

The Inner Loving Self

Finding our Highest Potential

Pranada Comtois



The Inner Loving Self

Finding Our Highest Potential

by Pranada Comtois

Copyright © 2021 by Pranada Comtois

All rights are reserved.

The watercolor on the front cover is a detail from a painting by Anna Johansson, used with permission.

THREE MEDITATIONS

To begin, I offer a few meditations to contemplate to create a mood as you enter the world of the self.



Sages determined that consciousness, or spirit,
is more important than matter, and
they dove deep into the nature of consciousness
using methods that gave them
a first-hand experience of spirit and the nature of Reality.

They came back to say,
You exist for a reason!
The world exists for a reason.
There is meaning, and we have a purpose.



“That which pervades the entire body
you should know to be indestructible.
No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul.

“The material body of the indestructible,
immeasurable and eternal
living entity is sure to come to an end.

“But he is unborn, eternal,
ever-existing and primeval.
He is not slain when the body is slain.

“As a person puts on new garments,
giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts
new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones.

“The soul can never be cut to pieces
by any weapon, nor burned by fire,
nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind.

“This individual soul is unbreakable and insoluble,
and can be neither burned nor dried.
He is everlasting, unchangeable,
immovable and eternally the same.”

Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2
Translation by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami



“Yoga traditions agree that the key determinant of authentic spirituality is that it facilitates knowing one’s true self, thereby ending the tribulations of material existence, which are based on ignorance of that self.

“Our current understanding of ourselves is largely illusory in that it is built around a body that will die. The more we identify with matter and things, the more sorrowful we become and the less meaningful the world becomes. Thus a primary goal of yoga is to dismantle the false self and reconnect with the pure self concealed beneath it.

“In human life we can pursue that. This is hugely encouraging and optimistic.”

~ Swami Tripurari

INTRODUCTION

Thanks for joining me here to explore your inner loving self.

When referring to the self, I'm talking about the nature of being, existence itself.

Existence, according to the dictionary, means “a state or fact of existing, occurring, or being present.”

We exist. We know this because we have the experience of existing! As Descartes famously asserted,

“... take as assured that the proposition: I am, I exist, is necessarily true ...”

This book is about *who* exists. Who is the you who exists? Is it the body that dies, or a trans-biological entity?

We'll be touching on these subjects:

- What is the nature of the self?
- What is the value and meaning of the self?
- What is the need of the self?
- What are the characteristics of the self?
- What is the highest expression of the self?

Finally, I teach from the corpus of texts of India's Vedanta, which includes the Upanishads, Sutras, Puranas, and much more. In this book, I refer mostly to the Bhagavad Gita. The Gita is a comprehensive treatise on the nature of being that has long garnered the attention of great minds around the world.

If you're unfamiliar with the Gita, I share some interesting quotes at the end of this book. Even if you've read the Gita, you'll probably enjoy that selection.

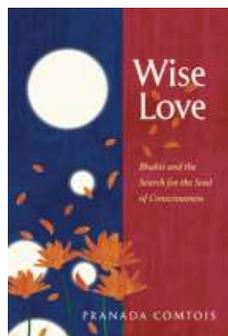
If you enjoy the discussion in this book and would like to know more, check out articles on [Exploring Bhakti](#) and [The Bhakti Series](#). (Books 3 and 4 to be announced in January 2022.)

Warmly,

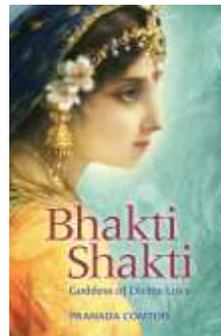
Pranada

The Bhakti Series

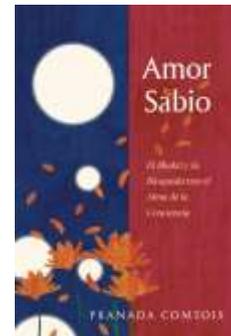
[Book 1](#)



[Book 2](#)



[Book 1 Spanish](#)



FIRST KNOW THYSELF

The Greek aphorism “Know Thyself” suggests that we should know our physical and psychological strengths, weaknesses, limitations, and influences so we can improve our chances of success and happiness.

