

In-Depth
Learning Program

DO WHAT the SAGES DID

How to enjoy and benefit from
the *BHAGAVAD GITA*'s wondrous teachings
through Self-Inquiry Dialogue

Jack Hawley

A godly guide for do-it-yourself group study
via *ROADMAPS to SELF-REALIZATION*



“You have to read the Gita through your heart.”

—Bhagavad Gita: a Walkthrough for Westerners

“The Truth has to be both known and experienced.”

—Sathya Sai Baba

Finding Delight in Going Beyond

The whole and sole purpose of the Gita, the only reason it was originally given to humanity, according to Sathya Sai Baba, is to help people rid themselves of their worldly suffering, find true happiness, and achieve self-realization.

Seize and embrace those words, cherish them and hold them close. Regard those promises as 100 percent (108 percent) truth! Know with certainty that you *can*—truly—rid yourself of your worldly suffering! Yes, it sounds unattainable, but millions of people have done it down through the ages. Know too that you really *can*, as Baba promises, uncover your bliss. And finally, know with certainty that you can indeed realize your True Self Within, no less! And what’s more, there’s no catch, no impossible price to pay, no centuries of waiting to endure.

Let us shift back and forth in time to gain clarity. Something of unique importance developed in the nearly pre-historic cultures that settled the river valleys of South Asia some eight thousand years ago (yes, 80 centuries). This draws our consciousness back in an unbroken line into the minds and hearts of the people who settled there and created sophisticated cultures in the eras not long after the last ice age.

A class of seekers of truth emerged in those cultures that profoundly influenced all civilizations that rose up later. These seers referred to with great reverence as *muni*, *rishi*, (or, for our purposes here, as *sages*) became the keepers of wisdom in those ancient cultures—a truly valuable role. They did this by pursuing through rigorous scientific study, the secrets of happiness and peace of mind.

To know today the truth of one’s real Self and live by that truth is Self-Realization. This is the ultimate meta-goal, the gold at the end of our spiritual rainbow.



The ancients' method of discovery was quite different from today's scientists. Instead of peering outward toward worldly phenomena for answers, they dialogued deep within themselves, and discovered through direct experience the answers to the great mysteries of life. They also dialogued to a careful extent among and between themselves, to further hone and then put into practice those deep secrets.

Spiritually inspired, they attained what has come to be called Realization of the Self. Doing so, they soared clear of painful worldly entanglements into a place called lasting bliss, beyond even happiness. The notion of sage-hood became a hallowed ideal in those ancient societies, a foundation stone in their system of beliefs. Powerful remnants of it live on today, continuing to influence the world.

And yet, we in our present day continue to brush *self-realization* aside as if it were an unfathomably vague and distant abstraction. But on the contrary, *self* is not distant (is there anything closer?)—and *realization* is not abstract (how could *realization* be “un-real?”). Attaining this essential state is not just a pipedream. The light of the spiritual rainbow shines within you, not at some dreamy, far-off horizon. The gold at rainbow's end is inside.

The goal of the ancient sages was never merely to *know* these things, but to make use of the knowledge for the welfare of all humanity. Their far-reaching aim was to raise human consciousness from its lower animal beginnings up to the plateau of human beings, and from there to its highest level, divinity. No less.

They succeeded often enough in this pursuit to inspire us nowadays to pay close attention to their methods, and emulate them.

Attaining the rainbow's gold in today's world requires some good effort. For one thing, you have to use that rainbow's light to unblinkingly gaze deeply into your self. But even that process can be delightful. (Pun intended.)

The real name of the game, as we all know, is *Transformation*. And yet we find it almost impossible to break free of the sticky habits that keep us playing at the plane of human beings. Our main reason for being here in this lifetime—our meta-goal—is to learn to play



at a level higher than that stuck plateau, and feel the fresh breeze of spiritual bliss, our divinity within, waft across our cheeks.

Of the innumerable methods developed down through the ages by the sages for gaining high wisdom, one stands out. Loosely referred to here as *self-inquiry* (not the stringent “Who am I” technique of later eras), this ancient method has withstood the crushing tests of time.

