

SECRET OF SUCCESS

New Year Lecture by Swami Paramarthananda

Transcribed by Sri VLN Prasad

NOTE: Swami Paramarthananda has not verified the transcription of talks. The transcriptions have been done with Swamiji's blessings by his disciple.



Published by :



Arsha Avinash Foundation

104 Third Street, Tatabad, Coimbatore 641012, India

Phone: +91 9487373635

E mail: arshaavinash@gmail.com

www.arshaavinash.in

Secret of Success

**sadāsiva samārambhām sankarāchārya madhyamām
asmad āchārya paryantām vande guru paramparām**

Some of you may wonder as to why we are celebrating English New Year. The reason is that now, our life is predominately governed by English calendar only. Many of us may not even know the **Tithi** or **Vāra** or **Nakshatra** or **Paksha** or **Ruthu** even though, that is the Indian calendar.

Secondly, if I have to choose any other New Year, any other New Year I choose will not be relevant to all the students equally because there are Tamil students, Gujarati students, Malayalam students, Marathi students etc. Therefore, English calendar seems to be the common thing. Above all, we require any one day as New Year because rather than the date, it is the spirit of the New Year that I consider very important.

Some particular day has to be kept as New Year because once in a while, we have to break our mechanical life style and pause for a moment and take stock of our life. What we have done in the past and what we want to do in future, we have to be conscious of it. Therefore, to break the mechanical-ness and to lead a conscious life, we have to take an auto suggestion.

For that purpose, we require some date or other. It doesn't matter whether it is English date, or Tamil date, or Malayalam date. Therefore, we have chosen the English New Year as the day for that. On this day, we have a Pūja because we want to seek the Grace of Lord for the success of different ventures that we undertake.

Whether it is in the material field or in the field of education for students, or in the spiritual field, we require the Grace of the Lord for success. Therefore, we pray to the Lord for our success. But we should remember that the success in life cannot be achieved by the Grace of the Lord alone. We accept the Grace of the Lord as an important factor, but

our scriptures clearly point out that the Grace of the Lord is not the only factor.

There is another equally important factor also and that is, what I have to do. I should also take care of my responsibility. If we take care of our roles properly, and if the Grace of the Lord is there to support us, then certainly, success is definite. So, the question comes as to what is the role to be played by me and what am I to do for success.

Our scriptures talk about some of important principles to be observed for success in life. Especially in the Bhagavad Gīta, Krishna gives many important principles to be followed for success. I will just discuss some of those principles which we see in the Gīta. The first important principle that we have to take care of is - the release of our will power.

I used the word release of will power because at this moment, the will power is the hostage of something else. I will explain that. In life, every individual has got two aspects. One is he is the experiencer of various situations. So, experiencer is one aspect of the individual. In Sanskrit, we call him I, the **Bhōkta**.

The second aspect that I have is - 'I', as the doer, the executor, the one who can do many things in life. From this aspect, I am called **Karta**, the doer. Every individual is a mixture of experiencer, the receiving fellow and doer, the contributing person. In technical language, from **Gnyānēndriya** angle, he is **Bhōkta** and from **Karmēndriya** angle, he is **Karta**.

Everybody is a mixture of Bhōkta and Karta, experiencer and doer. These two personalities are so much interwoven that often, we mix them together in our life and get into problems. So, what is required to release the will power is that we have to clearly distinguish 'I', the Bhōkta, the experiencer and 'I', the Karta, the doer. As a Bhōkta, the experiencer, the scriptures point out that we have to do one thing.

That is, acceptance of all experiences without grumbling or blaming. The Bhōkta, the experiencer has to train himself or herself to do one thing. **What is that?** 'I', as an experiencer of life, am willing to accept all the experiences that come to me because, as an experiencer, I do not have any choice.

As a **Bhōkta**, I am a choice-less individual and therefore, I accept all **Bhōgās**, all experiences without grumbling, murmuring, without keeping a castor oil face. And I do not blame anyone in the world for my experiences. Neither the Lord nor the stars nor the people around, I don't blame anyone, including myself. I simply have one attitude - 'I', as a Bhōkta accept all the experiences without grumbling and blaming.

The moment I accept everything as Bhōkta, the greatest advantage is that the Karta, the doer is released. He is able to enjoy the will power. The will power of the Karta is vitiated, affected by the Bhōkta, 'I'. If the experiencer, 'I', am going grumble or going to blame or going to complain, that experiencer, 'I', am stifling the doer, 'I'.

Therefore, the first step or the first principle that I have to notice is that I will be an intelligent Bhōkta and I will be a Karta who will use my will power. This is the first principle that Krishna gives and the scriptures give - Acceptance of everything as a Bhōkta and thus, releasing the Karta from the tyranny of the Bhōkta.

