

# NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS

❧ *Parama-Prema-Rupa* ❧

The Supreme Science of Divine Love

## ❧ 1. WHAT IS BHAKTI? ❧

Bhakti is the personification of intense, supreme love towards God — immortal like nectar, conferring absolute perfection and profound contentment. It is not a tool or a practice — Bhakti is its own result. It is the direct path for those who seek liberation from the chain of birth and rebirth.

## ❧ 2. KEY CONCEPTS ❧

**1 Parama-Prema-Rupa**  
The personification of the absolute highest love toward God.





**2 Amrita-Svarupa**  
Nectar-like and deathless: Bhakti confers immortality.

**3 Anirvachaniya**  
Fundamentally indefinable: known only through direct experience.

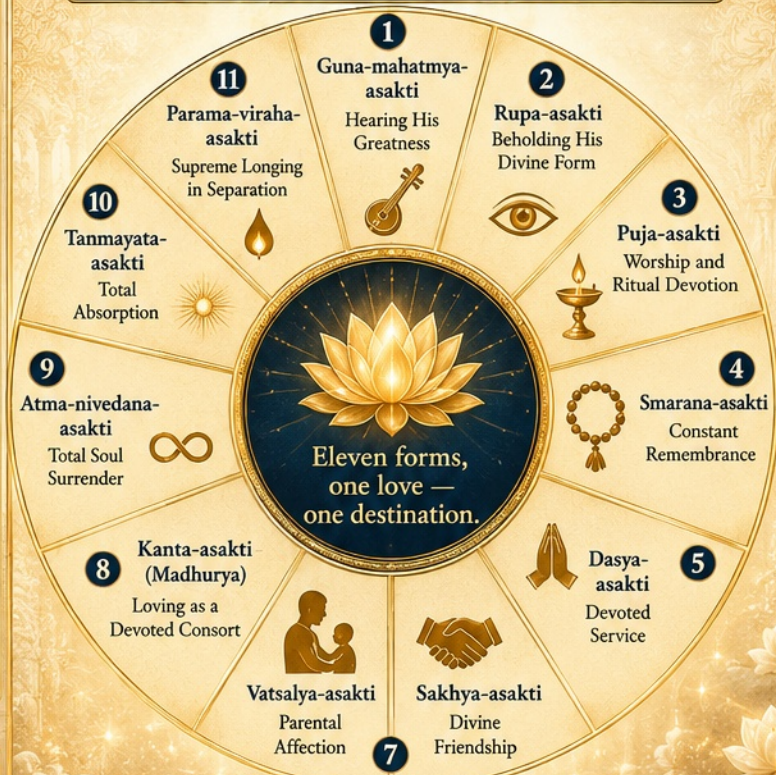
**4 Nirodha**  
Not suppression, but redirecting everything entirely toward God.

**5 Ananyatha**  
To sacrifice dependence on anything but God — absolute exclusiveness of devotion.

## ❧ 3. STATE OF THE TRUE BHAKTA ❧

-  Loves all beings and sees God in all.
-  Free from pride, ego, and all forms of possessiveness.
-  Established in contentment, peace, and unshakable faith.
-  Lives for the joy of God alone — nothing else is sought.

## ❧ 4. THE 11 FORMS OF BHAKTI ❧



## ❧ 5. CORE SUTRAS ❧

- ❧ Athato bhaktyā vyakhyāsyāmah. (Sutra 1)  
Now, therefore, we shall explain Bhakti.
- ❧ Sā tu karma-jñāna-yogebhyo 'py-adhigatarā. (Sutra 2)  
Bhakti is far greater than Karma, Jñana and Yoga.
- ❧ Tasmāt sarvātmatayā 'py-ukto Hariḥ viśeṣataḥ. (Sutra 3)  
Therefore Hari is declared as the Supreme, because He is the indweller of all beings.

## ❧ 6. ONE SENTENCE SUMMARY ❧

Bhakti is the nectar of divine love — indefinable, all-absorbing, exclusive — the direct path to liberation through total surrender to God.



# NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS

## The 11 Forms of Bhakti

### Nava Bhakti and Two Culminating States

Eleven doorways — one love — one destination.

Narada (Sutra 82) describes eleven asaktis — attachments of the heart to God. Each is a complete path in itself. Cultivate any one with sincerity — it leads to Him.

