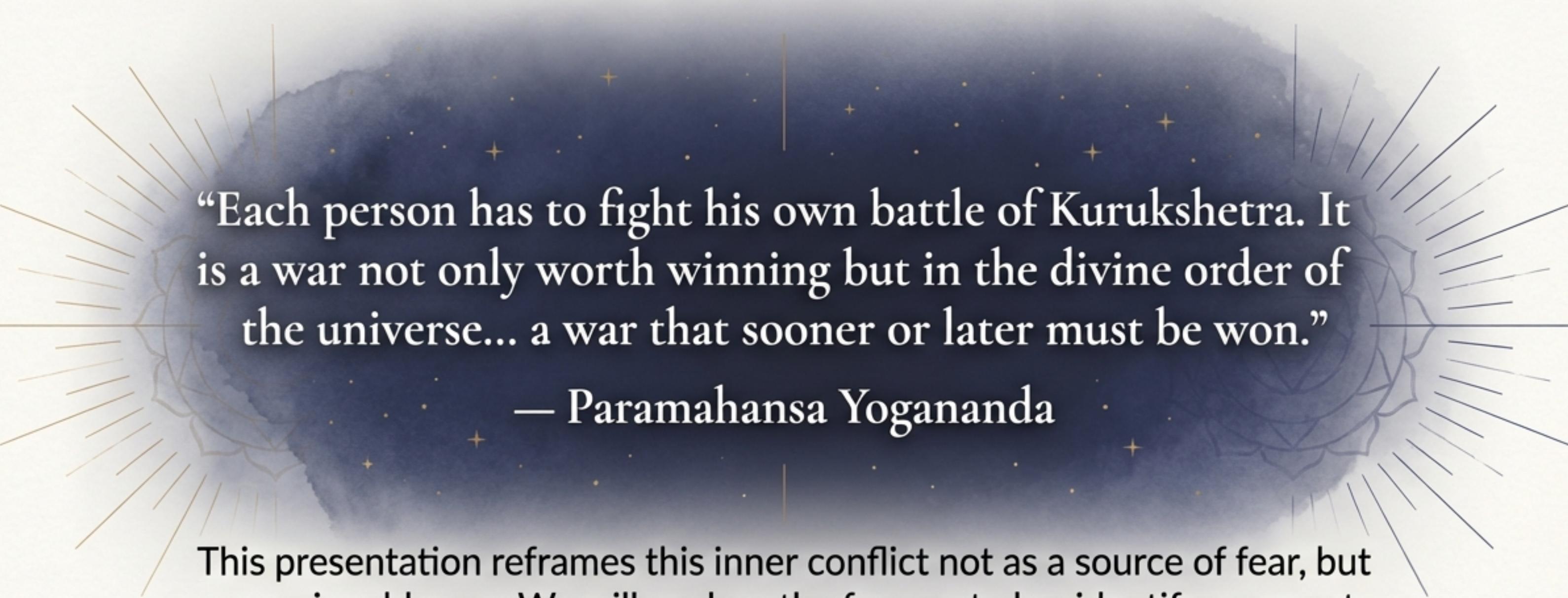




The Battle Within

A Strategic Guide to Winning the War of Life, Based on the Wisdom
of the Bhagavad Gita as Interpreted by Paramahansa Yogananda.

The Battlefield of Kurukshetra is Within You.



