Another beautiful method is not easy. Observe very

minutely how ideas arise in the mind. If you understand how and when they arise, you will be able to control them. When ideas are controlled there will be arising of self – realization. The science of yoga has given various physiological processes to master this powerful sex instinct. One trouble confronting the young is that the secretions of particular organs are produced far more than can be absorbed by the lymph system. Here Hath yoga aids by advising the student to do uddiyana bandha<sup>12</sup> and nauli kriya<sup>13</sup> which strengthen the lymphatic system. There are other kriya which the yogic science has evolved which can help. Among them would be Siddhasana, Sarvangasana, Matsyasana, Brahmacharyasana, Paschimottanasana and Mudras such as khechari mudra, vajroli mudra, yoni Mudra etc. These systems are very much in need by the world.

The self-restraint man never has a boundation for the attachment related to the earthy connection. This kind of man who is habituated with this practice never involved himself in libel and adulation; rather he practices to emancipate himself. In due course of time when man wants to make his decision by himself then self-control is very much necessary. One should take the help of self-control before making any decision otherwise if he makes use of it after taking any decision then it would become very much difficult because to the deep core of our heart we are habituated with simpler process. It actually develops the scope we can concentrate on the present task and bold out the fragmentations that obstruct the path of our success. Self-control can also sweep away the pessimistic thinking. Though, we cannot say that it is an all in all factors. But people who have possessed self-control dealt a colorful life by avoiding addiction because they are able to control themselves from the most attractive things presented before them. Self-control is not at all about denying yourself pleasure, it also encompasses working towards a higher ideal and sacrificing some things in the now in order to achieve long term. Many people are unable to make exert the necessary will power to make the change that they so desire in their lives.

### Notes and Reference:

1. Dhammapada verse 104. [www.tipitaka.net/tipitaka/dhp/verseload](http://www.tipitaka.net/tipitaka/dhp/verseload)
2. isaadi nou upanisad, sankarbhasyartha (Hindi), Samvat-2066, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, p.228.
3. *Idid.*, p.229.
4. *Srimadbhagavadgita, Tattvavivecani* (English commentary) by Jaydayal Goyandaka, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 1994, p.116 .
5. *Chanchalam hi manah Krishna pramathi balavad dridham/tasyaham nigrham manye vayor iva su-dushkaram.*// *Idid.*,p.134
6. *Idid.*, p.275 .
7. *Maharshi Patanjalikrit yogo darshan (Bengali)*, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, p.8.
8. *Idid.*, p. 54 .
9. *Vedanta darshan* <http://hindi.webdunia.com/yoga-articles>

10. <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anahata>

11. *Jo'sàbasau puruàap / so'hamasmi, // isopnisada(Bengali), B.N Publication and college street, I Bankim Chatterjee street, p .87.*

12. <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/uddiyana>

13. <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nauli>