

The Soul's Two Addresses: Understanding Krishna's Internal, External, and Marginal Energies

written by Bhaskarananda | September 20, 2026

Have you ever felt like life in this world is a non-stop cycle of competition, stress, and survival—like an endless workday with no real weekend in sight?

There is a profound philosophical reason for that feeling.

While Krishna possesses an **unlimited number of energies**, ancient spiritual wisdom organizes them into **three primary categories**. Once you understand how these three energies work—and how they map onto the simple analogy of **Home vs. Office**—everything about life, struggle, and spiritual purpose becomes crystal clear.

Krishna: The Master of All Domains

Before diving into the three energies, it is essential to remember one foundational truth: **Krishna is the supreme master of all His energies at every point in time.**

*“I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds.
Everything emanates from Me.”*

— **BG 10.8**

Whether an energy operates directly or indirectly, it belongs to Him. However, the way He interacts with these energies depends on their specific purpose and nature.

1. The External Energy: The Cosmic Office (*Bahiranga-Shakti*)

The external energy represents the physical universe around us—matter, elements, time, software, corporate hierarchies, and our physical bodies.

“Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego—all together these eight constitute My separated material energies.”

– BG 7.4

- **Indirect Management:** Krishna owns the external energy, but He chooses **not to involve Himself personally**. Instead, He delegates tasks to demigods and cosmic administrators to keep the systems running.
- **Governed by Karma:** Just as a corporation operates on strict policies and HR rules, the material world is governed by the impartial laws of nature.

“This material nature, which is one of My energies, is working under My direction, O son of Kunti, producing all moving and nonmoving beings.”

– BG 9.10

- **He is there, yet not there:** Krishna maintains the infrastructure, but He withdraws Himself from routine office operations.
- **The Experience:** The external world is where we fight, compete, struggle, lose sleep, and work hard just to get a temporary “paycheck” to survive.

2. The Internal Energy: The Eternal Home (*Antaranga-Shakti*)

If the external energy is the office, the internal spiritual energy is **Krishna's private Home**—His eternal spiritual realm.

“O son of Pritha, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible.”

– BG 9.13

- **Where His Heart Is:** Unlike the material world, the internal energy is where Krishna's heart truly resides.
- **Sweet, Loving Relationships:** Here, Krishna enjoys intimate, personal exchanges with His devotees across various sweet relationships: as a **friend**, a **servant**, a **parent**, or a **lover**.
- **Everything is Taken Care Of:** At home, you don't fight for survival or work for a paycheck. You belong to an eternal family where every need is completely cared for in an atmosphere of pure love and joy.

3. The Marginal Energy: You at the Crossroads (*Tatastha-Shakti*)

Where do we—the individual living entities—fit into this framework? We belong to the **Marginal Energy**.

“Besides these, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is another, superior energy of Mine, which comprises the living entities who are exploiting the resources of this material, inferior nature.”

– BG 7.5

The word *marginal* comes from *tatastha* (the border line or riverbank between land and water). As living entities, we exist right on the threshold between the spiritual and material realms.

“The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal fragmental parts. Due to conditioned life, they are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind.”

– BG 15.7

The Choice & The Guest Rule

Because we sit on this boundary, **we always have a choice**: Will we stay in the Office, or return Home?

Krishna gives us total free will to decide:

“Thus I have explained to you knowledge still more confidential. Deliberate on this fully, and then do as you wish.”

– BG 18.63

Think about your own private home: **You don’t let just anyone off the street walk through your front door, crash on your couch, and act like they own the place.** You only welcome people who respect your home and want a genuine, loving relationship with you.

Similarly, Krishna wants us to join Him at Home, but as long as we insist on acting selfishly or trying to be the “boss” of our own lives, we remain assigned to the **Office** (the material world) under the rules of karma.

Different Rules for Different Realms

The rules governing an office are fundamentally different from the rules governing a home:

Dimension	The External Energy (The Office)	The Internal Energy (The Home)
Primary Environment	Professional, structured, impersonal	Personal, warm, loving
Core Motivation	Desire fulfillment, survival, karma	Unconditional love, service, joy
Krishna's Presence	Indirect (delegated to demigods/laws)	Direct, intimate, personal
Living Entity's Experience	Struggling on your own for a paycheck	Fully protected by an eternal family

Reclaiming Your Place at Home

Life in the external energy will always feel like an uphill struggle because a workplace can never replace a loving family. The ultimate journey of the soul is to use our marginal choice wisely—turning away from the corporate grind of material desire and surrendering our hearts back to Krishna.

“Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.”

– BG 18.66

While the office provides a temporary paycheck, **true joy is only found at Home.**