But for some people “Know Thyself” means so much more because they have encountered or intuited the “I” beyond their psycho-physical self.

It is the large “I” who, from a time without beginning, poses and earnestly seeks answers to the question “Who am I?”

Through this persistent, universal question, our “I” is begging for our attention. If we’re lucky, we’ll take notice and be drawn into a quest for truth.

The question arises for those of us who sense there is more to us than what meets the eye. We’re more than what we see in the mirror.

I had a stark experience of this as a teenager. One ordinary morning as I was getting ready for school, I was brushing my hair while looking in the mirror. Suddenly, though nothing external had changed, the person I saw in the mirror wasn’t me. It was the same face that was there before, but it now was the face of a distant stranger. Who was that person in the

mirror? I puzzled and looked and looked, disbelieving, disoriented. *That is not me!*

The world became small and large simultaneously: focused yet expansive. What was I perceiving? Who was questioning the experience? *Who was experiencing?*

I “saw” someone. This subtle, esoteric self was unbounded by the room, the house, and other localities. Surprisingly, this normally unseen reality was more real than anything I had experienced. In a dizzying flash I understood I existed before I was in this body. And the person I was perceiving in that moment was the real me. I was not the body that I regularly saw in the mirror. I wanted to know more about the person I now knew existed.

After a minute or two, regular perceptions came back, and I carried on with my day. But the moment opened me to another layer of reality.

Anyone who has had a flash of insight that they are more than the body (or have experienced a shocking loss or other event that is life- or psychic-altering) will likely be pressed, at some point in their lives, to pursue their true self.

Nothing is more important than you. You’re more important than any “thing” in this world because you’re a unit of value and meaning – and so much more, as we’ll see.

In stark contrast, things have no enduring value because they're impermanent. And the only meaning they have is the ones you ascribe to them. Therefore, things have no ultimate value or meaning. Once you sell your car or it dies, it no longer has value to you.

What we're to learn is that the car actually doesn't have preeminent value even when it's yours, because it's only in your possession for a limited amount of time. This is a correct way of perceiving and informs how we can properly relate to the world.

To be clear here, we're speaking about two distinct categories of existence. They are

- the self, who is conscious
- matter, which is inert

WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT CONSCIOUSNESS OR MATTER?

Does a sentient being – a human being or an animal – have more importance than an inert thing, say a chair or a car? Would matter *matter* if we – consciousness – didn't posit meaning on it?

The Gita says consciousness is the ground of being. It is the foundation upon which Reality stands.

By Reality with a capital R I don't mean our common notion of reality: the nitty gritty of our daily life. I refer, instead, to that which is unchanging and underlies all existence.

You would think that our true self – who really matters because it has meaning and value – would be readily accessible to us. But this self, as it turns out, is quite difficult to get to know.

Why does it take a shift in consciousness to perceive the real self? Why is it that finding out who we are is so elusive?

For one, we've mistaken spirit for matter. We think the self is the body. But the illusion cuts much deeper, as we'll see.

We can know something about the self by examining our current experience. This vision can be honed, and further information accessed, if we turn our gaze eastward toward the Bhagavad Gita and other Bhakti texts.

Max Muller, the German 19-century scholar of Indian schools of thought, said that a single drop of the ocean of nectar contained in the sacred Upanishads (considered by many the world's most ancient texts) could easily satiate the innermost hankerings of the whole universe.

(If you're unfamiliar with Bhakti, check out the articles at [Exploring Bhakti](#) to learn more.)

This corpus of metaphysical knowledge of consciousness equips one to speak about matter and spirit.

First let's consider spirit. Consciousness and spirit are synonymous. Consciousness is spirit; spirit is consciousness. That which is conscious is a unit of spirit.

In this context, *consciousness* means more than "awareness," "introspection," "cognition," "attention," "knowledge," "intentionality," or "perception." These are *features* of consciousness, but consciousness is more than its features. A unit of consciousness has more capacity than awareness and knowing.

Hane Htut Maung writes in *Consciousness*,

“It is clear that in addition to the functional properties of how the mind operates, there is also a *subjective* aspect, namely how a mental state *feels* qualitatively. . . . Consciousness is, therefore, perhaps best defined as *first-person subjective existence*.”