Self-inquiry is the very foundation of your spiritual discovery. It is said that seventy-five percent of spiritual practice is self-inquiry. And coming face to face with the Truth of one’s Self is to discover that the Self in the individual is the Self in all. This is the pot o’ gold, the grand prize. To become aware of this is to realize the very basis of the unity of humanity, and to become one with all—including of course oneness with the Divine.

This at first seems outlandish to many, but the real aim of all true spiritual practices is to close the gap between the self and the Divine. The permanently cheerful sages learned how to do it.

The great reward of the *Roadmaps to Self Realization* book is that it helps one make significant progress toward this lofty aim through internalizing and applying the Gita’s great mystical and spiritual principles. The idea of *application* is the body and soul of this book.

Most people learn better in a conversational group setting, and they become more committed to applying the learning than if they were studying alone. Seekers at all levels of understanding—whether rookie or budding *rishi*—are coalescing into study groups, using the *Roadmaps* book as a snug focus for their dialogues.



The real purposes of this paper, therefore, are two. First, to convey information that can help Gita study groups be effective sooner. Second, and even more vital, to hold open the space so our true purpose—which is to soar to our divinity—is ever in our consciousness.

Keeping both purposes in sight—group effectiveness and soaring beyond—we will now swing back and forth with alacrity from the worldly practicalities of studying in a group, to the celestial practicalities of high spirituality. We arch between earthly details at one of the dimensions, and cosmic sky-walking at the other. We concern ourselves with building effective groups—routine things like meeting space, agenda, and so forth—and at the same time we also seek to soar toward the far reaches of the ancient and modern sages.

What is a Self-Inquiry Dialogue Group?

It's a process, consisting of a series of meetings, the primary aim of which is to help participants elevate consciousness. More specifically, the group's members gain a deeper, higher understanding of, and learn to actually apply in their lives the profound moral and spiritual teachings of the Bhagavad Gita. They become personally involved, for example, in finding their own inner beauty, becoming liberated from all worldly bonds, learning how to live, how to love, and even how to die.

These, and most other Gita teachings, are ideas of extraordinary size and power with numerous subtleties and shades of thought. People get together in regularly scheduled meetings which last only about an hour, and engage in structured yet open conversation about utterly important teachings. Through filling out the *Review-Worksheet* from the *Roadmaps* book and then talking about some of their answers in the group, participants gradually internalize the Gita's marvelous principles, including its meta-goal that we achieve our own divinity.

It's not the *Roadmaps* that accomplish this, it is not even the Gita's teachings, it is the group members' immersion in the teachings. Once the process gets rolling people grow



fond of it, and it builds its own positive momentum. In this manner the friendly, ever-amazing Gita again takes its earnest readers, whether new or seasoned, gently by the hand and leads them to their true destiny. It has been doing this for scores of centuries.

This process fits the view of true spirituality as defined by the legendary modern sage Ramakrishna. He said (I paraphrase), “Using spiritual means to achieve worldly ends is not spirituality; using worldly means to achieve spiritual ends is spirituality.” Using familiar, seemingly mundane group methods to achieve sublime, transcendent objectives certainly fits.

The benefits and pitfalls of group learning

Spiritual growth, though comprised largely of learning to love, is essentially an individual effort. It’s a journey we begin alone, proceed on alone, and end alone. Intuitive knowing, which is so necessary for spiritual advancement, also happens mostly in stillness at rare levels of consciousness, and mostly alone. But journeying alone does not rule out working in a group.

The four-fold advantages of group study are: deeper involvement, higher learning, greater commitment to implement, and broader support for making the huge shift from human to higher existence. Take them one at a time ...

- **Deeper Involvement.** You are drawn into a personal inner dialogue regarding the *Gita’s* various moral and spiritual principles—and then, as mentioned above, you share your insights by dialoguing in the group. This creates a more meaningful connection to the principles.
- **Higher learning.** Your answers on the self-inquiry questions give you the opportunity to test your thinking with others at varying levels of understanding. People learn tangentially from others’ reactions, responses and opinions.



