

# OVERCOMING — THE — PROBLEMS OF LIFE



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# **“Practical Solutions for Life”**

**Based on the Teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita As It Is**

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**The Bhagavad-Gita As It Is and Shrimad Bhagavatam verses are courtesy of BBTI, [www.krishna.com](http://www.krishna.com)**

## **1. Overcoming Distractions**

**Distractions are what leads us astray from the right path in many aspects of our life and wastes precious time.**

**“This is your emergency call.”**

**Mobile devices (cell phone, apad to zpad etc..) are the biggest distractions in our life. Most people are completely absorbed on mobile devices. These devices are more dangerous to our spiritual and material health than smoking thousands of cigarettes per day. Smoking only damages the health of the smoker, but mobile devices damage the health (physical and mental) of the whole family. People waste so much precious time on their mobile devices daily.**

**The purpose of life is to enquire about spiritual topics and not about material topics like what he/she is doing, eating, going, wondering, passing etc... The bond between humans is completely lost due to humans being bonded to mobile devices instead of humans. There are serious relationship problems, because both are connected to the mobile devices, instead of each other. There are serious road accidents, because people are looking at the phone instead of the road ahead. People have serious health problems, because they are always hooked to the mobile devices, and so they don't move and get enough exercise.**

**Social media makes humans anti-social. The human touch and feelings are gradually lost, because they become digital instead of physical and emotional.**

**Throwing away all the mobile devices in a home will instantly relieve all the family members of a lot of stress and avoid many problems in life for all the family members.**

**“As a strong wind sweeps away a boat on the water, even one of the roaming senses on which the mind focuses can carry away a man's intelligence.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.67)**

# **Spend Your Time with Live People – Not Devices**

## 2. Overcoming Anger

**Absorption in sense gratification and attachment lead to anger.**

- a. Many times, it's better not to respond or speak out.
- b. Never argue.
- c. Speak the truth and leave it for them to accept or reject.
- d. Don't get disturbed when there is misery or happiness.
- e. Give up material desires.
- f. Don't get attached to money, properties, objects, places, and people.

"From quarrel arises intolerable anger, followed by the darkness of ignorance. This ignorance quickly overtakes a man's broad intelligence." (Shrimad Bhagavatam 11.21.20)

"One who is not disturbed in mind even amidst the threefold miseries or elated when there is happiness, and who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady mind." (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.56)

"While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them, and from such attachment lust develops, and from lust anger arises. From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost one falls down again into the material pool." (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.62-63)

"Those who are free from anger and all material desires, who are self-realized, self-disciplined and constantly endeavoring for perfection, are assured of liberation in the Supreme in the very near future." (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 5.26)

"There are three gates leading to this hell – lust, anger and greed. Every sane man should give these up, for they lead to the degradation of the soul." (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 16.21)

# Anger will burn itself out if you do not respond

## 3. Overcoming Fear

**Fear is due to worrying about the current situation, uncertainty of the future, and due to taking too seriously commands or statements from egoistic and ignorant people.**

- a. A pure devotee of Krishna accepts whatever happens and is not disturbed by the flickers of happiness and distress that come in life like the waves in the ocean.
- b. The only proven and seen God, Lord Krishna. Gives assurance that His devotees will go back to the spiritual manifestation and live in complete bliss, at the end of this short life. He also gives assurance that all living entities (all souls) will eventually go back to the spiritual manifestation and nobody suffers eternally. This is because, everyone is His part and parcel, and He cares for all His parts.

"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear." (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 18.66)

# You are the eternal soul; nobody can harm you

#### 4. Overcoming Feeling Down/Depression

- a. Material existence is a short drama. Don't take things too seriously.
- b. Eat fresh fruits, vegetables, and freshly cooked foods. Food plays a major role in the health of the body and the mind.
- c. Do Yoga for the health of the body, mind, and the soul. Yoga does help to overcome depression.
- d. Don't look outside for pleasure, look within yourself.
- e. You have done your part, now leave it to God.
- f. If it's Saturday, Sunday will come for sure. In a similar way, happiness and distress are waves which will come and go.
- g. If one opportunity is lost, another one will come.
- h. There are plenty of fish in the ocean, don't get too attached to one fish.
- i. You came with nothing, there is no loss.
- j. You will leave with nothing, it wasn't yours.
- k. Live with joy- be joyful with everyone.

