

Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga

Balvir Acharya

Yoga is control of the fluctuation of the mind, **then** establishment of the *jivatma* (human soul) in its own self leading to the realization of the Divine Supreme spirit of the universe (That is, *Paramatma* or God).¹

In the *Kathopanishad*, it is said, that when the senses, mind (*mana*), intelligence (*buddhi*), i.e., the entire organs of experience are completely **stilled**, inversed and vested in the *atma* at total peace, that is the state of yoga.²

The Gita says, that the state of yoga is not only the total peace and stillness of the mind, sense and intelligence, it is also the reflection of that state of poise in action, the performance of *dharmic* duty without the expectation of reward, that is, the performance of duty for its own sake in God's dispensation with expertise and balance of mind.³

Yoga that is the philosophy of *being* and the science of *doing* both:

Paramarthic

Control of the senses, control of mind, self-realisation, God-realisation and rising of the individual *atman* to the state of ultimate freedom from existential bondage (*Moksha*). This is the progress from existence to the Essence, the ascent of the finite to the state of the infinite.

Practical or karmic

Performance of duty in the state of active living for the sake of action beyond all consideration of the reward expected in all states of life, such as loss or gain, heat or cold, praise or blame. This is freedom too, that is, action in the service of the Divine with complete faith in the Law of the Divine.

DIFFERENT KINDS OR SCHOOLS OF YOGA

In the Indian tradition of yoga, there are seven schools: 1. *Sankhya* yoga or the yoga of knowledge (*Jnana* yoga); 2. *Karma* yoga or the yoga of action; 3. *Bhakti* yoga or the yoga of devotion to God; 4. *Mantra* yoga; 5. *Laya* yoga; 6. *Hatha* yoga; and 7. *Raja* yoga or *Ashtanga* yoga, the eight fold yoga of Patanjali as expounded in the *yogasutras*, which Swami Dayanand also follows and prescribes in his *Satyarth Prakash* and *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika* on the basis of the Vedas, especially **Yajurveda, chapter 11**.

A brief description of the different schools follows:

Sankhya or Jnana Yoga

The first exponent of *Sankhya* yoga in the Vedic tradition was Maharshi Kapila, author of the *Sankhya sutras*. The basis of this school of yoga is man's discriminative knowledge (*viveka*) of *Prakriti* (Nature and its mutations in the forms of the world of change), and of *Purusha* (the individual soul, *jivatma*, and the cosmic soul, *Paramatma*). When man, (men and women all) realizes through knowledge and experience (vision) of *Prakriti* and *Purusha*, the difference between the world of change and the state of permanence (beyond change), then man rises to the state of freedom beyond all change and the consequent suffering caused by loss or gain.

Suffering is caused by change, losses and gains, in the state of nature and the soul's involvement with all these changes. The soul, i.e., the *jivatma*, is free in the essence because all changes occur in the state of Nature's mutability, not in the *atma*. The evolutes of *Prakrti* are various: *Ahankara* (individuation), *mana* (mind), *buddhi* (intelligence), organs of perception, organs of volition and action, the subtle elements (sound, touch, form, taste, smell), the gross elements (space, air, fire, water, earth). *Prakrti* is the original material cause of all these evolutes. *Sankhya* philosophy says that when gets discriminative knowledge of all these and realizes the difference between these, and the individual *atma* and *Paramatma* (the cosmic spirit), and comes to the conclusion that all changes take place only in *Prakrti*, not in the *purusha* (the individual *atma* as well as the cosmic *Atma*) then he gets freedom from suffering, caused by change, and gets freedom of the ultimate order (*Moksha*). Discriminative knowledge is *Viveka*, and the opposite of *Viveka* is *avidya* (ignorance). *Avidya* is the cause of suffering and bondage.

Lord Krishna in the *Gita* says: "O Arjuna, just as blazing fire reduces, the fuel to ash, similarly knowledge (*jnana*) burns off all *karmas* and their consequence."⁴ And he also says therein: "There is nothing so sacred here in the world as discriminative knowledge, and that the yogi, tempered and perfected in yoga attains by himself in due course of time."⁵

This is *Jnana* yoga.

***Karma* Yoga**

To do one's duty (*karma*) without personal consideration or selfish desire, non-involvement, giving up the temptation for personal gain as a result of *karma*, to act as only an instrument of God's will not as a proud doer, doing duty with surrender to God, this indeed is the real and wondrous form of *karma yoga*. This is *Nishkama Karmayoga*.

When a person accepts and follows strictly the path of *Nishkama Karmayoga*, he rises free from the problems and sufferance of fear, anxiety, pleasure or pain. This does not mean that a person should not do any *karma*, because, according to *karma yoga*, he should not claim any fruit personally. This would be a misinterpretation of *karma yoga*. *Karma yoga* is, on its own, based on the philosophy of cause and consequence. The fruit of *karma* follows definitely according to the law of Nature. The message of the *Gita* that, when the doer concentrates on *karma-phala*, the fruit of *karma*, his *karma* is likely to be vitiated in character possibly by unholy means. This way, the doer would concentrate on the reward rather than on the quality of action. The will, energy and effort which should have been put in on the quality of *karma* might be wasted on the anxiety and fear for the result. The doer must know that the fruit of the action follows according to Nature's law, but if the quality of action is compromised because of fear and anxiety for the fruit, then the fruit itself would be impoverished according to same law. This is the essence of the *Gita*.