#	SANSKRIT TERM	ENGLISH NAME	DIVINE RELATIONSHIP	INNER QUALITY	PRACTICE / EXPRESSION	EXEMPLARY FIGURE	KEY INSIGHT
1 	GUNA-MAHATMYA-ASAKTI	Hearing His Greatness	The seeker as eager listener — drawn to the stories and glories of God.	Awe and wonder — the heart opens through hearing.	Sravaṇa — listening to scriptures, stories, and the names of God.	 Sages and Saints	Even casual talk of sages contains the seeds of liberation.
2 	RUPA-ASAKTI	Beholding His Divine Form	The seeker as witness — captivated by the beauty of the Divine.	Longing and wonder — the eye seeks what the heart already knows.	Darshan — gazing upon the murti, the image, the sacred form.	 Those who yearn for the Divine Form	The form is a doorway — it dissolves into formlessness through deep seeing.
3 	PUJA-ASAKTI	Worship and Ritual Devotion	The seeker as devoted priest — offering flowers, light, and fragrance.	Reverence and joy — every act of offering becomes an act of love.	Puja — daily ritual worship with full concentration and feeling.	 Devotee Priests and Householders	True worship transforms the worshipper more than the worshipped.
4 	SMARANA-ASAKTI	Constant Remembrance	The seeker as one who cannot forget — God fills every moment.	Continuity and surrender — no gap between thought and devotion.	Japa and Smarana — the name of God as a continuous inner current.	 Prahlada, Mirabai, and the Saints	The mind that remembers God constantly becomes God.
5 	DASYA-ASAKTI	Devoted Service	Devotee as eternal servant — the Divine as Master and Lord.	Humility and tireless dedication — no task too small.	Seva — serving God and His creation in His name.	 Hanuman	The servant who forgets himself entirely finds God in every duty.
6 	SAKHYA-ASAKTI	Divine Friendship	Devotee as intimate companion — equal, playful, completely at ease with God.	Trust, ease, and joyful familiarity — no fear, no formality.	Sharing, laughing talking, walking with God in the heart.	 Arjuna and the Gopas	True friendship with God arises when all reverence is absorbed into love.
7 	VATSALYA-ASAKTI	Parental Affection	Devotee as loving parent — the Divine as a cherished child.	Tenderness, protectiveness, unconditional care.	Caring for God as a child in the heart; nurturance and affection.	 Yashoda	God becomes small so that the devotee's love can become infinite.
8 	KANTA-ASAKTI (MADHURYA)	Loving as a Devoted Consort	Devotee as beloved — the most intimate and tender of all forms.	Unblemished, pure love — never forgetting the divine greatness.	Loving God as the Beloved in the deepest intimacy of the heart.	 The Gopis of Gokula	This is the supreme form — where the lover and beloved dissolve into one love.
9 	ATMA-NIVEDANA-ASAKTI	Total Soul Surrender	No separate self remains — the self is entirely given to God.	Complete dissolution — nothing held back, nothing retained.	Offering every thought, action, possession, and breath to God.	 Bali Maharaja and the Saints	This is the end of the path and the beginning of everything.
10  NEW	TANMAYATA-ASAKTI	Total Absorption	No separate center remains — the devotee is entirely filled with the Beloved.	Complete absorption — living as God-awareness itself.	Abidance in God — love without 'I' or 'mine'.	 Narada and All God-Realized Souls	Love no longer points toward God — it lives as God itself.
11  NEW	PARAMA-VIRAHA-ASAKTI	Supreme Longing in Separation	The devotee experiences even apparent absence of the Beloved as the most intense union.	Burning, luminous longing — the highest intensity of love.	Longing, crying out, yearning for the Beloved's presence.	 The Gopis in Separation (Viraha)	Absence becomes the most concentrated presence.

Eleven forms, one love — each doorway opens into the same ocean of divine consciousness.

Cultivate any one with sincerity — Narada assures: it leads to the Supreme.

**i** Educational infographic — conceptual synthesis, not exhaustive commentary. For study and contemplation.



# NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS



## The 11 Forms of Bhakti



Eleven Modes of Divine Attachment — Eleven Doorways to Divine Love



Bhakti expresses itself through eleven distinct forms of divine longing — each a complete path in itself.



1

### GUNA-MAHATMYA-ĀSAKTI → Hearing His Greatness

Relationship: The seeker as eager listener — drawn to the stories and glories of God.  
Inner quality: Awe and wonder — the heart opens through hearing.



Exemplary Figure: Śuka, Parikṣit



Practice: Śravaṇa — listening to scriptures, stories, and the names of God



Key Insight: Even casual talk of sages contains the seeds of liberation.