**Lord Krishna is always smiling, and He wants all of us to smile too.**

**"The Lord is always smiling, and the devotee should constantly see the Lord in this form, as He looks very mercifully toward the devotee. In this way the meditator should look toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the bestower of all benedictions." (Shrimad Bhagavatam 4.8.51)**

**"O descendant of Bharata, at that time Krsna, smiling, in the midst of both the armies, spoke the following words to the grief-stricken Arjuna." (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.10)**

**"Such a liberated person is not attracted to material sense pleasure but is always in trance, enjoying the pleasure within. In this way the self-realized person enjoys unlimited happiness, for he concentrates on the Supreme." (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 5.21)**

## Material Existence is Temporary

#### 5. Overcoming Laziness

**Laziness is negligence. Ignorance and negligence eventually catch up and makes us pay dearly.**

- a. One must work to pay the bills.
- b. One must work to maintain the home and family.
- c. One must work to maintain the physical body.
- d. Think of the long term and not the short term.

**"Perform your prescribed duty, for doing so is better than not working. One cannot even maintain one's physical body without work." (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 3.8)**

**"Lazy human beings with paltry intelligence and a short duration of life pass the night sleeping and the day performing activities that are for naught." (Shrimad Bhagavatam 1.16.9)**

## Hard Work Pays Well

## 6. Overcoming Financial Hardship

There are many reasons for facing financial hardship or ruin. Negligence is one of them.

- a. Accept that you got what you deserve based on your own actions in the past (this and previous lives)
- b. Be satisfied with what you have.
- c. Focus on your work or business to maintain your income.
- d. Never overspend.
- e. Always save something from every paycheck.
- f. Buying and living in your own home is far better than renting or staying with others.
- g. Never gamble.
- h. Be aware of cheaters who will ask you for a loan but will NEVER return it. If you want to give, make it a donation and not a loan.
- i. Be always honest in your dealings, in the long term this will benefit you.
- j. Keep looking and you will get it.
- k. Work hard and you will get what you need.
- l. If you have the money, be charitable, this will save you from hardship in the future, because you will get back what you give.

“...The living entity is the cause of the various sufferings and enjoyments in this world.”  
(Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 13.21)

“Vasudeva Datta is very liberal. Every day, whatever income he receives, he spends. He does not keep any balance. Being a householder, Vasudeva Datta needs to save some money. Because he is not doing so, it is very difficult for him to maintain his family.”  
(CC Madhya 15.94-95)

## 7. Overcoming Disagreements in Business and Personal Dealings

Always document all agreements in clear and complete written format. People can deny what they agreed verbally, but they cannot deny their signature and handwriting. Always take references before getting involved with anyone. History does repeat itself. Everything is cyclic. Cheaters will cheat again. Liars will lie again etc...

Looks are deceiving. There are many wolves in sheep clothing. Never judge anyone by their name or clothing or position. Judge them by their actions and behavior.

## 8. Overcoming Loneliness

Loneliness is the result one's own actions.

- a. You are never alone, because God is everywhere and sitting within everyone.
- b. Be nice to everyone and make friends.
- c. Visit old friends and relatives.
- d. Forgive the mistakes of others. It takes hundreds of years for a tree to grow, but only a minute to destroy it. In a similar way, it takes many years to develop good friendship, but only 1 statement can destroy the long friendship, if there is no forgiveness.

“For one who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, I am never lost, nor is he ever lost to Me.”  
(Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 6.30)

**God is Everywhere, you can never be alone**

“The Supreme Truth exists outside and inside of all living beings, the moving and the nonmoving. Because He is subtle, He is beyond the power of the material senses to see or to know. Although far, far away, He is also near to all.” (Bhagavad-Gita 13.16)

## **9. Overcoming Hopelessness**

- a. **Never lose hope.**
- b. **Everything is possible.**
- c. **There is always a chance.**
- d. **There is always the possibility.**
- e. **Time is eternal, it's never too late.**
- f. **Even if you are in a complete mess now, have faith in Lord Krishna and start being good from now on and you will come out of the mess.**

“Wherever there is Krsna, the master of all mystics, and wherever there is Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will also certainly be opulence, victory, extraordinary power, and morality. That is my opinion.” (Bhagavad-Gita 18.78)

“Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 18.66)

