

Make the Most of Every Day

A Worksheet for the *Mahabharata* and *Bhagavad Gita*

The *Mahabharata* is a millennia-old collection of stories that includes the *Bhagavad Gita*. It is said that the *Mahabharata* contains all the wisdom needed to lead a happy, peaceful and fulfilling life. Many of its stories center on 4 major points:

1. **Be careful what you wish for.**
2. Nothing is what it seems.
3. Everything is evolving toward the higher good.
4. Live your destiny.

In this worksheet, we focus on point 1. Let's start with a story:

In a far-away kingdom, a young princess fell in love and kept this a secret. Before she could reveal her desire, a warrior from another land kidnapped her and took her to his home. The princess pleaded: "I have already given my heart to another. Please let me go to him."

Her abductor, who was the regent of a prosperous land, said, "Had I known that, I would not have taken you. You are free to go."

Rejoicing, the princess made haste to her beloved and said, "I have been freed by my captor and now we can be together." To her great surprise, her beloved said:

"I know who took you away and I fear him. Therefore, be gone and never return." The princess, heartbroken, did her best to convince her beloved to change his mind, but he refused.

The princess returned to the regent and said, "My beloved has refused me on account of you. Now you must marry me, or give me to another to marry."

The regent, a wise man, replied, "Why would I, or indeed any man, wish to marry a woman who is already in love with another? As I said, you are free. Please go forth and find your happiness."

The princess became furious and shrieked, "I curse you for doing this to me! I will not rest until I destroy you!"

True to her word, the princess performed an inhuman amount of pilgrimages and austerities until she caught the attention of the Supreme. The Supreme appeared to her and said, "What can I do for you? Ask for anything."

That stopped the princess for a moment. "Anything?"

"Yes, anything."

She considered, then made her choice. "I wish to have the strength and skill to kill the man who kidnapped me."

And the Supreme said, "If that is what you ask for, that is what you shall have." And indeed, the princess received a strong new body and skill in weapons, and she went forth to kill the man she had promised to slay.

Not exactly a story with a happy ending, is it? The tales of the *Mahabharata* are meant to reflect the universal. Although it would be easy to read this as a fairy tale of some sort, it is actually a symbolic story that can point out where our deep pain starts and how to relieve it.

The first key idea of this story is that this young woman was in love with something but kept it a secret. How many of us have a secret passion - and not necessarily for a person, but for a pursuit, an art, or travel? We are afraid to reveal it. Perhaps we will be mocked or told we are unrealistic or even amoral for our love. Unwilling to pursue this desire, we find ourselves waylaid by the passage of time and the responsibilities of the real world, represented by the regent. In truth the world will set us free to pursue our goals if we only ask, but then we are stopped by something powerful: fear, represented by the cowardly beloved. When we try to do what we love, fear can arise - fear of not making enough money, or being rejected by others, or failing. It is fear which ultimately denies us our pleasure, but instead of blaming fear, we start to blame the world. How dare it keep us from what we want! Yet when we are suffering the most, our truest self, our Supreme Self, reaches out for us and reminds us that we all have an incredible power in every moment - to choose exactly what we wish. And what will we choose? To hold on to old anger? To lash out in frustration? To lament the past?

Or, can we choose something else?

Can we choose our true love?

Which are you choosing? Use the questions below to find out:

- 1) What is your deepest love, your deepest passion?

- 2) Have you kept this a secret and if so, what has happened?

- 3) If you pursue your deepest passion, what fears might arise?

- 4) How are you suffering from not pursuing your passion?
- 5) Take a short break from writing or typing. Realize that this moment is a gift from the Supreme, a chance to either move forward to your goals or to move backward toward old negativity. Consider:
- a) In your waking moments, what are you most focused on - the opportunities of the future or the hurts of the past?
 - b) If you could ask for just one thing from the Supreme, however you view him/her/it/them, what would it be?
- 6) You can resume your writing again. Set down 3 things you could do, right now, to move toward your heart's deepest wish:
- a)
 - b)
 - c)

Go back and circle the one that you are most able to to accomplish.

Can you make the commitment to do that one thing?

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