CHAPTER VII

VEDIC SPIRITUAL MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

According to the Vedas, an inquiry and introspection into the inner spirit (Atman) is considered to be the supreme objective of human existence and endeavour. Realisation of the true nature of the Atman calls for deep concentration, meditation, contemplation and reflection about the stainless and eternal cosmic reality, which is beyond the easy comprehension of a mundane person. This conquest of the subtlest of all the subtler elements is the ultimate challenge to any human being, for which the appropriate guidance and direction are so compassionately provided by the Vedas for the benefit and redemption of humanity.

The Vedic dharma covers both outward-directed action (pravṛtti) and inward-directed action (nivṛtti) which together constitute the means of social welfare (abhyaudaya) and spiritual growth and fulfilment of all beings (niśreyasa). The Vedas gently remind that the whole span of life is but short and that man never gets satisfied with wealth while worries consume one as rats eat weavers’ threads. The Vedas point out that that there is no prospect of immortality through wealth.

1701 Kat Upa i-1-26
1702 Kat Upa i-1-27
1703 RkV Sam x-33-3
1704 Brh Upa iv-5-3
Riches come now to one, and now to another and like the wheels of car are are ever rolling.\textsuperscript{1705}

The \textit{Vedas} call upon the humans to undertake a blemishless spiritual life so as to look inward and explore the \textit{Atman} which is the only perennial source of eternal bliss.

One shall advance unhindered along the paths of order.\textsuperscript{1706}

One shall step forward.\textsuperscript{1707}

The \textit{Vedas} caution about the ephemeral and cyclical process of repeated births and deaths. They inspire man to understand the absolute reality, unravel and realize the \textit{Atman} which is resident in every living being, yet so tough to grasp. The \textit{Vedas} declare that bliss on realization of the Self is the supreme and ultimate.

One wishes for oneself yonder world and the Universe.\textsuperscript{1708}

The \textit{Vedas} urge one to reflect upon the following for an enquiry into the ultimate reality:

What was the tree, what wood in sooth produced it, from which they fashioned out the earth and heaven?

Ye thoughtful men, inquire within your spirit whereon he stood when he established all things.\textsuperscript{1709}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{1705} RgV Sam x-117-5 \\
\textsuperscript{1706} Vaj Sam vi-12 \\
\textsuperscript{1707} Vaj Sam ii-13 \\
\textsuperscript{1708} Vaj Sam xxxi-22 \\
\textsuperscript{1709} Vaj Sam xvii-20 
\end{flushright}
7.1 An Overview of the Ātman

The Vedas present a clear cut picture about the immortal and untainted nature of the Ātman, the realization of which is the ultimate goal of human efforts.

The Ātman is intelligent, imperishable (amṛtah) and undecaying (aṁśitah).¹⁷¹⁰

It is subtler than the subtest and greater than the greatest.¹⁷¹¹

This Self is the ruler of all beings and the king of all beings.¹⁷¹²

All the indriyas rest on the Ātman.¹⁷¹³

All this is verily Ātman.¹⁷¹⁴

I am Indra; never at any time I am a thrall to death.¹⁷¹⁵

Those who seek the Ātman by austerity, abstinence, faith and knowledge attain the Āditya (Sun) by the northern course.¹⁷¹⁶

Men may roll up all space like a piece of leather: still there is no end of sorrow for them without realizing the luminous one.¹⁷¹⁷

Like corn the mortal ripens and falls and like corn is born again.¹⁷¹⁸

¹⁷¹⁰ Tai Upa i-10
¹⁷¹¹ Kat Upa i-2-20
¹⁷¹² Brh Upa ii-5-15
¹⁷¹³ Pra Upa iv-8
¹⁷¹⁴ Cha Upa vii-25-2
¹⁷¹⁵ RgV Sam x-68-5
¹⁷¹⁶ Pra Upa i-10
¹⁷¹⁷ Sve Upa vi-20
¹⁷¹⁸ Kat Upa i-1-6
According to one’s work and knowledge, some souls enter the womb to have a body while others go to the plants.\textsuperscript{1719}

It is unchanging, auspicious and non-dual.\textsuperscript{1720}

The \textit{Ātman} is neither born, nor does it die; It has neither come into existence from anything nor anything has come into existence from it. This unborn, eternal, undecaying and ancient being suffers no destruction even when the body is killed.\textsuperscript{1721}

It is unchanging, auspicious and non-dual.\textsuperscript{1722}

\subsection*{7.2 Annam and Ātman}

The \textit{Vedas} magnificently describe the cycle of inter-relationship between \textit{annam} (food) and \textit{Ātman} (Self).