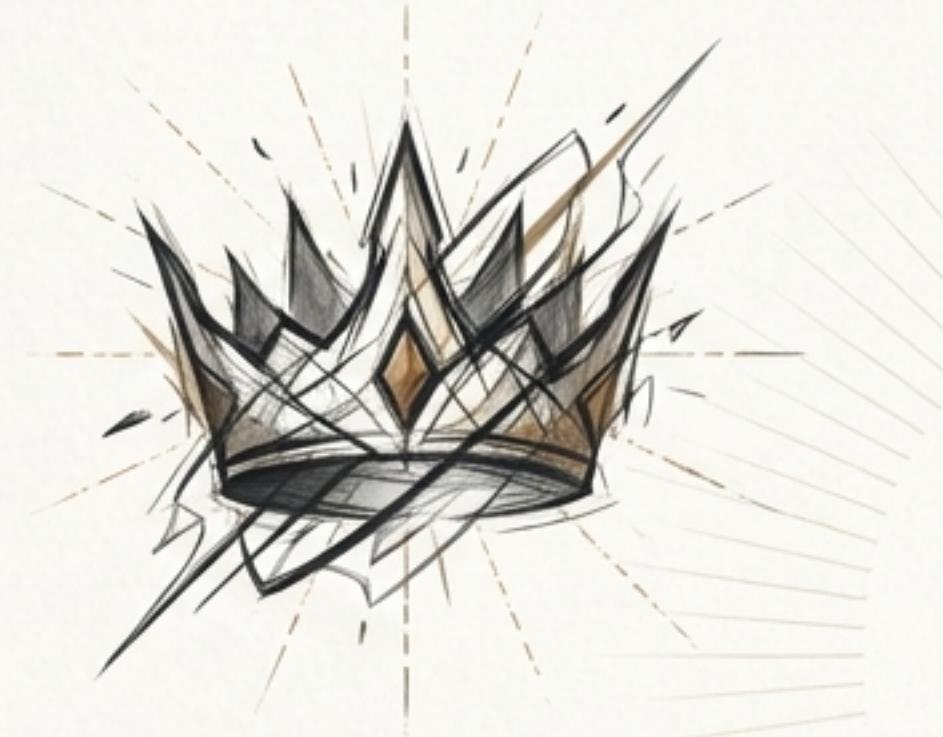
“Each person has to fight his own battle of Kurukshetra. It is a war not only worth winning but in the divine order of the universe... a war that sooner or later must be won.”

— Paramahansa Yogananda

This presentation reframes this inner conflict not as a source of fear, but as a winnable war. We will explore the forces at play, identify our most powerful allies, and outline the divine strategy for victory.

The question is not if we will win, but when.

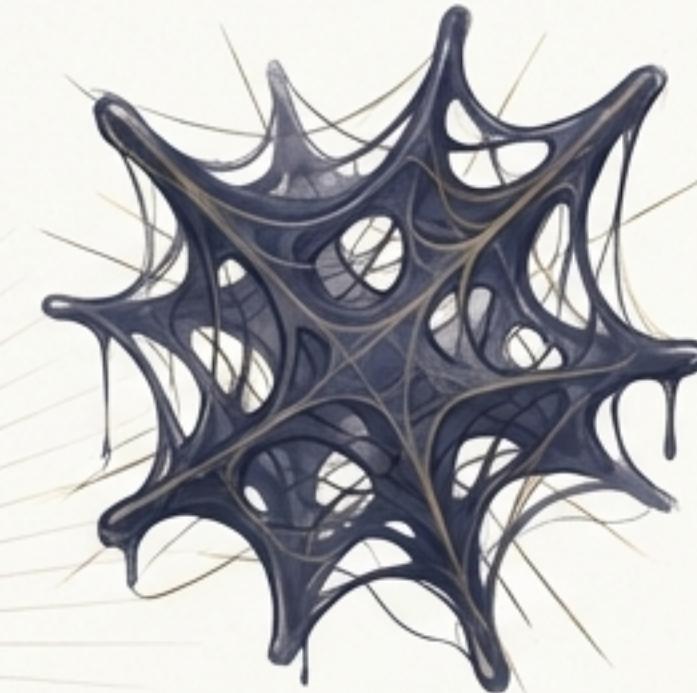
Know Your Adversary: The Forces of Material Desire and Habit.



King Duryodhana (Material Desire)

Role: The commander of the opposing army. Represents the ego's attachment to sense pleasures and material outcomes.

Tactic: Becomes alarmed when we turn towards inner spiritual practice, fearing its material desires will be ignored and starved.



Dronacharya (Past Bad Habit)

Role: The powerful preceptor invoked by Material Desire. Represents ingrained tendencies of restlessness, procrastination, sleepiness, and spiritual indifference.

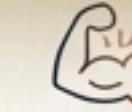
Tactic: Creates temptations and distractions precisely when we try to meditate: unfinished work, interesting TV shows, or a sudden urge to call a friend. It is the force that says, "I will compensate with a long meditation tomorrow."

Our Core Forces: The Five Pandavas

Our primary spiritual qualities, the five Pandavas, are always fighting for our soul's cause.



