

Worksheet 7.3.1c (1)

Three Men Enter the Forest

The first man entered a forest and thought to himself, “What a great place! I could hang around here all day and no one will find me, nor ask me to do any work”. So he smoked a cigarette, drank a few pints of beer and, selecting a suitable tree for shade, slept very peacefully for the entire day (mind you, he was quite grumpy when he woke up and complained that no one had woken him up. Not that he wanted to wake up, of course, but he just loved complaining!). He groggily stumbled home around midnight.

The second man wandered into the forest and said to himself, “Wow, what an extraordinary place. Look at all these nuts and fresh fruit. And there is so much wood I could sell for fuel. Those gorgeous flowers could fetch me a pound or two!” So he spent all day working hard, collecting wood, fruit and flowers, which he could take to the market. By the end of the day he was tired and his body ached. Nonetheless, as he rushed home, he was encouraged by the thought of all the money he could make by selling these goods at the market.

The third man walked into the forest and thought, “What a tranquil, beautiful place. I can feel the hand of the divine here, in the song of the birds and the beauty of the flowers!” He reflected on the purpose of life and spent the morning reading of spiritual matters. At the usual time (as he did every day), he ate a tasty vegetarian lunch and felt inwardly happy and invigorated. He washed his mouth and hands in the nearby river. He spent the afternoon writing, planning and meditating. As the sun began to set, he returned home contented and rejuvenated.

Exercise 1: Think about the three men and how they spend their day in the forest. In your exercise book write down three words that describe each man (based on their behaviour and values.)

Extension: The three men act under the influence of three gunas. Can you guess which guna is the most predominant in each case? Please explain why.