The second principle scriptures emphasize is this. Once I have released the Karta and once I am ready to use my free will (as Karta, not as a Bhōkta), then the next important step is self-effort. Since the Karta has got the will power, he can put forth any amount of effort that he wants to do until he attains success in the field that he wants to.

Therefore, the second important principle is **Prayatnaha** or self-effort. This is a very important thing because often, we tend to become destiny oriented or fatalistic in our live. Once we become fatalistic, then nobody including God, can help us. The scriptures cannot help, God cannot help, teachers cannot help, parents cannot help, and nobody can

help once we become fatalistic. Therefore, scriptures emphasize the importance of self-effort -

**uddharēt ātma nātmanam nātmāna mavasādayēt
ātmaiva hyātmanō bandhuhu ātmaiva ripurātmanaha**

Krishna tells Arjuna - hey Arjuna, you are responsible for your future. You alone can make your life successful, you alone can make a success a failure. Therefore, take charge of your life. Therefore, I have to tell myself that I am going to take charge of my life. It means I am ready to put forth the effort required whether it is for [Artha](#), [Kāma](#), [Dharma](#), or [Mōksha](#).

When we talk about effort, we should remember two parts. One is effort in right direction. Effort in right direction is important. It is just like reaching a destination. I have to go out of this hall. Naturally, I know that I have to walk, but more important is that I have to walk in the right direction towards the door.

Suppose, I am going to walk in the wrong direction; effort is there, but instead of reaching the goal, I am going away from the goal. Therefore, direction is important. The second important factor is the adequacy of the effort. It should be sufficient, it should not be inadequate. To reach a particular place, I might have to walk fifty steps in the Northern direction.

If I walk in Southern direction, I am not going to reach. I may walk in the Northern direction, but suppose, I am frustrated after ten steps. Then also, it is useless because if I have to take fifty steps, I should have the patience to take fifty steps. Similarly, for success in life, sometimes we have to work not for a month, not for one year, but often, we have to work for years.

In the case of [Mōksha](#), it is life long effort because [Shravanam](#), [Mananam](#) and [Nidhidhyāsanam](#) are not a one day job or one week job. Therefore, proper direction and proper amount of work is important,

which means I require a lot of patience. Impatience is our problem. We want instantaneous success. We want other people to change instantaneously. I want everything instantaneously because now-a-days, life has become fast.

Even while standing in front of the traffic signal, we don't have the patience for that one minute. Now we have instant Idly, instant coffee, instant Rasam, instant Sambar etc. So, everything instant has come. Even **Gīta** I want instantaneously. There are seven hundred Slōkās and we want to study that in one day! **How is it possible?**

Therefore, proper direction, sufficient amount of self-effort with lot of patience is required whether it is material achievement or spiritual achievement. This is the second principle that Krishna emphasizes. Then, the third principle is - seeking help from external source when required. Dayānanda Swāmiji nicely presents this.

Intelligence is seeking help when it is needed. Blind arrogance, blind superiority complex saying that I will not seek help from anyone, I will not bend in front of anyone is a foolish approach. Let us be humble enough to seek external help when required. It may be the help of a teacher, it may be a help of the scriptures and most importantly, it is the help of the Lord.

So, seeking the help of the Lord is the most important principle everybody has to accept which we call as the Lord's Grace. Because, whatever effort we put forth is always risky. One of the unfortunate things of our life is that whatever we do involves risk. Even crossing the road in Madras (not only in Madras but all over India) is the riskiest thing.

Even eating is risky because instead of the food pipe, if the food goes to wind pipe, a person may die instantaneously. Eating is risky, walking is risky, being born is risky, growing is risky and getting married is riskiest of things. Thereafter, getting children is risky. Every step is risk, risk, risk, and risk.

As a limited human being, I don't know my future and I don't know the risks involved. In many cases, even if I know what are the risks involved, I do not have sufficient power to control it because I am a human being of limited power.

Therefore, an **Alpagnya Jīva** has to seek the help of **Sarvagnya Ēshwara**. **Alpa Shaktimān Jīvaha** has to seek the help of **Sarva Shaktimān Ēshwaraha**. We require the push of the Lord in uphill task of our life. When a train has to move uphill, there are two engines - one in the front and one behind.

One engine pulls while another pushes because it is uphill. Our life is throughout uphill. Right from beginning till the end, it is an uphill task. For children, the education is the biggest uphill now. In the olden days, we never knew. Now, the amount of things that they have to learn! And getting an admission is Maha uphill task.

Then, getting a job is an uphill task and then getting married and then educating their children. Throughout life, it is an uphill task. We require two engines. Self-effort is one engine to pull and then, we require the Grace of Lord to push from behind. What we have to remember is that the Grace of the Lord does not replace the self-effort.