2

### RUPA-ĀSAKTI → Beholding His Divine Form

Relationship: The seeker as witness — captivated by the beauty of the Divine.  
Inner quality: Longing and wonder — the eye seeks what the heart already knows.



Exemplary Figure: Dhruva, Prahlāda



Practice: Darśana — gazing upon the murti, the image, the sacred form



Key Insight: The form is a doorway — it dissolves into formlessness through deep seeing.



3

### PUJA-ĀSAKTI → Worship and Ritual Devotion

Relationship: The seeker as devoted priest — offering flowers, light, and fragrance.  
Inner quality: Reverence and joy — every act of offering becomes an act of love.



Exemplary Figure: King Pṛthu, Ambariṣa



Practice: Pūjā — daily ritual worship with full concentration and feeling



Key Insight: True worship transforms the worshipper more than the worshipped.



4

### SMARANA-ĀSAKTI → Constant Remembrance

Relationship: The seeker as one who cannot forget — God fills every moment.  
Inner quality: Continuity and surrender — no gap between thought and devotion.



Exemplary Figure: Prahlāda, Tukārama



Practice: Japa and Smaraṇa — the name of God as a continuous inner current



Key Insight: The mind that remembers God constantly becomes God.



5

### DASYA-ĀSAKTI → Devoted Service

Relationship: Devotee as eternal servant — the Divine as Master and Lord.  
Inner quality: Humility and tireless dedication — no task too small.



Exemplary Figure: Hanuman



Practice: Seva — selfless service in body, speech, and mind



Key Insight: The servant who forgets himself entirely finds God in every duty.



6

### SAKHYA-ĀSAKTI → Divine Friendship

Relationship: Devotee as intimate companion — equal, playful, completely at ease with God.  
Inner quality: Trust, ease, and joyful familiarity — no fear, no formality.



Exemplary Figure: Arjuna, the Gopas of Vrindavan



Practice: Open-hearted relationship — sharing joys, sorrows, and everything



Key Insight: True friendship with God arises when all reverence is absorbed into love.



7

### VATSALYA-ĀSAKTI → Parental Affection

Relationship: Devotee as loving parent — the Divine as a cherished child.  
Inner quality: Tenderness, protectiveness, unconditional care.



Exemplary Figure: Mother Yaśodā, Nanda



Practice: Care, nurturing, and loving responsibility toward the Divine



Key Insight: God becomes small so that the devotee's love can become infinite.



8

### KANTA-ĀSAKTI (MADHURYA) → Loving as a Devoted Consort

Relationship: Devotee as beloved — the most intimate and tender of all forms.  
Inner quality: Unblemished, pure love — never forgetting the divine greatness of the Beloved.



Exemplary Figure: The Gopis of Gokula; Rādhā



Practice: Loving remembrance, union in love, songs of longing and union



Key Insight: This is the supreme form — where lover and Beloved dissolve into one love.



9

### ATMA-NIVEDANA-ĀSAKTI → Total Soul Surrender

Relationship: No relationship remains — the self is entirely given away.  
Inner quality: Complete dissolution — nothing held back.



Exemplary Figure: Bali Maharaja, Mīrābāi



Practice: Surrender of every thought, action, and breath to God



Key Insight: This is the end of the path and the beginning of everything.



10

### TANMAYATA-ĀSAKTI → Total Absorption

Relationship: No separate center remains — the devotee is entirely filled with the Beloved.  
Inner quality: Complete absorption — love lives as God-awareness itself.



Exemplary Figure: Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu



Practice: Abidance in God — awareness, beyond sense of 'I' and 'mine'



Key Insight: Love no longer points toward God — it lives only as God.



11

### PARAṂ-VIRAHA-ĀSAKTI → Supreme Longing in Separation

Relationship: The devotee experiences even apparent absence as the most intense form of union.  
Inner quality: Burning, luminous longing — the highest intensity of love.



Exemplary Figure: The Gopis in separation from Krishna



Practice: Remembrance in longing, sighs of love, songs of viraha (longing)



Key Insight: Absence becomes the most concentrated presence — separation deepens union.



Eleven forms, one love — each doorway leads to the same ocean of divine consciousness.





# NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS

## The Practical Path Sadhana — How Divine Love is Cultivated

### 1. CENTRAL TEACHING

Bhakti is not achieved by intellectual effort alone — it is cultivated through specific practices, right company, and the complete redirection of life toward God.

The path has two wings: what to actively cultivate,  
and what to strictly avoid.

