

18 DIRECTIVES TO LIVE

IN HAPPINESS AND TRANQUILITY



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Every human being in this world wants to live happily and peacefully without any disturbances, unrest, or anxiety. In general, we believe that being rich, having a beautiful spouse, and having well-behaved children will give us happiness and peace. But the actual experience in the world is contrary to the above. Even if we acquire some or all of the above, it is impossible to lead a happy and peaceful life forever. There will always be some problems, difficulties, and sorrows that keep popping up, and they will ruin our peace.

How is it possible to remain calm and peaceful in such chaotic life situations?

We have to change our perceptions, thoughts, words, deeds, and actions by following some rules.

This is the solution to leading a peaceful and happy life. What are those directives to follow?

1. The main reasons which disturb our peace and make our life miserable are hardships and sorrows. How to face difficult times in our life? Firstly, we should know some facts before diving deep into the solutions.

Irrespective of desires, one enjoys pleasures and similarly faces difficulties in the current life, though he is not wishing them. They appear as a consequence of thoughts and actions accumulated from many previous births. It is called *Prārabda*, a combination of *Karma Phalas* and *Vāsanas* (fruits of actions and tendencies from the past life.)

Moreover, no matter how much you try, it is impossible to escape from difficulties in life. You might be thinking of performing some *pūjas, vratas, yajñas*, and charity to escape from sorrows. Such current actions will give excellent results in the

future, but they do not provide solutions for the present sorrows. No one can claim any exemption from sorrows and difficulties as they are inevitable fruits of our past actions. But, if you can think and experience that you are the child of God or a devotee of God, you can bear the difficulties with minimal pain.

When you are in a difficult time with sorrow, do not feel depressed but remember the 18 ways or directives mentioned below:

1A) The easiest and simplest way to deal with sorrow is to remember that nothing is permanent, and soon Joy will follow. Both the joy and sorrow will keep coming and going. There is no human in the world untouched by these two influences.

1B) Does it make sense if the hardships come to inanimate objects rather than human beings? Is there anybody in the world who has been

exempted from difficulties and sorrows in their life?

1C) When we enjoy all types of pleasures and luxuries resulting from our past meritorious deeds (*Puṇyā*), we should know that some of *Puṇyā* are being spent. Similarly, one should think that accumulated negative results (*Pāpās*) from past lives are being expended when one encounters sorrows and difficulties, so we should feel happy for having expended the demerits acquired in the past. Thus, when we go through difficulties also, we will be able to feel happy by remembering this truth.

1D) We tend to remember God during difficult and adverse times and hence, these times will bring us closer to God. Similarly, during good times intoxicated with pleasure, we tend to forget God, thereby we go far from Him. So, having faith that adversities are bringing us closer to God, the

burden of those difficulties will become bearable and the resulting sorrow will be less.

2. Constant thinking of the future generally brings us fears, which leaves us paralyzed mentally, which in turn affects our physical health as well. The excessive worry about potential future events, such as health problems, relations issues, financial issues, etc., takes away our present happiness. Hence, always live in the present moment and it will be a “present” to you. Don’t be so anxious about the livelihood for yourself and your family. Whatever work you undertake, perform it at your best with good intentions, sincerity, and calmness. Be contented with what you receive as a result of such dedicated work and take it as God’s grace. The person who is contented with his own possessions and the fruits of his actions is the luckiest person. When you believe everything is

happening as per God's will, such faith gives you the fortitude to lead a peaceful life.

3. Stop seeking validation and recognition from worldly people. Don't look for the people's praise, Always aspire for God's approval. Hence, take inspiration from great saints and always lead a moral life. Trying to live and working for a noble cause should become the purpose of life. Spend some time in prayers, meditation, charity, chanting, etc., and such small things will give you peaceful life. The person with inner peace will definitely receive God's grace.

4. Always concentrate on your own work and be happy and calm. Don't interfere in other's activities. Who are we to finger-point other's mistakes? Did God send us into this world to judge others? Everything in this world is happening as per God's will. He is omnipresent and omniscient. He is the knower of all the past, present, and future. As

humans, we can only see and feel the present. Hence, we don't have the power and wisdom to judge anyone. Therefore, always mind your own business and lead a peaceful life.

5. One should not get into unnecessary arguments with others. Victory in an argument can pamper one's ego, and defeat in the argument can make one lose his self-confidence. Losing an argument may also lead to one becoming angry and agitating one's mind further. Hence, one should never argue with others and never ever accuse others, as these unnecessary conflicts will rob one's peace.