This is the biggest mistake many of us commit. We think that Bhagawān's grace is enough, I need not do anything; I have surrendered. He lies down, does prostration and never gets up. Many people, because of their laziness, take to the theory of surrender, take to the theory of destiny and they do not do anything.

Lord Krishna makes it very clear that Grace of the Lord cannot replace self-effort. Self-effort cannot replace the Grace of the Lord. **What does it mean?** Both of them are equally important.

**yathā hyēkēna chakrēna narathasya gatir bhavēt
evam purusha kārēna vinā daivam na sidhyatē**

They are like two wheels of a cart or two wings of a bird. Self-effort (Prayatnam) is required and seeking help from the Lord is also required which alone we call as prayer. Then, the next principle and the last principle that I would discuss briefly is - when as individuals, we are part of the family or organization or a setup, there also, one important principle has to be remembered.

As a member of the family and as a [Karta](#), I have to always help other members to do what they wish to do and what they can do. In the family life, the biggest problem that we face is because of a wrong principle. Every member thinks that the other members of the family are supposed to do what I wish to do.

A husband thinks that the wife and children are supposed to do what he wishes to do. Wife thinks that husband and children are supposed to do what she wishes to do. And the children think that my parents are supposed to do what we wish to do. There is the biggest chaos in the family.

The most important principle that a family should remember is my duty is to help other members to do what they wish to do. What they wish to do may not be my wish at all. If I bring my wish into the picture, I am becoming a Bhōkta and I can never become an efficient Karta. I can never help my children if I go by my wish.

I can help the wife or children or husband only under one condition and that is - it is not my wish. I am here not as a Bhōkta. As a Karta, I have to fulfill the wishes of the other people. Sometimes or often, what they wish may be different from what I wish. Sometimes, they wish to do something but they cannot do something.

Therefore, my family members can do what they wish and what they can and my job is to help them do what they wish and what they can. Then, the question comes - suppose, they have got a different wish. Here, we should remember an important law given in the scriptures. That law is - any action is prompted by the desire of an actor.

Any action is prompted by the desire of that actor. So, if my family member - wife or children have to do action, it should be backed by a desire. Now the question is - **whose desire?** Here only we commit the mistake. We think that our children's action should be based on our desire.

It is not true because the locus of action and locus of desire must be one and same. If an action should take place in me, it should be backed by a desire in me. Therefore, I have to respect the desires of the family members and help them act and fulfill their desires. Suppose, they have got a wrong desire;

Here, we say that if the children or other members have a wrong wish, it has to be corrected but the approach is very important. It is because there is a right approach, there is wrong approach. **What is the wrong approach?** If I want to correct their wish because their wish is different from my wish, then it is a wrong approach because I am judging them based on my wish.

'I', the Bhōkta has come to the picture. Once my wish comes, once the Bhōkta comes, then the Karta is vitiated, my will power is vitiated, my actions become selfish, there will be emotions, there will be quarrels, there will be tempers lost. It will be a problem. **Then, what is the right approach?**

Right approach is - I want to correct their wrong wish not because it is against my wish, but because it is wrong wish. If this approach is there, the advantage is that my wish is always kept aside. When I want to correct their wish, I may succeed or often, I may not succeed also. But whether I succeed or not, it will not affect me because I have not brought to the fore front my wish.

But once I am going to bring my personal wish, then whole family is going to have disharmony, problems etc. One of the problems that is repeatedly is coming in almost every family is - children choosing their

life partner. I am not referring to any particular family. It is now rampant and it is creating a lot of disturbance in the family.

It is creating a lot of disturbance because there is a difference between their wish and the parent's wish. They say - Swāmiji, isn't it a wrong thing, Isn't there **Varna Sankaraha**. You know, they have studied the first chapter of Gīta! So, they have got an additional argument. **Swāmiji, isn't it Varna Sankaraha?**

So, let us analyze this particular problem because it is repeatedly there. Let us see this problem. I want to place certain facts before we make a judgment. One argument they give is **Varna Sankaraha**, it is a mixture of **Varna**. Varna means the caste. Inter-caste marriage is Varna Sankaraha and it is a problem.

Now, let us analyze a little bit based on what we saw in the Gīta recently - the **Chāturvarnyam**. **When you talk about the mixture of castes, from what angle are you talking - Jātitaha Varna Sankaraha, Karmataha Varna Sankaraha or Gunataha Varna Sankaraha? Is it birth-wise Varna Sankara or is it Karma wise Varna Sankara?**

Varna Sankara means mixture of castes. Now invariably, our complaint is that birth-wise Varna Sankara is happening because he belongs to one Jāti, she belongs to another Jāti. It is **Jātitaha Varna Sankara**. But what I want to say is - we are complaining about Jātitaha Varna Sankara of the future generation.