### 2. WHAT TO CULTIVATE

#### Six Essential Practices

1



#### NIRODHA — RENUNCIATION

Not physical asceticism — but giving away all secular and Vedic customs that conflict with devotion. Continue eating and maintaining the body, but surrender all results entirely to God.

2



#### KIRTAN & JAPA — CONTINUOUS CHANTING

Ceaseless singing and hearing of God's names and qualities. The name of God is a continuous inner current that purifies the mind from within.

3



#### SAT-SANG — COMPANY OF THE WISE

The most essential and most difficult to attain practice. The grace of great souls (Mahad Krupa) is usually achieved only through God's own grace. It never goes to waste — even a moment with the wise plants seeds of liberation.

4



#### SECLUSION & SURRENDER

Living in a holy place, cutting off worldly fetters, and sacrificing the fruits of all actions — heat and cold, pleasure and suffering — entirely to God.

5



#### ETHICAL LIVING — THE FIVE FOUNDATIONS

• Ahimsa — Non-violence • Daya — Compassion  
• Sathya — Truth • Absolute Faith —  
• Sowcha — Cleanliness unwavering trust in God

6



#### SCRIPTURE STUDY

Continuous reading of Bhakti shastras keeps the mind anchored in devotion and provides the intellectual foundation for deeper surrender.

### 3. WHAT TO STRICTLY AVOID

#### Six Major Obstacles

1



#### DUSSANGA — BAD COMPANY

The greatest obstacle. Bad company breeds passion, anger, delusion, forgetfulness, and the destruction of wisdom. These traits begin as small waves but quickly become a destructive ocean.

2



#### ARGUMENTS & DEBATES

Entering into intellectual disputes drains the devotional energy and feeds the ego rather than the heart.

3



#### GOSSIP & SLANDER

Gossip, sensual fixation, contemptuous talk, and hostile disbelief pull the mind downward and away from God.

4



#### EGOISM & PRIDE

The sense of “I am the doer” and “this is mine” is the root of all bondage. God deeply dislikes pride and loves humility.

5



#### SENSE OF “MINE”

Crossing the veil of Maya is only possible for one who abandons the concept of “mine” entirely.

6



#### FORGETTING GOD'S GREATNESS

Even love that appears pure becomes destructive when the devotee forgets the divine greatness of the Beloved — like an illicit affair that harms rather than uplifts.

### 4. CORE SUTRAS

“Kastharathi kastharathi Mayam? —  
Who can cross the veil of illusion?  
He who serves wise people and  
has no feeling of mine.”

Anyasrayanan tyage ananyatha —  
To sacrifice dependence on  
anything but God is absolute  
exclusiveness.”

Bhakti is not achieved by intellectual  
effort alone — it is cultivated through  
right company, devotion, and total  
surrender.

### 5. THE KEY PARADOX

Bhakti does not demand the abandonment of the world —  
it demands the abandonment of the ownership of the world.  
Act fully. Surrender completely. Keep God as the only aim.

### 6. ONE SENTENCE SUMMARY

Cultivate the company of the wise, chant without ceasing, avoid bad company at all costs —  
and redirect every action, every breath, and every desire entirely toward God.



# NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS

## The Greatness of Bhakti

### Mahima — The Transforming Power of Divine Love

#### 1. CENTRAL TEACHING

True Bhakti does not merely transform the individual — it transforms everything around them.

The devotee becomes a living gift to the world.

Their presence purifies communities, elevates scriptures, and makes sacred places more sacred.

This is the Mahima — the incomprehensible greatness — of divine love.

#### 2. THE STATE OF SUPREME BHAKTI

The devotee in the highest state of Bhakti shows visible signs of divine intoxication:



**Tear-filled eyes** — the heart overflows with love.



**Voice choked with devotion** — speech becomes too small to contain love.



**Hair standing on end** — the body responds to the presence of God.



**Divine stupor** — drunk with the Self, completely still.



**Ineffable experience** — beyond words, beyond mind, beyond expression.



#### 3. THE POWER OF THE TRUE BHAKTA

A true devotee makes:



**Places of pilgrimage** MORE sacred — merely by their presence.



**Holy scriptures** MORE holy — merely by studying them with love.



**Ordinary actions** GOOD actions — merely by performing them with devotion.



**Their ancestors** REJOICE — the entire lineage is uplifted.



**The gods DANCE** — the devotee's love reverberates through all realms.



**Their community** PURIFIED — their presence is itself a blessing.

#### 4. BHAKTI AS SOCIAL EQUALIZER

Among true devotees there is NO difference by:



Caste  
Varna



Knowledge  
Jnana



Appearance  
Rupa



Birth  
Kula



Wealth  
Dhana



Actions  
Karma

Because all belong entirely to Him — all societal hierarchies completely dissolve in the face of supreme devotion.

