# Anger Management

## Slokam (Chapter 2, Sloka 56)

दु:खेष्वनुद्विग्नमना: सुखेषु विगतस्पृह: |

वीतरागभयक्रोध: स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ||

## Translation

One whose mind remains undisturbed amidst misery, who does not crave for pleasure, and who is free from attachment, fear, and anger, is called a sage of steady wisdom.

## Commentary

In this verse, Shree Krishna describes sages of steady wisdom as:

1) Vīta rāga—they give up craving for pleasure

2) Vīta bhaya—they remain free from fear

3) Vīta krodha—they are devoid of anger.

An enlightened person does not allow the mind to be consumed by material weaknesses like lust, anger, greed and envy. This frees the mind to steadily contemplate the divine and transcendental. When one broods over miseries, divine contemplation ceases and the mind sinks from transcendence.

Torture works similarly - more than present pain, memories of past pain and fear of future pain torment the mind. But staying with just the present sensation surprisingly shrinks the pain. Buddhist monks used this technique historically to tolerate torture by invading conquerors.

Likewise, if the mind craves external pleasures, it is diverted from divine contemplation and runs after enjoyment. Thus, a sage of steady wisdom does not let the mind pine for pleasure or lament miseries. Nor does a sage permit the mind to succumb to fear and anger. This keeps the mind focused on the transcendental.

In summary, an enlightened being masters the mind by not indulging its worldly weaknesses and negativities around misfortune, cravings and emotions. This concentrates the mind fully on the divine. Living in the now, not past and future, and rejecting mindless sense-gratification creates the mental clarity and discipline for transcendental contemplation.

## Sloka (Chapter 2, Sloka 62)

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंस: सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते |

सङ्गात्सञ्जायते काम: कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ||

## Translation

While contemplating on the objects of the senses, one develops attachment to them. Attachment leads to desire, and from desire arises anger.

## Commentary

Anger, greed, and lust are considered mental diseases in Vedic scriptures. We recognize bodily diseases easily when they make us miserable. But we fail to identify anger, greed and lust as afflictions of the mind, so we do not try to cure them.

Shri Krishna gives profound insight into the mind's workings - when we repeatedly contemplate happiness in some object, the mind becomes attached to it. For example, a boy in class notices something about a girl and thinks having her would make him happy. As he repeats this, his mind attaches to her until he feels madly in love, unable to study. His friends don't understand since they interact with her normally. But his repetitive thoughts created attachment.

Attachment seems harmless, but it leads to desire. If attached to drinks, desires for them arise frequently, creating cravings. Attachment brings recurring thoughts of the pleasure of something, spurring desires.

Desire births two problems - greed and anger. Greed comes from fulfilling desires. Even getting all wealth and sensual objects in the world cannot satiate desire, so desire causes misery. Thus, the wise renounce desire.

Conversely, obstructing desire spawns anger. Anger doesn't arise independently - it's created by blocked desires. Desire comes from attachment, which comes from contemplating sense pleasures.

We see how the simple act of contemplating an object's pleasures leads down to the mental diseases of greed and anger. No amount of fulfilment can extinguish the fire of desire. And blocking any desire incites anger.

In summary, Vedic philosophy offers profound insight into the mind's underside. Repeatedly contemplating happiness in objects breeds attachment, then escalating desires whose fulfillment and frustration fuel greed and anger. Recognizing this downward flow - from thoughts to diseases - highlights the need for mental discipline and renunciation to abate these afflictions. Curing anger and greed requires curtailing the preceding desires through moderating attachments and redirected contemplation.

## Sloka (Chapter 2, Sloka 63)

क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोह: सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रम: |

स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ||

## Translation

Anger leads to clouding of judgment, which results in bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, the intellect gets destroyed; and when the intellect is destroyed, one is ruined.

## Commentary

Anger impairs judgment, just as the morning mist creates a hazy covering on the sunlight. In anger, people commit mistakes that they later regret, because the intellect gets clouded by the haze of emotions. People say, “He is twenty years elder to me. Why did I speak in this manner to him? What happened to me?” What happened was that the faculty of judgment was affected by anger, and hence the mistake of scolding an elder was made.

When the intellect is clouded, it leads to bewilderment of memory. The person then forgets what is right and what is wrong, and flows along with the surge of emotions. The downward descent continues from there, and bewilderment of memory results in destruction of the intellect. And since the intellect is the internal guide, when it gets destroyed, one is ruined. In this manner, the path of descent from divinity to impiety has been described beginning with contemplation on the sense objects to the destruction of the intellect.

## Sloka (Chapter 5, Sloka 26)

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् |

अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ||

## Translation

For those *sanyāsīs*, who have broken out of anger and lust through constant effort, who have subdued their mind, and are self-realized, liberation from material existence is both here and hereafter.

## Commentary

Karm-yog is the safer path to take for most people, as explained previously, and that is why Shree Krishna has strongly recommended it to Arjun. However, for someone who is truly detached from the world, karm sanyās is also suitable. It is advantageous in that there is no diversion of time and energy toward worldly duties, and one can dedicate oneself fully to the practice of spirituality. There have been many accomplished sanyāsīs in history. Shree Krishna states that such true karm sanyāsīs also make rapid progress and experience peace everywhere. By eliminating the urges of desire and anger and subduing their mind, they attain perfect peace both in this life and here-after.

We often harbour the misconception that external circumstances are at fault for the lack of peace in our lives, and we hope for the day when the situation will become conducive to peace of mind. However, peace is not dependent upon the external situation; it is a product of purified senses, mind, and intellect. The sanyāsīs, with their mind and thoughts turned inward, find the ocean of peace within, independent of external circumstances. And then, with the internal machinery in order, they experience the same peace everywhere, and are liberated in this world itself.