

## Transforming Habits

### How to use these resources:

1. Identify the reading studies you would like to use.
2. Read the DVD talk summaries and select the ones which you think would work best with your chosen reading studies. You may want to select only one 15-minute section depending on the length of time you have allotted for watching the talk. Preview the entire talk to decide which 15-minute section to use.

### Reading study options:

These reading selections have been chosen from several books by Easwaran. They address several topics about transforming habits, such as:

- All of our sorrow can be traced to self-will, the desire to have our own way. Self-will's constant refrain is, "I like this, I don't like that," which is our conditioned habitual response to life. These are our samskaras – processes that can be changed and transformed
- Strategies for developing detachment, determination, the ability to withdraw attention, and how to go against the current
- Meditation, the mantram, training the senses, putting others first, and strategies for conserving prana.

### The Bhagavad Gita for Daily Living, Volume 2

366–370 "People sometimes ask me" – "closer to your goal." (14 paragraphs)

### The Bhagavad Gita for Daily Living, Volume 3

435–439 "There are four obstacles" – "have to lie down on the tracks." (15 paragraphs)

456–461 "Two forces pervade human life" – "feebly like a shadow." (15 paragraphs)

## Essence of the Upanishads

*Note: If you are using Dialogue with Death, you will find this reading in Chapter 6: Will & Desire in the section The Transformation of Desire.*

125–127 “Desire and Will are” – “The choice is wholly ours.” (10 paragraphs)

## Conquest of Mind

*Note: The page numbers are from the third revised edition 2010. In earlier editions, please look up the chapter information in italics at the end of each listing.*

48–51 “This kind of juggling” – “always free to enjoy.” (14 paragraphs, *Chapter 4: Juggling*)

68–69 “The explanation of this” – “positive influence on all.” (14 paragraphs, *Chapter 6: All Life is Yoga*)

70–72 “These big fellows” – “Otherwise we would not grow.” (15 paragraphs, *Chapter 6: All Life is Yoga*)

95–97 “The cry of freedom” – “dictates of pleasure and pain.” (10 paragraphs, *Chapter 8: The Forces of Life*)

98–101 “‘Yoga,’ says the Bhagavad Gita” – “Lives in Eternity’s sunrise.” (10 paragraphs, *Chapter 8: The Forces of Life*)

133–135 “The next strategy is reflection” – “happy, worthwhile life.” (7 paragraphs, *Chapter 10: Strategies for Freedom*)

135–137 “The Buddha’s third strategy” – “part of an indivisible whole.” (5 paragraphs, *Chapter 10: Strategies for Freedom*)

143–145 “After you have been meditating” – “knocked about first.” (6 paragraphs, *Chapter 10: Strategies for Freedom*)

## Video Talk Options with Summaries:

### 7: Real-Life Stories of Transcendence, Part I: *The True Spirit of Worship*

\* To help motivate us to transform our negative, compulsive habits – *samskaras* – we can offer the uncomfortable, difficult, even painful experiences we have for the benefit of others.

\* Tips for how to go against pleasure and bear with pain in conquering our negative habits.

\* By utilizing the spiritual practice of *yajna* – “an act directed to the welfare of others, done without desiring any return for it” – we can find motivation and purpose to tackle our *samskaras*.

### 10: Encouragement from the Buddha, Part I: *Swimming Against the Current*

\* Topic covered is the Buddha’s concept of the Brahmin. The Buddha’s advice: “Conquer all your passions, go beyond your likes and dislikes and all fetters will fall away.”

\* There is not much challenge in doing what we like and avoiding what we dislike.

\* Valuable tips on how to “swim against the current.”

### 28: Breaking Chains, Part I: *Breaking Chains*

\* Tips on how to break the chains of our negative, self-willed habits.

\* The same prana that goes into making negative *samskaras* can be put into making positive ones.

\* Two important tips:

1. If we continue yielding to a desire or compulsion it will become a habit – good or bad.
2. When we can't authentically behave the way we would like to, act out the positive behavior/habit we want to acquire. As we repeatedly act out the positive, it will eventually become natural for us.

### **28: Breaking Chains, Part II:** *Fetters & Freedom*

- \* The “fetters” that bind us: love of money and personal possessions, the thirst for pleasure, and the lust for power. These powerful desires shape our lives and hold us in bondage.
- \* Breaking free from them requires turning against our own needs towards the needs of others.

### **29: Inner Freedom & Beauty, Part I:** *Inner Freedom & Beauty*

- \* The importance of dedicating ourselves to unifying our desires so as to reach the supreme goal.
- \* As we work towards unifying our desires we may experience a release from the bondage of a particular *samskara* that has had it hold on us for decades. That “is infinite joy.”

### **30: The Spiritual Fight, Part I:** *The Spiritual Fight*

- \* After many years of *sadhana*, our *samskaras* will begin to “raise their pretty heads.” This is what we have been waiting for, and training for. We will have many challenges and tournaments with our *samskaras* but finally, if we persist, we will be able to level the blow that will make the ego hit the right ground. We should not run away from opportunities to make progress in this arena.
- \* Tips on how to defeat our *samskara* opponent.
- \* It is meditation which will help us solve very long-standing problems and the mantram will be there for us as “ready cash” to carry us through in the short term.

### **31: Go Beyond the World of Fragments, Part I:** *Go Beyond the World of Fragments*

- \* We all have the resources right within us to face our negative habits and emotional problems.
- \* We have our teacher’s wisdom and experience to guide us as we confront our compulsive desires and habits. As we use the eight-point program we begin to

open up to what real love is and – as we do so – we find that we are able to change our attitudes and habits more easily for the benefit of all.

### **33: Patience & Beauty, Part II:** *The Climax of Spiritual Evolution*

- \* Gaining complete mastery over our thoughts and emotions is the secret of where beauty lies.
- \* We should not let physical factors impede our spiritual growth. Through our thoughts and actions we are in the process of creating the body we will have in our next lifetime.
- \* It is imperative that we develop the detachment and discrimination to choose our thoughts and actions carefully.
- \* We need to address our conditioned eating habits and compulsive desires to get our own needs met in relationships, regardless of the needs of others. As we do so our health – mental and physical – improves, and our desire to be of service to all becomes boundless.