#### 5. CORE SUTRAS

“ Their very presence makes places of pilgrimage more sacred, turns ordinary actions into good actions, and elevates holy scriptures to be more holy. ”



(Sutra 69)

“ Among true devotees there is no difference by caste, by knowledge, by looks, by birth, by wealth or by actions — because all belong entirely to Him. ”



(Sutra 72)

“ Mooka swadanavat — It is like a dumb one tasting — for he cannot tell what he feels. ”

(Sutra 68)

#### 6. ONE SENTENCE SUMMARY

Where true devotion lives, places become holy, actions become offerings, scriptures come alive, and the whole earth is blessed.



# NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS

## Three Paths to the One Truth

### Bhakti • Jnana • Raja Yoga A Comparative Overview

#### 1. CENTRAL TEACHING



All three great paths lead to the same ultimate reality — but through entirely different inner movements.

**Jnana** dissolves the mind through knowledge.

**Raja Yoga** stills the mind through discipline.

**Bhakti** transforms the mind through love.

From Narada's Bhakti standpoint, Bhakti is the greatest — not because the others are wrong, but because love is the fruit that knowledge and discipline can only point toward.



#### 2. THREE PATHS COMPARISON



##### BHAKTI YOGA



##### JNANA YOGA



##### RAJA YOGA



Primary Text

Narada Bhakti Sutras

Yoga Vasistha Sara /  
Shankara (Upanishadic  
Tradition)

Patanjali Yoga Sutras



Core Method

Supreme love and total  
surrender to God.

Self-enquiry: "Who am I?" —  
Atma Vichara.

Stilling of mental fluctuations  
through disciplined practice  
(Nirodha).



View of the Mind

Redirect the mind  
entirely toward God.

Dissolve the mind through  
recognizing its unreality  
(mithya).

Still and steady the mind  
through sustained practice  
and self-mastery.



View of the World

Perform duties on behalf of  
God — the world is His.

The world is mithya —  
dependent, not ultimately  
independent (Ajatavada  
perspective).

The world is real but must be  
transcended through practice  
and discrimination.



View of Nirodha

Give away all customs and  
identifications that conflict  
with God.

Annihilate the mind  
completely —  
Mano-Nasana.

Absolute cessation of all  
mental fluctuations —  
Chitta Vritti Nirodha..



The Goal

Para Bhakti — Supreme Love —  
Jivan Mukti through devotion.

Nirvana — dissolution of  
ego in Brahman.

Kaivalya — absolute  
independence of Purusha  
from Prakriti.



Key Metaphor

Nectar — immortal, sweet,  
its own reward.

The rope and the snake —  
right knowledge ends  
delusion.

The stilled lake — when  
ripples cease, the Self is  
reflected.



Exemplary Figure

The Gopis — perfect love  
never forgetting divine  
greatness.

The Jivan Mukta — liberated  
while living in the body.

The Yogi in Samadhi —  
absorbed beyond all  
fluctuation.



God's Role

God is the beloved —  
personal, relational,  
ever-present.

Brahman is ultimate reality;  
Ishvara is honored as the Lord  
within empirical experience.

Ishvara — a special Purusha,  
used as the object of meditation  
(Ishvara-pranidhana).

#### 3. NARADA'S VERDICT (FROM HIS BHAKTI STANDPOINT)

“Saa thu karma jnana yogebhyo 'py-adhigatara —  
Bhakti is far greater than the path of action,  
knowledge, and disciplined contemplation.” (Sutra 25)

##### Narada's Argument:



Pure knowledge is like glancing at a palace — you see it  
but cannot enter.



Hearing about sumptuous food does not cure  
the hunger of the soul.



God dislikes the pride often born of intellectual paths —  
and loves humility.



Bhakti is not a means to an end —  
it is its own fruit and its own reward.

#### 4. WHAT UNITES ALL THREE PATHS

Despite their differences, all three paths converge  
on the same recognition:



The ego (ahamkara) is the source of bondage.



Liberation requires the transformation or  
dissolution of the limited self.



The goal is not personal achievement but the  
recognition of what was always already true.



All three affirm: the seeker (sadhaka) and  
the sought (sadhya) are ultimately not two.

#### 5. ONE SENTENCE SUMMARY

Knowledge shows the palace. Discipline builds the key.  
Love simply opens the door — and walks in.

