

# HOW ILLUMINED AM I?

*A spiritual progress instrument drawn from the Bhagavad Gita*

In response to a question at the end of chapter two, the Bhagavad Gita gives a listing of the qualities of the enlightened human being (referred to as an "Illumined One") and never veers from these through its remaining 16 chapters.

I take that list a step further, making it into the modern self-inquiry instrument. This can register as a test. But when people take a breath and dive into the teachings, they find themselves comfortably participating in spiritual growth.

That's when I sigh, because for many people this is the

breathless opening of a profound shift in consciousness — and consciousness is everything! When we change our consciousness we change our world, and when we change our world we change the world. It's that simple, and that profound.

Proceed unhurriedly with high receptivity. Notice your awareness shift as you proceed. Do not seek to learn the material, but to become it — to actually *be* the consciousness that permeates these teachings.

## Self-Inquiry — Self-Assessment

Consider the list of Illumined One qualities to be both a life goal list and life assignment checklist. Take it seriously but not grimly. As you read each item:

- Put a 1–9 self-rating (see sample scale below) next to each of the 24 items based on the extent you practice that in your life at this time.
- Mark \*\* by any "impossibles" (qualities that, to you, now seem unattainable).
- Date this sheet and revisit it later to check your progress. (You will be pleasantly surprised.)

"The truly enlightened human, the 'Illumined One,' can be identified by certain qualities. He or she . . .

- \_\_\_\_\_ abandons all selfish desires, cravings, and torments of the heart
- \_\_\_\_\_ is satisfied with the True Self Within (Atma)
- \_\_\_\_\_ wants nothing outside of the True Self
- \_\_\_\_\_ knows that real bliss is found only within
- \_\_\_\_\_ is unperturbed by sorrow and adversity
- \_\_\_\_\_ does not thirst for pleasures
- \_\_\_\_\_ is free of the three traits that most tarnish the mind:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a) greed
  - \_\_\_\_\_ b) fear
  - \_\_\_\_\_ c) anger
- \_\_\_\_\_ is detached from worldly objects of desire

- \_\_\_\_\_ neither rejoices nor gets depressed when faced with good or bad fortune
- \_\_\_\_\_ is poised in wisdom above worldly turmoil
- \_\_\_\_\_ deftly withdraws the senses from attractions of the world (just as the turtle pulls in its limbs to protect itself)
- \_\_\_\_\_ keeps the mind ever intent on achieving the goal of life, which is union with Divinity
- \_\_\_\_\_ gets in the habit of substituting divine thoughts for bad thoughts and sense attractions
- \_\_\_\_\_ stays free of either attachment or aversion to sense attractions
- \_\_\_\_\_ is tranquil of heart
- \_\_\_\_\_ is absorbed in the peace and wisdom of the True Self Within (Atma)
- \_\_\_\_\_ knows that serenity is the point where all sorrow ends!
- \_\_\_\_\_ uses the mind's powers to restrain the senses and steady the mind
- \_\_\_\_\_ is totally still, never disturbed, despite the constant flow of desires and attachments
- \_\_\_\_\_ is free of ego (the sense of 'I' and 'mine')
- \_\_\_\_\_ lives life devoid of cravings; forgets desire.

Once you achieve this fixed, still state, you will never fall back into delusion, and will eventually achieve the goal of life, which is to merge into Me, Divinity." ❖

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