"You have a right to action, not to the fruit thereof." Quite often people misunderstand this philosophy of *karma*. The correct interpretation of the message is that you are free to plan the programme of the action. You do your best to arrange for all the means and instruments and finances for the action, but do you or can you, exhaust all the parameters of the infrastructure required? Can you fore see all the possibilities and difficulties on the way? You are in perfect health, your car is fine, the gas is full in the tank, but can you fore see or eliminate the chances of a traffic jam. Therefore the message is: you can plan, you can do your best, but the final result is in someone else's hand. You can write the best paper on your own, but are you also the examiner? That is someone else. Therefore the message is : Do your best, you can do your best. But do not waste energy on anything other than *doing*. Not for any reason, slacken in your performance. The fruit is certain. The giver knows better than you. Therefore no worry, no fear, insist and concentrate on *karma*.⁶

“Arjuna, be firm in the state of yoga. In the state of *karma yoga*, without attachment to consideration of the result, do the duty. With equanimity in the possibilities of success or no-success do your duty. Yoga is equanimity.”⁷

“Yoga means efficiency and expertise of the performance of duty.”⁸

“Yoga is equanimity, equanimity, for soul.”⁹

Bhakti yoga

Giving up all material desires, with complete surrender to God, to celebrate, sing and pray to God, to meditate on the Divine presence, to love God with mind, act and speech without reservation, in such state of love and piety, to do all one’s duty: this is *Bhaktiyoga*.

Mantra yoga

To chant God essential name-word Aum (Om), or chant the Gayatri mantra, and to stabilize oneself in that chant, that is *Mantrayoga*.

This is also called *japa yoga*. *Japa* is of four types : Speech *japa* (*vachika*), *upanshu* or quiet *japa*, *Manasika* or mental *japa*, and *Ajapajapa* or silent *japa*.

When you chant the name-word of God, it is ‘articulate *japa*’. When the word of *japa* is heard by none other than the doer, it is called ‘up anshu *japa*’, when no organ of speech is in operation and the chanter chants the name only mentally. It is called ‘mental *japa*’, when the chanter in if just hears, not pronounces, the word, it is called ‘*japa* without *japa*’.

Laya yoga

When the yogi is completely merged in *Dhyana* (meditation), it is the state of ‘*laya yoga*’. Walking, sitting, standing, even in sleep, the entire consciousness and attention is concentrated on God, that is ‘*laya yoga*’. When the yogi ‘hears’ the sound of Om reverberating in the environment all round, and his mind is completely merged in the sound (*Nada*), this also is *laya yoga*.

Hatha yoga

Hatha yoga is called *Kundaliniyoga* consist of two sounds : ‘*ha*’ and ‘*tha*’. *Ha* means the ‘*surya swara*’, the breath by the right nostril. *Tha* means ‘*chandra swara*’, the breath by the left nostril. ‘Surya’ means ‘sun’, and ‘Chandra’ means ‘moon’. To join these two breaths and make them flow into the central nerve, ‘*Susumna nadi*’, that is called *hatha yoga* (*ha+tha*). In *hatha yoga*, there is primary emphasis on *asana* (posture), *pranayama* (breath control), *mudra* (finger position of mystical meaning), *nada* (the cosmic sound of Om), and *kriya* (particular exercise). *Hathayoga* and *Rajayoga* are said to be complementary.

Rajayoga or Ashtanga (eightfold) yoga

This is the form of yoga. That is why it is called *Rajayoga*. It is also called ‘*Samadhiyoga*’. To realize the self and also to realize the presence of God in the state of *Samadhi*, and to attain the state of *Moksha*, total and ultimate freedom from suffering, that is the end and aim of *Rajayoga*. Maharshi Patanjali has described the complete process with steps in detail in the *yogasutras*. In fact, the other forms of *yoga* can be subsumed in the *Rajayoga*.

DETAILED SKETCH OF ASHTANGA YOGA

The eightfold steps of *Ashtangayoga* are the following¹⁰ : (i) *Yama*, (ii) *Niyama*, (iii) *Asana*, (iv) *Pranayama*, (v) *Pratyahara*, (vi) *Dharana*, (vii) *Dhyana*, and (viii) *Samadhi*

The first five of these are called *Bahiranga* (external) yoga, and the other three are called *Antaranga* (internal) yoga. Swami Dayanand says that these eight steps of yoga are steps to *Moksha*, spiritual freedom from suffering.¹¹

EXTERNAL STEPS OF YOGA

YAMA

Yamas are five¹²: *Ahinsa* (love, non-violence, *satya* (truth), *asteya* (non-stealing), *brahmacharya* (sexual discipline and sanctity of man-woman relations), *aparigraha* (frugality, minimal things of necessity). These are values of social ethics.