# **If there is the will, there will be a way**

## **10. Overcoming the mind**

**The mind can be your greatest friend if you can control it and your greatest enemy if you do not control it.**

- a. **Control your mind by slowly becoming detached from wanting material objects.**
- b. **Perform actions without desiring results.**
- c. **Live simply by eating simply and wearing simply.**
- d. **The more you get or see, the more your mind will become out of control. Reduce the wants and desires.**

“One must deliver himself with the help of his mind, and not degrade himself. The mind is the friend of the conditioned soul, and his enemy as well. For him who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best of friends; but for one who has failed to do so, his mind will remain the greatest enemy.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 6.5-6)

“One who performs his duty without attachment, surrendering the results unto the Supreme Lord, is unaffected by sinful action, as the lotus leaf is untouched by water.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 5.10)

# **Mind Control is Life Control**

## **11. Overcoming Temptation**

**We cannot even control our own body which can become diseased at any time.**

- a. **Confidence is a good quality, but over confidence is not good.**
- b. **Give up the desire to control.**
- c. **Restrain the senses.**
- d. **We can never be satisfied, so stop the wants and desires.**
- e. **Accept whatever comes of its own accord and there will be no side effects. Acquiring by desires leads to side effects.**
- f. **Play the game without desiring to win or lose and there will be no side effects.**

“The senses are so strong and impetuous, O Arjuna, that they forcibly carry away the mind even of a man of discrimination who is endeavoring to control them.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.60)

“A person who is not disturbed by the incessant flow of desires – that enter like rivers into the ocean, which is ever being filled but is always still – can alone achieve peace, and not the man who strives to satisfy such desires.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.70)

“You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.47)

## Do the task without any expectations

### 12. Overcoming Lust

**Being a materialist is what causes lust to develop. Lust can be for objects like cars, properties, electronic devices, and for people of opposite gender. We must slowly give up being a materialist by reducing our desires for objects, visiting places, and controlling our senses.**

**Lust for people can be reduced by realizing that the male body and the female body is composed of the same matter. Both bodies contain nasty liquids, gases, stool, bones etc... Beauty is only skin deep, and it does not come alone. Beauty comes with a complex mentality, very high false ego, and an unlimited list of wants. The illusory beauty will force the luster to develop donkey mentality. The donkey works very hard all day in the sun so that he can get some grass at the end of the day. He is very happy to do this day after day, all his life, because he is a donkey.**

**The Vedic culture is that except for one’s wife, all other females should be seen as mothers, sisters, and daughters.**

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: It is lust only, Arjuna, which is born of contact with the material mode of passion and later transformed into wrath, and which is the all-devouring sinful enemy of this world.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 3.37)

“Therefore, O Arjuna, best of the Bhāratas, in the very beginning curb this great symbol of sin [lust] by regulating the senses and slay this destroyer of knowledge and self-realization.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 3.41)

“Thus, knowing oneself to be transcendental to the material senses, mind and intelligence, O mighty-armed Arjuna, one should steady the mind by deliberate spiritual intelligence [Kṛṣṇa consciousness] and thus – by spiritual strength – conquer this insatiable enemy known as lust.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 3.43)

“There are three gates leading to this hell – lust, anger and greed. Every sane man should give these up, for they lead to the degradation of the soul.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 16.21)

### 13. Overcoming Confusion

**Confusion is caused by lack of proper knowledge and understanding, which results in loss of confidence.**

- a. **Seek advice and gain knowledge from people with proper knowledge and understanding.**
- b. **Seek advice in a submissive way and not in a challenging way.**

“Now I am confused about my duty and have lost all composure because of miserly weakness. In this condition I am asking You to tell me for certain what is best for me. Now I am Your disciple, and a soul surrendered unto You. Please instruct me.” (Arjuna to Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.7)



## **14. Overcoming Envy**

**Envy is slowly developed by lack of proper knowledge, misunderstanding, and misguidance.**

- a. The first step in overcoming envy is to stop envy of animals by stopping animal killing. We must become vegetarian and not buy leather items.**
- b. Give up personal ego by respecting and seeing everyone equally.**
- c. One should realize that the result of envy is degradation to lower species in the animal kingdom.**
- d. Never be envious of others for any reason. They got what they have based on their own actions.**
- e. Look at what good others have done or are doing, and not what they have not done.**

“One who is not envious but is a kind friend to all living entities, who does not think himself a proprietor and is free from false ego, who is equal in both happiness and distress, who is tolerant, always satisfied, self-controlled, and engaged in devotional service with determination, his mind and intelligence fixed on Me – such a devotee of Mine is very dear to Me.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 12.13-14)

