



# INSIGHT INTO WILLPOWER

## PART TWO

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The Gita mentions three types of austerity to remember and reflect upon while developing enhanced willpower.

### Physical austerity

The first is austerity of the body. Your physical body is meant to serve others through your good deeds. Maintain your physical strength by Hatha Yoga exercises, walking, or running a little every day. Be active by doing things. Do not develop the idea that the joy of life lies in giving comfort to the body, for the more comfort you give it, the more vulnerable it will become to laziness, diseases and ill health.

Another point is not to allow your body to emanate a sense of pride. People express their mental states, eccentricities, and positive or negative traits through their physical bodies. For example, the moment you see a person who is highly conceited, you can observe that their body is tense or posed. On the other hand, the moment you see that a person's body is relaxed, you sense a more positive vibration emanating from them.

According to the Gita, allow a kind of frankness (*arjava*) to express through your body when you interact with people. Children are admired because they don't hide anything: they are frank and straightforward.

Of course, the greatest physical austerity that Yoga emphasizes is an advanced austerity: the practice of *brahmacharya* or sex-restraint.

In Yogic culture, specifically with reference to householders, sex-restraint implies fidelity and a spiritual love between husband and wife. It is a deeper love wherein sex, ultimately, is no longer the dominant reality of the mind.

For those who are more one-pointed on the spiritual path, and who do not have any entanglements (advanced aspirants and *sanyasis* (renunciates), *brahmacharya* implies a project in which one transcends the sex-idea and rises beyond the notion that "I am male or female." *Brahmacharya* is a most profound endeavor. If a person develops this austerity, he has acquired a most powerful process for building willpower.

*Brahmacharya* also implies that one should overcome the three "gates to Hell:" *kama*, *krodha*, and *lobha*. *Kama* is lustful desire, *krodha* is anger, and *lobha* is greed. Sometimes people are able to restrain one trait, but fail to do so with another. For example, one might control *kama*, but then develop *krodha*. Or, they might control *krodha* only to have *lobha* spring forth. If any one of these three are developing in a person, they are not yet succeeding in *brahmacharya*. The ideal of *brahmacharya* is to avoid wasting precious energy over lesser values.

### Vocal Austerity

The next aspect of austerity discussed in the Gita that can help you develop a powerful will is austerity of speech. Do not speak words that

will hurt others. Refrain from rationalizing your defects, then blaming others for your negative behavior.

Use words for discussing the scriptures and for doing good to others. Vocal austerity is so powerful that a few words from the lips of an enlightened Sage or Saint can inspire thousands of people for generations.

### **Mental Austerity**

Next is austerity of the mind. This implies the practice of serenity. Foster a serene mind, or *chitta prasada*, as it is known in Sanskrit. Do not allow your mind to be ruffled by attachment and hatred. Possess *bhava-sanshuddhi*—purity of feeling. Refrain from allowing degraded feelings to rule your personality: feelings of humiliation, misery, failure; believing that life has no meaning. When you hold degraded feelings, you unwittingly become cruel to yourself and then become cruel towards other people. You are not able to admire their good qualities, or encourage them to uplift their life.

Promote mental austerity by taking recourse to *satsanga* (association with people of a high spiritual attainment), reflection, meditation, prayer and surrender to God. Direct your will for attaining Self-realization—the highest goal of life!

### **The Mystic Experience of Sage Trishanku**

There is a peace chant that inspires the development of immense willpower in an aspirant. It contains the spiritual experience of Sage Trishanku:

*“Om Aham vrikshasyarerivaa.  
Keertih prishtham gireriva.*

*Oordhwapavitro vaajineeva swamritamasmi.  
Dravinam suvarchasam. Sumedhaa amritokshitah.  
Iti trishankor vedaanuvachanam.  
Om Shanti Shanti Shanti.”*

“Om. I am the uprooter of the world-tree. My glory is above the mountain top. My wisdom is like the effulgent sun that shines above the heavens. I am the very embodiment of nectar. My wealth is the shining treasure. My intellect has been purified by the waters of immortality. May there be threefold peace!” Thus did Sage Trishanku declare based on his spiritual experience.