Ahinsa

Do not hurt anybody, any living being by thought, word or deed. According to Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *ahinsa* means no jealousy, no enmity, but love for all living beings in every way at all times.¹³

To nurse anger and enmity to anyone, to think ill of others, to harm any one out of revenge, all this is mental violence. *Hinsa* (violence) is caused by anger, fear, greed, infatuation, ignorance and weakness. In the *yoga sutras* there are eighty one forms of violence, either directly done, or caused to be done or approved or affirmed, etc.¹⁴

The result of non-violence is that for a man of non-violence, there is no anger, no jealousy, no dear, no enmity all round.¹⁵ In fact, when a person is confirmed in love and non-violence, even others also learn love and non-violence by his example.¹⁶

Satya (Truth)

Satya means to accept, believe or describe a thing as it is. As you know something by direct experience and observation, so speak of it, follow it, believe it, and do it, says Swami Dayanand.¹⁷ The meaning and purpose of truth is the good of all. Speak the truth but in a language which does not hurt the listener. Social and notional good is also the end and aim of truth.¹⁸

One commits four kinds of sin by words: tell lies, unnecessary chatter, back-biting and scandal, and rough and hurtful language. Avoid these. Think before you speak, be courteous, cultured, true, and socially true and helpful.

The reward of truth, according to Swami Dayanand is this: When a person is sure of the truth he knows, believes, speaks, and follows the truth in his actions, conduct and behaviour, he is blessed with success in all he ought to do, does, and wants to do.¹⁹

Asteya

Asteya means 'non-stealing', i.e., in thought, word and deed, not to take away, by deceit or injustice, anything that belongs to others, without their agreement, will, and permission. Swami Dayanand says that not only to take away, even to wish to take away the things that belong to others without their permission is a violation of *asteya*. In other words,

not to take away and not even to intend or think of taking away anybody's rights and belongings is the meaning and spirit of *asteya*.²⁰

Taking bribe, getting or earning money without hard and honest work, to weigh less than the right amount in sale, accepting salary without doing one's duty, to be careless in the performance of duty, to fix the price of goods higher than what is fair, all these are forms of theft in the business of daily life according to Patanjali and Swami Dayanand. The basics of *yoga* are thus real and not just philosophical as intellectual exercise.

The fruit of *asteya* is that when a person, in thought, word as deed, is determined and confirmed in *asteya*, then all the precious jewels of life attend around him.²¹

Brahmacharya

Complete control of the sex instinct, virility of fertility of the body system, is *brahmacharya*. Swami Dayanand further explains that, during student life, from childhood up to the minimum of twenty-five years of age, complete sense control and sex control is extremely important and necessary. Twenty-five years is the minimum age for marriage. Premarital or extra-marital relations are out of question. Indulgence even during married life must be avoided. During student life, and even after in one's professional life, one must continue to observe and maintain the sanctity of one's person, family, community and society in the context of culture and *dharma*.²²

The reward of *brahmacharya* is strong, supple and handsome body, if you observe and maintain the discipline honestly, sincerely and conscientiously, in thought, word and deed. A healthy mind in a healthy body. The intelligence is fine, subtle and alert so that it is easy to comprehend serious subjects of higher significance.²³ Swami Dayanand says that a person, who maintains *brahmacharya* in life without calculation and violation, remains free from disease, depression and vitiation of body; mind and soul and ultimately self-realises the four great ideals of life which are *dharma*, *artha*, *kaman* and *moksha*, and ever and always, in life and even after continues to be in a state of *ananda* (bliss).^{24,25}

Aparigraha (non-hoarding, frugality)

Getting, collecting, hoarding, beyond need and measure, this is *parigraha*. The opposite of it is frugality, prosperity and comfort as far as your need without feeling the strain of want on the anxiety of excess or the fear of loss. No attraction for the thief, no pressure or insecurity for the master.

Collect no more than you need, no expense on the safety lock, no guards for security, and no mourning for the loss if at all. Maharshi Vyasa, in his commentary on the *yogasutra* writes: "the collection of the insatiable, protection, preservation, loss, diminution, appetizers, violence, fearsome defectives all these are negatives, therefore all these are un-acceptable for intelligent : the rejection of these is *aparigraha*."²⁶

Swami Dayanand adds: anything beyond the necessities is rejectable. This is *aparigraha*. A person must be free from pride and even of his competence, because pride for the positives as well as for the negative is negative in itself. The proud is greedy, and greed is the negation of virtue. Therefore *aparigraha* is freedom from pride²⁷ and freedom from greed and even self-pride.²⁸ In short, *aparigraha* means rejection of the unnecessary and harmful materials and rejection of negative, harmful thoughts, ideas and attitudes of the mind and morals.

Explaining the *yoga sutra* on *aparigraha*²⁹, Swami Dayanand says that when a person is free from selfish derives, emotions and attitudes of the mind for materials and concentrates on yogic well-being of life, he thinks on and finds answers to questions on the meaning and

purpose of life, such as ‘Who am I?’ ‘Where from am I?’ ‘What should I do?’ ‘By doing what shall I come to good?’ Such question, answers, ideas and ideals are confirmed in his mind and culture.³⁰

The necessity of Yamas

The observation of yamas is ladder for the practitioner. The mind and senses return, revert and get stabilized internally off from the external temptations and the consciousness concentrates on self-realisation. Maharshi Patanjali says that all these *yamas* are universal, they are not bound by considerations of time, space or species. For the person in search of self-realisation they are the basic mantra on way to the goal. Therefore they are called *mahavrata*³¹, “the great Discipline”.

