

Astanga Yoga of Patanjali

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Abstract: Yoga is a group of physical, mental and spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in ancient India. The word yoga was first mentioned in the oldest sacred texts, Rig veda. The vedas were a collection of texts containing songs, mantras and rituals to be used by Brahmans the vedic priests. According to patanjali, Yoga is the suppression of modifications of the mind. Yoga creates a sense of inner peace.

Keywords: Yoga, spiritual, Veda, Priest, Peace, Mind.

1. Introduction

Yoga is one of the orthodox school of Indian philosophy. Patanjali is the founder of the yoga philosophy. The word "Yoga" literally meaning is union of the soul with the super soul. According to Bhagavad Gita, "Yoga is said to be equanimity". Gita defines, 'Yoga is skill in action'. For Patanjali, Yoga does not mean union but spiritual effort to attain perfection through the control of the body, senses and mind.

2. Relation with Sankhya philosophy

The Yoga philosophy is very closed allied to the Sankhya philosophy. Yoga philosophy is the practical part of Sankhya. Gita defines, Sankhya and Yoga philosophy are same and one. Yoga mostly accepts the metaphysics and the Sankhya accepts Epistemology. For Sankhya Purusa and Prakriti are two ultimate realities; but Yoga philosophy accepts god also.

A. Astanga Yoga

A man cannot realize spiritual truth so long as his mind is tainted with impurities and his mind intellect vitiated by evil thoughts. Yoga philosophy advocates control over the body, the senses and the mind. For the purification and enlightenment of mind, the Yoga philosophy gives us the eightfold means, which are called Astanga Yoga. They are –

- Yama
- Niyama
- Asana
- Poanayanma
- Pratyahara
- Dharana
- Dhyana
- Samadhi

Astanga Yoga are broadly explain in the following,

- **Yama:** In Yoga philosophy, Satya Ahimsa, Satya Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha of Jainism Vows are called Yama. Ahimsa means to accept the

principles of non-violence. It defines that not to kill or do any injuries to any living beings. Satya says to speak the truth and adhere to truth even in your thinking. Asteya includes both not desiring on others wealth and not stealing any goods from others. Brahmacharya needs to control one's senses towards the attachment of worldly pleasures. It restrains somebody for not having sexual life. Aparigraha says not accept and aspire for any sorts of unnecessary lavish things for life enjoyment like gold, diamond etc. All these Yamas are badly required for the concentration of Chitta or mind. So Yama needs to control of mind, body and speech.

- **Niyama:** In Yoga philosophy, Sauca Santosa tapas, Sradhyaya and Isvarapranidhana are called Niyama. It is self-culture. Niyama consists in the cultivation of the following good habits-
- Sauca or purification of the body by washing and taking pure food are called external purification and purification of the mind by cultivating good emotions and sentiments such as kindness for the virtues and indifference to the vices of others which is called internal purification.
- Santosa or the habit of being content with what comes of itself without undue exertion.
- Tapas or penance which consists in the habit of enduring cold and heat etc. and observing austers vows.
- Svadhyaya or the regular habit of study of religious books.
- Isvarapranidhana or meditation of and resignation to god.
- 1. **Asana:** The Yoga realise that our body has a dignity of its own as much as the mind. Asana or posture is a physical help to concentration. Patanjali said, that the posture must be firm, pleasant and easy. There are various kinds of Asana, such as padmasana, Virasana, bhadrasana, dhyanasana, Namaskarasana etc. If the body is not free from disease and other disturbing influence, it is very difficult to attain concentration. We are very careful about our food. We should not eat and drink things which set our nerves on edge, driving them into fever or stupor. The lower satisfactions of life generally strangle the true joy of spirit. Yoga philosophy says that the perfection of the body

consists in beauty, grace, strength and adamantine hardness.

2. *Pranayama*: Pranayama is regulated suspension of the breathing processes. Pranayama is regarded as a steadying influence on the mind, and plays an important part in hatha Yoga where it is esteemed for its great efficiency in producing occult powers. There are three types of Pranayama such as Recaka, Puraka and Kumbhaka. The function of breathing continues, the mind abs gons on fluctuating and noting the current of air in and out. It is suspended, the mind is in a state of undisturbed concentration. Hence by Practicing the control of breath the yosin can suspend breathing for a long time and thereby prolong the state of concentration.
3. *Pratyahara*: In this stage, the agent should control their sense organs for not being attracted by the worldly objects. So, in this stage the mind not disturbed by sights, sounds etc. through the eye, the ear and other sense, but keeps all of them under perfect control. This is state is very difficult, although not impossible of attainment.
4. *Dhanana*: Dhanana consist in fixing the mind on the desired object. The object thus attended to may be a part of one's body, like one's navel, the midpoint of the eye brows etc. The ability to keep one's attention steadily fixed on some object is the test of fitness for entering on the next higher stage of yoga.
5. *Dhyana*: Dhyana or concentration is the steady contemplation of the object without any break. This has the effect of giving us a clear and distinct representation of the object first by parts and aspects. But by long continued mediation the mind can develop the partial representation of the object into full and live presentation of it. This dhyana reveals the reality of the contemplated object to the yogin's mind.
6. *Samadhi*: Samadhi is the name of the condition to be passed through before reaching deliverance. Since the

yoga insists on attaining freedom through Samadhi. It is the goal of the yoga discipline, since it lifts the soul from its Aomporal conditioned, changing esistence into a simple eternal and perfect life. Samadhi or concentration is the final step in the practice of yoga. It is the highest means to realize the cessation of mental modification which is the and It is ecstatic state in which the concentration with the external world is broken and through which one has a pass before obtaining liberation.

3. Conclusion

According to Yoga philosophy, the five disciplines of restraint and culture (Yama and Niyama), bodily posture (asana), breath control (Pranayama) and control over the senses (Pratyahara) are regarded as the Bahiranga sadana and the last three disciplines are said to be internal or Antaranga Sadhana, because they are directly related to some kind of Samadi or yoga.

A yogin is believed to acquire contain extra ordinary powers by the practice of yoga, in its different stages. These are told that the yogins can know directly the past present and future, they can also see trough closed doors; pass through stone walls, disappear from sight appear at different places at the same time. Yoga s for the attainment of liberation. We can conclude by the words of Patanjali yoga sutra- "It is only when the correct practice is followed for a long time, without interruptions and with a quality of positive attitude and eagerness, that it can succeed."

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