

# The Universal Law of Karma

Karma means actions. The law of karma is a universal system that is based on the concept of cause and effect. The law of physics states that every action produces an equal reaction. The law of karma works on the same principle. Positive karma encourages progress of the soul, and negative karma hinders the progress of the soul.

Karma can also mean the choices or decisions that one makes through free will. Throughout our lifetime, we are engaged in a series of choices. There are really only two options: either you make a positive choice or you make a negative choice. We are tested in a wide variety of contexts. We make choices involving our family situations, our physical bodies, our career, and so on. After a choice has been made, the results of that choice are apparent at various intervals. Many of the results will be witnessed in this lifetime; other outcomes will not be witnessed in this life. The laws of nature decide when and how you will witness the results of your actions.

Some choices we make affect us individually, but we also make choices that affect others. We are constantly making individual choices that affect our body, mind, and soul. For example, if you want to stay healthy, you have to eat properly and exercise regularly. In order to educate yourself, you must attend an academic institution. To benefit the soul, you must engage in religious activity and prayers. Every choice that you make which involves another individual directly affects your soul. When we make a decision that relates to another person, we do not immediately see its result. However, as soon as that action takes place, it is recorded. If, for example, you have secretly stolen some money from your best friend, the resulting negative karma will be recorded by your soul, by the soul of your friend, and by existence. Then existence will ensure that a situation will arise where this negative action is rectified. Likewise all actions cause similar reactions. You may be surprised to know that karmic law does not begin at our first human incarnation. It goes back to the animal state of evolution. Animals also have the freedom to make a series of choices. They contain a soul that is evolving towards humanity.

Many of the decisions we make are complex. They are rarely simple cases of right and wrong or white and black; there is a lot of gray area. If all decisions were simple, we would all be enlightened and the law of karma would cease to exist. What should be the basis of your decision when you are unsure of which way to go? The critical factor is your intentions. No matter what decision you make, if your intentions are good, you are heading in the right direction.

All souls in this world must rectify and learn from the choices they have made. Certain souls are given the opportunity to make choices that affect a large number of

people. A political leader often makes decisions that affect millions of people. As a result, his karma is connected with every member of the country. The same idea applies to parents making decisions for their children, doctors for their patients, teachers for their students, a sage for his disciples, and so on. Some souls come down with a special purpose. Perhaps they have travelled for a long time to achieve the knowledge to make the right choices.

Let us assume you have a professional career, and you are making decisions that affect a large number of people. The individuals under your supervision will either prosper or suffer as a result of your actions. This situation is very common and often creates a dilemma. If you make an important decision for selfish reasons, your intentions are misleading you and everyone else. That one decision will affect many other individuals, and it will be permanently recorded by existence. On the other hand, if a decision is made with good intentions, even if there are more obstacles, your soul will immediately grow as a result of helping others.

Individuals often seek psychiatric treatment because of the guilt they feel. It comes from decisions they made earlier in their lifetime. Guilt is a cancer of the soul; it can destroy your spiritual health. If you know that you acted with good intentions, you will be able to let go of your guilt. Your soul will remind you that you based your decision on the best interests of other individuals; therefore, you have done all you can. Most situations you encounter should be dealt with in a similar manner.

The principles of karma do not apply to only one lifetime. It is an eternal system of debits and credits, an invisible bank account with multiple transactions. Let us now consider the eternal cycle of karma. What is predestination? What is free will? How do they relate to karma? All the circumstances that you encounter in this lifetime as a result of choices from past lives are predestined. All the choices you make in this lifetime from the time you are born are products of your free will.

The law of karma teaches us to accept the outcomes of our past actions. Our physical body, our parents, our children, our relationships, our health and wealth are all predestined. How we decide to handle our physical body, our parents, our children, our relationships, our health and wealth is a result of our free will.

The Vedas, among other prominent scriptures, shed light on this fundamental area. Vedic literature states that the soul is the spiritual element of the human that never dies. The soul is eternal. The soul lives in the body for a certain number of years and goes through a series of transformations. When the body is worn out, the soul departs and, after a short time, re-enters a mother's womb and assumes another body.

Psychologists now practice regression therapy. Patients are not only encouraged to return to their childhood, they can also go back to a previous lifetime. Quite often, a patient is given regression therapy to cure an illness that is untreatable by conventional medicine. All the illnesses that manifest themselves in the body, as well as those that affect the mind, are results of our past actions.

Between our physical eyes, in the centre of our forehead, there is a third eye. The third eye is invisible to normal eyesight. It contains a blueprint, in minute detail, of each action of our present life and all our previous lives. The ancient sages of the East engaged in lengthy sessions of meditation. They could meditate for sixteen hours a day without resting. They mastered the techniques of meditation to such an extent that they were able to approach the blueprint at will. They were able to read the blueprint page by page.