Maharshi Manu says that for spiritual realization, the observance of *yamas* and *niyamas* both is necessary and unavoidable:

‘यमान् सेवेत सततं न नियमान् केवलान् बुधः ।

यमान् पतत्य कुर्वाणो नियमान् केवलान् भजन्’

Yaman seveta satatam na niyaman kevalan budhah,

Yanam patatyakurvano niyaman kevalan bhajan.³²

The practitioner must observe the *yamas* without break, not the *niyamas* only, intelligent as he/she is. One who observes only the *niyamas*, without observance of the *yamas*, falls off from the path of yoga.³³

Not only for personal good of the individual, but also for the social good, for the peace, progress and order of the society, a person must observe all the five *yamas*. It is also the duty of the government and the society to see that every citizen observes these rules of social discipline. If it does not happen, the society and the nation would morally and organizationally fall to evil and disorder. Corruption, bribe, disunity would follow inevitably.

2. NIYAMA

The five Niyamas³⁴ are : *Shaucha* (Cleanliness and purity), *santosha* (contentment), *tapa* (austerity of discipline), *swadhyaya* (self-study and study of good literature), and *Ishwara-pranidhana* (surrender of God).

The observance of these is necessary for every-one’s personal life and personal advancement. A discussion follows:

Shaucha (Cleanliness and purity)

Shaucha means to clean, to purify, Cleanliness is twofold: external and internal. External cleanliness means cleanliness of the body, clothes, home and surroundings. Internal cleanliness means to purify the mind of all negativities, intellectual, moral, emotional and ideational **dist** such as jealousy, enmity, greed, infatuation, anger, selfishness of love and attachment and all causes of these negativities.

On the subject of purity, Swami Dayanand also says that purity is twofold: internal and external. You achieve internal purity by *dharmic* conduct. Speaking the truth, self-study and study of good books, company of good, positive and *dharmic* people in holy congregations. External cleanliness you can achieve by bath, washing i.e. floor or paths of movement in water and helping your food and clothes etc. by washing, sifting, sieving, proper cooking of food and by *agnihotra* which purifies the air and environment.³⁵

Maharshi Manu emphasizes cleanliness and purity, saying that the body is washed and cleansed with water, mind is cleansed by speaking the truth, by knowledge and austerity

of discipline, the *atma* (soul) is cleansed, and *buddhi* (intelligence) is cleansed by knowledge and scientific and logical thinking.³⁶ In the same view, Swami Dayanand says that with water, the external parts of the personality are cleansed, but not the mind and the spirit because they are internal. The mind is cleansed by faith in truth, and truth in speech and action. The individual spirit (*atma*) by knowledge, practice of yoga and *dharmic* conduct, and the *buddhi* (intelligence) is cleansed by reason, rational thought and knowledge, not by water or clay.³⁷

Swami Dayanand says that when a person finds that with both the means of external and internal cleansing, his own body system, in that he/she must avoid and help off from contact with external dirt and concentrate on the cleanliness of his *antahkarana*, i.e., *mana*, (mind), *buddhi* (intelligence), *chitta* (memory and ideas), and *ahankara* (his sense of the self and spiritual identity) with the practice of yoga. The result would be that the *antahkarana* (self) would be purified and he/she would experience purity and joy at heart, would win over the distractions of the senses and mind, attain mental concentration and achieve the possibility of self-realisation purely in spiritual terms.³⁸

Santosha

Explaining *santosha*, Swami Dayanand says : self-satisfied, if a person stays on by himself doing nothing, that is not *santosha* (contentment). But to do, effort at the optimum, but staying cool, without feeling too happy on success, and depressed at no-success. That is *santosha*.³⁹ To do one's best with *dharmic* effort, happy at heart, without excess with success, and cool at no-success, without depression. That is *santosha*, aquanimity of mind and spirit of course, sloth is us contentment.⁴⁰ The point is: moving on the right path, doing one's best with the heart means at one's command and, expecting no more than what comes one's way, without trying to grabe anything more. That is contentment.⁴¹ *Santosha* incase neither laziness nor intoxication, nor madness. It means best effort and most acceptance with equanimity. If you are over anxious for more than what rightly and rightfully comes your way. You are heading toward disappointment and depression, with efficiency depleting every moment.

सन्तोषादनुत्तमः सुखलाभः “Santoshadnuttamah sukhlabhah”, says Patnjali.⁴² Explaining the sutra, Swami Dayanand says, the joy that you get from contentment as explained above is the best, nothing better or higher than that.⁴³ By *santosha*, the yogi gets freedom from the ambition for what is not. By freedom from such ambition, the yogi gets freedom from suffering born of insatiable desire (*trishna*). This is joy supreme. This joy, Swami Dayanand describes as *Moksha*. Maharshi Vyasa in his commentary on *yogasutra* says that, the joy people get from the fulfillment of cherished desire, and also the joy that is heavenly, both of these joined together do not equal the joy - even the one-sixteenth of it. Which the *yogi* experiences from the elimination of *trishna*.⁴⁴

Tapa (anteriority of discipline)

Swami Dayanand has given three versions of *tapa* in his writings:

1. Observance of Dharma, i.e. justice and rectitude in an objective impersonal manner, coupled with *yoga* practice like *pranayama*.⁴⁵
2. Even in spite of unhappiness and suffering, observance of *Dharma* and performance of *Dharmic* works.⁴⁶
3. Just as the goldsmith purifies and refines gold in the heat of the furnance, similarly the yogi should purify and refine his mind and soul (*mana* and *atma*) in the austere

discipline of *tapa* through *darhim* could not and inculcation of holly ideas and virtues of life.⁴⁷

According to Patanjali, *tapa* means performance of one's duties and while doing so, face with equanimity of the contraries (*dvvandwa*) of pleasure versus pain, gain and loss, praise and insult, heat and cold.⁴⁸ This is the *satvica* (best) form of *tapa*. In sacred literature also, *tapa* has been explained: In the *Gita*⁴⁹, there are three orders of *tapa* described: mental *tapa* (*manasic tapa*); verbal *tapa* (*vachika tapa*); physical *tapa* (*sharirica tapa*).