Exchanging and explaining aloud one's insights and experiences strengthens everyone's grasp of the sometimes intricate principles.

- **Greater commitment.** Dedication to implementing the teachings stems only from your active *involvement* in the teachings. It is participation in the group that kicks open the door to applying these divine principles in your life. Kicking free of our stuckness and yanking ourselves toward our divinity requires a powerful surge of dedication and courage.
- **Broader support.** Moving ahead together in a group toward a general but clear common goal creates a support base for practicing the teachings.

Individuals not only live the principles themselves, but cheer on the others' efforts. Thus they all, at varying speeds, learn to fly beyond—toward Divinity. No less.

To soar in a good group is to keep good company, and “keeping good company” (*satsangh*), Sai Baba tells us, is of vital importance for our spiritual development. *Satsangh* is another of the ancient ones' time-honored means for elevation of human consciousness.

Potential Pitfalls of Group Learning:

Some people are shy in a group setting. They fear being misunderstood, embarrassed, controlled, judged, or otherwise made “smaller.”

In a group discussion (as opposed to private inner dialogues), people may relinquish a certain amount of independence. If not mindful of this it can slip into “group-think” and people in effect hand over some responsibility for their spiritual growth. People can also lose sight of the group's real purpose (self-realization), and the meetings become a sort of social gathering rather than an occasion for earnest progress. It's a question of balance.



Those pitfalls are common and understandable. They can be eliminated or greatly alleviated by making sure that the overall atmosphere, attitude and behavior of the group is dedicated to attaining much higher ends.

How do you create an appropriate atmosphere in the group?

It's largely common sense. First, love the process and trust the innate wisdom in the group. The group will find its way if you don't try to grind it into shape. Know that crafting a good atmosphere is an active, not passive, process; you can't just wait, and hope for it to happen. There are three main ways to achieve this: (1) be crystal clear about what the group is and is not, (2) be almost overly explicit with everybody about the purposes of the group, and (3) be smart about the group's environment and meeting details.

1. **Crystal clarity: what the group is, and isn't.** It's a self-inquiry group, not a weekly social get together. (It should be social and it's obviously a get together, but its DNA, its basic nature, is to be a *working* group—relaxed, but doing its duty to achieve an extreme goal.) It is also a process, an ongoing course of action leading to a clear goal, not just an event. And it is a high-trust space, an opportunity to openly share information and beliefs, be listened to, and listen to others.
2. **The group's extreme purposes.** The group exists to achieve five objectives, which in summary are to:
 - A) Realize significant spiritual growth, and soar even beyond that.
 - B) Internalize the Gita's lessons—gain a personal, in-depth understanding of the *Bhagavad Gita's* wondrous teachings.
 - C) Implement those teachings in our lives—modify our behavior in accord with those high (attainable) principles.
 - D) Support each other's efforts to grow spiritually and make the needed changes in our lives.



E) Encourage personal transformation—that is, to “in-courage” us to take our game to the next level—which is to transform from a worldly-driven human being to a truly god-connected being—in this lifetime no less.

3. **Being smart about the details:**

What size group? Any number of participants, from any level of current understanding, will be alright. For good dialogue 8 to 10 participants is optimum. Smaller is okay; larger might be acceptable. In one sense it’s not a matter of size but how well the meetings are organized. If the group has more than 12 members, consider breaking into two sub-groups—and be aware that the meetings may take a little longer. In larger groups (20 to 50, or more), break into several sub-groups of roughly equal size.

Pointer: If you go into sub-groups, participants should opt into a “stranger group” as this provides an opportunity to interact with people you don’t usually talk to.

Note: *Self-Inquiry Dialogues*, if they’re carefully planned, can be used with huge assemblies of several hundred.

Physical arrangements. You need a generally peaceful setting that enhances communications. Sitting in a circle is important because people can see each other. (Non-verbal signals such as eye contact and body language, etc., are 80 percent of communications.) Circles are an ancient, time-honored way for good conversation with other humans.

