LIFE AS A VIDEO GAME!

I have always been fascinated how life and video games seem to have so much in common. There seem to be many lessons we can learn from video games on how to live and understand our life better.

1. LIFE IS A GAME, DON’T TAKE EVERYTHING TOO SERIOUSLY.
   The first and foremost lesson is that we should enjoy life as the entertaining and exciting game it is. There is no use in getting worked up about things as everything is part of the master plan that is in place, and we are but puppets in the play (leela) of the Divine.

2. GET TO KNOW THE RULES OF THE GAME AND THINGS GET EASIER.
   If we know the rules of the game we can play it better and more successfully too. Similarly we need to find out the rules of the game called life. The most important rule is, “you are responsible for what happens to you”!

3. IT HELPS TO HAVE A GUIDE.
   Having a guide who knows the rules and obstacles on the path makes things much easier. You not only get to know the game better but get past obstacles faster, easier and with minimum damage. You can also score more heavily in all aspects of the game and so also in life. The role of the Guru in ones’ life can never be underestimated.

4. BE ALERT TO FACE ANY CHALLENGE
   The games teach us the necessity and importance of being ever alert and ever ready. This is vital in good living for eternal vigilance is one of the important keystones of right living. In Yoga, the concept of being in a restful yet ever ready state is exalted just as a bowstring with perfect balance leads to the perfect bull’s-eye being achieved.

5. SKILL DEVELOPS WITH PRACTICE
   Practice makes perfect goes the saying and the games teach us that for sure. As you play it again and again, you surely and steadily improve your scores attempt by attempt. Life also works on similar principles. If we learn from previous mistakes, we become more skillful in avoiding pitfalls and learn to negotiate the dynamic twists and turns that crop up at every point in our life. Dedicated and determined practice (abyasa) is the most important aspect of Yoga and this we can learn from the game too.

6. YOU DON’T SOLVE PROBLEMS, YOU OUTGROW THEM
   One of the most important lessons we need to learn is that we can never really solve our problems. All we can do is outgrow them. Any one who has played video games knows that there are different obstacles and dangers at each level of the game. When you get past one level you outgrow those obstacles and dangers but then you are faced with new ones at the next higher level too. Similarly in life too at each level of our growth there are multiple challenges that are aimed at making us evolve for that is the purpose of life itself.

7. DO YOU BEST AND THEN LEAVE THE REST.
   While playing the game, you are determined and focused on staying ‘alive’, getting more energy, wiping out your loses (karma) and scoring the most points (punya). However at the end of the game you realize it was just a game and that you need to go on and try once again. You try your best but then when you loose it is not the end of the world for there is another chance awaiting you
soon. A sense of dispassionate detachment (*vairaghya*) can also be developed by understanding this important Yogic principle of right living.

8. **THERE IS ALWAYS ANOTHER CHANCE**

Just as games give us more opportunities to improve on our score and do better, so does life. We are given many chances within lifetimes and also many lifetimes (84,000,000) to evolve towards the final goal of MOKSHA.