

Part Eight

The Return: Living the Teachings

You continue walking toward the golden light.

The forest gradually begins opening into a vast meadow bathed in the warm glow of the setting sun. The sky is painted with shades of amber, rose, violet, and soft gold. The air feels peaceful. The breeze has become gentle. Every sound seems quieter now, as though the world itself has slowed its pace.

Your guide walks beside you in silence. There is no need for many words anymore. The greatest teachings have already begun settling within your heart.

Ahead, you notice an ancient banyan tree standing alone in the centre of the meadow. Its branches stretch outward in every direction.

Its roots reach deeply into the Earth. It feels both grounded and expansive. Strong and gentle. You instinctively know this is where the journey begins to come full circle.

You walk toward the tree and sit comfortably beneath its broad canopy. The earth beneath you is warm. The trunk supports your back. Leaves dance softly overhead. Birds are returning to their nests as evening settles across the land. The guide sits beside you.

For several moments neither of you speaks. Then they quietly ask, "What have you learned?" You begin searching for words. At first your mind tries to gather teachings. Verses. Ideas. Philosophy. The guide smiles. "No." "I am not asking what you remember." "I am asking what has changed."

The question settles deeply. You notice your breathing. Earlier in the journey your breath carried uncertainty.

Now it feels spacious. Earlier your mind searched for answers. Now it seems comfortable resting with questions.

Earlier you believed you needed to conquer the battlefield. Now you understand it differently. The battlefield has never disappeared. Fear still visits. Doubt still appears. Grief still comes. Joy still comes. Uncertainty still belongs to life.

The difference is that you no longer believe every visitor should become your guide. The guide nods gently, as though hearing the thoughts forming within you. "The Bhagavad Gita has never promised a life without challenge."

"It teaches us how to meet challenge with awareness." "It does not ask us to stop feeling." "It teaches us how to stop becoming imprisoned by every feeling." "It does not ask us to stop thinking." "It teaches us to become wiser than every passing thought."

You look out across the meadow.

The wind moves effortlessly through the tall grasses. None of the blades resist. They bend. They rise again. Flexible. Responsive. Alive.

The guide continues. "Look carefully." The grasses do not argue with the wind. The river does not argue with the mountain. The seasons do not argue with time. Nature participates.

It responds. It adapts. Perhaps wisdom asks the same of us. You begin reflecting upon your own life. How often have you exhausted yourself arguing with reality? Wishing the past had been different. Demanding certainty from the future. Trying to control people who were never yours to control. Holding tightly to identities that had already begun changing. Perhaps suffering is not always created by what happens. Perhaps suffering often grows from our resistance to what is already here.

The guide reaches down and gently lifts a single autumn leaf from the ground. It is beautiful. Its colours have shifted from deep green to brilliant gold and crimson. The guide turns it slowly between their fingers. "This leaf has not failed because it is changing." "It has simply entered another season." The words seem to echo through your entire body.

How often have you mistaken change for failure? How often have you believed that endings meant something was wrong? Yet every season has its purpose. Spring awakens. Summer expands. Autumn releases. Winter restores. The tree never clings to its leaves. It trusts another spring will come. Perhaps we are invited to trust life in the same way.

The guide places the leaf gently back upon the earth. It is immediately carried away by the breeze. Neither of you attempts to stop it. You simply watch. Sometimes love allows things to remain. Sometimes love allows them to leave. Both require trust. The guide turns toward you once more.

"As a yoga teacher..."

"You will sometimes guide classes that feel effortless."

"And sometimes classes that challenge you."

"Some students will thank you."

"Some will quietly disappear."

"Some lessons will land immediately."

"Others may blossom years later."

"You cannot measure the value of your teaching by immediate results."

"You simply continue offering your practice with sincerity."

You recognize the familiar teaching of Karma Yoga. Offer your effort. Release your attachment. Trust the unfolding. The guide smiles warmly.

"And as a human being..."

"Offer yourself the very same compassion."

"You are still learning."

"You are still growing."

"You are still becoming."

"There is no final version of you waiting somewhere in the future."

"There is only this moment."

"And your willingness to meet it with presence."

Evening has now settled completely. The first stars begin appearing overhead. One by one they illuminate the sky. Soon thousands shimmer above the meadow. The guide looks upward. "The same stars watched over Arjuna."

