



How to Change Your Life

Human life abounds with changes. There are changes in your body as well as in your state of mind. Of course, there are changes in the objects of the world. However, there are times when you desire to bring about a total change in your life. You do not want to be the same personality with constant irritability, sustained tension and a lingering habit of jealousy. You desire to be free from these negative qualities. You aspire to become a person abounding with the qualities of endurance, patience, magnanimity, a balanced mind, and a cheerful disposition. Such a desire to change is indeed commendable. It is this inward feeling to change that marks the commencement of the soul's journey towards the goal of Self-realization.

It is important, however, to bring about a deep-rooted change so that an old habit does not reassert itself and a suppressed negative trait does not arise again with greater vehemence. Lacking a profound understanding of the secrets of life, people adopt various methods to deal with their negative qualities. Some try to suppress or hide them. Some try to veil a negative quality by adopting a positive quality. Those who are prone to irritability, cruelty, and pride often try to adorn themselves with exaggerated tenderness, kindness, and humility in an attempt to outgrow their negative traits. But they do not succeed.

You may deck thorny bushes with ornamental flowers, or deprive them of their branches and

leaves. You can even cut or pulverize them. But as long as their roots are in the ground, they will arise again. Much in the same way, you may suppress your negative qualities, try to modify them or even cut them down significantly through good association and meditation, but until you get at the roots of the negativity within you, you will not eliminate it fully and completely.

When you briefly turn away from your anger, greed, and pride, you have merely changed. But when you turn away from these saying a final goodbye, you have brought about a spiritual transformation within yourself. You have merely changed when you no longer find pleasure in the toys of your childhood because you have merely changed your toys. The inner weakness that drives you to find happiness in the objects of the world has not been overcome. But when you are free from that illusion, you are transformed.

When you bring vital change within yourself as a result of increasing integration and spiritual understanding, you become transformed. You are filled with new energy, new insight, and new inspiration. In the process of eliminating the roots of your negative traits, you continue to discover the increasing expansion of your inner Self. Your life becomes a song of success; it flows with joy, vitality and spiritual aspiration. But when you simply change your external surroundings, objects, and relationships, without changing at the deeper level of your personality, your mind gradually becomes burdened with boredom.

An ordinary clerk may become a government official. A lawyer may become a judge. A student of philosophy may become a professor. But the deeper part of their personalities continues to be the same. When deprived of their favorite objects, they still grieve and lament as they have done in the past. When encountering objects of their liking, they lose their balance of mind through elation. Veiled by the mask of external prestige and public recognition, they continue being what they have been all along. The external mask has actually hindered them from receiving the healthful atmosphere of nature. The defects and negative habits of those who mask their old uncultured self with glittering degrees, titles and accolades become even more uncontrolled.

As an example, a short-tempered student becomes a professor. Now, with his higher status, he does not feel the necessity of controlling his temper. Rather, he thinks he has a license to express his “righteous indignation” towards his students “for their own good.” At times, overpowered by the grossest form of his uncontrolled nature, he fails to recognize his humiliation and degradation in the light of his own faulty reason. Those who continue to ignore the inner voice of conscience, seeking consolation in the illusory masks of this glittering world, cannot hope to experience true joy and abundance in life.

On the other hand, you may change deeply within yourself without changing your external make-up. You may remain the same old clerk, but not the same old personality. You may remain the same old farmer, but not the same old weak personality of a few years ago. When you simply change, you remain the same personality. But when you bring about a transformation, you come closer to the Universal Life that flows through you. This inner transformation is what you truly need.

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molded into different shapes, while the mystic change that Yoga professes is like converting the iron of your personality into the shining gold of inward unfoldment. When you bring about spiritual transformation, your virtuous qualities continue to shine more and more. You will not be drawn back to the quagmire of your old uncultured habits.

Take recourse to INTEGRAL YOGA. It will bring about a total change in your being. But, do not expect a change overnight. Bring rhythm and balance to your daily life. Your personality is sustained by the pillars of reason, emotion, will, and action, so a vital change must take place in each of these four foundations of your personality. However, when your reason changes into intuition, the process of spiritual change attains its climax. All the favorable changes that you endeavor to bring about in yourself are completed by the light of intuition. Until you have developed intuitional vision into the nature of the Self, the changes within you remain at the mercy of the subtle processes of ignorance that operate through your unenlightened mind.