It’s important to understand the term “first-person subjective.”

I’m not just a *collection* of experiences. Even if neuroscientists and philosophers of mind could identify why we experience what we experience – and they haven’t been able to yet even after one hundred years at it – they will not have found consciousness because consciousness is more than a collection of experiences, more than awareness, knowledge, etc.

Consciousness has a first-person element to the experience. Consciousness is the experience of I am. I am the *experiencer* of the experiences. I am that which experiences the experiences. I do many things with the collection of experiences. It’s not that I’m just aware of the experiences. I learn from experiences and more.

In a word, consciousness is alive and is sentient. Wherever we find sentience, we have found spirit. The depth of the sentience may be different, say between the spirit-covering body of a human being and an animal, but finding sentience means we have found spirit, not inert matter.

What is the result of being sentient? We have experiences. We have *subjective* experiences – experiences that have not been (and, according

to the Gita, will never be) isolated or quantified through a study of the brain.

Why? Because consciousness is categorically different from matter. It's not of the natural world but is trans-temporal and trans-physical.

WE ARE EXPERIENCERS

When I was looking in the mirror as a teenager and asked myself “Who is experiencing?” I was attempting to verbalize the difference between the experiencer – me – and inert matter, that which is experienced, the body. In that moment I realized there were two distinct features of “me.”

I had thought of myself as a female born in San Francisco. I was the daughter of my parents and the sister of my siblings who was going to Redwood High School in Larkspur and who loved the giant Redwoods in Madrone Canyon. But in that moment I understood I was more than *that* identity. That identity was fleeting. I was the person who was having thoughts about identity.

We can think of the temporary identity as the small “me,” and the permanent identity as the big “I.”

We must carefully tease out the self, or the big “I,” lest our whole life is lived as the small, temporary, limited me.

I exist. I know that I exist because I experience existing. That which exists and is conscious of its existence is real, it is permanent, it is eternal.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna says that each individual soul existed in the past, exists now, and will exist in the future. In other words, the self is eternal. We are immortal.

How different you are from temporary, inert matter that is constantly decaying. When you come to know this, how free and secure you can be!

THE WORLD OF THINGS

The table my wrists are resting on, the keyboard, the chair, the floor – they are insentient, nonexperiencing reality. They are not conscious; they don't possess consciousness.

They will never possess consciousness or have a subjective experience. It's not that one day the keyboard will say,

“Hey, stop pressing down on the keys so hard!”

Or the chair will admonish me,

“Could you lose a little weight? Give me a break!”

As silly as this sounds, this is exactly what physicalists would like us to believe will happen one day in the future because their hypothesis is that consciousness is biological and can develop from inert matter. In fact, they say they will develop consciousness in the laboratory.

The Gita rejects these ideas outright. There are two ontological realities: matter and spirit. The world is objective, nonexperiencing reality. And the self, who is a finite unit of consciousness, is subjective, experiencing reality.

The gulf of difference between experiencing reality and nonexperiencing reality is vast, and one will never become the other.

Consciousness will never become inert, and that which is inert will never develop consciousness.

Experiential reality will never manifest from nonexperiential reality.

To put it another way, nonconsciousness will not become conscious, and consciousness doesn't come from nonconsciousness. They are two distinct features of reality. They are ontologically different.

Matter is constrained by time and space. The self, which is different from matter, is not governed by time and space. That means it doesn't begin at a certain point, and it will never cease to exist.

When we mistake one for the other, we find it impossible to identify and know our self. We're convinced we're the body in the mirror, and that the things we've accumulated since we arrived in this body are ours.

When we think this, we've mistaken ourselves for inert matter and have limited ourselves by the limitation of those things which are temporary, inert, nonexperiencing reality.

The body in the mirror is going to die, and all the things in our possession will be taken from us. This illusion is the root cause of all our suffering.

And it is the ignorance that hides from us all our possibilities as powerful, free consciousness.

We're so much greater than our idea of who we are. Our current sense of self and the potentials and prospects we have as an American, a man, a lawyer, a mother – or any of the myriad of ways we see ourselves now – is so little compared to what the Gita tells us we are and can discover.

It's like the difference between ice and water. With ice you can cool something, but with water you can grow food and flowers to beautify your surroundings. You can make electricity to be used in so many ways. You can refresh yourself with a swim and keep the body clean by bathing. The potential is extraordinary in comparison.

The true self is extraordinary in comparison to the illusory self we have identified ourselves with.

Thinking we are the temporary self is ignorance. In the Gita, ignorance, or avidya in Sanskrit, is defined as forgetfulness of my identity. Ignorance is not a lack of knowledge of the material sciences, philosophies, professions, the humanities, or any discipline; it means not knowing the self. In fact, it's more than ignorance; it's the scariest type of Alzheimer's.

We can begin to counter this situation with vidya, or knowledge.

Now that we understand the difference between matter and spirit, let's explore the nature of consciousness, our self, in greater depth.

If consciousness is more important than any “thing” in the world,
what’s important to consciousness?

THE LUMINOUS SELF

We generally learn what something is by comparing it to something else that we already know. But consciousness cannot be compared to anything else; it is in its own category and is completely different from matter. For this reason some spiritualists define the soul through a process of negation: it's not this, it's not that. But what is it?

We can know more about the soul by three ways:

- referring to our experience
- hearing from seers and ancient texts
- developing a first-hand experience through a spiritual practice

In other words, we're not asked to just believe. We confirm the truth of what we hear with reference to our current experience and experiential spirituality – or a method designed to give us a first-hand experience of our self.

Let's start with the theory and then move on to the method of experiencing the self.

The self, or atma, is described in yoga texts as a finite spark of spirit. We are small sparks of a great fire, units of a Whole. The atma exists in all phases of time – past, present, and future.

As sparks of the Whole Consciousness, the soul is self-luminous, and it illuminates other things. It can make itself known, and it can know things outside itself. Luminosity, or light, brings the capacity to know. Knowing is an intrinsic characteristic of spirit.

I'm speaking about a knowing that transcends the body and exists as part of the inherent characteristic of the soul. The self has knowledge even in a liberated state.

I emphasize "even in a liberated state" because some schools of thought say that in liberation the self ceases to exist. Bhagavad Gita disagrees. Not only do we exist now, but we exist eternally.

The qualities the self possesses also exist eternally and are unchanging.

Therefore, as we are cognizant now, we are cognizant in our pure spiritual trans-physical existence.

What are the soul's other qualities?

Since I am consciousness, by extension my experience is the experience of consciousness. If I examine my experiences, I can learn something about consciousness.

What is a universal experience, something we all experience? We experience ourselves as individuals. You and I are not one. We are distinct individuals with distinct experiences. We have unique self-identity.

In our pure state, the self is eternally an individual. An eternal individual with knowledge.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura, a Bhakti saint-theologian of the nineteenth century, explains that the soul is the proprietor of an eternal identity, which is extremely esoteric and subtle.

He writes, “The material human body is made up of limbs, ears, nose, etc. Similarly, the spiritual body of the atma (the soul) is embellished with perfect spiritual features and this is his eternal form.”

The material that constitutes the psycho-physical biological body corrupts and perverts our original, actual identity and form, which are sublime and beautiful.

We’ve now identified two characteristics of the self: existence with individuality, and knowledge.

There is a third primary characteristic, which we can also identify based on our current experience as a unit of consciousness.

THE FEELING SELF

As individuals, we have will, desires, emotions, and an ability to act. We reason, enjoy, learn, and bring meaning to our environment and relationships. Ours is more than a rational, knowing life, but an emotional life as well. What is the most exalted emotional state? Love.

To be clear, though, material emotion mirrors, though poorly, spiritual emotion. Moods roam and shift over minutes and months and years. Inevitably they change. Everything material perishes, whether an emotion, a possession, a relationship, or a thought.

Spiritual emotions, on the other hand, endure and expand, surging as they do from timeless spirit itself. Once uncovered by awakening the self, pure emotional states exist eternally. These spiritual emotions give life a transcendent meaning. When we arrive at meaning that endures, we have located our home. Another way of saying this: when we know our self, we arrive home.

In this way, self-consciousness is the combined miracle of being (existence), knowing, and loving.

We experience that we exist, that we are cognizant, and that we love.

We exist, we know, we love.

