



## DESIRE

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Wise men and saints have said that desire is a part of our existence and we cannot ignore it, but we should not allow ourselves to be victims of it for our whole life. Step by step human beings have to control, channel and transform it and Yoga is the science for this transformation.



The real bondage with all of us is desire, and this desire has to be eliminated and brought to an end. As long as desire is present, the process of life and death continues. When there is no desire one finds one's 'Oneness' with the supreme Truth - the Divine.



The root cause of all evils is desire. Now, the question will be asked: "Is it possible in this world to remain alive without desires?" The answer that the saints give is that real life starts only when one learns to live without desires. The real life is a life without desires. Desire is the bondage.



There are methods for getting rid of desire. Some can get rid of it simply through the power of their intellect. Some need to fight with it. Some need to experience it and then go beyond it so that the desire disappears. But the purpose of experience is not indulgence for pleasure. The purpose is to go beyond the element of desire by seeing through it.



There are two selves: the lower and the higher. The lower self is a bundle of desires. The one who conquers the lower self by the higher self - by wisdom - becomes his own friend. Such people are at peace with their own selves. If you are not able to conquer the lower self, you are your own enemy. The inner battle continues inside you.



It is one of the great good fortunes of human beings that not all their desires are fulfilled. If this were not the case, this already filthy world would become even filthier, because the desires of human beings know no limits.



The pleasures that are born of sense contact are verily a source of suffering only (though appearing as enjoyable to worldly minded people). They have a beginning and an end (they come and go). Arjuna, it is for this reason that the wise man does not indulge in them (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter V, verse 22).



We are conditioned by our passions, desires, and motives. We are not free. When we are free there is freedom from everything including the desire to be free. What

remains then? Only choice-less awareness remains, which is our true self, and self is of the nature of love, peace and happiness.



If we restrict our needs and reduce our desires as much as possible, irritation and anger will diminish and eventually disappear altogether. My point is that one's mind is filled with endless desires, but one's real needs are few. One's needs will be fulfilled by Him who created us and gave us birth.



We all want some sort of arrangement, some environment and circumstances conducive to a comfortable life; a fine house, a car, enough money, good people looking after us, good food prepared at the right time, people coming with respect to us, smiling and then washing our clothes, and asking us if we are all right. If there were such assurances from others, life would be very nice. It would be heaven. This world would become heaven, everybody taking care of you and you having no responsibility and no stress. These things are not going to happen. Sorry - never in anybody's life. My suggestion is that you should try to go beyond these dualities of liking and disliking, of good and bad. Then the problem will be solved permanently.



What is this bondage after all? Bondage is nothing but the accumulation of impressions created inside by desire-oriented activity. Whenever any work is done with the intention of fulfilling a desire, then that activity leaves in us a memory or an impression. In the course of many lives, we have performed many desire-motivated actions, and we carry with us impressions of those actions. Desire-motivated activity creates bondage. Desire-less or duty-motivated activity breaks that bondage.



The mind works either in the past or in the future. It remembers past events or looks forward to the future with pleasurable anticipation. To be in the past is bondage. Desire for the future is also a bondage. Freedom, whenever it arises, exists here and now only.



When there is change and the change is according to our desires we feel happy. But when the change is contrary to our desires, we are unhappy. It is never possible for a change to be always according to our desires, because the lives of different people are so often at variance; I become rich, somebody else becomes poor; I get promotion in my company or government service, somebody else loses his job. There is competition, and when there is competition there is bound to be frustration. Life is like that.



All desires are desires except one desire. The desire for Self-realisation or for experiencing God is not a desire. It appears to be a desire, but it is not a desire. Why? Because when this desire is fulfilled, all desires die. All other desires are to do with something in the world, but this desire takes a person beyond the world to God. When this desire is fulfilled, there will be no desire at all, including this desire itself. Have this desire as much as you like!



How a person takes birth is very deep, and it is very difficult for you to understand this. When death happens, the residue of desires becomes the cause of the next birth. Some desires are fulfilled in life, but some desires remain unfulfilled. The cause of birth is nothing but desires. As long as desires remain, one takes birth again and again for the realisation of those desires.



“Why is ‘bliss’ not with me when it should be?” The simple answer given by the sages is that ‘bliss’ and ‘pleasure’ are opposed to each other. Pleasure comes through the senses. While one seeks pleasure through the senses, one cannot experience bliss. Withdrawal from the world of pleasure amounts to moving in the direction of bliss.



The body wants to enjoy nature, and the senses want to enjoy the objects of the senses, so they pull us towards this. But the individual consciousness wants to have the experience of infinite consciousness - God. Thus a tussle - a tug of war - goes on inside everyone of us.



To achieve bliss one should withdraw from the world of pleasure through the senses. Now, you may ask the question: “Then for what purpose are these senses given to us by God?” The senses are given to us for a definite purpose. The purpose is to use them, but not misuse them. It is quite simple - the difference between use and misuse. A balance must be found, and you have to find it in all things.



Our five sense organs have their purpose, but they should be controlled by discrimination. If the senses are given freedom then the end is nothing but misery.



In one of the verses of Bhagavad Gita is written a beautiful comparison. If you are in a boat crossing the river, it is essential that the helmsman steers the boat carefully otherwise you will not reach the other bank. If the boat were rudderless, it would sail in whichever direction the wind would take it. In the same way, the Lord says that, if your senses are moving among the sense objects, and you have no control over your senses and mind, the mind can take you to any place it likes.



Conquering the senses means making them slaves to our faculty of discrimination. Our senses should go where we want them to go. They have to be brought under control according to our decision: “I must not be taken prisoner by the senses, they must become my servants and I must become their master.”