KARMA YOGA gives you the art of changing in the physical plane. You learn the art of working without seeking the deluded pleasures of your ego. You work with detachment and increasing insight into the philosophical fact that action is the expression of the flowing stream of life. When you are transformed spiritually, you delight in performing actions that produce goodness in the world. Instead of being urged by selfishness, greed, and egoism to work for perishable results in the world,

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you are urged by selflessness, universal love, and inward spiritual revelation to increasingly recognize God expressing Himself through this creation. This is the transformation you endeavor to acquire in the plane of your active life.

Next, RAJA YOGA outlines change in your mental plane. Instead of keeping your mind a perpetual workshop for the “devil” of distraction, you convert it into a shrine for the “deity of meditation.” You learn the art of controlling your thoughts and enter the profound depths of your personality through concentration and meditation. Your egoistic will becomes transformed by the philosopher’s stone of *samadhi* (superconsciousness) into the Divine Will that operates for the good of all.

BHAKTI YOGA presents the art of transforming your sentiments into a stream of Divine Love. Instead of falling into the widespread snares of attachment and infatuation in the name of love, you discover the Love of the Self as the basis and source of all human love operating in this relative world. “It is for the sake of Self that all are loved.” This Upanishadic truth is realized. You enjoy spiritual love that neither comes nor goes. The soul blends into God Himself, enjoying a perennial stream of sweetness. The loving sentiment of attachment that flowed like a muddy river in a swampy land transforms into a silvery stream of freedom that finds fulfillment in the Ocean of Bliss.

Finally, JNANA YOGA gives you the art of transforming your reason into intuition. It is the culmination of personality integration. By listening to the scriptures under the guidance of a spiritual preceptor, and by reflecting and meditating upon the meanings of the scriptural teachings, you bring a total change in the perspective of your very identity. Instead of asserting, “I am this body of flesh and blood,” you realize, “I am the Universal Self.” Instead of pursuing the desires of the mind led by egoistic vision, you question the very fictitious existence of the ego. And having discovered that the ego-sense is like a wandering dream-subject in the darkness of ignorance, you “wake up” to realize you are essentially the Divine Self, independent of all desires and cravings.

Intuitional knowledge is the fire that consumes the root of all evil habits in one’s personality. It

is the magic potion that completes the process of transformation in every plane of existence. The soul becomes transformed into the Divine Self, and the human body becomes a living temple of God.

How long will you continue to change on the superficial plane of your existence? Learn the art of bringing a profound change in your being. Practice a blend of dedicated action, devotion, meditation and spiritual enquiry in your day-to-day life. Place yourself increasingly in the hands of your purified reason. Let your personality bask in the sunshine of wisdom. Let it enjoy soft showers of Divine sentiments. Let it breathe in the atmosphere of a joyous mind. You are going to be transformed.

In the light of intuition, you will discover the Self beyond all changes and transformations. With the removal of dark clouds, the sun reveals itself in its intrinsic brilliance, bringing a transformation to the world. The clouds shine with the colors of the rainbow, the trees reveal their greenery, and the rivers flow with brightness. Similarly, with the revelation of the Self, changes occur in the clouds of the mind, in the river of one's sentiments, in the summits of one's thoughts, and in the valleys of one's daily life. Though it seems paradoxical that the Self totally changes one's personality, such is the wisdom acquired by the Yogis and Sages. Acquire the wisdom of the immutable Self. This is the secret of spiritual transformation in yourself and the world in which you live. It is the basis of all that is good, beautiful and Divine in this world.

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FROM SWAMIJI'S KITCHEN

Karhi

- 1/2 quart buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon besan or chickpea flour
- 1 teaspoon garam masala or a dash each of powdered cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1 small hot dried chili (optional)
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon whole cumin seeds
- Karhi leaves (if available)
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- salt to taste

Place chili, mustard seeds, and cumin seeds in a deep pan with oil and let them sputter over high heat for a few seconds. Then add the karhi leaves, sliced onion, and the spices and continue to fry while stirring, without allowing the onions to turn brown; they should stay creamy. Then blend the buttermilk and besan in a blender and pour this into the pan. Bring to a boil over low heat, stirring constantly. If the karhi thickens add some water to maintain desired consistency.

Karhi may be enjoyed with rice or bread or can be used as a tasty sauce for boiled vegetables such as brussel sprouts, cauliflower or any other vegetable.

Mango Karhi

Follow the same procedure as above, except in place of the blended ingredients, blend the following:

- 1 cup pulp of ripe mango
- 1/2 cup of shredded coconut
- 2 teaspoons besan flour
- 4 teaspoons sugar

Omit the onions. Begin with the sputtering cumin and mustard seeds and chili and then pour in the blended ingredients. Cook on low heat until it thickens (10 minutes). This is a nourishing and delightful dish.