Try to remove as much stress from the environment as possible, but don’t obsess about it. Make it as congenial and peaceful as feasible. Think about lighting, seating, background music and stillness. Don’t



strain to make a temple of it, but do create a good place to do very elevated work.

Initiate the meetings with a short ceremony—lighting a *jyoti* lamp or a candle, chanting, meditation, etc. Consider invoking “*Om-Tat-Sat*” (refer to the *Gita*, 17: 20-28, and/or *Review-Worksheet # 55* in the *Roadmaps* book).

Pointer: As you draw on any of these ancient symbols or invocations of the sages, try to know their meaning and make it a learning opportunity; be aware of its impact on the group.

Seating should be adequate and comfortable, but not over-stuffed comfy. If feasible, provide enough space for everyone to do earnest work. Eliminate elements in the social architecture that get in the way of participation and communication.

Pointer: Avoid “power position” seating. No head table, no special “Teacher” seat, as these make others feel down-sized, like kids or subordinates. Psychological size differentials do hinder participation and communications. Round tables help overcome this.

The whole point, again, is to foster *Constant Spiritual Awareness*. In *every*-body! The actual work of the group is self-inquiry and dialogue—and this is important. But do not lose sight of two facts: *everything* is spiritual, and the group’s aim is to reach the very highest levels. Thus you need to craft an environment conducive of inspiration in the true sense, being “in-spirited.” Make it not just a good learning place but a good space for unveiling high truths. No less.

Organization. There are only four designated roles. In the past, these probably fell on the shoulders of the sage’s assistants, but nowadays it is best to disperse them to various group members so all



can share the joy and learn to emulate. The roles are: Meeting Host, Meeting Convener, Keeper-of-Group-Memory, and Participants:

1. **Meeting Host:** Handles details of place, space, and house-keeping. Makes sure the facilities are passable, peaceful and sacred. Makes sure people are tolerably comfortable. Coordinates refreshments, if any, and generally does the needful.

Pointer: In some cultures eating together can enhance group effectiveness, in others it may detract from it by laying on un-needed social obligations. Decide for yourself.

2. **Meeting Convener:** Gets out the invitations, announcements of meeting time and place. Convenes the meeting. Makes sure the group's purposes and processes are clear to all. Welcomes newcomers; bids goodbye (usually in absentia) to people leaving the group. Keeps the meeting by and large on track, without being stiff.

Pointer: Be familiar with the group's *Goals* and *Ground rules* and make sure the others are too (Visuals B and D are key).

Idea: *Review-Worksheets* are a new way of learning for many. Consider reading (slowly, with feeling) the first 3 or 4 items on today's sheet, and then turning it back to the participants via the "Alone/Stillness Time" segment.

3. **Keeper-of-Group-Memory:** Is quickly designated each time the group or sub-group begins. Keeps an informal, all-purpose record of what goes on in the session—not "minutes," just simple, casual, reminder notes of topics, general conclusions, and so forth. Anything worth sharing.

Pointer/reminder: Don't record any private information.

Keeper also takes the lead during verbal summaries at meeting's end.



Idea: At times, the *Keeper's* raw notes are used as a flash review at the beginning of the next meeting to help people shift back into the mood. It can also serve well as a symbolic record of progress. If they're too raw (the notes, not the people) they may need a little editing.

4. **The Participant Role.** All attendees are full-fledged *Participants* (including the Convener, Host, and Keeper-of-Group-Memory). Thus everybody shares responsibility for the group's processes and practices, and for its eventual success.

Pointer: Try to steer clear of using *Facilitators, Teachers, Experts, or "Officers."* Expert-led or boss-chaired dialogues may at times improve the transmission of information, but the quality of the dialogue will be different—and the level of creativity, commitment, and consciousness will probably be lower. The over-arching aim is to soar, not to just run an efficient group.

What must I be

Down through the ages the *Bhagavad Gita* has endeared itself to countless millions of souls because of the breadth and depth of its teachings and its practical relevance. Throughout the Gita it repeatedly returns to the meta-goal (divinity, no less), and it insists that we actually live its teachings.