Keeping the mind cool and peaceful with the minds purification with positive ideas, pursuit of truth, freedom from double-speak and double-think, and purity and transparency of behaviour with all, this is mental *tapa*.

To speak words which bring peace, to use words: dialogue which are true, sweet and holily encouraging, reading of good books and use of minimum words for maximum expression. This is verbal *tapa*.

Respect for, and service of parents, appreciation and respect for the seniors to remain clean and natural, give in a simple natural manner, to observe *ahinsa* and brahmacharya: This is physical *tapa*.

Doing mental, verbal and physical *tapa* to keep the mind and soul is *satvic tapa*.

In sacred literature, *satvic tapa* is recommended, but the *tamasic tapa* (of the lowest type) and *rajasic tapa* of the middle one prohibited and not recommended. The *tapa* which is done to earn social recognition and collect self-esteem is *rajasic tapa* (of the middle order). The *tapa* which subjects the body to strain and pain, which is performed with obstinate persistence, for example, sitting with fire all round, standing on one leg for a long time, keeping one or both arms up, these are the lowest kinds of *tapa*. These are of no use.⁵⁰

Tapa eliminates the health problems and *kafa*. The body becomes strong and healthy, clean and supple, and the efficiency of the organs of perception and volition is increased.⁵¹

Swadhyaya (Self-study and study of good literature)

According to Maharshi Vyasa, *swadhyaya* means reading of sacred literature way forward on to *Moksha* and chant of Aum.⁵² Maharshi Dayanand too affirms the same and says: Reading of sacred literature on the subject of *Moksha* such as the *Vedas* and the *Darshanas*, meditation on Aum and defining the presence of God for one's own vision and experience, that is *Swadhyaya*.⁵³

In the context of the subject on hand, the word *swadhyaya* has two meanings: *su+dhyaya*, i.e., reading of the best and holiest books which explain yoga philosophy and light the path to *Moksha*. Such are the *Vedas*, *Vedanga*, *Upanga*, *Upavedad*, *Upanishad*, *Darshana*, *Gita*, etc.

The other meaning of *Swadhyaya* is *sva+adhyaya*, i.e., study and meditation of one's own self, that is, study of the *atmas koshas*, namely, *annamaya kosha*, *pranamaya kosha*, *manomaya kosha*, *vijnanamaya kosha* and *anandamaya kosha*; and after knowing of these planes of the personality, knowing of the subtle body (*sukshama sharira*), and then, on top, purist of *atma-sakshatkara*, self-realisation, leading, finally, to the vision of the Divine.

The person dedicated to *swadhyaya* is led on to the Divine vision (*Ishwara sakshatkara*). The person gets into the company of *yogi*, scholars dedicated to the *Veda*, and saints in pursuit of God. This company of the holy helps him or her to get on to and proceed to the divine goal.⁵⁴ Explaining Patanjali's '*ishtadevata samprayoga*', Swami Dayanand says: By *Swadhyaya*, the *yogi* gets close to the presence of the divine object of his holy pursuit, God and, by virtue of divine grace, is led on the self-purification, self-vision, pursuit of truth, *purushartha* (attainment of the meaning and purpose of life), Divine love and *Moksha*, ultimate freedom.⁵⁵

Ishwara-pranidhana (surrender to God)

Prayer, meditation and *upasana* with complete surrender to God, complete renunciation of worldly desires and ambitions, with only one aim of self-realization (*atma sakshatkara*) and through that, God realization (*Ishwara-sakshatkara*), doing one's duty in respect of life, complete, unqualified, unreserved surrender to God is *Ishwara-pranidhana*.⁵⁶

Maharshi Dayanand explains that *Ishwara-pranidhana* means the surrender in all faith and love, of all one's strength, powers and virtues, all qualities, all *pranas*, the *atma* and *mana* (self and mind), in short, the surrendered dedication of all that is yours in this phase of existence.⁵⁷

The devotee attains the state of Samadhi without difficulty.⁵⁸ Elsewhere it is said that, the devotee attains the direct realization of God (*Ishwara sakshatkara*), and success over all obstacles to the top state of yoga.⁵⁹

3. ASANA

In meditation, that posture of the body in which you can sit comfortably with body, mine and *atma* in harmony, that is *asana*.⁶⁰ In the language of Swami Dayanand *asana* is the posture at ease, without any discomfort.⁶¹

In yoga practice, there are two kinds of *asana*: one, for meditation; the other, for health of body.

For meditation: that posture in which you can sit for as long as you can, with ease, comfort, disturbance. The body, *mind* and *atma* should be one in harmony. Such *asanas* are *padmasana*, *siddhasana*, etc.

The other kind of asana is for the *saka* of exercise for good health. Such are *halasana*, *shirshasana*, and *sarvangasana*, etc.