“Those who are envious and mischievous, who are the lowest among men, I perpetually cast into the ocean of material existence, into various demoniac species of life.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 16.19)

“And one who listens with faith and without envy becomes free from sinful reactions and attains to the auspicious planets where the pious dwell.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 18.71)

# **Like All - Love All**

## **15. Overcoming Demotivation**

**Failure or having no goals leads to demotivation.**

- a. Persistency works.**
- b. Success will come for sure, if you keep trying.**
- c. Nothing was yours before and so you have lost nothing.**
- d. You came with nothing and will leave with nothing, so why worry?**
- e. When you engage in devotional service of the supreme, you have the master on your side. Victory, power, and morality is assured.**

“Every endeavor is covered by some fault, just as fire is covered by smoke. Therefore, one should not give up the work born of his nature, O son of Kunti, even if such work is full of fault.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 18.48)

# **Life is an Intelligent Design - Nothing Happens by Chance**

## 16. Overcoming Intense heat, Pollution, and High Food Prices

**Destruction of nature will result in destruction of humans.**

**Save trees and grass. Plant trees and grass.**



<b>Result of Trees and Grass</b>	<b>Result of Buildings</b>
Reduces pollution by cleaning the atmosphere	Increases pollution
Keeps the atmosphere cool and prevents intense heat	Causes intense heat
Normal weather	Abnormal weather
Produces vital oxygen which everyone needs	No oxygen
Provides food for cows, birds, monkeys, and humans	No food
Lower food prices	Higher food prices
Helps humans advance in spirituality	Destroys spirituality
Helps humans to reduce material desires	Increases material desires
Reduces diseases	Increases diseases
Develops nature	Destroys nature
Softens the heart (humans become kind and loving)	Makes the humans cement hearted (no compassion)

**“One who is not envious but is a kind friend to all living entities – Such a devotee of Mine is very dear to Me.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 12.13-14)**

**“...Who is friendly to every living being – he certainly comes to Me.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 11.55)**

**Plants are living beings and we should not kill them.**

# Think of the Future

## **17. Overcoming Greed**

**Greed is wanting more than what you need and deserve. Greed develops by being materialistic (the mode of passion).**

- a. Be satisfied with what you have.**
- b. Live on what you have.**
- c. Let go.**
- d. Accept what you have.**
- e. Think of those who have less than you.**
- f. Start giving without expecting anything in return.**
- g. Reduce the desires.**
- h. Reduce running around from one place to another. The more you see, the more you will become attached.**

**The result of greed is degradation for the soul.**

**“From the mode of goodness, real knowledge develops; from the mode of passion, greed develops; and from the mode of ignorance develop foolishness, madness and illusion.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 14.17)**

**“There are three gates leading to this hell – lust, anger and greed. Every sane man should give these up, for they lead to the degradation of the soul.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 16.21)**

**“Without desiring fruitive results, one should perform various kinds of sacrifice, penance and charity with the word tat. The purpose of such transcendental activities is to get free from material entanglement.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 17.25)**

# **The Seed of Self-Destruction is Greed**

## **18. Overcoming Pride**

**Pride develops when one is overconfident or thinks himself/herself to be the best.**

- a. The body you have is made of the same stuff as the others, nasty liquids, gases, bacteria, flesh, bones etc... You are in a bag of filth just like the others.
- b. Live at home like a guest, without any sense of ownership.
- c. Knowledge is not limited by what you know.
- d. You know very little compared to many others.
- e. You have nothing compared to many others.
- f. There were many others like you, before you. They are all gone, and you will too.
- g. For how long will your position and opulence last? Not forever.

“Pride, arrogance, conceit, anger, harshness and ignorance – these qualities belong to those of demoniac nature, O son of Pṛthā.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 16.4)

“One who performs his duty without association with the modes of material nature, without false ego, with great determination and enthusiasm, and without wavering in success or failure is said to be a worker in the mode of goodness.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 18.26)

“A person who has given up all desires for sense gratification, who lives free from desires, who has given up all sense of proprietorship and is devoid of false ego – he alone can attain real peace” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.71)

**Live Nicely and Let Others Live Nicely**

## **19. Overcoming Discrimination**

People discriminate due to lack of proper knowledge, feeling insecurity, and very high personal ego.