This makes Eastern philosophy unique. In the West, once the ideas are clear the philosophy is considered to be whole, and the philosophers can take a bow. Not in the East. Until the philosophy includes an *application component* it is considered half-baked, undone, and of no spiritual value whatsoever. The *Roadmaps* book takes this strong *application* ethic even further.

At numerous points throughout the *Gita* we hear valuable descriptions of the qualities and lifestyles of various extremely high beings: the Muni, the Rishi, the *Yogi*, the *Jnani* (person of wisdom), the Illumined One, the Wise One, Transcended One,—and others. For our purposes here they are all “sages” of various stripes. As they become alive to us it



gradually becomes clear what our eventual goal is. One important characteristic of all those “sages” is to attain, through constant practice, ultra-high consciousness—the chief aspect of which is intuitive knowing.

Eventually the light dawns that one does not gain the ultra-high consciousness of a sage through intellectually knowing, but through intuitive knowing, above the level of our mind and thoughts. The way to this lofty knowing is not through *thinking*, because thinking is of our mind. This high knowing is beyond our mind.

Intuitive knowing comes through cultivating *in ourselves* certain ordinary but godly virtues such as: leading a simple and self-reliant life, seeking solitude, eating but little, being detached, and at peace with oneself, guided by our more divine nature, and so forth.

We also learn through the Gita that one is a sage not only at the end of the path but while on the path—and we learn that we can, and must, be absorbed in the Divine even while staying fully effective in the world.

Apply this now

In the spirit of application we have here taken those big ideas a small step further and compiled some key virtues of the sages into a self-inquiry instrument—see “Being Sage-Like” below. (This is but one of the many virtual check-lists in the Gita which pull us ever toward our sage-ness.) In a few moments you will be invited, through filling out the instrument, to assess the extent to which you feel at this point that you are sage-like.

If you just felt a slight bump inside, you’re not alone. It’s because your “perusal contract” just shifted. You are no longer merely a reader, but are about to become a self-inquirer. The “bump” is the soft breath of resistance that some feel when they meet these instruments. “Oops, a ‘test,’ and I’m not prepared!”



But these are not “tests” they’re tools. There are no right or wrong answers. The Gita makes it clear that we can’t flub this one. “There are no failures on the spiritual path,” it tells us. Notice also that there are no zeroes on the 1-to-9 scales. That is utterly intentional. We are now, all of us, at a higher point than we presume. Having just this simple but true knowledge is a crucial footstep upward, toward our true objective.

We are all traveling the spiritual path, and each one of us is at a particular point along the way—and every one of us is exactly where we’re supposed to be. It is wonderful for us to actually see that point, and know where we stand. Now we can focus our spiritual practice on areas of our life that most need it.

Of course we are all at sundry points on our journeys. Some perceive the distance yet to be traveled as very far, to others it is right around the corner. That’s just the way life is. The *point* is that we are all progressing at our own gait along the only road that counts! It is the road to our eventual meta-goal, the road to truth, love, inner peace, and doing the right thing for the benefit of all humanity.

All the souls ever born or yet to be born anywhere in the world, have these truths within them. At the very highest levels of human awareness the sage-virtues of Truth, Love, Peace (of mind), Right Action, and so forth, swirl together and are impossible to differentiate from one another. This is Divine Love.

Being in this high space is what the journey of life is all about. The small bump we felt earlier is now simply a marker on our passage from fear to love. Everything changes when we get here. The self-inquiry process is suddenly friendlier and no longer “work.” The instruments are no longer *work*-sheets, they have become answer sheets—and everybody loves having the answers. The tools are all of a sudden practical, useful gifts, helpful implements.



Those who have previously experienced this shift of perception know how quickly people come to appreciate these simple, seemingly worldly yet profoundly spiritual “roadmaps.”

On the rough and rutted road of life it is good to find clear charts that smooth your every step along the way. Moving into your sage-ness is the central expedition of your life, and these teachings from within can be the most important you ever encounter.

Be still, peaceful, open your heart, leap into the next page ...



