

If you are not able to fix your mind steadily on Me, O Dhananjaya, then seek to reach Me by *Abhyasa-yoga*. 9

Staunch is that devotion of the *sadhaka* which does not deviate from the Lord. Wavering is that devotion which oscillates between God and the world. Through constant practice the mind has to be weaned away from the world. It is *Abhyāsa-yoga* which is practised ceaselessly until the mind is permanently reclaimed from baseness. The impossible can be made possible through constant practice. Nature can be changed by nurture, it being the most effective means.

A man was rearing a pet dog allowing it undue indulgence. One day when he was conversing with a learned visitor the dog, as was its wont, jumped on to the lap of its master and licked his face. 'This is no good,' observed the new comer. The remark produced a salutary effect on the man who decided then and there to train the dog properly. Thenceforth, he gave a knock every time the dog jumped up to lick his face. The sagacious animal was not slow to find out that the master did not approve of that act. It changed its habit accordingly. Similarly the unwanted desire is a wretched dog that man has fondly reared. It dominates over him and depraves him woefully. Repeated blows in the form of counter thoughts and ideas are the only way to rectify it.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Is there any other course open to the *sadhaka*, if his mind does not submit to *Abhyāsa-yoga*? The next course is pointed out —

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥ १०