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**ON THE BHAGAVAD GITA'S PERCEPTION OF EMOTIONAL STABILITY
AS A SKILL-SET FOR THE NEW WORLD ORDER**

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The challenges of the new world order calls for enhancing the appropriate skill-set of individuals. As individuals cannot change the external challenges, it is only prudent that they focus their attention on enhancing their intra-personal skills, especially mind-set and emotions. Emotions colors the behavior and functioning of individuals. The control of one's own emotions and that of others is referred to as emotional intelligence.

Objective: The purpose is to deliberate on the Bhagavad Gita's perception of emotional stability and discern its perspectives that may enrich the skill-set of individuals to adequately address the challenges of the new world order.

Method: In the process of deducing the perspectives of the Bhagavad Gita, the concept-based paper clearly brings out the state of emotional stability, its benefits and the path-way to achieve the same.

Discussion: According to the Bhagavad Gita, a person of emotional stability is one who has complete control of his/her emotions in all situations. It leads to experiencing peace and free from fear. It arises as a consequence of controlling senses, desires, anger and mind.

Conclusion: The above discussion highlights that emotional stability is a state of existence, specific and predominantly an intra-personal necessity for the personal development of individuals, thereby positively impacting productivity and effective inter-personal communication in work place and society.

Introduction

The present world order, in the background of uncertainty, has impacted all dimensions of one's life, be it physical, social, cultural, economic, psychological and so on. The new normal challenges calls for enhancing the appropriate skill-set

of individuals . As individuals cannot change/alter the external challenges/situation, it is only prudent/logical that they focus their attention on enhancing their intra-personal skills, especially mind-set and emotions. Intra-personal skills may refer to an individual's understanding and development of vital factors within oneself,

Role of Emotions:

In the ever-changing and dynamic world, emotions play a vital role in the attitude and productivity of individuals. In fact, emotions evolve a personality trait of individuals. Human emotions may be positive or negative. Positive emotions include comfortable, enthusiastic, satisfied, happiness and so on. Negative emotions include frustrated, stressed, anger, fear and so on. Weiss, H. & Cropanzano, R. (1996) highlighted the importance of emotions in work place through a study on various kinds of emotions. The study underlined six important kinds of emotions, namely, anger, fear, joy, love, sadness and surprise. The task lies in enhancing the positive emotions and mitigating the negative emotions. It requires the skill of understanding and managing of emotions (ie.) emotional intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence:

Emotional intelligence may be defined as the ability of an individual to identify, understand and manage one's own emotions as well as that of others and make decisions that achieve positive results. Mayer, J. & Salovey, P. (1990) defines emotional intelligence as the ability to understand one's as well as others feelings and emotions, and to regulate them with the objective to guide one's thinking and action. Goleman, D. (1995) has identified five important dimensions of emotional intelligence. Out of the five dimensions, three dimensions, namely, self-awareness, self-regulation and motivation reflect the individual's personal competencies related to knowing one's own emotions and managing the same. The other two dimensions, namely, empathy and social skills reflect the individual's social competencies related to knowing others' emotions and managing the same.

The skill of emotional intelligence: (a) enhances creativity, communication, empathy and relationships among human resources, (b) manages change, difficult work conditions and career prospects, and (c) reduces stress, mistakes and negativity in work place.

To sum up:

From the foregone discussion, we are able to understand that the importance of emotions cannot be over emphasized. Further, emotional intelligence is a skill that involves managing one's own as well as the emotions of others. It is a vital skill for inter-personal relationships in work-place.

With the above background on emotions, let us now enter into the Bhagavad Gita's perception of emotional stability.

The Bhagavad Gita- an Introduction:

The Bhagavad Gita is a comprehensive practical manual providing vital guidelines for the various aspects of human existence. The Bhagavad Gita occurs in the Bhismaparva (Chapter 23-40) of the great epic Mahabharata of Sri Veda Vyasa. It consists of 18 Chapters and 700 Verses. 'Bhagavad' refers to 'Divine/Lord' and 'Gita' refers to 'song'. Therefore, the 'Bhagavad Gita' may be called as ' the song of

the Lord/Divine'.

Even though a part of Mahabharata, the Bhagavad Gita is self-contained. It is considered as the Fifth Veda. The popularity of the Bhagavad Gita may be due to: (a) its dealing with day-to-day existential issues, (b) It is a scripture for all age groups, for all temperaments, and (c) it appeals irrespective of caste, creed and religion.

The Bhagavad Gita contains eternal spiritual and ethical truths (Sanathana Dharma). It perceives 'Man' (jiva) as a combination of (a) the physical body (b) the mind and (c) the Self/Soul (atman). While the physical body and the mind are matter/material that are mortal and perishes, the Self/Soul is individual consciousness/energy that is immortal and eternal.

The essential/real nature of man is the eternal Self and not the body-mind complex (Chapter II, Verses 18 & 24). Liberation lies in the union (yoga) of individual consciousness/energy (Self) with the Universal/Cosmic consciousness/energy (God). This union is made possible by the purification of the mind (Citta Suddhi/Sattva Suddhi).

The Bhagavad Gita identifies three important paths towards the purification of the mind that enables the union of individual consciousness with the Universal consciousness. The three paths are: (a) The path of Action (Karma-yoga), (b) The path of Devotion (Bhakti-yoga) and (c) The path of Knowledge (Jnana-yoga)

The concept of Emotional Stability in the Bhagavad Gita:

Recognizing the importance of managing emotions, the Bhagavad Gita presents the characteristic features of an individual possessing emotionally-stable wisdom (or) individuals attaining a state of emotional stability (Sthitaprajna). Further, it analyses the impediments and provides appropriate solutions to achieve the state of emotional stability. Let us now proceed to discuss the state of emotional stability, as perceived in the Bhagavad Gita.

Characteristic features of a person possessing Emotional Stability:

According to the Bhagavad Gita, a person of emotional stability is one who has casts off all the desires of the mind (Chapter II, Verse 55), not shaken by adversity & duality, free from attachment, fear & anger (Chapter II, Verse 56) and has complete control over attachment or detachment (Chapter II, Verse 57). In short, a person of stable wisdom has complete control of his/her emotions in all situations. The Bhagavad Gita proclaims that the state of emotional stability leads to experiencing immortality (Chapter II, Verse 15), peace (Chapter II, Verse 71), free from fear (Chapter II, Verse 56) and tranquility (Chapter II, Verse 52).

Path-way towards Emotional Stability:

The Bhagavad Gita states that individuals achieve emotional stability as a result of managing/controlling (a) their senses (Chapter II, Verse 58), (b) their desires (Chapter II, Verse 55), (c) their anger (Chapter II, Verse 56) and (d) their mind (Chapter II, Verse 57).

Let us now discuss how these factors may be controlled, according to the Bhagavad Gita.

(a) Control of the Senses (Gunas) - Senses Management:

The senses of a person consists of three vital elements (gunas), namely, sattva

(reflecting the characteristic features of knowledge and calmness), rajas (reflecting the characteristic features of activity and desire) and tamas (reflecting the characteristic features of laziness and ignorance) (Chapter XIV, Verses 5 & 17). The three gunas are present in every individual in different proportions and they constantly act among themselves. In fact, the gunas are the foundations for evolving the personality features of individuals (Chapter XIV, Verses 11-13). Therefore, with the purification of the senses, the individual's personality is developed.

According to the Bhagavad Gita, senses-control/senses-purification is an individual's internal process of experience from a pre-dominantly tamasic level to the rajasic state, and from a pre-dominantly rajasic level to the sattvic level of experience/existence (Chapter XIV, Verse 18). This inner journey is effected by doing any work/action based on one's own intention/ duty and not based on the result of the work/action (Chapter 11, Verses 47-49).

(b) Control of Desires (Kama) - Desire Management:

According to Indian tradition, desires may be of two kinds, namely, desires in accordance/approved by ethics (dharma) and desires in variance & not approved by ethics. The first kind of desires are termed as positive desires, while the second kind of desires are termed as negative desires. Therefore, when the Bhagavad Gita mentions about desire-control, it refers to the negative desires.

According to the Bhagavad Gita, the negative desires of individuals are the greatest impediments towards progress (Chapter III, Verse 39) and these can be mitigated by the control of the senses (Chapter III, Verse 41).

(c) Control of Anger (Krodha) - Anger Management:

It is common knowledge that anger causes emotional disturbances in individuals. According to the Bhagavad Gita, anger causes individuals to forego the all important power of discriminating capacity, leading to their ruin (Chapter 11, Verse 63). The real cause for anger is due to unfulfilled desires (Chapter II, Verse 62). Therefore, when individuals manage/control their desires, the power of anger is controlled.

(d) Control of Mind (Manas) - Mind Management:

Mind is an important component of individuals. The Bhagavad Gita states that the general nature of the mind is always fickle, oscillating, ever fluctuating and unstable. The mind is continuously activated by two forces, namely, attachment (raga) and aversion (dvesa). This situation limits individuals to experience tranquility and peace (Chapter II, Verse 64).

According to the Bhagavad Gita, the unstable mind may be managed/controlled by the spirit of renunciation (vairagya) of temporal factors/ gains and the repeated practice (abhyasa) of the same (Chapter VI, Verse 35).

To Sum Up:

The Bhagavad Gita clearly deliberates on the state of emotional stability and its resultant benefits. Further, it also clearly presents the conditions and the factors to be controlled to achieve the state of emotional stability.

Conclusion:

From the above discussion, we are able to clearly understand the importance of emotions. A discussion on emotional intelligence in the light of the Bhagavad Gita brings out the following important perspectives: (a) emotional stability is not merely

a skill but a state of existence/experience, (b) emotional stability is not merely managing emotions in a general way, but is involved in controlling different facets such as senses, desire, anger and mind. It is more specific as well as more comprehensive, and (c) emotional stability is an intra-personal necessity in the new world order.

In conclusion, we may state that the Bhagavad Gita's enlightened perspectives on emotional stability, involving the management of the senses, desire, anger and the mind, would enhance the skill-set of individuals in the new world order. This would result in the personal development of individuals, thereby positively impacting productivity and effective inter-personal communication in work place and society.

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