- a. You should behave properly and set good examples for others to follow. In this way, the ego of the discriminators will melt.
- b. Offer your respects to all and expect none in return.
- c. See everyone as equals.
- d. Don't react. Just as a disc goes around, accept that your own behavior to others in the past is coming back to you.
- e. See the good qualities in others and not just the bad ones.

“The humble sages, by virtue of true knowledge, see with equal vision a learned and gentle brahmana, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater [outcaste].” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 5.18)

“I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto Me in devotion is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 9.29)

## **20. Overcoming health problems**

**Health problems are caused by bad eating habits and uncleanness.**

- a. Eat freshly cooked foods – Foods cooked within 3 hours.
- b. Don't store cooked foods for eating next day.
- c. Don't eat frozen and processed foods.
- d. Don't eat too hot or too salty foods. Reduce hotness and salt in foods.
- e. Using natural fire to cook is best, second best is a gas fire. Never use microwaves, as this makes the food taste like chemicals and may cause cancer.
- f. Eat fresh fruits and vegetables every day.
- g. Drink cow milk for good health and spiritual intelligence.
- h. Never eat meat, fish, and eggs.
- i. Never touch tobacco and alcohol.
- j. Take bath at least once daily, brush teeth at least twice daily.
- k. Keep the home, work areas, rivers, and streets clean.
- l. Men should never keep a beard. Hair is a byproduct of the body just like stool, and thus men should not keep stool on their face (a beard). The hair on the face affects the consciousness in a negative way.

**Hair is needed on the head to retain the body heat.**

“Foods that are too bitter, too sour, salty, hot, pungent, dry and burning are dear to those in the mode of passion. Such foods cause distress, misery and disease. Food prepared more than three hours before being eaten, food that is tasteless, decomposed and putrid, and food consisting of remnants and untouchable things is dear to those in the mode of darkness.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 17.9-10)

**Eat Fresh - Save Lives - Go Vegetarian**

## 21. Overcoming the death of a loved one

Attachment to people eventually leads to lamentation due to their bodily loss (death), and loss of their association.

- a. It is perfectly natural to lament over the death of a loved one.
- b. We say he/she has passed away, but the body is front of us. So, the body is not the living entity. The soul is the living entity.
- c. Death is for the body only, not for the real us, the soul.
- d. Death means the soul has moved onto another body.
- e. One life ends another one begins.
- f. Death is not the end, it's the beginning of another life.
- g. Every soul is eternal. Our loved ones (the souls) never die.
- h. The soul can never be cut, burned, withered by the wind, nor moistened.
- i. Our relationships with others (spouse, children, parents, relatives, friends) are only for this life short life.
- j. "The association of children, wife, relatives and friends is just like the brief meeting of travelers. With each change of body, one is separated from all such associates, just as one loses the objects one possesses in a dream when the dream is over." (Shrimad Bhagavatam 11.17.53)
- k. "Like birds spending a night together on a tree and going their separate directions the next morning. So inevitably the union of all beings ends in parting. As clouds coming together in the sky only to separate again, so do creatures collect together and then disperse." (Lord Buddha)
- l. Birth, death, and the activities in life are all due to our own desires, but we forget this and lament when our desires must be satisfied in another body or others have moved on to satisfy their desires in another body.
- m. All living entities are part of God and He cares for all His parts, more than any of us. Knowing this one should realize that our loved ones are in the best care possible.
- n. God assures us that every soul belongs to Him and thus eventually everyone goes back to the spiritual manifestation to live eternally in complete bliss.



“Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be. As the embodied soul continuously passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such a change.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.12-13)

“One who has taken his birth is sure to die, and after death one is sure to take birth again. Therefore, in the unavoidable discharge of your duty, you should not lament. All created beings are unmanifest in their beginning, manifest in their interim state, and unmanifest again when annihilated. So what need is there for lamentation?” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.27-28)

“That which pervades the entire body you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.17)

“For the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever existing and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.20)

“The soul can never be cut to pieces by any weapon, nor burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.23)

“O descendant of Bharata, he who dwells in the body can never be slain. Therefore, you need not grieve for any living being.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 2.30)

“Having obtained real knowledge from a self-realized soul, you will never fall again into such illusion, for by this knowledge you will see that all living beings are but part of the Supreme, or, in other words, that they are Mine.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 4.35)

“The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal fragmental parts. Due to conditioned life, they are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 15.7)

## Do Good to Others Before They Go

### 22. Overcoming wickedness

Ignorance is the cause of developing wicked mentality.