"The same stars have watched every generation that has struggled, loved, questioned, healed, and hoped."

"You are part of something much older than your worries."

Something within you exhales. Not because every question has been answered. Because you no longer need every answer before continuing your journey. The guide slowly rises.

"It is time to return."

You stand together beneath the great banyan tree. The meadow begins glowing with soft golden light. The grasses. The trees. The stars. The earth beneath your feet. Everything seems quietly alive. You realize that nothing has become extraordinary. Your awareness has simply become more open. The guide begins walking once more. This time, the path leads back toward the place where your journey began. Toward the great battlefield. You wonder why.

The guide smiles before you even ask.

"Because the battlefield never disappeared."

"It simply looks different now."

Together you begin the final walk home.

Part Nine

Returning to the Battlefield

You and your guide continue walking together.

The stars shine brightly overhead now, illuminating the path with a soft silver glow. The night air is cool against your skin, carrying the scent of cedar, jasmine, and the earth after a warm day beneath the sun.

The path feels familiar. Not because you have walked it many times. Because something within you has changed. The questions that once felt heavy now feel spacious. The uncertainty that once felt frightening now feels alive with possibility. The guide walks beside you without speaking. Words are becoming less necessary. Wisdom often arrives quietly. Eventually the trees begin opening once again. You recognize the landscape immediately. Before you stretches the great plain of the battle field.

The place where this journey began. You stop walking. Something immediately feels different. The morning mist has been replaced by the soft light of the moon. The atmosphere is peaceful. Still. Gentle. The guide turns toward you.

"What do you notice?" You look carefully. The two great armies remain standing exactly where they were before. Fear is still there. Comparison. Perfectionism. Control. People pleasing. Doubt. Guilt. Shame. Across the field stands Courage. Compassion. Truth. Discernment. Joy. Trust. Love. Nothing has disappeared. For a brief moment you feel confused.

"I thought they would be gone."

The guide smiles with tremendous kindness.

"No."

"They were never meant to disappear."

"They were meant to be understood."

The words settle deeply. How many years have you spent trying to eliminate fear? Trying to stop overthinking? Trying to become perfectly confident? Trying to never feel anxious again? Trying to become someone who no longer struggles? The guide gently continues.

"Freedom is not the absence of fear."

"It is remembering that fear does not need to make your decisions."

"You will still feel uncertainty."

"You will still experience disappointment."

"You will still grieve."

"You will still celebrate."

"You will still love."

"You will still lose."

"You will still begin again."

"This is the nature of being human."

You slowly begin walking across the battlefield. Something extraordinary begins happening. As you walk past Fear, it quietly bows its head. Not defeated. Acknowledged. You smile gently toward it.

"Thank you." "Thank you for trying to protect me." "I no longer need you to lead."

Fear quietly steps aside. You continue walking. Comparison looks toward you. For years it convinced you that everyone else's path was somehow more meaningful than your own. Today you simply bow.

"Thank you." "You helped me notice what I admired." "But I no longer need to become someone else."

Comparison smiles softly. Then fades into the distance. Perfectionism approaches. Its polished armour now appears incredibly heavy. You suddenly realize how exhausting it has been carrying expectations that no human could ever fully satisfy. You gently remove one piece of armour from its shoulders. Then another. Then another.

Beneath all that metal stands someone remarkably gentle. Someone who simply wanted to be loved. You place your hand over your heart. "You have worked very hard." "You may rest now."

Perfectionism quietly sits beneath a nearby tree. For the first time...It closes its eyes. You continue walking. People Pleasing steps forward. It still smiles kindly. Still wants everyone around it to feel comfortable. Yet today you speak gently.

"I can be kind."

"And still have boundaries."

"I can care deeply."

"And still honour my own needs."

People Pleasing smiles. Not sadly. With relief. It no longer has to carry the impossible responsibility of making everyone happy. One by one you greet every figure. Control. Doubt. Guilt. Shame. Each one receives the same gift. Recognition. Compassion. Understanding. None are pushed away. None are condemned. Each simply steps aside. Not because they have been defeated. Because they are no longer misunderstood.

You arrive once again at the very centre of the battlefield. The guide stands quietly beside you.