BEING SAGE LIKE

A spiritual progress instrument drawn from the teachings of *the Bhagavad Gita*

Throughout the *Bhagavad Gita's* timeless spiritual teachings the qualities for being a Transcended Being—a Person of Wisdom, an Illumined One, *Yogi*, etc.—are gradually revealed.

Here, we have taken those teachings a step further, making some of the qualities of a sage into a modern self-inquiry instrument. We can now use that tool to help us assess ourselves.

It may at first register as “unattainable” or as a “test,” which can bring a faint twinge of resistance (common in adult learning). But this is neither impossible nor a test.

There are no right or wrong answers here, no unachievable goals.

The aim, remember, is to move beyond our current plateau toward the wisdom of the sages.

It's a breathtaking trip, so take a deep breath, and dive into the below teachings. You will find yourself comfortably participating in your spiritual evolvment.

Proceed unhurriedly in a mood of high receptivity. Notice your awareness shift and expand as you progress. Do not seek to *learn* the material, but to *become* it—to in fact BE the high consciousness that permeates the teachings.

SELF-INQUIRY—IMMEDIATE SELF ASSESSMENT

- **Candidly rate yourself 1-9 (see scale at page bottom) at each of the 18 items below. Ask yourself, “To what extent am I this or do I do this in my life?”**
- **Mark the three most important teachings to you.**
- **Put a * * by any “impossibles” that seem unattainable at this point. (Revisit them at some later date and be pleasantly surprised).**
- **Ponder: “What one major change would raise my assessment two levels?”**
- **Be ready to dialogue (within you or with others).**

* * *

The Gita's directives:

- ___ Cultivate a pure intellect.
- ___ Be self-restrained, give up the ego.
- ___ Abandon the world's sights, tastes, and commotion.
- ___ Put aside with no regret both the likes and dislikes so burdensome in your life.
- ___ Seek solitude.
- ___ Eat but little.
- ___ Lead a simple, self-reliant life.
- ___ Curb your thoughts, speech and actions.

- ___ Be detached, impersonal.
- ___ Be calm, at peace with yourself and all.
- ___ Engage your mind always in concentration, contemplation, and meditation on Brahman, the Godhead.
- ___ Cast from yourself all egotism, arrogance, desire, anger, and attachment.
- ___ Turn your back on luxuries and property; own little, and shed any sense of 'mine.'
- ___ Enter into a heartfelt state of unity with Me, Brahman, as I *am* Truth, Consciousness, and Bliss—your True Self Within.
- ___ When you truly know that all acts of the mind, senses, and body are of Divinity, then your sense of doership leaves you.
- ___ Have no concern but to do Divinity's work for Its sake only.
- ___ Be only interested in merging into Divinity.
- ___ It is by loving God that you rise from the human being level to the Divine!”

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9
 never seldom sometimes frequently always



The *TYPICAL FLOW* of a *SELF-INQUIRY DIALOGUE MEETING* . . .

I. START-UP [about 5 Min.]

Convener convenes the session...

- Opening chant, music, prayer, quiet time, etc.
- Makes eye contact, “*Om-Tat-Sat*,” “Welcome.” Greets all, introduces newcomers; bids goodbye to people leaving.
- Makes sure all are on the same page (*Review-Worksheet*).
- Reminds group (every time) of *Goals* and *Groundrules*.
- Generally helps the people settle in; checks where the group is now (perhaps using “raw notes” from last meeting), etc.

[See “Welcome” Visual B, and “Groundrules,” Visual D]

Pointer: Enlarge the *Visuals* so they can be read from across the room (at least 1” print size per 20’ [5 cm per 6 m]), and post on walls. People thus ‘live within’ and are constantly reminded of their *Goals* and *Groundrules*.
Hint: times are suggestions only. Adjust to fit.

II. ALONE/STILLNESS TIME [about 10-plus Min.]

Convener introduces the task. **Participants** work alone—each, in stillness, fills out the *Review-Worksheet* for today’s topic.

Pointer: Do this in total silence; no side conversations; when a person finishes writing, stillness reigns.
[See *Visual C*, “Group Tasks”]

III. SHARE INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES [10-15 Min.]

First, take a minute to designate a **Keeper-of-Group-Memory**.

