

# God, Grace, & Goal Setting



## Reflective Journal

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## **Welcome to these teachings.**

This journal contains edited versions of the videos on God, Grace, and Goal Setting drawn from the Bhagavad Gita.

### **How to use this journal.**

First listen to the video. Then, review the edited transcript.

What stands out for you?

Make notes in your spiritual journal.

Finally, use the reflective questions to go deeper and the prompts for action to embody the teachings in your life.

### **Questions?**

Email me at [eric@wisdomheart.com](mailto:eric@wisdomheart.com).

## Teaching 1 - Ambition without Desire

Our conversation about God, grace, and goal setting places us at the heart of our life experiences, much like the Gita, set in the middle of a battlefield, symbolizing the unintegrated aspects of our selves – our memories, emotions, ideals, and concepts. The Gita teaches us to take action that furthers our integration into a mandala of blessing.

### Engaging Wholeheartedly without Attachment

The key to integration is to be fully committed yet unattached. Wholehearted engagement without the desire to control the situation indicates a freedom from attachment. Our actions, our dharma, should not be duties imposed from outside but natural expressions of our gifts, commitments, and values.

### Krishna's Wisdom on Duty and Attachment

Krishna, representing the wisdom heart, teaches that performing our duty with attachment leads to life's extremes. Fixation and emotional drive fragment and extremize our life. Conversely, by working without attachment, we attain the supreme, engaging in each moment with the wisdom of the soul rather than the confusion of past memories.

### Creative, Loving, Clear Action

Acting without attachment allows for creativity, love, and clarity. It aligns us with truth and the supreme, enabling us to play our role in the cosmic drama with wholeheartedness. This alignment is not about being in charge but about syncing with the universal pulse of wisdom and love.

### Perfected Action and Reaching the Unknown

Perfected action, as described in the Gita, does not mean perfectionism but attunement to the flow of wisdom and love in existence. Through such action, wise souls reach the unknown, exploring the depths of the soul, the energies of creativity, and the vastness of love.

## Passionless Action and Cosmic Balance

Krishna advises staying mindful of the cosmic balance, acting with passionlessness. This balance is a felt sense, an attunement to staying aligned with the evolutionary current, rather than being driven by past emotional programs.

## Staying Present, Open, and Awake

This process requires staying present, open, and awake to the current of love flowing through us and into our life. Such action is natural and graceful, an embodiment of grace in our everyday lives.

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## Reflective Questions

How can I engage in my daily activities with wholehearted commitment yet without attachment?

In what ways can I align my actions with the evolutionary current of wisdom and love?

What practices can help me stay present, open, and awake to the flow of love and creativity in my life?

## Prompts for Action

- Mindful Meditation: Practice daily meditation focusing on detachment and alignment with the universal flow of wisdom and love.
- Intention Setting: Each morning, set an intention to act with clarity, love, and creativity, staying attuned to your inner wisdom and the needs of the moment.

## Teaching 2: Loss & Gain

### Navigating Loss and Gain in Life

Life's journey, filled with our work, service, creativity, and contribution, inevitably includes loss and gain. The Buddha described life as a bumpy ride, exacerbated when we are off-center from our soul's core. Staying true to what we're committed to can smooth out this ride.

### The Bhagavad-Gita's Guidance

The Bhagavad-Gita teaches us how to live an engaged, active, loving, and awakened life. Our life situation becomes our yoga school, where we learn to commune with and embody the sacred.

Krishna emphasizes the importance of detachment in dealing with life's ups and downs.

### Detachment from Loss or Gain

Acting with detachment from loss or gain is essential. My father, a Wall Street broker, understood the market's fluctuating nature. He advised his clients to stay focused and not let emotions dictate their actions. Similarly, Krishna instructs us to focus on what we care about most, without being swayed by external changes.

### Parenting with a Long-Term Perspective

In parenting, whether a child is having a good or bad day, the key is to remain focused on the long-term goals and deeper values you wish to impart. Gratitude during good times and clarity during challenging times are vital.