In all of Vedanta, whenever the characteristics of consciousness are listed it's always in the same sequence: sat-chit-ananda, being, knowing, loving. Emphasis is placed on the last: loving, ananda. Why?

To understand the metaphysical completeness of the self when it achieves ananda, or Bhakti's divine love, contemplate the following truisms:

One who exists does not necessarily know or love.

But one who knows, certainly exists,
though s/he may not love.

However, if one loves, then one both exists and knows.

A loving existence automatically includes knowing and being and is the most whole existential state.

Each of us, soul-consciousness, at our core speaks and sings the language of love. It is the only language we really know, but we've been schooled in other mundane languages for so long we've forgotten this truth.

Our search for happiness is factually our search for divine love.

We are lovers. Not ordinary lovers. We are extraordinary lovers.

Currently we confuse physical intimacy, compassion, and (loving) kindness and other expressions of ordinary love with the existential divine love of the self.

The two loves are as different as iron and gold.

Divine love is Bhakti, and the method to awaken that love is called Bhakti yoga. Bhakti is not an energy of the world of matter. Bhakti in its pure form is a fully surcharged, undiluted spiritual energy that is the absolute and single driving force of the world of spirit, or the world of consciousness.

Bhakti is condensed spirit. It is the singular substance required for our well-being and nourishment. Without it we are malnourished and languishing precariously with material disease, seeking real food so that we can return to healthful living.

We're fervent seekers of love because the self is driven by love. And we want divine love – Bhakti, or transcendent, enduring pure love – not mundane love that sends us soaring then leaves us in a depression or an inconsolable despair.

As consciousness is indestructible and unchanging, so too are its qualities. We exist, we know, we love even after the demise of the body.

OUR SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS

The Bhakti texts explain that our hunt for happiness is natural and, encouragingly, that enduring happiness is attainable but we haven't correctly identified what are real love and happiness, where they are to be found, and how we're to go about fulfilling our desires.

Our happiness project fails because we haven't identified the true self and our relationship with the world and greater Reality.

The Gita tells us,

“You exist to love; the world exists to teach you how to love purely and wholly.”

We're to claim our opportunity to become free of the suffering caused by the bondage of time, space, and the merciless laws of nature and become reinstated in our normal free, spiritual position beyond matter.

Bhakti teacher B. R. Sridhardev Goswami says,

“We are advised by the Vedas to consider: ‘Although you have been cast on this earth, still your native soil is the conscious sun. You emanate from there, you are sustained from there, and your prospect is there.’

“You have to conceive of reality in that way. Because you are conscious, your home is the source of consciousness. If we cross beyond the vision of light-consciousness, we shall find the real necessity of our existence: happiness, ecstasy, and divine love.

“After establishing ourselves in the realm of consciousness [the self], we must establish ourselves in the realm of divine love, ecstasy, and beauty. We must search for our fortune there, and never in this material world.”

When we gain insights into the nature of our existence and the reason the world exists, a whole new perspective on the world opens to us, and a fresh beginning to our lives can unfold.

TWO CATEGORIES OF CONSCIOUS BEINGS

An unseen universal thread holds everything together, and it's not us.

We are *finite* units of consciousness, as evidenced by the fact that we become illusioned and aren't absolutely independent. We aren't self-manifest or self-sustaining. We require water and food to maintain the biological body. We require sunshine for our physical and mental health.

Simply put, we're dependent entities. We're atomic units of sentience, small bits of consciousness, particles of truth. We are parts of a Whole. Though we aren't the Whole, we are of the nature of the Whole: spirit, or consciousness, entities of unique, glorious qualities.

The Gita says that everything is held together "as pearls are strung on a thread" by the Supreme Conscious Person. A spiritual reality is the root cause of our conventional reality.

I, the soul, am the root and basis of my body. At every stage of the development of my ever-changing mind-body, I have remained the same.

In the same way, at the root of the large body of all existence, or Reality, is infinite consciousness, the Supreme Conscious Person.

So the two categories of conscious beings are

- the innumerable, individual finite beings
- the singular Infinite Being, who is the source of the many and maintains them

There is a natural relationship between the soul and its Source. And forgetfulness of our intrinsic connection with the Supreme Conscious Person is the basis of material illusion and ignorance, the cause of our suffering.