People go to places of worship many times, read the scriptures many times, perform Deity worship many times. But despite all this, they remain the same in terms of their behavior and mentality. They are still engaged in sinful activities, or they treat others badly, or they are full of material desires or they are miserly and so on. They are basically in ignorance and have developed a wicked mentality.

“With the increase of the mode of goodness, the strength of the demigods similarly increases. When passion increases, the demoniac become strong. And with the rise of ignorance, O Uddhava, the strength of the most wicked increases.” (Shrimad Bhagavatam 11.25.19)

1. It is wicked to deny others the same rights that you want.
2. It is wicked to accept gifts from others but not give any gifts in return. If you take, you must also give.
3. It is wicked to waste another person’s time. You do not want others to waste your time. You should not waste other people’s time either.
4. It is wicked to want the highest price for your items and expect others to give you their items for free. You should put yourself in their shoes and pay for items appropriately.
5. It is wicked to want the highest pay when you work and when it comes to paying others for their work, you want to bargain and pay the lowest amount. Put yourself in their shoes and pay reasonably.
6. It is wicked to visit the homes of people and eat their food and when they come to your home, you wonder why they came. Eat from others but you must also feed others when they come to your home.
7. It is wicked to live off others. You must pay your share of the costs or help based on your resources (effort, give time, give money).
8. It is wicked to want others to listen to you when you don’t want to listen to them. Listening should be both ways and not one way.
9. It is wicked to think your way is the only way. People are different and thus there are different ways for everyone.
10. It is wicked to think that you know everything. Knowledge is not limited to what you know. Listen and learn from others. The variety of people have variety of knowledge and thus one must learn from all to learn the most.

11. It is wicked to expect others to follow your orders when you follow nobody's orders. If you want to give orders, you must also obey orders from others.
12. It is wicked to expect others to tell the truth, when you are a liar. Speak the truth, stand up for the truth, and side with those who are truthful.
13. It is wicked to expect from others everything and you expect to give nothing to others. Expect from others but also realize that others are expecting from you. Take and give.
14. It is wicked to expect cheap labor. You would not work cheaply, so why should others? Pay others what you would expect if you were doing it.
15. It is wicked to only contact others when you are in need. You must stay in contact with everyone on a regular basis.
16. It is wicked to take from others and not give.
17. It is wicked to do onto others what you wouldn't want done onto you. Treat others the same as you want others to treat you. Treat everyone nicely.
18. It is wicked to be miserly. Be miserly with yourself but never be miserly with others. Be very generous with others.
19. It is wicked to live in other people's homes when you have your own home. Be satisfied with what you have, and use what you have, don't live off others.
20. It is wicked to use other people's things when you have your own. You must live with what you have.

### **23. Overcoming ignorance**

**Ignorance of spiritual knowledge is the mother of all sinful activities.**

**Ignorance of spiritual knowledge leads to increase in personal ego, envy, lust, materialistic lifestyle, and greed. The result is sinful acts like hatred, animal killing, drugs, tobacco use, alcohol, violence, gambling, adultery, lying, deceit, stealing, and so on.**

**“O most intelligent Uddhava, the living entity, called jīva, is part and parcel of Me, but due to ignorance he has been suffering in material bondage since time immemorial. By knowledge, however, he can be liberated.” (Lord Krishna, Shrimad Bhagavatam 11.11.4)**

**You must acquire Vedic knowledge. Going to Temples is good but if you do not learn anything then you will not advance in spiritual consciousness.**

**“Knowledge is the ultimate perfection of self-realization...” (Lord Krishna, Shrimad Bhagavatam 3.26.2)**

**The Vedic scriptures like the Bhagavad-Gita has the highest level of spiritual knowledge, and thus one should study and follow the Bhagavad-Gita. This will enable you to see the truth and you will slowly give up all sinful activities. Just one moment of bad association can ruin your whole life, so always be on guard and become spiritually strong by studying the Bhagavad-Gita and other Vedic scriptures daily. Only with Vedic knowledge, one can become spiritually strong and know God as a person.**

**“This knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct perception of the self by realization, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting, and it is joyfully performed.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 9.2)**

**Acquiring Spiritual Knowledge is Bhakti**

**“And I declare that he who studies this sacred conversation of ours worships Me by his intelligence.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 18.70)**