Each Participant shares their answers to the Self-Inquiry questions on the *Review-Worksheet*. (Optional but suggested.)

This quickly flashes everyone’s information, and each voice gets heard, even the naturally quiet ones. Good give-and-take quickly and easily becomes a habit.

Pointers:

- Each person, one-by-one reads out the answers on their own worksheet—for Info only, no explaining, no “editorials.”
- As individuals read their answers, others lean forward to listen for similarities, differences, insights, questions, etc.
- Participants are responsible for their own privacy. Read what you feel comfortable sharing [see *Visual D*], but stretch beyond your usual comfort zone limits. Expansion *is* your life.

IV. GROUP DIALOGUE [about 30 Min.]

Participants participate; useful conversation ensues:

- Exchange thoughts, observations, ask clarifying questions, offer ideas, points of view, pay attention to others’ views.
- Everyone gains a more personal understanding of the teachings, and how they pertain to daily life right now.

Pointer: At end of group dialogue, take a few minutes in group to prepare a flash report of topics discussed, average ratings, new insights, conclusions, any “*impossibles*” (seemingly unattainable items), etc. Full agreement is *not* necessary.

V. GOOD ENDING [3 or 4 Min.]

A definite end, rather than merely drifting out.

Keepers-of-Group-Memory help get a summary rolling; others join in.

Convener closes the session with appreciation, a pat on the back for all, and a spiritually moving “wrap” quote.

Convener of the next session reminds people of the details for next time—date, time, and any homework or pre-work.

Hint: Loosely organize the closing, e.g. a ‘round robin sharing of feelings about this meeting before each person departs.

Idea: Appoint someone to read an inspiring quotation (or serve this need yourself). Have members pick the two most important learning s from today’s session. Formally adjourn.

Remember to always end “up.”

“Om. Goodnight. See you at our next meeting.”



Self-Inquiry Dialogue VISUALS...

[A] Do What th' Sages Did

POINTERS for GROUP STUDY
via ROADMAPS to SELF-REALIZATION

MEETINGS FLOW:

- I. GETTING STARTED WELL (WELCOME) [5 Min.]*
- II. ALONE TIME [5 to 10+ Min.]*
- III. INFO SHARING [10-15 Min.]*
- IV. DIALOGUE (GOOD CONVERSATION) [30-40 Min.]*
- V. END WELL (FAREWELL) [3 or 4 Min.]*

[B] WELCOME

GREETINGS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, REMINDERS, etc.

HOPED FOR OUTCOMES:

- *TO GROW SPIRITUALLY (and Soar Beyond!)*
- *TO INTERNALIZE the GITA'S TEACHINGS*
- *TO IMPLEMENT THOSE TEACHINGS in OUR DAILY LIFE*
- *TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH*
- *TO PROMPT PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION*
- *OTHER GOALS*

TODAY'S TOPIC, WORKSHEET # _____

[C] The GROUP's Tasks:

APPOINT "KEEPER-OF-GROUP-MEMORY"

- *ALONE TIME (DO THE REVIEW-WORKSHEET)*
- *INFO. SHARING (READ ALL ANSWERS)*
- *GOOD CONVERSATION (DIALOGUING)*
- *GET READY TO REPORT-OUT*

[D] Meeting GROUND RULES:

- 1. GROW SPIRITUALLY (and soar even beyond, to your Divinity!) ... BUT STRETCH A LITTLE*
- 2. TAKE THE TRIP SERIOUSLY AND LOVINGLY*
- 3. START ON TIME, END ON TIME*
- 4. THE RIGHT PEOPLE ARE HERE NOW*
- 5. ALL ARE FULL-FLEDGED PARTICIPANTS*
- 6. PARTICIPATE AS THE SPIRIT MOVES YOU . . .*
- 7. THERE'S NOTHING TO PROVE; ... NO "RIGHT" OR "WRONG" ANSWERS*
- 8. BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN PRIVACY (AT TIMES, IT'S OK TO "PASS")*
- 9. OTHER GROUND RULES: e.g., BE RECEPTIVE . . .*