By food vital breaths are nourished; By nourishing life-breath, bodily strength is gained; By bodily strength one gets the capacity to practise austerity; By austerity faith is established; By intelligence sense control is achieved; By sense control, reflection results; By reflection one gets tranquility; By tranquility one gets the conclusive experience of truth; Conclusive experience of truth results in remembrance; remembrance leads to continuous remembrance; continuous remembrance produces uninterrupted direct realization of the truth; by uninterrupted

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\textsuperscript{1719} Kat Upa v-7  
\textsuperscript{1720} Man Upa vii  
\textsuperscript{1721} Kat Upa i-1-18  
\textsuperscript{1722} Man Upa vii
direct realization of the truth one knows the supreme Atman; Therefore one who gives food gives all these.\textsuperscript{1723}

The realized soul exclaims that he is the food (annam), the eater of the food (annādaḥ) and the author of the śloka. He is the first born of the True and immortal. He declares that he has conquered all in the world as is luminous like the Sun.\textsuperscript{1724}

7.3 Brahman

Brahman is truth (Satyam), knowledge (jñānam) and infinity (anantam).\textsuperscript{1725}

All this is verily Brahman.\textsuperscript{1726}

Verily beyond the unmanifested is the all-pervading Puruṣa, imperceptible to the senses, knowing whom every creature is emancipated and becomes immortal.\textsuperscript{1727}

All this world is verily the supreme Brahman.\textsuperscript{1728}

Brahman is one deity, though called by many names and forms.\textsuperscript{1729}

Brahman is without antecedent and without consequent, without interior and without exterior.\textsuperscript{1730}

He frees from bonds of death.\textsuperscript{1731}

Thou art Vasvi, Aditi, Āditya, Chandrā.\textsuperscript{1732}

\textsuperscript{1723} Mah Upa lxxix-15
\textsuperscript{1724} Tai Upa iii-10
\textsuperscript{1725} Tai Upa ii-1
\textsuperscript{1726} Man Upa ii
\textsuperscript{1727} Kat Upa vi-8
\textsuperscript{1728} Mun Upa ii-2-11
\textsuperscript{1729} RgV Sam x-114-5, RgV Sam ii-1-3 to 11, RgV Sam viii-1-27, RgV Sam iii-54-17, ArV Sam xiii-4
\textsuperscript{1730} Brh Upa ii-5-19
\textsuperscript{1731} Vaj Sam iii-60
\textsuperscript{1732} Vaj Sam iv-21
All this is enveloped by the Lord.\textsuperscript{1733}

Speech returns along with the mind without reaching the Brahman. One who knows the bliss of the Brahman fears not at any time.\textsuperscript{1734}

The Brahman can neither be attained by the study of the Vedas nor by the intellect and not even by great learning; It can be known through the self alone that the aspirant prays to and to that seeker this Self reveals its true nature.\textsuperscript{1735}

His form is not within the purview of vision; No one can see him with eyes; He is revealed by the intuition of the intellect residing in the heart and controlling the mind.\textsuperscript{1736}

Brahman is the most benign and auspicious the fulfiller of all desires.\textsuperscript{1737}

His glory is greater than His creation.\textsuperscript{1738}

In the beginning, this was Being alone, one only, without a second.\textsuperscript{1739}

In the beginning this was but the absolute Self alone.\textsuperscript{1740}

Not this, not this: For there is no other or better specification of the Brahman than this. It is the truth of truth.\textsuperscript{1741}

This one is the Lord of all, who is omniscient, the inner director and source of all. This is verily the place of origin and dissolution of all beings.\textsuperscript{1742}

He is the soul of the universe, immortal, All-knowing, all-pervading and the eternal ruler and protector of the universe.\textsuperscript{1743}

\textsuperscript{1733} Vaj Sam xl-1
\textsuperscript{1734} Tai Upa ii-4
\textsuperscript{1735} Kat Upa i-2-23
\textsuperscript{1736} Kat Upa vi-9
\textsuperscript{1737} Tai Sam iv-5-10
\textsuperscript{1738} RgV Sam x-90-3
\textsuperscript{1739} Cha Upa vi-2-1
\textsuperscript{1740} Ait Upa i-1-1
\textsuperscript{1741} Brh Upa ii-3-6
\textsuperscript{1742} Man Upa vi
\textsuperscript{1743} Sve Upa vi-17
There is no counterpart for Him, whose glory verily is great.\textsuperscript{1744}