Yudhishtira:
Calm discrimination.



Bhima:
Life force.

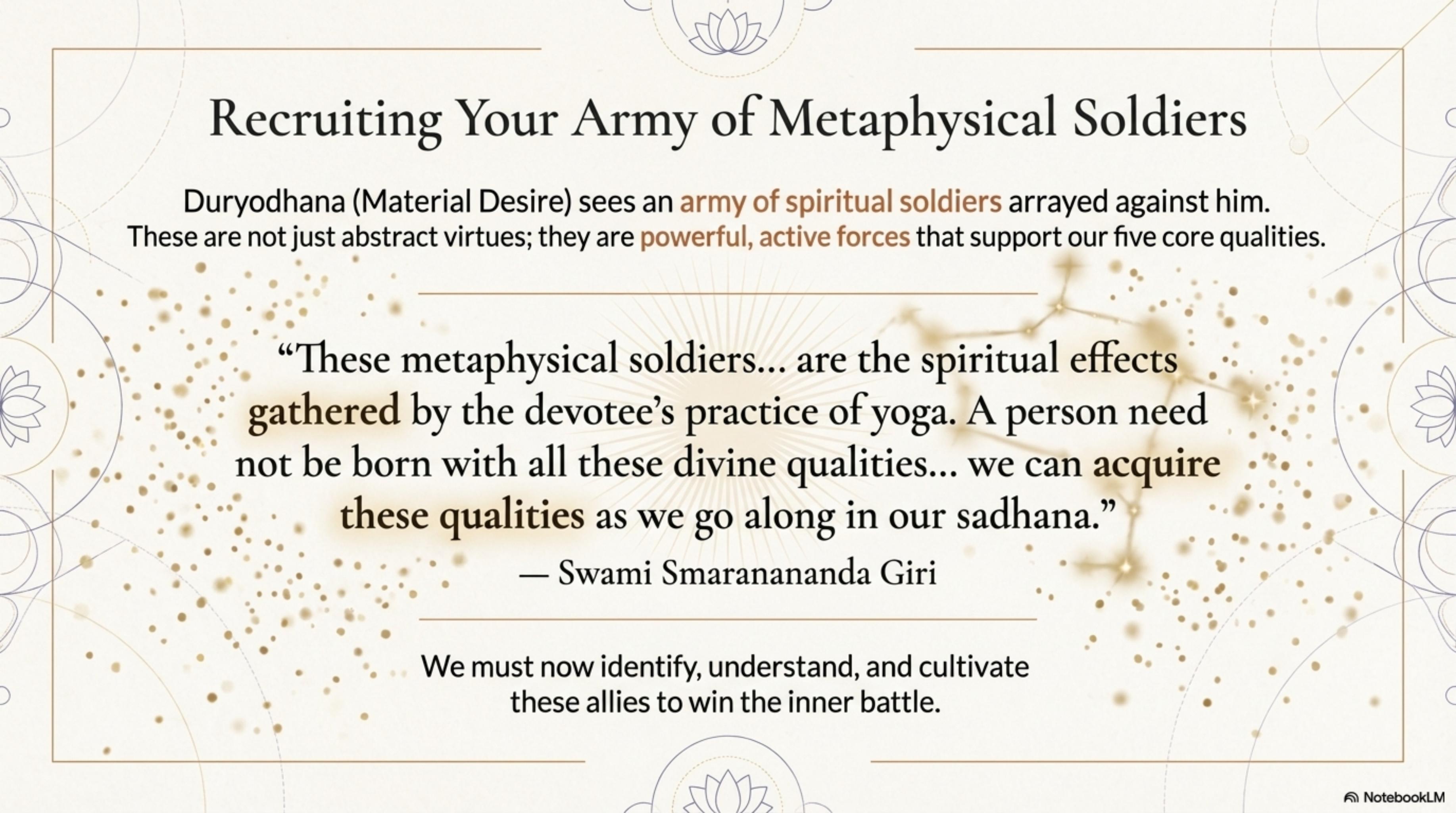


Arjuna:
Self-control.



Nakula & Sahadeva:
Adherence to Yama
(don'ts) & Niyama (do's).