**“I am the object of knowledge...” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 9.17)**



**“He is the source of light in all luminous objects. He is beyond the darkness of matter and is unmanifested. He is knowledge, He is the object of knowledge, and He is the goal of knowledge. He is situated in everyone’s heart.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 13.18)**

**Because spiritual knowledge is very important, Lord Krishna has made distributing the topmost spiritual knowledge (the Bhagavad-Gita and the Shrimad Bhagavatam), the highest service unto Him.**

**“For one who explains this supreme secret to the devotees, pure devotional service is guaranteed, and at the end he will come back to Me. There is no servant in this world more dear to Me than he, nor will there ever be one more dear.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 18.68-69)**

**“One who liberally disseminates this knowledge among My devotees is the bestower of the Absolute Truth, and to him I give My very own self.” (Shrimad Bhagavatam 11.29.26)**

**You must first learn yourself and then distribute the knowledge to others, this is pure bhakti.**

**“One should become a guru and spread Krsna consciousness all over the world, simply by preaching the teachings of Bhagavad-Gita.” (Swami Srila Prabhupada)**

## **24. Overcoming Relationship Problems**

**Prevention is always better than a cure. It may be possible to figure out how to attach the head of a bacteria to a whale, but one will never be able to figure out the complexities of human mentalities.**

- a. Good association is most important, stay away from bad association. The bad qualities in people are more contagious than the diseases carried by the air.**
- b. Listen to all parties the whole story before making any decisions.**
- c. To minimize marital relationship problems. Marry someone from the same class, financial level, family background, similar food choices, similar religious beliefs, similar interests, similar qualifications, similar location of upbringing (a city person and a village person do not have similar mentalities). The key is mental compatibility. This will give the best chances of successful and happy relationship.**
- d. To minimize mother in law relationship problems. It’s best to live separate from beginning. We must be practical. Heat from a fire is good for keeping warm but get too close to the fire and it will burn.**
- e. To minimize son/daughter and parent relationship problems. It’s best for the parents to behave like friends to their children once they are 16. Always give them good guidance but never make them think they are being forced. Give good advice and then leave it for them to accept or reject. Never expect them to accept everything.**
- f. Always be humble and tolerant. If two hot rods touch each other, both will remain hot. If one of them cools down, the other one will also cool down.**

**“An intelligent person should therefore reject all bad association and instead take up the association of saintly devotees, whose words cut off the excessive attachment of one’s mind.” (Shrimad Bhagavatam 11.26.26)**

**“The Lord is very satisfied with His devotee when the devotee greets other people with tolerance, mercy, friendship and equality.” (Shrimad Bhagavatam 4.11.13)**

**Always Consider the Wellbeing of All Living Beings**

## 25. Overcoming religious cheaters



“The symptoms of a sadhu are that he is tolerant, merciful and friendly to all living entities. He has no enemies, he is peaceful, he abides by the scriptures, and all his characteristics are sublime.” (Shrimad Bhagavatam 3.25.21)

“A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind’s demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world.” (Nectar of Instruction 1)

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O Uddhava, a saintly person is merciful and never injures others. Even if others are aggressive, he is tolerant and forgiving toward all living entities.” (Shrimad Bhagavatam 11.11.29)

“He who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whims attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 16.23)

**There are many false or inappropriate Gurus who take advantage of innocent, the less intelligent, and ignorant people. Their aim is simply to satisfy their own needs. They have no real interest in the well-being and advancement of others.**

**A genuine spiritual master, will exhibit all the below mentioned qualities:**

01. He is completely free from lust, greed, anger, and violence.
02. He is friendly to all living beings, even to the animals (he does not kill them).
03. He can describe God and His pastimes.
04. He orders justice for all living beings.
05. He does not force anyone to follow him.
06. He is very humble, tolerant, forgiving, kind, and merciful to all.
07. He does not incite hatred towards any living being.
08. He is not envious nor jealous of anyone.
09. He wants every living entity to get liberation.
10. He loves everyone, whether they follow him or not.
11. He follows the scriptures and quotes from them.
12. He lives simply and makes no demands.
13. His behavior is a role model for all to follow.

**One Must Set Good Examples for Others to Follow**

**You can transcend material life and its miseries by acquiring and realizing the transcendental knowledge of the Bhagavad-Gita.**

**“Even if you are considered to be the most sinful of all sinners, when you are situated in the boat of transcendental knowledge, you will be able to cross over the ocean of miseries.” (Lord Krishna, Bhagavad-Gita 4.36)**