He is the creator and knower of everything. He is His own source. He is the repository of all good qualities. He is the controller of matter and spirit. He is the cause of Liberation from the cycle of births and deaths.\textsuperscript{1745}

One shall never deny \textit{Brahman}, nor \textit{Brahman} deny one.\textsuperscript{1746}

One shall know the creator.\textsuperscript{1747}

The teacher shall impart the very secret knowledge of \textit{Brahman}.\textsuperscript{1748}

The knower of the \textit{Brahman} attains the Supreme.\textsuperscript{1749}

One who knows it as existing in the cave of one’s heart realizes all his desires with the omniscient \textit{Brahman}.\textsuperscript{1750}

Anyone who knows the Supreme \textit{Brahman} verily becomes \textit{Brahman} and in his lineage is not born anyone who does not know \textit{Brahman}. Overcoming grief and rising above aberrations, he becomes free from the knots of the heart and attains immortality.\textsuperscript{1751}

Realising Him alone, one overcomes death. There is no other path for emancipation.\textsuperscript{1752}

\textbf{7.4 \textit{Ātman} is Brahman}

The \textit{Vedas} declare that \textit{Ātman is Brahman}. From that \textit{Brahman} which is this \textit{Ātman}, space (\textit{ākāśaḥ}) is born; From space air(\textit{Vāyubi}); From air fire(\textit{Agniḥ});
From fire, water (āpah); From water earth (Prithivī), from earth herbs (oṣadhayaḥ) ;
From herbs, food (annam); From food, man (puruṣaḥ).  

The person who is seen in the eye is the Ātman; This is the immortal and fearless Brahman.  
The Self which experiences everything is Brahman.  
That infinite, birthless, indestructible and fearless Self is Brahman. 

7.4.1 Mahāvākyas

The Vedas define as to what is meant by Ātman and present a vibrant picture about the realization of the Self.

The four Mahāvākyas (great declarations) of the Vedas have deep import and significance in explaining the core and complex concept of Ātman.

The Rg Veda defines that, “Consciousness is Brahman” (Prajñānam Brahma).  
The Sāma Veda declares that, “that thou art” (Tat tvam asi).

The Atharva Veda inspires one to practise that, “this Self is Brahman” (Ayam Ātmā Brahma). 

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1753 Tai Upa ii-1  
1754 Cha Upa viii-7-4  
1755 Brh Upa ii-5-19  
1756 Brh Upa iv-4-25  
1757 Ait Upa iii-1-3  
1758 Cha Upa vi-8-7  
1759 Man Upa i-2
The Yajur Veda extols one to exclaim his blissful experience that, “I am Brahman” (Aham Brahmasmi).\textsuperscript{1760}

The Vedas inspire one to scale great heights and reach the pinnacle in terms of self-realisation which is at once available to one and all without any barriers of caste, creed, colour, race or religion. Only the requisite efforts should be made by the person concerned towards this end.

The Vedas declare that the individual Self is none other than the Supreme Being. They continuously motivate the individual to rise up to the highest level of human contemplation and emancipation by his own efforts. Thus in the vision of the Vedas no one is inferior or superior as each one has the potential within oneself to reach the highest level of consciousness necessary for Self-realisation.

In the mundane life of constant condemnation of an individual without any rhyme or reason, the Vedas offer priceless solace and comfort as they pave the way for redemption of the soul and its emancipation to a state of eternal bliss.

7.5 Self realisation

The Vedas emphasise that the Atman shall be meditated upon, reflected and truly realized.