**But just as the five Pandavas could not win the war alone, these five qualities are not enough.
To secure victory, we must awaken and recruit a vast army of divine allies.**



Recruiting Your Army of Metaphysical Soldiers

Duryodhana (Material Desire) sees an **army of spiritual soldiers** arrayed against him. These are not just abstract virtues; they are **powerful, active forces** that support our five core qualities.

“These metaphysical soldiers... are the spiritual effects gathered by the devotee’s practice of yoga. A person need not be born with all these divine qualities... we can acquire these qualities as we go along in our sadhana.”

— Swami Smaranananda Giri

We must now identify, understand, and cultivate these allies to win the inner battle.

The Vanguard: Devotion and Spiritual Memory



Yudhana (Divine Devotion)

Role: Fights the forces of irreverent doubt and disbelief.

Strategy

Counters the three primary spiritual doubts:

- 1) Does God exist?
- 2) Is my path correct?
- 3) Am I worthy?

Devotion allows us to proceed with our practice even before all doubts are intellectually resolved.



Chekitana (Spiritual Memory)

Role: Opposes the material delusion that makes us forget our true nature.

Strategy

Reminds us of the truth:

"Aham Brahmasmi" (I am Brahman/Spirit).

This memory prevents us from over-identifying with temporary roles (job, nationality) and reduces the pain of worldly ups and downs.

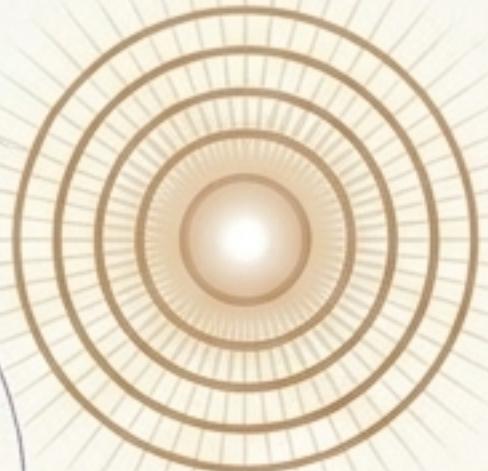
The Strategists: Ecstasy and Dispersion

Virata (Samadhi Ecstasy)

Role: Routes the delusion of seeing diversity instead of the one Spirit.

Strategy

The joy experienced in deep meditation provides the strength and motivation to fight the inner battle. Like the Pandavas planning their strategy in Virata's kingdom, we draw power and make plans from our experiences in **meditative ecstasy**.



Drupada (Extreme Dispersion / Vairagya)

Role: Fights the strong army of material attachment.

Strategy

True dispassion is not a negative state of deprivation. It is “an **ardent devotion** for attaining the spiritual goal... so that the longing for the world is transmuted naturally into a fulfilling **desire for God**.” It is born from a positive love for the Divine.

The Rules of Engagement: Intelligence and Moral Code



Kashi Raja (Discriminative Intelligence / Prajna)

Role: Protects from the entrapment of false reasoning.

Strategy

Prajna is not mere intellect; it is the intuitive faculty of the '**supreme knower**'. It allows us to see beyond flawed logic and the mind's rationalisations.

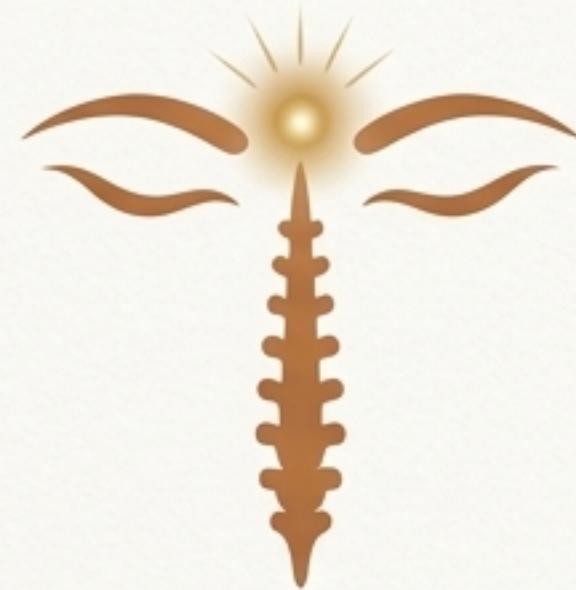


Dhrishtaketu & Saibya (Yama & Niyama)

- **Yama (Mental Resistance):** The 'Thou Shalt Nots' - abstaining from injury, falsehood, stealing, incontinence, and covetousness.
- **Niyama (Mental Adherence):** The 'Thou Shalts' - purity, contentment, self-discipline, self-study, and devotion.

