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Make Contradiction Your Tool...

Human life is a unique phenomenon of contradictions. It is a complex web of opposites, contrasts and contradictions. Even in the Gita, Lord Krishna points to contradictions in personal lives and exhorts us to develop equanimity of mind, stability of character and serenity of temper. All our scriptures say that one who treats loss and gain, praise and blame, victory and defeat, prosperity and adversity and a host of other contradictory things alike is stable of wisdom. Lord Krishna calls such a man, *sthitpragya*. Really we find that life is full of contradictions. Even conflicts galore arise in our lives, which we battle against, throughout our lives. Marx and Engels interpreted them through their dialectical materialism. Earlier German philosopher Hegel expounded his theory of dialectics according to which all development takes place through conflict leading ultimately to the resolution of the conflict. According to him the present situation is what is called Thesis. Through conflict it leads to antithesis; ultimately they both resolve into synthesis. Then again synthesis becomes thesis which again leads to antithesis, finally resolving into synthesis. This process of conflict and resolution goes on eternally. This is ordained by God Himself. The wiser is one who understands this law of life and Nature and makes the most of it through his prudence and circumspection which our seers call *Vivek*. The lesson to be drawn is that we should take this law as it is and direct our thoughts and actions in conformity with it. Let conflict and contradictions be the instrument of our growth and development rather than of destruction and devastation; of progress and upliftment rather than of retrogression and decay.

A major part of our time goes in contradiction; be it self-contradiction or contradiction with others. Both of these are extremely different and extract a lot of our energy and time. Our young readers should not believe that contradiction is simply the everyday conflict. It is a process. Great thinkers and philosophers have taken it as a way of life... The law of contradiction in things, that is, the law of the unity of opposites, is the basic law of materialist dialectics. Lenin said, "Dialectics in the proper sense is the study of contradiction in the very essence of objects." Engels explained the universality of contradiction as follows :

If simple mechanical change of place contains a contradiction, this is even more true of the higher forms of motion of matter and especially of organic life and its development. ... life consists precisely and primarily in this—that a being is at each moment itself and yet something else. Life is, therefore, also a contradiction which is present in things and processes themselves and which constantly originates and resolves itself and as soon as the contradiction ceases, life, too, comes to an end and death steps in. We likewise saw that also in the sphere of thought we could not escape contradictions and that for example the contradiction between man's inherently unlimited capacity for knowledge and its actual presence only in men who are externally limited and possess limited

cognition finds its solution in what is—at least practically, for us—an endless succession of generations, in infinite progress.

This clearly brings out the importance of contradiction in one's life but then we tend to misinterpret contradiction in a way where it becomes a hindering factor which has been overtly imposed. On the contrary, it is something which is naturally present in almost every sphere of life.