But have we thought about a fact that we ourselves are guilty of another type of Varna Sankara. **What is that Varna Sankara? Karmataha Varna Sankaraha**. The present generation has already created one Varna Sankara that is, duty-wise Varna Sankara. No Brahmin does Brahmin's duties. **How many Brahmins have studied the Vēdās?**

How many people have studied the Vēdā? How many people regularly do Pārāyana? How many people regularly do Pancha Mahā Yagnya? Therefore, the present generation has already created one Varna

Sankara. **In what position are we to talk about the future generation creating Varna Sankara?**

Perhaps, the **Jātitaha Varna Sankara** itself is caused because the parents have already initiated **Karmataha Varna Sankara**. If we are very much aware of what our Dōsha is, before finding fault with our children, perhaps we may be more considerate towards our children or we may have an objective attitude towards children.

I am not telling that let Jātitaha Varna Sankara take place. I am not talking about right or wrong, but what I say is we are judging the situation from the stand point of our wish. **How will I face the society? What will other people think? How will other children get married? What does that mean?**

I am judging the situation not from the standpoint of that member but I am judging the situation from my own personal stand point. I am functioning as a **Bhōkta**. If in the family, I am going to function as a Bhōkta, I am never going to function as a **Karta**. If I don't function as a Karta, there will be problem in the family.

To function as a Karta is to set aside my personal desires, personal ambitions, and my family honor. They are all my personal things, but as a family member, my first and foremost interest is helping other members to do what they wish to do. If I think it is a wrong wish, I try to educate.

If it fails, then I am going to become a Bhōkta. Karta has failed. **As a Bhōkta, what am I supposed to do?** Swallow the whole stuff without grumbling and complaining. If I swallow as a Bhōkta, then in future, I can work better as a better Karta. So, this is the fourth principle - Help the family members to do what they wish.

Sometimes, even the ladies complain. Swāmiji I want to go to my house. There are certain husbands who do not allow the wife to go to their family because he wants food cooked by her only. Ok, he loves to

do that but she is also a member, she is also a human being. She wants to stay with the children for some time. The children are somewhere else.

They are in another state or another country. The husband does not give the freedom. And there is lot of problem because wife has a lot of grievances and is suppressed. Therefore, it has to be set right and it can be set right only one way. That is my principle is - helping my family members to do what they wish to do.

Also, I expect from them what they can do alone. For example, children may not come to our expectations. We want them to get 99% marks in all the subjects. That is what I wish, but what I wish is not important, what they can is important. They begin to pressurize the children, the children fall sick, mental breakdown or they run away.

All kinds of things happen because we forget one important value - other members in the organization, other members in the family should do what they wish and what they can. **What is my job?** - Helping them. These are the four principles. The first principle is release the will power. **How to do?**

As a Bhōkta, accept everything without grumbling or blaming. That is the release of will power. The second is self-effort which is in proper direction and which is adequate. The third is seeking the Grace of the Lord because the life is full of risks alone. We require an extra push from behind.

Fourthly, family will be in harmony only if I remember this one law. As a family member, my duty is to help other members to do what they wish and what they can. If these four principles are observed, then we can succeed as an individual, we can succeed as a family member, we can succeed as a member of any organization or anything for that matter.

So, on this New Year day, we will try to follow these four principles prescribed by the scriptures and we will see whether they work or not. I can guarantee you that today you start and tonight, you see it works. It simply works. If you fail to observe these four principles, you can clearly see guaranteed failure.

**Pūrnmadah Pūrnamidam Pūrnāth Pūrnāmudachyatē.
Pūrnasya Pūrnāmādāya Pūrnāmēvāvasishyatē..**

Om shānti shānti shāntihi



Visit website www.arshaavinash.in

To download the following

Books On Puja Swamiji

Biography of Swami Dayananda Saraswati in English, Hindi and Tamil

Books in English On Vedanta

Books on Indian culture, Yoga, Gita, Upanisads, Brahma Sutra and Vedanta Texts

Books in Tamil on Vedanta

Books on Indian culture, Upanisads and Vedanta Texts

Books on Sanskrit Grammar

Books on Dhatukosah, Astadhyayi and Sanskrit Grammar for Vedanta Students

Books on Sanskrit Texts

Text Books in Sanskrit on Gita, Upanisads and Brahma Sutra with Sankara Bhasyam

Books on Indian Culture

Books in English on Yoga and Indian Culture

Books for Youth

Books in English on Yoga, Indian Culture & Self improvement

Books on Holy Chant

Books in English and Sanskrit on Holy Chant

Articles

Articles in English on Indian culture & Vedanta Texts

PARTICIPATE IN ONLINE QUIZ

Online Quiz on Gita, Upanisad and Brahma Sutra

Website of:



Arsha Avinash Foundation

104 Third Street, Tatabad, Coimbatore 641012, INDIA

Phone: + 91 9487373635

E mail: arshaavinash@gmail.com

www.arshaavinash.in