Thumbnail sketches of the two books used in meetings:



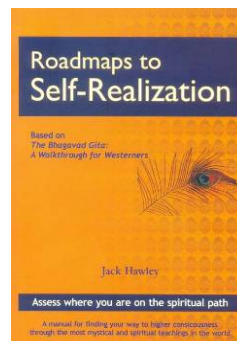
The Bhagavad Gita: A Walkthrough for Westerners

New World Library, Novato, California. 2001.
ISBN 1-57731-147-7

The '*Gita*' is more than just a book, more than mere words or concepts. There is an accumulated potency in it. To read the '*Gita*' is to be inspired in the true sense of the term: to be "in-spirited", to inhale the ancient and ever new breath of spiritual energy.

The '*Gita*' is a universal love song sung by God to His friend man. It can't be confined by any creed. It is a statement of the truths at the core of what we all already believe, only it makes those truths clearer, so they become immediately useful in our daily lives. These truths are for our hearts, not just for our heads.

The '*Bhagavad Gita*' has been called India's greatest contribution to the world. For more than 5,000 years, this great scripture has shown millions in the East how to fill their lives with serenity and love. Now, these ancient secrets have been brought to us in a beautiful prose version that makes the story of the '*Gita*' clear and exciting and makes its truths understandable and easily applied to our busy lives.



Roadmaps to Self-Realization

**Based on The Bhagavad Gita:
A Walkthrough for Westerners**

Walkthrough Press, Palm Springs, California. 2006.
ISBN 1-886112-20-7

Roadmaps is a clear, comprehensive review of the world's highest mystical and spiritual principles given to humanity thousands of years ago in the universally acclaimed *Bhagavad Gita*. Now, for the first time, these ancient yet modern teachings are presented as a self-inquiry manual, a respectful guidebook to help you chart your course to self-realization.

This is a veritable treasure map that will show you how to be a happier, more peaceful and loving human being now, today, in your daily life.

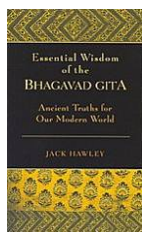
"The moment you see your own inner beauty and are so filled with it that you forget all else, you become free from all worldly bonds.

You realize that you are all the beauty, all the glory, all the power, all the magnificence of the universe. Once you attain this Self-realization you recognize everyone else as us the reflection of yourself. This is the true basis of the unity of humanity."

- Sathya Sai Baba



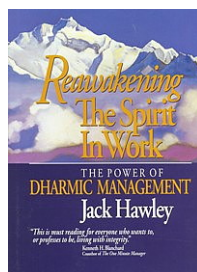
Other books by Jack Hawley:



Essential Wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita

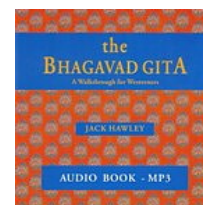
Over 5,000 years old, the Bhagavad Gita is written as a tale set on the battlefield, a metaphor for the battles humans face daily.

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Audio Book (CD, MP3)

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Join Jack Hawley on a practical, treasure-laden stroll into the spiritual heart of ancient India. He makes the story of the Gita clear and exciting, and brings its high truths home to us in a way that is easily applied to our busy, complex lives.

Jack Hawley is the author of the following books: *The Bhagavad Gita: a Walkthrough for Westerners; Roadmaps to Self-Realization; Essential Wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita; Reawakening the Spirit in Work: the Power of Dharmic Management; a CD Audiobook of the Bhagavad Gita.*

Each year, Jack and his wife Louise spend six months at Sathya Sai Baba's bustling, non-sectarian ashram in rural South India (free university campuses, primary and secondary schools, free hospitals, public works and service projects, orphanages, and so forth.), where they learn, love, and lecture on the teachings of the *Gita*. They then spend six months in the U.S. and other countries living and bringing this high spiritual wisdom to the rest of the world.

For more information on the above and free, downloadable articles see website: www.GitaWalkthrough.com ... or email jackhawley@yahoo.com

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