

What If You're Not the Body You're Stressing Over?

written by Bhaskarananda | January 22, 2026

Let's try a simple experiment.

Imagine the most advanced body on earth. Perfect brain. Perfect heart. Perfect genetics. Now remove the invisible force that makes it alive.

What's left?

A silent structure. No thoughts. No personality. No ambition. No love. No fear. Just chemistry.

So here's the uncomfortable question:

What is it that actually makes a body alive?

We obsess over muscle mass, skin care, aging, health metrics, biohacks, supplements. But the one thing that makes all of that matter—the animating presence inside—is almost never discussed.

That presence is what the **Bhagavad-gītā** calls the soul.

And if that's true, it flips everything upside down.

The Mistake That Creates Most of Our Anxiety

We don't just *have* bodies.

We've started to believe we *are* the body.

So when the body changes, we panic.

When it ages, we feel personally attacked.
When it gets sick, we feel diminished.
When it dies, we think everything is over.

But pause for a second.

Your body has changed completely since childhood. Different cells. Different size. Different face. Different voice.

Yet something about you hasn't changed.

You still experience being "you."

That constant witness—the one who has watched your body evolve—isn't the body itself.

And that's where clarity begins.

The Driver and the Vehicle

Think of the body like a car.

It needs maintenance. Fuel. Care. Attention.
Ignore it, and you'll have problems.

But no sane person cries when their car gets scratched and says, "*I am ruined.*"

The problem starts when we mistake the vehicle for the driver.

When that confusion sets in, every wrinkle feels like a crisis. Every illness feels like annihilation. Every birthday feels like a countdown.

That's heavy. And it's unnecessary.

What the Wise See Differently

In Chapter 2, Verse 11, the **Bhagavad-gītā** makes a bold claim:

“Those who are wise lament neither for the living nor for the dead.”

That’s not emotional coldness.

It’s perspective.

If what you truly are is not born with the body and does not end with it, then birth and death are events of the body—not the self.

And suddenly:

- Fear shrinks.
- Grief softens.
- Aging loses its sting.
- Life feels less fragile.

Not because pain disappears—but because identity shifts.

Real Knowledge Starts Here

We’ve mastered anatomy.

We’ve decoded DNA.

We can track sleep cycles down to the minute.

But the most important question still stands:

Who is the one experiencing all of this?

Real knowledge doesn’t start with the body.

It starts with understanding the difference between what changes... and what doesn’t.

Once you see that, something subtle but powerful happens.

Stress loosens its grip.

Fear becomes manageable.

And life stops feeling like a desperate attempt to preserve something temporary.

All from one shift in perspective.

Not bad for an insight that's been around for a few thousand years. □