There are two ways of attaining success in *asana*: one is *prayatna shaithilya*, no bodily strain and slow, successive exercise for comfortable perfection of the posture. The other is *ananta samapatti*, complete concentration on the presence of God.⁶²

When success and efficiency in the *asana*, then the yogi attains the strength and ability to remain calm, comfortable and concentrated, all at peace, in spite of the contraries of weather such as heat and cold, and needs of the body such as hunger and thirst.⁶³ Maharshi Dayanand also says that, when the yogi is stabilized in the *asana* posture, then heat and cold of the weather do not disturb him and he does not have to strain his body or mind to sit at peace for meditation.⁶⁴

4. PRANAYAMA

After stability in *asana* has been attained, then in that posture, then to control and slap the movement of breath is called *pranayama*.⁶⁵

On this subject, Maharshi Dayanand writes: The inhalation of breath is *shvasa*, the exhalation of breath is *prashvasa*. The yogi should control both by the act of thought. Never hold the nose by hand, the control (including stoppage) of the breath only by thought and will and knowledge (of the science of breath) is *pranayama*.

And *pranayama* is of four kinds: One is external (*bahya-vishaya*), the second is internal (*abhyantara-vishaya*), the third is still (*stambha-vritti*), and the fourth is 'stop-out', 'stop-in' by control.

The four *pranayamas* are like this: When the breath is exhaled, stop it out (as far as easily possible). This is the first *pranayama*. When the breath is inhaled, stop in and hold it in as far as possible. This is the second *pranayama*. The third is *stambha-vritti* which means

‘neither exhale nor inhale, but stop it where it is and hold as long as you comfortably can. The fourth is *Bahyabhyantarakshepi*, that is, when the breath is exhaled (from in, to out), stop it out in parts; and when the breath is inhaled (from out, to in), stop it in parts as long as possible.⁶⁶

When the yogi successfully has practiced *pranayama* for sufficiently long time, then the ignorance and *avidya*, which veils over discriminative knowledge (*viveka*), starts getting reduced. The negative Sanskars (genetic impressions) as well as the future negative *karmas* too, of which the possibility is there, all that getting reduced.⁶⁷ In addition, the mind develops the capacity for contraction (*Dharana*). The yogi develops the competence for concentration of the mind whenever and wherever he wants.⁶⁸

Maharshi Dayanand says that the yogi who practices meditation with *pranayama* experiences that the veil of ignorance from over the potential *jnana*, discriminative knowledge, is disappearing and the light of knowledge is increasing.⁶⁹

When the yogi is in control, of *prana*, the potential of mind and senses too comes into his control, according to his will. His strength of mind and will increases. It is intelligence (*buddhi*) grows fine and subtle and sharp and his understanding of the meaning and purpose of life expands. He can understand the subtle and difficult mysteries and problems of life. His vitality of body and mind increases, stability of mind, strength, potential for advancement, sense control, memory and discrimination grow so fast that he can master the *shastras* in a short time.⁷⁰ (Let us remember that Swami Dayanand too mastered and memorized the Vedas and shastras the same way).

When man practices *pranayama*, then every **moment on in time darkness**, impurity and ignorance thin out and the light of knowledge and awareness increase and radiate until the man is free from all bondages of time and *Prakriti* in the state of *Moksha*.⁷¹ Maharshi Manu writes in *Manusmriti*⁷²:

दह्यन्ते ध्मायमानानां धातूनां च यथा भलाः ।

तथेन्द्रियाणां दहन्तेदोषाः प्राणस्य निग्रहात् ॥

Dahyante dhmayamananam dhatunam ca yatha ma lah,

Tathendriyanam dahyante dosah pranasya dharanat.

Just as in the fire, the impurities of metals such as gold get burnt off, similarly, by *pranayama*, the impurities of the mind and senses get burnt out to purity.⁷³

5. PRATYAHARA

Through long and continuous yoga practice, when the mind of the yogi becomes pure and peaceful, the business of his senses and mind too stops by themselves. The senses were, so far, wandering out to their objects by the direction of the mind. Now that the mind is still and at peace, the senses have nothing to do, so by themselves they retire and turn inwards in deference to the mind. They are silent, at peace.

Thus the return of the senses inward, in unison with the mind is called *Pratyahara*.⁷⁴

On this Maharshi Dayanand says that *Pratyaharar* is that state of man’s personality when man has won over the mind with full control, then the senses are won over and controlled of themselves, because the mind is the mover and master of the senses.⁷⁵

When the yogi is stabilized in *pratyahara*, the senses are completely under his control. There is no need to try to control the senses any further.⁷⁶

THE INTERNAL MEANS (SADHANAS) OF YOGA

6. DHARANA

When through the external means of yoga, from *yama-niyama* to *pratyahara*, the mind is at peace in the state of purity, then to fix and stabilize the mind on any object of positive value in terms of yoga, is called *Dharana*: देशबन्धचित्तस्य धारणा *Deshabandhachittasya Dharana*.⁷⁷ The meaning is: When the yogi, according to his own will and choice, wants to fix and stabilize his mind and attention on some object of yogic values, and fixes it there at peace, that state of yoga is *Dharana*.

Maharshi Dayanand's view of *Dharana* is this: The mind, free from all its fluctuations, consciousness concentrated on any point such as the navel, heart, forehead, tip of the nose or tip of the tongue, and chanting Om identified with its content, *Parameshwara*. That is the state called *Dharana*.⁷⁸

When the yogi stabilizes his mind on some point – heart, *ajnachakra*, navel, etc. and meditated on the presence of God, then God is the object of meditation, the *jiva*, i.e., the yogi, is the mediator, and the presence of 'I' (The mediator consciousness) and 'thou' (God, the object) *both* is the content of the act of meditation: This is internal-oriented *Dharma*.