### The Concept of Being 'Unstained'

Krishna advises not to be 'stained' by success or failure. This term refers to the mind's coloring by past experiences, which can skew present perceptions. We should recognize the transient nature of life's victories and defeats, continually aligning with deeper service.

## Embracing Equanimity

Equanimity of mind, as described in the text, is a mark of a spiritual soul and a form of self-control. It's not about rigidly holding the mind and body together, but rather a spacious consciousness that includes life's cycles while staying focused on the heart's center.

## Practical Approaches to Loss and Gain

- Act with detachment to both loss and gain.
- In success or failure, avoid being stained by past memories.
- Cultivate equanimity of mind, which is not about straining control but embracing a spacious consciousness.

## The Heart's Role in Equanimity

Equanimity involves recognizing the ebb and flow of life's experiences, knowing they will pass, but what sustains is the presence and the heart's commitment to an awakened life in our unique situations.

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## Reflective Questions

How can I practice detachment when facing loss or gain in my life?  
What strategies can help me avoid being 'stained' by past successes or failures?  
In what ways can I develop and maintain equanimity in my daily experiences?

## Prompts for Action

- Mindfulness Exercise: Regularly engage in mindfulness practices that focus on detachment and observing life's fluctuations without emotional entanglement.
- Journaling for Self-Reflection: Write about recent experiences of loss or gain. Reflect on your reactions and explore how to approach similar situations with a more equanimous mindset in the future.

## Teaching 3: The Misery of Goals

It's not the goals per se that are the source of the misery; it's the projections we put on the goals. We believe:

- If we attain a particular financial goal, then we will be at peace.
- If we reach a specific productivity goal, then we will be happy.
- Achieving a particular parenting, relationship, real estate, or political goal will lead to fulfillment.

But this is not true. It's a structure for endless disappointment, or, we should say, for momentary happiness followed by disillusionment and the need for the next projection that's going to make us happy.

## Ancient Wisdom from the Gita

In the Gita, this text that we're following to learn about the path of unconditional success, Krishna, the awakened state, the divine mind, the illumined heart, explains this. To strive for reward is contrary indeed to the ancient, holy yogic creed. Yoga is the pathway of realizing our essential unity, our ever-present, already-there unity with life. It's a pathway that releases us from our projections:

- Projecting our happiness.
- Projecting our fulfillment.
- Projecting our success onto specific goals.

## Joy from Within

This pathway returns us back to the realization that joy comes from within. Fulfillment overflows from the awakened heart within. Completeness is already present and is then emanated out, taking form in our life, relationships, family, work.

## Goals as Invitations

But the goals themselves are simply invitations. They are calling us to fully express the joy, the beauty, the love that's already present. They don't give us beauty, joy, and love; they are invitations to express.

## The Path of Wisdom

Follow the course of wisdom true. Be not miserable; be ever new. Follow the course of wisdom true. So, pay attention:

- Is this path, action, decision, or way of engaging with my life bringing me into the awareness of the ever-new, ever-beautiful, ever-unfolding sense of joy, peace, and presence?
- Or are these choices, decisions, and actions making me miserable?

## Discerning Balance and Joy

It's not a subtle discernment. Is it bringing me out of balance? Is it bringing the mind out of balance, creating angular energy within the system, energies that are self-contradictory and in struggle?

Or are these choices re-vivifying and strengthening the ever-present awareness of the bliss and the beauty of this life? The goal becomes the occasion for that ever-new, ever-more-glorious, ever-more-appreciated opportunity to act.

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## Reflective Questions

- How are my current goals influencing my sense of peace and happiness?
- In what ways might my projections be leading me towards momentary happiness and subsequent disillusionment?
- How can I align my actions and decisions with the ancient wisdom of realizing joy and fulfillment from within?

## Prompts for Action

- Mindfulness Practice: Spend a few minutes each day reflecting on whether your daily actions and decisions are bringing you closer to joy and peace or contributing to a sense of imbalance and struggle.
- Goal Reassessment: Revisit your current goals and ask yourself if they are invitations to express the joy, beauty, and love already present within you or if they are projections of happiness and success onto external achievements. Adjust your goals accordingly to align with the wisdom of inner fulfillment.



