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# Instrumental to Ethical: Ancient Guidance for Contemporary Individual Social Responsibility

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The purpose of this paper is to constructively build on the scholarship of corporate social responsibility (CSR) by positing that ancient Eastern and Western texts, which have not been adequately elucidated in the literature, have a great deal to offer to CSR theory at the individual level. We use a framework of instrumental, relational, and ethical established in the literature as a platform to elaborate on the individual level of analysis of CSR. Both the Nicomachean Ethics and The Bhagavad Gita, texts believed to be written during an age of transcendence during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C., assure that people have the opportunity to “learn” and utilize their consciousness to become an ethical self. By embracing the wisdom of these ancient texts, we may move toward a horizon of a second age of transcendence.*

**Keywords:** *Nicomachean Ethics, The Bhagavad Gita, CSR, Individual social responsibility*