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... Bhagavad Gītā ...

Chapter 6

AI Summary - Class 227

By Acharya Tadany Cargnin dos Santos
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Summary

The Universal Problem of Mental Restlessness

Acharya Tadany began by addressing the fundamental challenge that all spiritual seekers face: the restless and fluctuating nature of the mind. He emphasized that this is not a problem unique to any individual practitioner, but rather a universal condition of the human mind. Before seeking solutions, it is crucial to acknowledge and understand this inherent characteristic of mental restlessness. This recognition helps students realize they are not alone in their struggles and that the mind's tendency to wander is a natural phenomenon that requires systematic approach to manage.

Two Methods for Managing the Mind: Abhyāsa and Vairāgya

Drawing from the Bhagavad Gita, Acharya Tadany outlined Krishna's teachings on two complementary methods for managing the mind:

Abhyāsaḥ (Proper Practice)

Abhyāsaḥ refers to the development of interest and concentration through consistent study and practice of spiritual texts. This method involves:

- **Understanding the benefits:** To develop genuine interest in spiritual topics, one must first comprehend their benefits and superiority over temporary worldly pursuits
- **Consistent study:** Regular engagement with spiritual texts like the Bhagavad Gita helps build momentum and deepen understanding



- **Concentration development:** Through repeated practice, the mind gradually learns to focus and stabilize on spiritual subjects
- **Mental discipline:** The practice cultivates the ability to direct and sustain attention where we choose

Vairāgyam (Detachment)

Vairāgyam means developing disinterest in temporary, fluctuating worldly things. This is not about rejecting the world, but rather:

- **Recognizing impermanence:** Understanding that material things and worldly pleasures are temporary and ultimately unsatisfying
- **Natural withdrawal:** As interest in spiritual topics grows, attachment to temporary things naturally diminishes
- **Shifting priorities:** Gradually reorienting one's values and goals toward lasting spiritual fulfillment

The Progressive Path: From Dependence to Independence

Acharya Tadany described spiritual practice as a gradual transformation involving three stages of dependence:

1. **Dependence on Fluctuating Things:** Initially, we depend on temporary worldly objects, relationships, and experiences for our sense of security and happiness. These are inherently unstable and lead to suffering when they change or disappear.
2. **Dependence on God:** Through spiritual practice, we gradually shift our dependence from fluctuating worldly things to the eternal, unchanging reality of God. This provides a more stable foundation for our inner peace and happiness.
3. **Self-Dependence (Independence):** The ultimate goal is mokṣa—complete independence or self-realization. This is achieved when we recognize our true nature as the ātman (self), which is identical with the ultimate reality. At this stage, we no longer depend on anything external for our fulfillment.

Acharya Tadany used the analogy of developing healthy habits to illustrate this process: as one consciously cultivates healthy practices, unhealthy habits naturally fall away without needing to fight against them directly. Similarly, as spiritual practice deepens, worldly attachments naturally loosen their grip.



Q&A after class

"Fake It Until You Make It" - A Practical Strategy

When Antonina asked about how to develop genuine curiosity and interest in spiritual study, Acharya Tadany introduced the practical concept of "fake it until you make it." This approach involves:

- **Conscious imitation:** Deliberately exhibiting positive qualities such as love, courage, patience, and motivation, even before feeling them authentically
- **Mental internalization:** Through consistent practice, the mind gradually internalizes these qualities and they become more natural and genuine
- **Forced engagement:** Initially forcing oneself to engage with spiritual study, similar to how children learn through repetition in the educational system
- **Gradual transformation:** Over time, what begins as forced effort transforms into genuine interest and natural engagement

Acharya Tadany explained that this method works because the mind learns through repetition and consistent exposure. By repeatedly engaging with spiritual content, even when initial interest is lacking, the mind begins to recognize patterns, understand concepts more deeply, and naturally develop authentic curiosity and appreciation for the subject matter.

Key Takeaways for Students

- Mental restlessness is universal—you are not alone in facing this challenge
- Both abhyāsa (practice) and vairāgya (detachment) are necessary for spiritual progress
- Spiritual development is a gradual process of shifting dependence from worldly things to God, and ultimately to self-realization
- Understanding the benefits of spiritual knowledge is essential for developing genuine interest
- The "fake it until you make it" approach is a valid and effective method for cultivating desired qualities and interests
- Consistent practice and regular attendance in spiritual classes accelerate this transformation