"Look." You turn toward the second army. Courage walks forward first. Not carrying a sword. Only an open heart. Compassion joins beside it. Then Truth. Discernment. Patience. Joy. Love. Resilience.

One by one they begin walking toward you. Not to rescue you. To walk beside you. Then something beautiful happens. The two armies begin dissolving. Not into darkness. Into light. Fear transforms into wisdom. Comparison becomes inspiration. Control softens into trust. Perfectionism becomes wholehearted effort.

People pleasing becomes compassion with healthy boundaries. Doubt becomes curiosity. Shame becomes acceptance. Nothing was ever wasted. Every experience has contained the possibility of transformation. The guide quietly explains.

"The Bhagavad Gita never teaches us to reject parts of ourselves."

"It teaches us to bring awareness to them."

"Awareness changes our relationship with everything it touches."

You stand in complete stillness. The battlefield no longer feels like a battlefield. It feels like a landscape of learning. A place where every human being returns again and again throughout life. Not because they failed. Because they are growing. The guide looks toward you one final time.

"Every morning..."

"You will awaken somewhere upon this field."

"Some days fear will speak first."

"Some days courage."

"Some days grief."

"Some days gratitude."

"The practice is not deciding which voices exist."

"The practice is remembering which one deserves your attention."

You breathe deeply. Perhaps this is yoga. Not escaping life. Meeting life. With awareness. With compassion. With steadiness. With love. The moonlight now fills the entire plain. The battlefield slowly begins dissolving into countless tiny points of golden light. The figures. The horses. The chariot. The mountains. The forests.

Everything gradually becomes light. Only you and your guide remain. The guide smiles warmly.

"There is only one final step."

"It is time to return."

You begin walking together through the soft golden light, carrying every teaching not as knowledge to remember, but as wisdom to live.

Part Ten

Bringing the Gita Home

The golden light surrounding you gradually becomes softer. Warmer. Gentler. The battlefield has disappeared completely. The armies are gone. The chariot has dissolved into light.

The mountains, forests, rivers, and gardens that accompanied your journey slowly begin fading into the distance. Only your guide remains beside you.

You walk together through a quiet landscape unlike any place you have visited before. There are no destinations. No crossroads. No lessons waiting to be discovered. Only spaciousness. Only peace. It feels as though you are walking through your own heart. The guide eventually comes to a stop.

Before you stands a simple wooden bridge crossing a calm stream. The water moves slowly over smooth stones, creating a quiet melody that seems to echo through the entire landscape. You both stand silently for a few moments. Then the guide turns toward you.

"This bridge," they say softly, "is the place where understanding becomes living."

Many people read sacred texts. Many people memorize philosophy. Many people collect beautiful ideas. But wisdom is never measured by what we know. Wisdom is revealed by how we live. The Bhagavad Gita has never asked us simply to study its teachings. It asks us to embody them. The guide begins walking slowly across the bridge. You follow. Halfway across, they pause. Looking down into the flowing water below, they ask,

"What will you carry with you?"

You begin reflecting on everything you have experienced. The battlefield. The two armies. The chariot. The guide. The mountain. The garden. The lake. The stars. Every image now feels less like a story and more like a mirror. The guide smiles gently.

"The Gita is not asking you to become Krishna."

"It is inviting you to discover the wisdom that already exists within you."

"The battlefield is not somewhere else."

"It appears every day."

"It appears every time you choose between fear and courage."

"Every time you choose between reaction and response."

"Every time you choose between ego and compassion."

"Every time you choose whether to remain asleep or awaken."

You slowly continue walking. The bridge leads into a beautiful village. Children laugh as they play beneath enormous trees. An elderly woman sweeps the front step of her home with quiet contentment. A potter shapes clay with patient hands. A young couple plants flowers together. A teacher welcomes students through an open doorway. Nothing extraordinary is happening.

And yet...Everything feels sacred. The guide notices you observing the village.

"This," they whisper,

"is where yoga lives."

"Not only in temples."

"Not only on meditation cushions."

"Not only in philosophy."

"It lives here."

"In ordinary moments."

The words settle deeply. Yoga lives in the way we greet another person. The way we listen. The way we speak. The way we prepare a meal. The way we respond when someone disagrees with us. The way we care for our own body. The way we rest. The way we forgive. The way we continue showing up when life becomes difficult. You continue walking through the village. A young child falls while running. Without hesitation, an older child reaches down and helps them stand. Neither expects praise. Neither thinks twice about the act. Compassion simply expresses itself.