Our disconnection with the Source with whom we have an eternal connection may drive our fascination with our bodily origins. A quick look at the number of genealogy organizations speaks to the fact that we're captivated by the idea of tracing our history and uncovering our hidden story.

We want to know who or what makes us who and what we are. Maybe there was someone important in our past, and that revelation would give us some importance or status.

We have an innate sense that if we could trace out our source, we'd know something true about ourselves, and with this information we might be wiser or happier. Perhaps we might find meaning and be given value in our life.

We have a strong desire – an actual need – to know our Source. The fact is, we are important, and the concealed story of our roots is remarkable. We can look to our bloodline, but better if we track the line of our consciousness. This will lead us on in our search for love and the perfect object of love.

BHAKTI

THE LOVING CONNECTION

Although we are of the nature of immutable, faultless, brilliant spirit, because we're atomic in size we're vulnerable to the deluding influence of the material energy, which eclipses and conceals our real nature.

Our opportunity, then, is to reconnect with the grand fire of Consciousness through a loving relationship, which gives full expression to our highest self and awards attainment of our highest potential.

Culturing divine love within the whole heart through a daily practice of Bhakti yoga is the recommended process for knowing our self and freeing it from the pernicious problem of material existence and repeated birth and death.

The Gita reviews the four yoga paths in great detail and says the easiest and most effective process to achieve the goal of liberation is Bhakti.

We are a love-driven reality generated from love-imbued Reality. Just as I'm compelled to love, so too is my Divine Source, from whom I garner all my propensities.

My Source's insatiable desire for unlimited loving reciprocation creates a pressing need. In this truth I find that the Supreme – the one who has everything – is interested in me. Although I'm small, I'm important to him. Being a unit of love gives me inestimable value, and so I'm someone he desires. He sits in our heart right alongside us waiting for us to turn our attention to him and be embraced by the deep affection that natural exists between us.

The practice of Bhakti, the heart and soul of yoga, is a culture of the heart that reveals our spiritual identity, our relationship with our Divine Friend, and the possibilities in transcendence that await us should we choose to act on the spiritual platform of the self.

People who sincerely take up a Bhakti practice and lifestyle are givers not takers. The practice purifies the heart and establishes them in the true self, having dismantled the false pretenses and masks that define and control most people. Such people become full of all good qualities.

By their saintly behavior they create an environment of true brotherhood and sisterhood because they see with the soul's eyes that on the spiritual level everyone is equal and equally searches for and requires love.

Such lovers are peaceful, thoughtful of others, nonenvious, and free of greed and other unbecoming qualities. They create a peaceful environment for others, and their good qualities inspire others to follow

their example and experience. They are beacons of the true liberty and freedom awarded by a genuine spiritual life.

They have bright futures in the spiritual plane of existence.

This is the person you naturally are. You can claim that self and achieve your highest potential.



We just completed a very brief look at Bhakti's view of the self, its immortal nature, and its relationship with the world and the Supreme Conscious Person, our Divine Other.

Pausing throughout the day to remember that you, a unit of spirit, are situated at the heart and are accompanied by your Divine Friend begins to create shifts of consciousness that build into profound and uplifting inner and external changes. You'll receive insights about how to act on the platform of the self, which is very freeing. This is a preliminary but important step on your spiritual journey.

But to have first-hand experience of the self and forever leave behind the illusory identity and ignorance that it creates, we require a method – a spiritual culture – designed to achieve this goal.

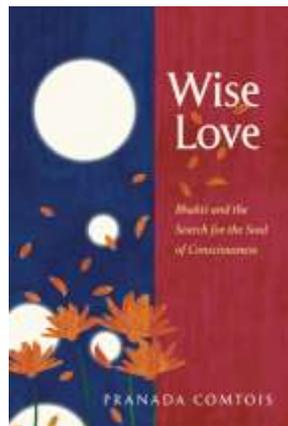
Bhakti is not only a philosophy, but a yoga practice that has been a favored path for spiritual seekers for millennia.

Bhakti is new to the West, only coming to its shores about fifty years ago. The deep ocean of spiritual truths had been locked in India's treasure house of Sanskrit texts and known only to seers who tended to remain in seclusion.