Combined Force: Together, they are the foundation of a spiritual life, harmonising the body and mind with divine laws to produce inner and outer well-being.

The Battle Plan: Posture and Life Force Control.



Kuntibhoja (Asana - Right Posture)

Role: Fights laziness, restlessness, and flesh attachment.

Strategy

Provides the physical and mental pacification necessary for deep meditation. A straight spine and upward gaze (at the point between the eyebrows) are key. Asana supports the ability to invoke divine life energy.



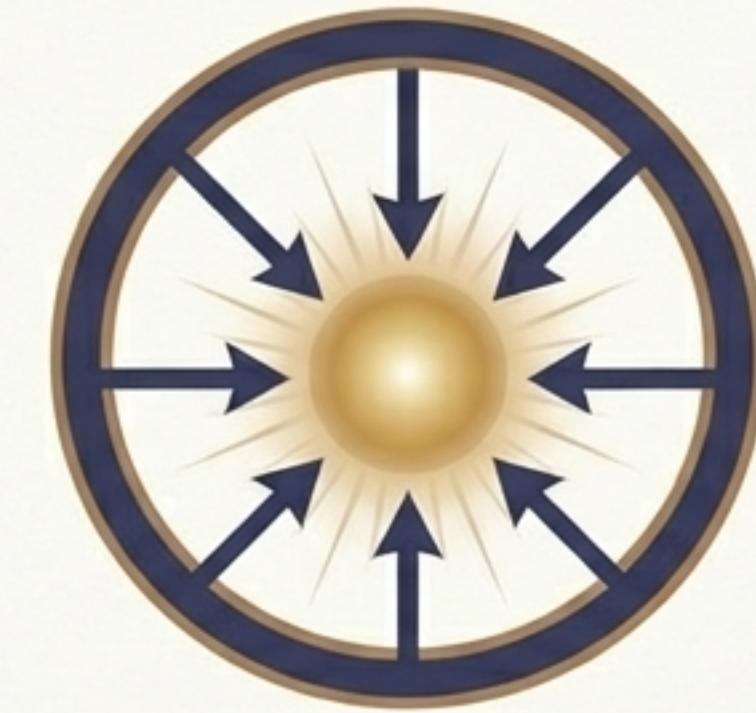
Yudhamanyu (Pranayama - Life Force Control)

Role: Disarms and renders powerless the sense army of the blind mind.

Strategy

The mind is "blind," relying on the senses for information. Pranayama reverses the flow of life force (prana) from outwards to the senses, to inwards and upwards into the spine. This subdues the senses, freeing the mind from their influence.

The Strategic Objective: Interiorisation and Stillness.



Purujit (Pratyahara - Interiorisation)

Role: Prevents the scattering of the mind into the material world.

Strategy: When life force is withdrawn from the senses via Pranayama, the mind can turn within.
This state of conscious, alert stillness is Pratyahara.

Key Insight: "The goal of any meditation is Pratyahara." It is both a result of practice and an effort to be made. In this stillness, inner joy is not a theory but a direct experience.

"When bliss comes over you, you recognise that as a conscious intelligent universal being to whom you may appeal and not as an abstract mental concept." — **Paramahansa Yogananda**