Each element in the universe revolves around a certain set of laws. The body has a set of laws. If you eat too much, you become sick. If you sleep too much, you become lazy. If you don't exercise, your body starts to deteriorate. The soul also revolves around the laws of the spiritual world. It has to follow all the evolutionary stages, starting from life in the sea. The soul has a responsibility to keep a balance between the world of spirit and the world of matter.

Before a soul enters the womb of a mother, it chooses one mother and one father. Before the soul comes down, there are millions of potential mothers. Why does it choose that one particular mother? One of the main reasons is karma. A special bond was created between the mother and the child through a choice that was made in the past. The soul waits in the spirit world for the mother to be able to conceive. The link between the mother and the child continues for many lifetimes.

It is mentioned in the holy Gita that a mystic only chooses birth in the family of a mystic. The holy Gita teaches us that there has to be great compatibility between the soul that is taking birth and the parents who are giving birth. A mystic is a spiritually elevated soul whose karma is based on good or positive decisions. A soul with such an impressive record will only choose parents who also have spiritual qualities.

Family trees continue from one generation to another. It is possible for a great-grandfather to come back as a grandson. A family is a very special unit chosen by existence. Do not take the presence of your family members for granted. Your grandmother, your grandfather, father, mother, brothers, and sisters have been with you more times than you can imagine. Love them, help them, learn from them, and respect them. Build positive karma with them. You will need their help not only in this world but also in the spiritual world and other worlds.

Those who have had a near-death experience claim that when they are going towards the spiritual world, a deceased family member comes to receive them. They are absolutely correct. When we are in the spirit world, we have multi-sensory perception. We are aware of all our past lives. Family relationships continue in the spirit world. You should learn not to build any negative karma, especially with your loved ones. Jealousy, hate, tyranny, manipulation, and emotional abuse are all tools of negative karma. If one was to pass away after inflicting pain on his family members, he carries that burden of pain and guilt into the next world. He is then given another chance to return to this world and make things right.

According to the great epic the Mahabharata, journeying between this world and the spiritual world is an ongoing process. The disciple of Lord Krishna (a spiritual master) poses a very important question to the master. He asks the master if he had any past lives. Krishna explains to his disciple that he has evolved through many lives, but he was not aware of them. Today, many individuals are coming forward with experiences of life after death, near-death experiences, and experiences relating to reincarnation. All these concepts are linked to the law of karma.

Individuals who have had a near-death experience claim that there is one moment in particular that is very vivid. In an instant, every event that took place during their lifetime flashes before them. Good actions bring happiness and bad actions cause pain. All the events that we witness are the actions that were recorded in our personal blueprint, the diary of our daily lives. Clean up your diary and get rid of the blots on it. Start taking proper care of your soul by creating positive karma. Life after death and reincarnation have been assured in many holy scriptures. The more open you can be to esoteric concepts, the better your chances will be for spiritual growth.

Many individuals go through many intimate relationships. Often these relationships end up in marriage. At the end of their lives, they wonder why they had so many relationships. Were they predestined or acts of free will? The reason for a relationship is to finish your past karma with your partner, not to extend it with negative actions. Pay off what you owe, and begin again with a clean slate. All the relationships that you started in your past lives with your free will come back to you in this life.

When you decided to take birth, you came with a very large agenda to fulfill. In one lifetime, an individual endures much adversity, suffering, and pain. Ask an old man about all the events that took place during his lifetime and he will tell you volumes. Life will make all kinds of demands on you. It will ask for your money, services, love, happiness, health, and reputation.

So, you may be asking, how does all this benefit my soul? The answer is simple: it is not possible to attain spiritual union with God until all your debts are paid. So be wise and pay off as much as you can. There are many areas to consider in order for you to end the cycle of karma. The rest of this book discusses these areas.

We are all individual souls on a journey towards the unknown. We don't own anyone or anything. Everything in this world is temporary. Even your physical body has been lent to you for a higher purpose. Every time you make a decision, make it consciously. Get into the habit of pausing a few seconds before making a decision. All decisions made out of anger, hate, and jealousy will hinder your progress. All decisions made out of love and awareness will enhance the quality of your soul.

During the course of a day, we are forced to make many decisions: decisions at work, decisions with our family members, decisions while driving, etc. In order to make you more conscious of the decisions you make on a daily basis, use the following technique. First you must always listen to your heart; that is where God resides. Any decision that does not involve another person, you can make immediately, as long as it does not harm your body, mind or soul. Any decision involving another person should be postponed for twenty-four hours if you feel at all unsure. After twenty-four hours, your decision will be made more calmly and consciously. Get into the habit of reminding yourself that your actions are interconnected with others around you.