But when the yogi, keen on knowing some doubly object in its specific identity, concentrates the mind and consciousness on that object, that is external-oriented *Dharana*.

7. DHYANA

Constant continuance of the concentration of mind and consciousness, uninterruptedly, wholly and exclusively, on the object of meditation, i.e., on God, on the same point as in the state of *Dharana*, that is *Dhyana*. In simple words, *Dhyana* is constant continuation of meditation as in the state of *Dhyana*. In simpler words: *Dhyana* is the continuation of *Dharana*.

In the language of *yogasutra*, तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम् *Tatra pratyayaikatanata dhyanam*.⁷⁹

Explaining this sutra, Maharshi Dayanand says: Having attained to the state of *Dharana*, meditation on God, with all love and thought, the yogi experiences as unearthly presence of light divine and joy in and out everywhere. To enter and merge in that light and joy just like a stream entering and merging with the sea, and to continue therein without interruption, that is *Dhyana*.⁸⁰

8. SAMADHI

Samadhi is the highest state of *Dhyana*. When the yogi, through *Dhyana*, realizes the presence of God and, with mind withdrawn from all worldly objects and consciousness withdrawn even from the self, concentrates and stabilizes on God alone, that is *Samadhi*. In *Samadhi*, the yogi forgets his own self even, and merges with God-consciousness.

In the language of *yogasutra*, तदेव-अर्थमात्र-निभासं स्वरूप-शून्यमिव समाधिः *Tadeva-arthamatra-nibhasam svarupa-shunyamiva samadhih*.⁸¹

Explaining this sutra, Maharshi Dayanand says: Just as a piece of iron in the fire of the furnace becomes fire itself, similarly the yogi's consciousness merges in the divine consciousness and divine self-refulgence, and in that state of joy (*ananda*) forgets even his own identity.⁸²

Having emerged from Samadhi, the *jivatma* can, in the waking state, address and ask *Paramatma*, like a child, of course: “Pray what is the difference between you and me?”

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DHYANA AND SAMADHI

Maharshi Dayanand explains the difference between *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* : In the state of *Dhyana*, the subject (The *I* that meditates, the *yogi* as an *atma*), the object (the Thou, Ishwara, God, on whose light and presence and *ananda*, the *yogi* meditates), and the experience (light, or joy, whatever the *yogi* feels during meditation), all these three are these. In the state of *Samadhi*, all the three merge into one.

In the language of Maharshi Dayanand, in *Dhyana*, the subject (who meditates), the object (Ishwara on whom the consciousness is concentrated), and ‘*mana*’ (the mind which is the vehicle of consciousness), all the three are there. In *Samadhi*, there is only One.

Just as a person dives into water, stays in there, for as long as he can, this is the state of *Samadhi*.⁸³

When he emerges from water, he emerges from *Samadhi*, the person is a person. The water is there. The experience was, for sure, an experience.

I, thou, experience, the three are there in *Dhyana*. The three are one in *Samadhi*.

In the language of yoga, we call them “*dhyata*, *dhyana* and *dhyeya*.”

In the language of psychology, we call them “subject, object, and experience.”

When you come to that stage in the experience of *yoga-sadhana* where there is no distinction between the subject, the object, and the experience, then feel that you had achieved the state of *Samadhi*.⁸⁴

DHARANA, DHYANA AND SAMADHI (SAMYANA)

In the *yogasutra*, the three, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi*, are called *Samyama*.⁸⁵

Maharshi Dayanand says that the three are, at the end, not three, because the technique in excluding order, although linear in description, is actually simultaneous for the efficient *yogi*. It hardly takes any time to move from *Dharana* to *Dhyana*, and from *Dhyana* to *Samadhi*. Further, the equipment of all three also is identical: Realisation of the presence, refulgence and ecstasy (*ananda*) of *Paramatma* by the *jivatma*. The *phala*, end and aim of all three is the same: direct experience of the presence, power and *ananda* of the infinite Divinity by the finite humanity.⁸⁶

Whenever you wish to follow the practical technique of yoga for God realization, follow the process this way: Below the throat, above the stomach, between the nipples. There is the divine resonance hollow, called *Hridayakash*, ‘The city of God’, so called among all cultures. Therein, in the heart lotus, is the divine presence of the Sacchidananda God Almighty with all His refulgence. Centre all your consciousness there, with absolute attention, persist in the practice without a break with perfect faith, and one day you will see the light. Patanjali is the guide, says Maharshi Dayanand. That is the way.

Laid out by Maharshi Patanjali, explained by Maharshi Dayanand, if. This path is followed constantly without break, for a sufficiently long time, life with food and conduct well ordered as prescribed by the sages, success is possible for sure.

Indulgence and ‘*sadhana*’ do not go together for success. Therefore, Yogeshwar Krishna says in the *Gita*:

If a person’s food and daily habits and conduct are well ordered, if the intention, will and action is well controlled, if sleep and wakeful state is well controlled, yoga would remove all his problems of pain and suffering for sure.⁸⁷ Further, if a person eats too much, or

eats too little, staying hungry as a part of virtue, or sleeps too much, or keeps awake too long then too no success.⁸⁸

Blessing : This is *upasana yoga*, *Param Dharma*, self-realisation through the practice of *yoga*.