6. Do not attempt to reform a fool which only will result in loss of your mental peace and a waste of your time.

7. The fundamental qualities of a decent human being are patience and forgiveness. Sadly, evidence shows that people who seek revenge instead of forgetting and forgiving tend to feel worse in the

long run. Have patience in each and every situation. In case of humiliation, reconcile that he might have insulted or done some harm to the other person in the past, which is why you are being humiliated now. One should practice this way to have peace and tranquility. Therefore, in order to attain peace, don't get angry with anyone who hurt you, and it is highly recommended not to keep any grudges against anyone or to keep negative thoughts ever in your mind.

8. Never ever treat others in the ways that you would not like to be treated. It is expounded clearly in *Mahābhārata* by *Vidura*, which is known as *Viduranīti*.

Kanda padyam -

Orulēyavi yonariñchina;

naravara yapriyamu tana manambuna kagu,

dā norulakunavi sēyakuniki,

parāyaṇamu parama dharmapathamula kellan.

You should not hurt anyone because everything you do to others will definitely come back to you after a certain period of time. Do you think you will be able to live peacefully,

- by criticizing and hurting others?**
- by not looking after your near and dear ones?**
- by not fulfilling your responsibilities? How can you live peacefully by inflicting harm or pain to others?**

Hence, make a few concrete changes in your daily life, and don't harm anyone, including yourself. By creating peace, tranquility, and happiness in others' lives, one will certainly gain peace and happiness in one's life as well.

9. The mind is full of endless series of desires. When one desire is satisfied, it will be followed by another and another, and so on and so forth. If you want to fulfill every desire, the resulting actions, like begging others, will make you a beggar and

disturbs you mentally and physically. You can live like an emperor - If you can reduce your desires. Desires are the root cause of human miseries. Moreover, it should be noted that both desires and peace are like two different swords, which cannot go together in one scabbard.

10. It is normal to be worried while doing several tasks in our daily life. You will be left with anxiety and worry when the actions (*karmās*) are performed with doership and enjoyership (*kartṛtva* and *bhōkṛtva bhava*). Hence, don't burden yourself with unnecessary actions both physically and mentally. Simply perform only the obligatory actions without focussing on results. Make use of every opportunity you get to perform actions for a greater cause and welfare of the society. Conduct all activities in the name of God and offer the results to Him, which will give you supreme peace and Joy.

11. Always compare yourself with other people who are less privileged in the material world. Such a comparison will make you appreciate what you have in this material world. Besides, always compare with others who are ahead of you in the spiritual arena, as such comparisons will help you progress in your spiritual path.

12. Being envious of the good fortunes or achievements of others is called jealousy. King *Duryōdhana* is the best example for jealousy. It is the monster that swallows the peace of mind. It is like cancer, that ruins the man in several ways. It creates worry and anxiety. Hence, one should work hard to remove it from one's character and avoid it at any cost. Wisdom is within reach of only those who are free from jealousy. The great Guru, *Śrī Dattātrēya Swāmi*, who is the personification of "Wisdom", is the son of Mother *Anasūya*, which means "No jealousy". The story shows that the one

who wants to acquire wisdom should be out of the shackles of jealousy. Precisely, you should not be jealous of anyone for anything in order to lead a peaceful life.

13. Cultivate and Develop intimacy and closeness with Paramatma. That is the true treasure of life. See God in everyone. Therefore, never criticize, ridicule, or hate anyone. Acknowledge imperfections with humility and without any expectations for praise or attention. As soon as you get up early in the morning daily, surrender yourself at the feet of God and say, “Bhagawan! I am an instrument in your hands. You make this instrument work as per your wish. You are the driver of this vehicle. You are working through this instrument, so utilize me for the tasks that I am entitled to. I just surrender myself at your feet and start the day with the auspicious prayer “*Tvamēva*

śaraṇaṁ mamadēva dēva” (O! God, I completely surrender to you).

14. Don't be under the impression that you lost something in this world because you know very well that you entered into this world bringing nothing and will leave empty-handed. Everything will remain here in this world.

15. *Mahātmās* say that this world is impermanent and illusory. Hence don't try to seek happiness in this impermanent world. Expecting happiness from this world is like expecting nectar from a serpent's fangs. The great saints always said that - this world is like a dream where all the things you believe to be true are just an illusion. We are not wiser than those great saints.

16. Always think that, because this universe is so immense and vast, “I am a tiny spec, and really there is no freedom for me other than following

God's will". Such thinking will decrease your ego and promote inner peace.

17. Living a spiritual life by consuming only *sātvik* food, dressing in a humble manner, reading the holy scriptures, and being in the company of saints will give you immense peace.

18. Whenever you feel depressed or worried about anything, always approach *sadgurūs* and seek their valuable advice. If you have no access to them, study holy scriptures. Read the epic stories of ardent devotees of God. Learning what numerous difficulties they faced in their lives will give you strength and you can come out of miseries and have a peaceful life.



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