Farther along, a gardener quietly waters flowers blooming beside the road. No one is watching. No applause follows. Yet the flowers continue growing.

Karma Yoga. Offering effort without attachment. Outside another home, an elderly man sits watching the sunset. He smiles at everyone who passes. Nothing about him appears hurried. Nothing appears unfinished. Simply presence. Santosha. Contentment. You begin recognizing the teachings everywhere.

The Yamas.

The Niyamas.

The Bhagavad Gita.

The Koshas.

They are no longer separate philosophies.

They have become one way of living.

The guide stops outside a small yoga studio. Inside, a teacher quietly prepares the room before students arrive. She rolls out mats. Straightens blankets. Lights a candle. Then she pauses. She closes her eyes. Takes one slow breath. And simply becomes present. The guide asks,

"What made her class special?"

You think for a moment.

"It hasn't even begun."

The guide smiles.

"It began long before the students arrived."

"It began with her presence."

The words touch something deep within you. Perhaps this is what it truly means to become a yoga teacher. Not someone who possesses perfect knowledge. Not someone who demonstrates the most advanced postures. Not someone who always says the right thing. A yoga teacher is someone continually practicing the teachings themselves. Someone willing to return. Again. And again. You begin reflecting upon your own teaching. How often have you worried about sequencing? Finding the perfect words? Remembering every philosophical detail? Trying to create the perfect class? The guide speaks softly.

"Your students will forget many of your cues."

"They may forget the sequence."

"They may forget the playlist."

"They may even forget the theme."

"But they will remember how they felt in your presence."

"They will remember whether they felt welcomed."

"Whether they felt respected."

"Whether they felt safe enough to listen to themselves."

"They will remember whether you trusted their own inner wisdom."

Teaching is not about becoming indispensable. Teaching is about helping people discover that the wisdom they seek already lives within them. The guide continues walking toward the edge of the village. The sun now rests low upon the horizon. Everything glows with soft amber light. The guide turns toward you one final time.

"I cannot walk the next steps for you."

"You never needed me to."

"I simply reminded you of what you already knew."

You feel gratitude rising within you. Not because every question has been answered. But because you no longer fear the questions themselves. The guide smiles warmly.

"When you breathe with awareness..."

"I will be there."

"When you teach with compassion..."

"I will be there."

"When you choose courage instead of fear..."

"I will be there."

"When you forget..."

"And gently remember again..."

"I will be there."

The guide slowly bows. You return the gesture. As you lift your head once more... They are gone. Not because they have left. Because you realize they were never separate from you. The quiet wisdom that guided you has always lived within your own heart. You stand alone. Yet you have never felt less alone. Ahead, the landscape gradually begins dissolving into warm golden light. The familiar awareness of your own body slowly begins returning.

You notice the gentle rhythm of your breathing. The support beneath you.

The quiet beating of your heart. The room around you slowly begins coming back into your awareness.

You remain still for a few more breaths. Not rushing to return.

Simply noticing.

The Bhagavad Gita has often been described as a conversation between Krishna and Arjuna. Perhaps now you understand something even deeper. It is also the conversation that quietly unfolds within every human heart. The voice of fear. The voice of wisdom. The invitation is not to silence one forever. The invitation is to become increasingly able to recognize which voice is worthy of your trust. Carry that awareness with you.

Into your relationships.

Into your teaching.

Into your work.

Into your moments of uncertainty.

Into your moments of joy.

Into every ordinary day that quietly becomes extraordinary through your presence.

Take one final slow breath.

As you inhale, receive the wisdom of this journey.

As you exhale, offer it gently back into the world.

Begin inviting small movements back into your body.

Perhaps gently moving your fingers.

Your toes.

Stretching in any way that feels nourishing.

There is no rush.

Gently allow light to return to your eyes.

As you continue your own journey, may you remember that the Bhagavad Gita is not simply a story about an ancient battlefield.

It is a living invitation.

To meet each moment with courage.

To act with integrity.

To serve without attachment.

To love with an open heart.

To trust your deepest wisdom.

And to remember, again and again, that the greatest guide you will ever meet has been quietly walking beside you all along.