Inner spiritual evolution does not happen by attending to your own desires and your own comfort. Rather this evolution tends to happen more by having consideration for others.



Anger and greed are the two children born of desire. They both are off-springs of desire. Whenever there is an obstruction in the fulfillment of a desire anger is born, and whenever a desire is fulfilled greed for more is born.



Entry to hell is free and there is no need to buy a ticket! For anyone who is desirous of going to hell, three gates are open. Desire, anger and greed are the gates. The more the desire, the anger and the greed, the greater is the possibility of going to hell. These are the three gates and they get opened any time in the heart.



Lust and anger are interconnected. Anger is born of desire: "I want something!" As soon as there is an obstruction to my desire, I become angry. I want someone to behave in a particular manner - my husband, wife, son or daughter - and when the person does not behave in that manner, then I become angry, because there is an obstruction to my desire. Those who are free from lust and anger find the peace of God everywhere.



Desire is the root cause of the miseries of human beings. Becoming free from desire is the means for the real development in human life.



The more one withdraws from worldly pleasures and goes into the inner self, the nearer one comes to the Truth. Withdrawing does not mean that essential things should be given up. You do not have to withdraw from food, clothes and suchlike. You have to understand the difference between necessity and desire. Necessity is what is required for living and it is always limited. Desires are selfish things which have no limits.



What is 'ego'? Ego is the identification of the soul with the body. The person forgets that his true existence, the spirit, is eternal, unborn and undying, and the person considers himself as the body only. You can see that all desires are centred around the body.



There are three basic desires of mankind: the desire to do something; the desire to know something; and the desire to achieve something. Only in the life of a person who has Self-realisation can all these three desires come to an end. After that there is complete peace.



The seers of the Upanishads have said: "Then is known that by knowing which everything becomes known." Then there remains nothing to be known. The three desires that exist in human beings are fulfilled and are satisfied: the desire to know; the desire to do; and the desire to achieve something. When that experience happens, one finds total fulfillment.



Placidity of the mind is achieved when you enjoy worldly objects through self-controlled senses and mind.



What is meant by the 'finishing of desire'? It means that a person is no more *Rajasic* in life and has become primarily *Sattvic* and only then there is a possibility of that person finding peace without having material means in the world.



One begins to realise that, as far as possible, one's basic needs should be satisfied and one should rid oneself of desires. There is a difference between needs and desires. Good food is necessary for good health and is a need, but to eat it in the best restaurant is not a need. You must dress yourself to suit the season, but you do not need to have an expensive fur coat. You start changing your attitudes and a time comes when Self-realisation or God experience automatically happens.



You may have a nagging thought as to how life can be possible at all without desires. All life is motivated by desires. "If there is no desire, shall I live life at all?" Desire is purely a product of your mind and has nothing to do with your basic existence. You will come to understand this later on. Desire is a sort of drama going on in your mind. There is no problem in having many desires but these desires have no connection with existence as such. One may desire to be the Prime Minister of India for one year! There is no harm in having this desire. It would be nice to see how it feels to be in the Prime Minister's office there in the South Block! But what connection has that desire with one's real being?



If we understand the purpose of life and the difference between the body and soul, and recognise the permanence of the soul and the impermanence of the body and the inevitability of old age and death, we will be able to give up desires. When we have given up desires, we can be free from attachments.



If we do not have something, we desire it. In our real existence - the soul, we never lack anything. When we are the spirit, the real existence, what need can there be for anything? What desire can there be except through ignorance? When someone realises that he or she is the eternal spirit, which was never born and will never die, what is the point of desiring anything?



Whatever worldly desires are to be fulfilled, will be fulfilled. If they are not destined to be fulfilled, they will not be. It is not possible for everybody's worldly desires to be fulfilled. If this were possible, quite a large number of people, perhaps all, would be able to become president of their country. Sorry, but this will not be possible!



The root of anger and irritation is desire. The more filled a person is with desires, the more he is likely to show anger and irritation. Whenever something happens which we do not wish to happen, we become angry. It is very simple. Why do we become angry? We want something to happen in a certain way and it does not happen like that. We want others to behave as we desire them to. For example, within the family circle we want others do what we want and, when they do not, we are angry. In this way, one goes on accumulating these impressions of anger.



A person who says he is unhappy on account of another person, is not on the spiritual path. The germs of all these diseases exist in us. They arise from the expectation that the world will conform to our desires. We desire that others should behave as we want them to. But this is not going to happen. There is nothing wrong with the world and there is nothing right with us! We have to reform ourselves and not reform the world!



There is a sort of curtain of our own creation - a curtain which separates us from Him - a curtain of desires, passions and ego. It is just like a curtain. When this curtain is removed, we find that the lover was always with us. In fact, you were nowhere but in the lap of the lover. He was always with us.



The saints say that real life starts only when one learns to live without desires. The real life is a life without desires. Seekers should make a distinction between desires and needs. There are certain needs which are required for our daily life and without which we cannot survive. An interesting fact is that such needs are realised by God - by the infinite energy. For example, before a child is born and comes into the world, milk is produced in mother's breast. If the child from the beginning started saying: "All right, milk is provided, but why not chocolate? If chocolate could be mixed with the milk in my mother's breast it would be very tasty." God would say that there is to be no chocolate. Milk alone is the best food. The child should drink it and be healthy.



By trying to minimize your needs and remove your desires, you are adopting a negative approach. This is not the complete solution to the problem. There should also be a positive approach. What is this positive approach? It is to try to live for others and make others happy. A happy man and an angry man are diametrically opposed to each other. A happy man is one who is not angry, and an angry man is one who is not happy. So the question is: "How can we be happy?" For those who want to be happy there is only one solution - to try to make others happy. This will give you real inner happiness.

