

The Inner Circle — Edition #9

Absolute Faith: What Gita Chapter 17 Teaches Modern Entrepreneurs

By Dr. Dibyendu Choudhury | The Inner Circle Newsletter



The Chapter Nobody Reads

Chapter 17 of the Bhagavad Gita is called **Shraddhatraya Vibhaga Yoga** — the Yoga of the Threefold Faith. It is one of the most practically applicable chapters in the entire text, and almost nobody reads it.

Shraddha means faith — but not the blind, passive faith of popular religion. Shraddha is the quality of conviction that animates your actions. It is what you actually believe, as demonstrated by what you actually do.

"The faith of every person, O Arjuna, is in accordance with their nature. A person is made of their faith — whatever their faith is, that is what they are." — **Bhagavad Gita 17:3**

The Three Faiths

The Gita identifies three distinct qualities of faith — each shaping the entrepreneur's path in a fundamentally different way.

Sattvic Faith

Directed toward what is genuinely nourishing. The entrepreneur with Sattvic faith builds for the long term, invests in people, and makes decisions from clarity.

Rajasic Faith

Directed toward prestige, power, and visible success. The Rajasic entrepreneur builds fast, burns bright, and often burns out. Not wrong — but incomplete.

Tamasic Faith

Directed toward what numbs, distracts, or comforts. This is the faith of procrastination, of self-deception, of businesses that survive without purpose.

Sattvic Faith — Building from Clarity

The entrepreneur with Sattvic faith builds for the long term, invests in people, and makes decisions from clarity. This is the highest quality of conviction — one that is rooted not in ego or fear, but in genuine understanding of what is nourishing for oneself, one's team, and the world.

Long-Term Vision

Decisions are made with patience and perspective, not reactive urgency.

Investment in People

Relationships and teams are treated as the true foundation of enterprise.

Clarity of Action

Each move is aligned with purpose — free from the noise of comparison and status.

Rajasic Faith — The Burning Ambition

Directed toward prestige, power, and visible success. The Rajasic entrepreneur builds fast, burns bright, and often burns out. **Not wrong — but incomplete.**

Rajasic faith is the engine of many celebrated startup stories. It produces extraordinary energy, competitive drive, and the willingness to sacrifice comfort for achievement. The world rewards it — at least in the short term.

But the Gita cautions: when faith is anchored entirely in external validation, the entrepreneur becomes a hostage to outcomes they cannot fully control. The fire that drives Rajasic ambition can illuminate — or consume.

1

Prestige-Driven

Decisions made to impress, not to serve.

2

Rapid Scaling

Speed prioritised over sustainability.

3


Burnout Risk

The flame burns bright — and can burn out.

Tamasic Faith — The Quiet Danger

Tamasic faith is directed toward what numbs, distracts, or comforts. This is the faith of procrastination, of self-deception, of businesses that survive without purpose.

It is the most dangerous of the three — not because it is loud or destructive, but because it is invisible. The Tamasic entrepreneur often appears busy, even productive. But the underlying conviction is one of avoidance: avoiding discomfort, avoiding accountability, avoiding the hard clarity that Sattvic faith demands.

 Tamasic faith does not announce itself. It disguises itself as caution, as patience, as "waiting for the right moment." The Gita asks us to look honestly at what our actions reveal about our actual convictions.

The Entrepreneurial Application

Which faith drives your business decisions right now? Not which faith you aspire to — but which faith is actually running the engine?

The answer is visible in three places:



Where You Spend Your Most Focused Hours

Time is the most honest ledger. What you give your deepest attention to reveals the faith that actually governs you — not the faith you profess.



Which Relationships You Prioritise

Do you invest in people who challenge and elevate you, or those who confirm what you already believe? Your relational choices are a map of your faith.



What You Do When No One Is Watching

The truest measure of Shraddha is private behaviour. The Gita is unambiguous: your faith is what you do in the dark, not what you declare in the light.

A Framework for Self-Inquiry

The Gita offers not a judgment but a mirror. Use these questions as a diagnostic — an honest audit of the faith currently animating your enterprise.

SATTVIC (Lasting Value)

Am I building
for lasting value?



Do my decisions
serve others?



Am I acting
from or
clarity or fear?



RAJASIC (Sustainable Impact)

Am I chasing
recognition?



Is my pace
sustainable?



What if no one
applauded?

TAMASIC (Honest Action)

Am I avoiding
hard
conversations?



Is comfort
masquerading as
strategy?

What am I
avoiding doing?



These are not rhetorical questions. Sit with them. The quality of your answers — and your willingness to answer honestly — is itself a measure of your Shraddha.

Absolute Faith Is Not Certainty

The Gita does not promise results. It promises that Sattvic action, sustained with Sattvic faith, produces a Sattvic life. The entrepreneur's task is to align faith with action — and trust the rest.

"Absolute faith is not the absence of doubt. It is the commitment to act rightly even in the presence of doubt." — A reading of Gita 17:3

This is the liberating paradox at the heart of Chapter 17: you do not need certainty to act with integrity. You need only the willingness to examine your faith honestly, to align it with what is genuinely nourishing, and to let your actions speak what your convictions truly are.

The modern entrepreneur lives in a world of radical uncertainty — markets shift, technologies disrupt, and the future refuses to be predicted. The Gita's answer is not a strategy for certainty. It is a discipline of faith: cultivate Sattvic conviction, act from that conviction consistently, and release attachment to the outcome.

Until Next Fortnight

The Core Teaching

Shraddha is not what you say you believe. It is what your actions, your time, and your private choices reveal that you believe. Chapter 17 is an invitation to close the gap between the two.

The Entrepreneur's Practice

Audit your faith regularly — not as self-criticism, but as navigation. Know which quality of faith is driving you, and consciously cultivate the Sattvic.

The Promise of the Gita

Sattvic action, sustained with Sattvic faith, produces a Sattvic life. Align faith with action — and trust the rest.

Until next fortnight — keep thinking, keep building.

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