## Teaching 4: Full Commitment

In our continued exploration of God, grace, and goal setting, we delve into the profound teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita. This sacred text, set amidst a battlefield, symbolizes the unintegration of various aspects of our selves, such as memories, emotions, ideals, and concepts. It guides us to take action that furthers our integration into a "mandala of blessing."

### Wholehearted Engagement and Detachment

The key to integration and effective action lies in being fully committed yet unattached. We are encouraged to engage wholeheartedly in life without trying to control outcomes, understanding that such control is often driven by attachment.

### Dharma: The Natural Expression of Our True Self

Our actions should stem from our dharma – not duties imposed externally, but those realized as natural expressions of our gifts, commitments, and values. Krishna, representing wisdom, teaches that attachment in duty leads to life's extremes and fragmentation.

### Attaining the Supreme Through Unattached Action

Engaging in our duties without attachment aligns us with the supreme, helping us meet each moment with soulful wisdom rather than confusion from past experiences. This alignment fosters creativity, love, and clarity.

### The Cosmic Drama and Perfected Action

Acting without attachment allows us to play our role in the cosmic drama wholeheartedly. We become attuned to the wisdom and love that flow through existence, aligning with the evolutionary current. Perfected action leads us to the unknown, enabling us to discover the universe's vast richness and the depths of our soul.

## Passionless Action and Cosmic Balance

Krishna advises mindfulness of the cosmic balance, acting with passionlessness. It's about staying aligned with the evolutionary current and not being swayed by past emotional programs. This attunement is not about strain but about being present, open, and awake to the love seeking to flow through us.

## Natural and Graceful Action

In this state, our actions become natural and graceful, embodying the flow of divine grace in our everyday lives.

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## Reflective Questions

How can I engage wholeheartedly in life while maintaining detachment from outcomes?

What practices can help me align with my true dharma and the evolutionary current of the universe?

How can I cultivate passionless action to stay attuned to the cosmic balance?

## Prompts for Action

- Daily Meditation: Focus on aligning your actions with divine grace and the wisdom of your soul.
- Mindful Reflection: Regularly assess whether your actions are driven by attachment or aligned with the cosmic flow of love and wisdom.

# Teaching 5: Let the Current Carry You

## Let the Current Carry You

In our exploration of God, grace, and goal setting, we focus on the concept of "letting the current carry you." The Bhagavad-Gita, a text teaching us how to act with integrity and embody awakening, offers profound insights.

## The Teachings of the Bhagavad-Gita

The Gita teaches that those who put off desire and wrath, and remain on the unselfish path, strive for the fulfillment of life's greater dream. This dream is not just our personal aspirations but aligns with the grander current of life's awakening process.

## Aligning Personal Dreams with Life's Current

Our personal dreams hold validity and can be fulfilled when we align them with life's bigger dream. We are like eddies in the stream of life's awakening process. The practices of yoga, kriya, and meditation help us find within ourselves the flow of this universal current.

## Putting Off Desire and Wrath

To align with this flow, we must let go of desire and wrath – the grasping and aggression fueled by emotional programs from our past. This includes the influences of our upbringing, religious conditioning, and societal expectations. Releasing these fixations allows us to return to the unselfish path, moving beyond the narrow horizon of the smaller self.

## Serving the Deeper Dream

By serving the deeper dream, the current of life that nourishes, evolves, and seeks to awaken all sentient beings, we play our part in this grand process. We attune to the flow of wisdom and love, bringing it alive in our thoughts, speech, actions, relationships, and creative endeavors.

## Finding Our Path in the Holy Stream

In the holy stream of life's inevitable awakening, we find our path. To be in the center of the stream is to be carried by the current, experiencing ease, grace, and generativity. Struggling against this current often indicates resistance due to anger or fulfillment of conditioned desires.

## Returning to the Center

To align with the stream, we must tune in, recognize our resistances, and release ourselves from them. Returning to the center, we allow the energy of wisdom, love, and creativity – the ever-awakening, ever-expansive current of life's dream – to flow through and animate our own dreams.

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## Reflective Questions

How can I align my personal dreams with the larger current of life's awakening process?