The Self shall be known.\textsuperscript{1761}

\textsuperscript{1760} Brh Upa i-4-10
\textsuperscript{1761} Man Upa vii
The Self should verily be realized, heard of, reflected on and meditated upon; by realization of the self alone, all this is known.\(^{1762}\)

For one who sees oneness everywhere, there shall be no grief.\(^{1763}\)

The Brāhmaṇa rejects him who knows the Brāhmaṇa to be different from the Self. The Kṣatriya rejects him who knows the Kṣatriya to be different from the Self. The gods reject him who knows the gods to be different from the Self.\(^{1764}\)

This Self is that which is described as ‘not this, not this’. It is imperceptible, unshrinking, unattached, untrammelled and it does not suffer or perish.\(^{1765}\)

It is known to him to whom It is unknown; He does not know to whom it is known; It is unknown to those who know well and known to those who do not know.\(^{1766}\)

The Self is to be realized as homogeneous, unknowable, unchangeable and free from impurities. It is superior to the unmanifested space, unborn, infinite and indestructible.\(^{1767}\)

One cannot see the seer of the sight, hear the hearer of hearing, think about the thinker of thought and know the knower of knowledge. This is Self that is within all. Everything besides this is perishable.\(^{1768}\)

The human life journey is towards fulfilment and there cannot be any complacency or stagnation or degeneration at any stage. It uplifts one from mean worldliness to supreme dynamic spirituality.

\(^{1762}\) Brh Upa ii-4-5
\(^{1763}\) Isa Upa vii
\(^{1764}\) Brh Upa ii-4-6
\(^{1765}\) Brh Upa iii-9-26
\(^{1766}\) Ken Upa ii-3
\(^{1767}\) Brh Upa iv-4-20
\(^{1768}\) Brh Upa iii-4-2
One shall arise, awake and approach the great ones for enlightening oneself through the path that is like the sharp edge of a razor, difficult to tread and hard to cross. The glory of the Atman is realised by one who is detached, through the serenity of the organs and thereby he becomes free from sorrow.

The Katha Upanisad in the second chapter distinguishes between Preya and śreya. While living at the bodily and sensory level is called Preya, realising absolute freedom from bondage is known as Sreya at the highest level of consciousness. This Atman is hidden in all beings and (therefore) is not manifest: but it can be realized by the one-pointed subtle intellect of those who are trained in discovering subtle truths.

"This is its supreme bliss. On a particle of this very bliss alone other beings live".

"The Atman, is to be realized, is to be heard about, thought about, and meditated upon: when the Atman is realized, heard about, thought about, and known, the whole manifested universe becomes known".

Wise seers declare that Sanyāsa mentioned as the supreme means of liberation is Brahman, which is the universal spirit and supremely blissful.

One who has intelligence as his charioteer and the mind as the rein, attains the supreme abode of Viṣṇu.
As *Sanyāsa* is the supreme means of realization, wise men declare that to be above all other means of liberation.\(^{1776}\)

*Sanyāsa āśrama* is referred to as highest order.\(^{1777}\)

Those who are well established in the Self, purified by a life of renunciation attain immortality in *Brahman* at the time of illumination and are absolved on all sides.\(^{1778}\)

Their fifteen constituents resolve into their basic sources, their senses into the corresponding deities and their deeds and intellect into the Supreme, imperishable Being.\(^{1779}\)

As rivers flowing disappear in the ocean losing names and forms, so the wise man, free from name and form goes into the highest of the high, the supreme divinity.\(^{1780}\)

One shall desire to understand the infinite.\(^{1781}\)

Realising the Supreme who is without beginning or end, who creates the cosmos in the midst of chaos, who assumes many forms and who alone envelopes everything, one is freed from all fetters.\(^{1782}\)

*Ațman* alone is all this; One who sees thus, reflects thus and understands thus has pleasure in *Ațman*, delight in *Ațman*, union in *Ațman*, joy in *Ațman*; He becomes self-sovereign and he becomes free to act as he wishes in all the worlds.\(^{1783}\)

One shall seek and desire to understand the *Ațman* which is free from evil, old age, death, sorrow, hunger and thirst, whose desire and resolve is of the truth.\(^{1784}\)

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\(^{1776}\) Mah Upa lxxix-16

\(^{1777}\) Sve Upa vi-21

\(^{1778}\) Mun Upa iii-2-6

\(^{1779}\) Mun Upa iii-2-7

\(^{1780}\) Mun Upa iii-2-8

\(^{1781}\) Cha Upa vii-23

\(^{1782}\) Sve Upa v-13

\(^{1783}\) Cha Upa vii-25

\(^{1784}\) Cha Upa viii-7-1
The seers who have attained the Self find satisfaction in wisdom. Being perfected in soul, non-attached, tranquil, they enter into all having realized the all-pervading Brahman.  