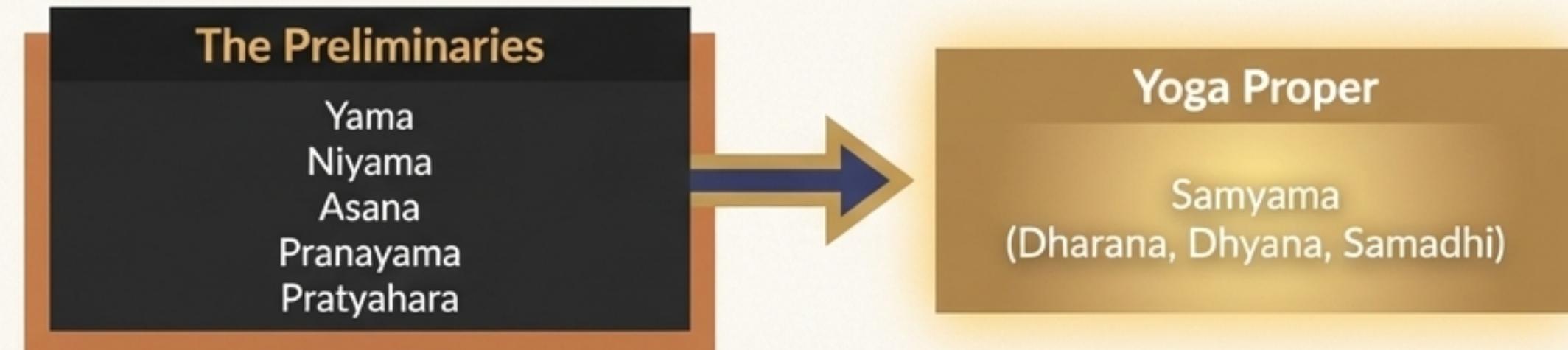
The Ultimate Warrior: Abhimanyu (Self-Mastery)

The son of Arjuna (Self-Control), his victories enable the yogi to remain in divine soul consciousness, both during and after meditation.



Samyama: The Threefold Power

1. Dharana (Concentration): Becoming one with the object of concentration (e.g., the cosmic sound of Aum, or inner joy).
2. Dhyana (Meditation): Experiencing that oneness expanding outside the body.
3. Samadhi (Divine Union): The final state of union with the Divine.



A Universal Path to Divine Union.

The esoteric essence of all great religions is Yoga (union with God).

The principles are universal, though the terminology may differ.

Comparative Example: Saint Teresa of Avila's Stages of Prayer

- Oral Prayer
- Mental Prayer
- Prayer of Recollection
- Prayer of Quiet
- Prayer of Communion
- Prayer of Union

Patanjali's Eight Limbs of Yoga

- Pratyahara (Interiorisation)
- Dharana/Dhyana (Concentration/Meditation)
- Samadhi (Divine Union)

This framework describes a universal human experience of turning inward and progressively uniting one's consciousness with a higher reality.

A Cautionary Tale: The Defeat of Self-Mastery.

The son of Arjuna (Self-Control), his victories enable the yogi to remain in divine soul consciousness, both during and after meditation.

The Story

Abhimanyu (Self-Mastery) was defeated only when his father **Arjuna (Self-Control)** was temporarily lured away from the main battle.

Alone, **Abhimanyu** could defeat individual enemies like desire or anger one-by-one, but he was overwhelmed when they all attacked together.



The Lesson

A momentary lapse of self-control can leave our hard-won Self-Mastery vulnerable and isolated, preventing the benefits of meditation from spilling over into daily life.

The Modern Parallel

We lose our self-control (**Arjuna**) when we react to a 'challenge' from the world.

- **Example 1:** Feeling challenged by another driver on the motorway and reacting with aggression.
- **Example 2:** Feeling happy with your possessions until a neighbour buys something bigger, creating envy and desire.

The Nature of Victory: Excellence in Action.

Winning the inner Kurukshetra is to live a smooth, purposeful, and joyous existence, free from the cycles of pain and suffering.



“Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam” – ‘Excellence in action is Yoga.’ (*Bhagavad Gita 2.50*)

“The love for God becomes manifest in you... by calm devotional will for perfection.” – Paramahansa Yogananda.

Victory is not about renouncing the world, but about engaging with it perfectly, with a consciousness established in the divine. Yoga is the art of proper action.

Your Divine Army Awaits.



Your five Pandava-like qualities are not enough to win the war alone. You must actively cultivate an army of allies:

- **Devotion** to overcome doubt.
- **Spiritual Memory** to overcome delusion.
- **Dispassion** to overcome attachment.
- **The discipline of Yoga** (Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara).
- **The ultimate power of Self-Mastery** (*Samyama*).

These divine qualities are the spiritual results of your own practice. They can be cultivated by you, and by me, to win our internal Kurukshetra and lead a life of lasting, meaningful joy.