What desires or aggressions might be holding me back from fully engaging with life's flow?

In what ways can I contribute to the greater dream of awakening through my actions and creativity?

## Prompts for Action

- **Meditation on Alignment:** Practice meditation focusing on aligning your personal aspirations with the universal flow of life's greater purpose.
- **Self-Reflection Exercise:** Reflect on areas where you might be resisting life's flow. Identify desires or aggressions that may be influencing your choices and consider ways to release them to find greater harmony and alignment.

## Teaching 7: Your Unique Path

In this exploration of God, grace, and goal setting, the Bhagavad-Gita's teachings unveil the secrets of unconditional success. Krishna, symbolizing wisdom and awakening, emphasizes that each soul achieves ultimate success through her own best efforts, exerted effortlessly. This concept mirrors the idea of flow states, where our life energies merge with a larger, awakening purpose, allowing us to be carried by a current of inspiration.

### Effortless Effort and Mastery

This state of being, where life becomes an art of awakening, is described as effortless effort. It's a paradoxical blend of intense engagement and a deep sense of ease, aligning with the natural flow of life. This path of mastery lets life come alive within us, expressed uniquely through our presence and contribution.

### The Inward Sun and Ultimate Success

The wisdom heart guides us to act according to our duty, as seen by the inward sun - a metaphorical reference to our inner guiding light, transcending cultural and past life conditioning. This inner radiance illuminates our life's purpose, enabling us to become light beings, embodying awakened presence in every moment.

### Reflective Questions

How can I align my actions with the effortless effort and the flow of nature?  
What does my inward sun reveal about my true duty and purpose in life?  
How can I cultivate a state of being where my best efforts feel effortless and in tune with my deepest values?

### Prompts for Action

- Contemplative Practice: Reflect on the concept of the inward sun and how it guides your actions and decisions.
- Mindful Alignment: Seek ways to align your daily efforts with the natural flow of life, making your actions an expression of your inner wisdom and purpose.

## Teaching 8: Everything is On Schedule

### God, Grace, and Goal Setting in the Bhagavad-Gita

The Bhagavad-Gita teaches that everything in life is on schedule, with no moment arriving too early or too late. This concept is a reminder that our current situation, with all its challenges and joys, is precisely configured to support our awakening.

### The Work Allotted to Each Soul

The text emphasizes that no soul should cease the work allotted to it, regardless of weariness or struggle. This work, our path of engagement and awakening, is crucial in our journey.

### Saturn's Role in Endeavors

Every endeavor has its own 'Saturn,' symbolizing the discipline and time required for manifestation. Saturn teaches that our visions and inspirations need a specific set of disciplines to be fully realized in the physical world.

### The Path of Mastery and Incarnation

There are no shortcuts in mastery or in living out our purpose. Saturn, the lord of discipline, ensures that any skipped steps are revisited for integration.

### Appreciating the Moment's Mandala

We are encouraged to slow down and appreciate the nuances of our current situation. This appreciation aids in the integration of our hearts, minds, and actions.

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## Reflective Questions

- How can I embrace the notion that everything in my life is arriving on schedule?
- What disciplines might Saturn be asking me to master in my current endeavors?
- How can I more fully integrate my heart, mind, and actions in my daily life?

## Prompt for Action

- Daily Mindfulness Practice: Each day, take time to reflect on how your current challenges and joys are part of your path to awakening. Embrace the discipline required in your endeavors and appreciate the fullness of each moment.
- Each evening, write in your journal about the day's experiences, focusing on how they connect to your life's schedule as outlined in the Bhagavad-Gita. Reflect on the discipline required in your endeavors and how these experiences are shaping your path to awakening.

## Teaching 9: Discipline, Yoda, and Grace

We're exploring the Bhagavad-Gita's insights on realizing, embodying, and expressing the sacred in our life, focusing today on discipline and grace. The Gita's wisdom, reminiscent of Yoda's teachings, emphasizes the balance achieved through awakening to life's supreme radiance.