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This peace chant suggests the immense power that abides in every soul. When you become aware of that power, you join with Sage Trishanku in declaring, “I am the mover of this world-tree.” The purpose of developing willpower is to shake off the illusion of the world-process from one’s consciousness and to realize, “I am not this mortal personality; I am the non-dual, eternal Self!”

The world-process is an illusion in one’s consciousness caused by *Maya*, and by shaking it, one attains Liberation. The whole project consists of shaking, uprooting, and finally removing it. As long as that determination has not developed, a human being’s will is feeble and insignificant.

For example, you wish for small things like a refrigerator, a house, some property, or a letter from a friend. When these things come to you, you become so happy because you think that now you are developing willpower. This is true to a certain extent—will is there—but ultimately your will must become so purified that it harmonizes with the Divine Will. Saints and Sages reach a stage where they do not permit ego’s will. Rather they feel, “Let it be His Will, not mine.”

**A**llow me to guide you along the meaning contained in the peace chant quoted above so that you may develop the fountain-source of immense will within yourself:

**“Aham Vrikshasyarerivaa”**—“I am the mover of this world tree.” You are not the feeble personality subject to birth and death. Enquire into your essential nature by studying the scriptures and reflecting upon their teachings. The world cannot shake you. Rather, you have the power to shake the world and to uproot it from your consciousness.

**“Keertih prishtham gireriva”**—“My Glory is above the mountain top.” There is no need to seek any glory in this world, for the glory of the soul itself is beyond the mighty Himalayas, beyond imagination. The innermost soul in you is *Brahman*—the Absolute.

**“Oordhwapavitro vaajineeva”**—“My wisdom is like the effulgent sun that shines above in the heavens.” By realizing the Self, one rises beyond the relative concepts of heavenly realms. The joyous worlds that are attained as a result of virtuous karmas are little compared to the attainment of Supreme Bliss.

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**“Swamritamasmi”**—“I am the very embodiment of nectar.” This implies the innermost Self in everyone is deathless. The nectar of wisdom removes death and bestows immortality. Knowledge of the Self removes the body-idea and, thereby, the fear of death.

**“Dravinam suvarchasam”**—“My wealth is the shining treasure.” It is the treasure of Realization. When you become the Self, you have possessed all that is. Such treasure is not ordinary treasure; it is not the perishable treasure that comes and goes. When you attain the treasure of the Self, you possess forever all that exists.

**“Sumedhaa amritokshitah”**—“My intellect has been purified by the waters of immortality.” This means that your intellect has been bathed in the waters of *samadhi* (super-consciousness). The intellect is not ordinary any longer because it has become intuitive.

**“Iti trishankor vedaanuvachanam”**—When Sage Trishanku entered into profound meditation, this was his revelation.

The threefold peace is meant to negate the three types of miseries: subjective—caused by body and mind; objective—caused by people and objects from outside; Divine—caused by forces that are not within the control of human beings such as storms, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.

Reflect upon this peace chant and pulsate with the Will that uproots the tree of the world-process. That glorious Will leads you to the great height of glory—the Bliss of Liberation!

### **Become a Channel of Divine Will**

**T**here are many examples of great personalities who acted through Divine Will. Moses was one such personality. The Divine Will was operating through him when he led his

people out of slavery in the land of Egypt and the ocean gave passage. During this great exodus, the children of Israel encountered the seemingly insurmountable barrier of the Red Sea. With great fear they cried to Moses that he had led them into tragedy. At that time Moses himself did not know what to do. Yet surrendering to the Divine Will he saw the mighty power of God operating and the ocean rose up like a mighty wall of water, allowing all the people to pass through.

**A**nother example from the Bible is from the life of Lord Jesus. At one point during his ministry, Jesus and his disciples were on a boat in the Sea of Galilee. Suddenly, a great tempest arose, and huge waves threatened to overturn their boat. Jesus wasn't affected in the least. Jesus was fast asleep. When the disciples awakened him, asking Jesus to save them, he said, "Why are ye fearful? Oh, ye of little faith." Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, resulting in a great calm. It was the mighty power of the Divine Will that allowed Jesus to calm the winds and the sea. Saints and Sages do not act according to their individual egoistic will; they perform cosmic tasks in accordance with God's Will.