Warning : Success in yoga does not favour the man of bad conduct, because unless a person gives up evil in thought, words and deed, unless he does not work for peace of mind, Unless he does not engage heart and soul for the attainment of “*purushartha*”, doesn’t purify himself in and out, let him read, listen to sermons ever so much, he cannot realize his own self, cannot realize the Supreme *Atman*.⁸⁹

अयं तु परमो धर्मो यद्योगेनात्मदर्शनम् ।

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 (i) *Yogdarshan*, 1.2; योगश्चित्त-वृत्ति-निरोधः ।
- (ii) *Ibid.*, 1.1, Vyas Bhashya; योगः समाधिः ।
- 2 *Kathopanishad*, chapter-II, बल्ली-3.10.11
- 3 *Gita*, 2.50; योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्
Ibid., 2.48; समत्वं योग उच्यते ।
- 4 *Ibid.*, 4.37
- 5 *Ibid.*, 4.38
- 6 *Ibid.*, 2.47
- 7 *Ibid.*, 2.48
- 8 *Ibid.*, 2.50
- 9 *Ibid.*, 2.48
- 10 *Yogdarshan*, 2.29
- 11 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer (1951)
- 12 *Yogdarshan*, 2.30
- 13 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*,
- 14 *Yogdarshan*, 2.34
- 15 *Ibid.*, 2.35
- 16 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 *Yogdarshan*, 2.30, Vyas Bhashya
- 19 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*; cf. *Yogdarshan*, 2.36
- 20 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 21 *Ibid.*, *Yogdarshan*, 2.37
- 22 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 23 *Yogdarshan*, 2.38
- 24 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter-III, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer (1925)
- 25 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 26 See *Yogdarshan*, 2.30, Vyas Bhashya
- 27 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 28 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter-III
- 29 *Yogdarshan*, 2.39
- 30 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 31 *Yogdarshan*, 2.31
- 32 *Manusmriti*, 4.204
- 33 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter-III
- 34 *Yogdarshan*, 2.32
- 35 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 36 *Manusmriti*, 5.109; अद्भिर्गात्राणि शुद्ध्यन्ति, मनः सत्येन शुद्ध्यति । विद्यातपोऽज्ञां भूतात्मा, बुद्धिज्ञानेन शुद्ध्यति ।

- 37 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskarvidhi, Ghriyashram Sanskar*, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer (1968)
- 38 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*; cf. *Yogdarshan*, 2.40-41
- 39 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter-III
- 40 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 41 *Yogdarshan*, 2.30, Vyas Bhashya
- 42 *Yogdarshan*, 2.42
- 43 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 44 *Yogdarshan*, 2.41
- 45 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskarvidhi, Sanyas Prakarnam*
- 46 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter-III
- 47 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 48 *Yogdarshan*, 2.32
- 49 *Gita*, 17.14-17
- 50 *Ibid.*, 17.5-6
- 51 *Yogdarshan*, 2.43; कायेन्द्रियसिद्धिरशुद्धिक्षयात्तपसः ।
Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya; पूर्वाक्त तप से उनके शरीर और इन्द्रियाँ अशुद्धि के क्षय से दूढ़ होके सदा रोगरहित रहती हैं ।
- 52 *Yogdarshan*, 2.32, Vyas Bhashya
- 53 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 54 *Yogdarshan*, 2.44
Please see, Vyas Bhashya; देवा ऋषयः सिद्धाश्च स्वाध्यायशीलस्य दर्शनं गच्छन्ति कार्ये चास्य वर्तन्त इति ।
- 55 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 56 *Yogdarshan*, 2.32, Vyas Bhashya
- 57 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 58 *Ibid.*
- 59 *Yogdarshan*, 2.29
- 60 *Ibid.*, 2.46
- 61 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 62 *Yogdarshan*, 2.47
- 63 *Ibid.*, 2.48
- 64 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 65 *Yogdarshan*, 2.49
- 66 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 67 *Yogdarshan*, 2.52, see Vyas Bhashya
- 68 *Yogdarshan*, 2.53
- 69 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 70 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter-III
- 71 *Ibid.*
- 72 *Manusmiriti*, 6.71
- 73 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyarth Prakash*, chapter-III
- 74 *Yogdarshan*, 2.54
- 75 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 76 *Yogdarshan*, 2.55; ततः परमा वश्यतेन्द्रियाणाम् । इस सूत्र का अर्थ करते हुए महर्षि दयानन्द सरस्वती लिखते हैं कि-“तब वह मनुष्य जितेन्द्रिय होके जहाँ अपने मन को ठहराना व चलाना चाहे, उसी में ठहरा और चला सकता है और फिर उसको ज्ञान हो जाने से सदा सत्य में प्रीति हो जाती है और असत्य में कभी नहीं ।” *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 77 *Yogdarshan*, 3.1
- 78 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 79 *Yogdarshan*, 3.2
- 80 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 81 *Yogdarshan*, 3.3
- 82 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*
- 83 *Ibid.*
- 84 Bhwanilal Bhartiya ed., *Dayanand Shashtrarth Sangrah*, Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Bahalgarh, Sonapat (1970)
- 85 *Yogdarshan*, 3.4
- 86 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya*

87 *Gita*, 6.17

88 *Ibid.*, 6.17

89 Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Rigvedadibhashyabhumika- Upasana Vishya Kathopanishad*, वल्ली-2 मन्त्र 24