### Tuning into Life's Current

The Gita suggests that when our energies are out of balance, we're more aware of life's 'static' - thoughts and emotions - than the current of bliss, love, and wisdom. Tuning our instrument to this current reveals the steps for our awakening journey.

### Aligning with the Force

The true discipline, as illustrated through Yoda's guidance to Luke Skywalker, is aligning with the force within. This force, the current of bliss and inspiration, leads us towards the state of Samadhi, or unity with all life.

## Becoming Agents of Awakening

By aligning with this force, we become agents of awakening, each expressing this current uniquely. Total discipline involves becoming open and undefended, receiving the grace that nourishes and awakens through us.

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### Reflective Questions

- How can I better tune into the current of bliss, love, and wisdom in my daily life?
- What does aligning with the 'force' within mean to me, and how can I practice this alignment?
- In what ways can I open myself more to the grace that seeks to awaken through me?

### Prompts for Action

- Daily Meditation on Alignment: Dedicate time each day to meditate, focusing on feeling and aligning with the inner current of bliss and inspiration.
- Journaling for Awareness: Write about moments when you feel out of balance and explore how you can tune back into life's harmonious current, using the teachings of the Gita as a guide.

## Teaching 10: Let the Light Move You:

The Bhagavad-Gita's profound teachings encourage us to be moved by light, allowing it to guide our thoughts, emotions, and actions. This alignment transforms us into God's handiwork, expressing life in our unique ways.

### Embracing Unpleasant Work



The text also teaches that being moved by light means never hating unpleasant work. Every situation has aspects we prefer more or less, but embracing even the challenging parts is crucial for our growth and awakening.

## The Face of Glory and Loving Awareness

Life's 'face of glory' represents the aspects we might reject or feel uncomfortable with. The Gita teaches that turning towards these aspects with loving awareness redeems them, revealing hidden gifts and blessings. This process allows us to become wiser and more powerful agents of the light.

## Moving Beyond Aversion and Attraction

The Gita advises against being driven by aversion and attraction. Instead, we should focus on the light that illuminates everything, realizing that we are part of that light and can become God's handiwork, the agents of awakening.

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## Reflective Questions

How can I practice being moved by light in my daily life, especially in challenging situations?

What 'faces of glory' do I tend to turn away from, and how can I approach them with loving awareness?

How can I move beyond aversion and attraction to let the light guide my actions?

## Prompts for Action

- **Mindful Meditation:** Focus on visualizing light moving through and guiding you, especially when facing unpleasant tasks or situations.
- **Journaling for Integration:** Write about the aspects of life you find challenging. Reflect on how approaching these with loving awareness can transform your experience and understanding.

# Teaching 11: Dwell in Presence

We're exploring how to live an awakened life amidst uncertainties and challenges, using the Bhagavad-Gita. This text teaches us to embrace our current situation fully, finding awakening right here and now.

## Dwelling in Presence

The Gita speaks to us through Arjuna, representing our human incarnation, and Krishna, symbolizing divine wisdom. Krishna urges us to work for the greater, awakening dream, opening ourselves to the evolutionary current and the divine radiance.

## Working for a Higher Purpose

Krishna's message is to work not just for personal or worldly gains but for a deeper, spiritual purpose. This involves staying attuned to bliss and wisdom, making them the source of our inspiration and actions.

## Freedom from Entanglements and Embracing Love

Krishna advises freeing ourselves from mental entanglements and self-deception. Instead, we should cultivate love for the divine in everything and release hatred towards any creature, aligning with the wisdom heart.

## Becoming Healers of Life

By embracing this wisdom, we become healers, not by imposing ideologies but by being a presence of wisdom and love. This approach allows us and others to awaken and return to our true, radiant selves.

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## Reflective Questions

How can I integrate the teachings of the Gita into my daily life, especially amidst challenges?

In what ways can I work for a higher purpose beyond my personal or worldly goals?

How can I become a healer in my environment, fostering wisdom and love?

## Prompts for Action

- Practice of Presence: Regularly remind yourself to stay attuned to the divine current in everyday activities.
- Mindfulness Exercise: Reflect on your interactions and thoughts, focusing on releasing negativity and embracing a loving perspective towards yourself and others.