All this world is verily the supreme Brahman. The Self is not gained by men of weak spirit, nor by the careless, nor by those through improper austerities. But the wise who strive with vigour, attention and propriety attain union with the Brahman.  

Knowing the Self is man’s bridge to immortality. By perfect knowledge of him, the wise realize the state of blissful immortality. He is the light of all that shines.  

The Vedas inspire every man to choose the companionship of the God who leads.  

Om is the bow; the soul is the arrow and Brahman is Its target. An unerring man has to hit It and become one with It just like an arrow.  

7.6 Concept of Pañca Kośa  

The Vedas vividly explain the concept of Pañca Kośa for realization of the Atman.  

7.6.1 Annamaya Kośa (Food sheath)  

Food is the material cause of the names and forms. The physical body which is made up of the five great elements goes back to these same elements on death.
On deeper reflection, it is understood that matter is ever-changing and has a positive beginning and an end. Since the world of food always changes, it cannot be the Ultimate reality.\textsuperscript{1793}

\textbf{7.6.2 Prāṇamaya Kośa (Vital air sheath)}

Prāṇa is subtler than annam. The energy and the vitality expressed in the body is perceived as the reality in the level of contemplation and reflection. When the activities of perception, digestion, evacuation, circulation, etc are not carried on, an individual is considered dead.

On deeper reflection, it is understood that Prāṇa is a jada and not an intelligent principle and is itself an effect having a cause for it, it cannot be the ultimate reality.\textsuperscript{1794}

\textbf{7.6.3 Manomaya Kośa (Mind sheath)}

Mind is subtler than the Prāṇa and it controls the same. The mind is the master and the Prāṇa is the servant. Mind is the source of all creations. Even on death, mind continues to exist.

On deeper reflection, it is understood that mind is only an organ of cognition and it depends upon an agent who controls it and dictates terms to it. Mind is indeed an effect and it has a cause other than itself. Multiple thoughts emanate which have a

\textsuperscript{1793} Tai Upa iii-2
\textsuperscript{1794} Tai Upa iii-3
beginning and end. Thoughts change so frequently. Hence it cannot be the ultimate reality.\footnote{Tai Upa iii-4}

\textbf{7.6.4 Vijñānamaya Kośa (Intellect sheath)}

Intellect is the master which tully drives the mind. Intellect is subtler than the mind.

On deeper reflection, it is understood that intellect is only an agent. As it has to work for the satisfaction of its master, it cannot be the ultimate reality.\footnote{Tai Upa iii-5}

\textbf{7.6.5 Ānandamaya Kośa (Bliss sheath)}

On transcending the intellect sheath, the state of bliss is finally reached. Bliss sheath is the ultimate enjoyer and intellect is only its agent. At this stage the ultimate reality is reached. \textit{Ānanda} is much subtler than intellect. Consummate bliss is experienced and enjoyed upon realizing the self.\footnote{Tai Upa iii-6}

The self is beyond hunger and thirst, grief and delusion, decrepitude and death.\footnote{Brh Upa iii-5-1}

The knower of the \textit{Brahman} becomes self-controlled, serene, free from desires, possessed of fortitude and concentration and sees the Supreme Self (\textit{Brahman}) in his own self. He sees everything as self. Evil does not overtake him. He becomes free from evil, desires and doubts and a true \textit{Brāhmaṇa}.\footnote{Brh Upa iv-4-23}
One who has found out and understood the *Atman* attains all the worlds and all the desires.\textsuperscript{1800}

That infinite, birthless Self is the eater of all foods and the bestower of the results of the work. One who knows thus obtains the results of work.\textsuperscript{1801}

That infinite, birthless, undecaying, indestructible, immortal and fearless self is *Brahman*. *Brahman* indeed is fearless. He who knows the self as above indeed becomes the fearless *Brahman*.\textsuperscript{1802}

After studying the quintessence of *Vedic* literature refreshingly in a wholesome manner, it shall be worthwhile to relate the eternal and immortal *Vedic* principles to the realms of modern business management so as to demonstrate their relevance and significance in today’s context of business management.

The *Vedic* genesis of modern business management principles is presented in Chapter VIII.

The relevance of *Vedic* statements in relation to modern business management practices is highlighted in Chapter IX.

\textsuperscript{1800} Cha Upa viii-7-1
\textsuperscript{1801} Brh Upa iv-4-24
\textsuperscript{1802} Brh Upa iv-4-25