Sanskrit is a language that takes up to twelve years – or longer – to master. Therefore few people have had full access to the vast wealth to be mined from hundreds of ancient Bhakti texts.

But this has changed as Bhakti has gained more attention from Westerners. These texts are being translated into English, and Western-born Bhakti practitioners are bringing out the wisdom they have unearthed. They agree with Max Muller's observation that these texts *could easily satiate the innermost hankerings of the whole universe.*

I invite you to explore Bhakti. Award-winning *Wise-Love: Bhakti and the Search for the Soul of Consciousness*, a surprisingly concise overview, is a good place to begin.



ACCLAIM AND REFLECTIONS ON THE BHAGAVAD GITA

It is the most rewarding and elevating reading possible: it has been the comfort of my life and it will be the one of my death.

~ Arthur Schopenhauer

It is possibly the deepest and most elevating thing the world offers.

~ Wilhelm von Humboldt

The Gita is one of the most concise and richest summaries of the philosophy perennis there is. Therefore it has permanent value, not only for the Indians, but for the whole of mankind.

~ Aldous Huxley

The Bhagavad-gita is a rich message, directed toward the human being, showing him the path for his actions, in order to establish a divine society on earth.

~ Roger Garaudy

It was as if an empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us.

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

How much more impressive than all the ruins of the Orient is the Bhagavad Gita!

~ Henry David Thoreau

An unscholared, experienced wisdom is revealed as helping goodness. This beautiful revelation, this wisdom of life, this philosophy, blossomed to religion, is what we are looking for and what we need.

~ Hermann Hesse

The language of Sri Gita is simple and sweet. Its mood is grave, extensive, and fundamental. Its thought is brief, distinct, and impartial. Its logic sound and natural.

The prologue, epilogue, and exposition, review, analysis, synthesis, and art of presentation of Sri Gita is unprecedented and charming to the extreme. Sri Gita is activation for the lazy, courage for the coward, hope for the hopeless, and new life for the dying.

Sri Gita unifies and sustains all ranks, whether revolutionist, occultist, optimist, renunciationist, liberationist, or full-fledged theist. From the atheist of grossly crude vision to the most elevated saint the essential conceptions of all class of philosophers are dealt with in clear and forceful logic.

~B.R. Sridhardev Goswami

ALL-TIME CLASSIC GITAS

These editions are true to the devotional yoga school of Bhakti. There are hundreds of translations of the Gita. Usually, the translator aims to convey his or her opinion or personal agenda on any number of topics, such as politics, sociology, philosophy, etc., often in direct opposition to the literal meaning of the text. In contrast, these Gitas reflect the intention of the speaker of the Gita, Sri Krishna.

If you'd like more information about these books, I review these Gitas at [Exploring Bhakti "Reviews"](#).

Bhagavad Gita: Talks Between the Soul and God

by Ranchor Prime

Gita Wisdom: An Introduction to India's Essential Yoga Text

by Joshua M. Greene

*A Comprehensive Guide to
Bhagavad Gita with Literal Translation*

by HD Goswami

Bhagavad Gita: The Beloved Lord's Secret Love Song

by Graham M. Schweig

The Bhagavad Gita: Its Feeling and Philosophy

by Swami B. V. Tripurari

Bhagavad-Gita As It Is

by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

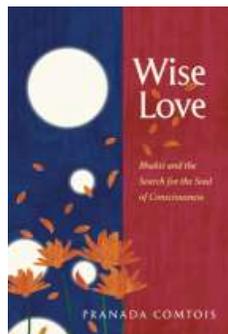


Hi, I'm Pranada. I've been a Bhakti pilgrim for almost fifty years. I write about Bhakti at [Exploring Bhakti](#), and I've also written "The Bhakti Series." (Books 3 and 4 will be released in September and December 2022.)

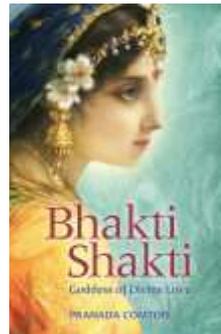
I can be found at www.pranadacomtois.com and enjoy hearing from my readers.

The Bhakti Series

[Book 1](#)



[Book 2](#)



[Book 1 Spanish](#)