**T**here is a story from the Mahabharata to further illustrate this point. Jayadratha was a great demoniac personality, who, joining the Kaurava army, fought against the virtuous Pandavas. During that time, Lord Krishna himself drove Arjuna's chariot. During the course of the Mahabharata War, Jayadratha caused the death of Abhimanyu, who was the dearly loved son of Arjuna. As a result, Arjuna made a terrible vow: If he did not kill Jayadratha the very next day before sunset, he would enter fire, thus ending his life.

It so happened that Arjuna was unable to kill this great tyrant on the appointed day because he was too well guarded by the Kauravas. Lord Krishna, knowing this, created by his will, a magical veil over the sun so it appeared that the sun had set. The Kaurava troops began to rejoice, thinking that now the appointed day had

passed for the slaying of Jayadratha, and that Arjuna would now have to walk into fire in order to keep his resolve.

So, the Kauravas collected logs of wood and set them on fire. As Arjuna prepared to enter into that fire, Krishna said to him, "Oh Arjuna, as you walk into the fire, keep your bow and arrow fixed and ready and enter like a hero."

Now, while this was going on, Jayadratha had been lifting his head above the crowd out of curiosity to see whether Arjuna had entered the fire or not. At one moment when his head was visible, Krishna withdrew the veil that he had placed across the sun by means of his powerful will and said, "Oh Arjuna, there is still time. Fulfill your resolve and shoot your arrow now." Arjuna looked up and saw Jayadratha's neck extending above the ranks of the Kaurava troops. He carefully aimed the arrow. The arrow flew directly at the target, and Jayadratha was destroyed.

These are illustrations of a mighty will. Since every individual is essentially one with God, he has the capacity to utilize this type of powerful

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will by moving towards God through the process of self-effacement (negating the ego), devotion, and ultimately Enlightenment. Compared to Divine Will, which is hidden within everyone, human will for little things is petty and often times disgusting. When an individual becomes the channel of Divine Will, they can accomplish things that are beyond human imaginations.

### Transcending Ego's Will

In the early attempts to develop more intense willpower, it is important to discipline yourself to successfully accomplish little tasks. You learn to will, and then to pursue what you have willed with sustained effort. Gradually, as you become more adept, you discover growing determination within yourself, and you are able to exercise your willpower in more complicated tasks.

It is similar to studying mathematics. Mathematical concepts are graded according to the level of education. When studying elementary mathematics, one set of concepts apply. But when graduating to advanced mathematics, all the concepts that seemed so ironclad in the beginning are discarded, and they are seen in a different light.

Much in the same manner, the willpower you cultivate in the beginning level is power in a relative sense. At the advanced level your will becomes Divine Will, and your personality becomes a channel of the Divine Will. Human personality becomes just an instrument in the Divine Hand.

To reach that goal, however, you must have a clear understanding that what your ego wills, no matter how wonderful it may appear, could be based on ignorance. By pursuing the ego's desires, you keep yourself involved in the wheel of birth and death. On the other hand, when your goal is to transcend ego and to discover the Divine Will within, you reach the real source of joy—the Bliss that lies within. And that should be your project.

To develop that type of determination, your mind should experience day by day a sense of joyousness based upon surrender to God. Nothing goes wrong in the Divine Plan. Knowing this, your mind should be permeated with faith and cheerfulness.

Another great quality to develop is fearlessness. Do not be afraid, no matter what happens, even in the worst of situations. There is the Divine power within you. God is there to sustain your personality. Not only should you practice fearlessness, but you should also radiate fearlessness.

Praying to God will develop purity of heart and lead you to your goal. Allow your mind to turn to the following prayers as soon as you wake up in the morning:

*“Tanme manah shiva samkalpamastu”*—  
“May my mind be endowed  
with auspicious will.”

This is a Vedic prayer that implies, “This mind that achieves amazing things—may it be endowed with auspicious will—*sankalpa*. May it not waste its energy over petty things.”

*“Sarvesham Swastir Bhavatu,  
Sarvesham Shantir Bhavatu,  
Sarvesham Purnam Bhavatu,  
Sarvesham Mangalam Bhavatu”*

The meaning: “May there be auspiciousness or goodness for all; may there be peace for all; may there be happiness for all; may no one suffer!”

If you are treading the path of Self-realization, you will discover amazing power of will operating through your personality—the power that will destroy all your obstacles, that will sublimate the negative forces into positive ones, and will enable you to do immense good for humanity.