



## CONCEPT OF SAUCHA (PURIFICATION) AND ITS IMPORTANT IN YOGA PRACTICES

**Dr. S. Jayaprakash**

Principal, Vethathiri Maharishi College of Yoga, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

### ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the concept of saucha (purification), while analyzing various types of yoga practices. Purification in Sanskrit is written as saucha or shauca. Saucha is discussed in yoga sutra, Hatha yoga pradipika and other yoga texts as yama and epics including Bhagawat geetha and Ramaynam.

**KEYWORDS:** Saucha, Purity, SKY Yoga, Yoga Sutra, Astanga Yoga.

### INTRODUCTION

According to Pathanjali Yoga sutra, the first Principal of Niyama (Personal observances) is *Saucha*, which means purity, cleanliness or Hygiene, Niyama is the second principle of Astanga yoga (Eight limbs of Yoga). The Objective of this paper is explore the concept of purification and its relevance to yoga practices.

### Yoga Practices

There is general perception in the society that yoga means Yoga asanas only (Yoga Postures), but reality Yoga asanas are the one of the limbs of astanga yoga. The Steps of astanga yoga are (1) Yama (2) Niyama (3) Asana (4) Pranayama (5) Prathyakara (6) Dharana (7) Dhyana (8) Samadhi. Asanas is only in the fourth limb of astanga yoga. The Yoga Practices includes Physical, Mental and Spiritual in nature. This is can be further classified in to Asanas, Pranayama, Shat kriyas, Mudras, Bandhas which are more related to Physical, Prathyakara, Dharana, Meditation, Samadhi and Introspections techniques are related to mental and spiritual aspects.

### Concept of Purity

In general the concept of *saucha* relates to cleanliness, Purity and hygiene, which can be interpreted as purity of physical, mental and Soul. The concept of *saucha* is mentioned in hatha yoga pradipika text as the 10<sup>th</sup> yama (to do things) and according to Tamil saint thiruvalluvar, in one of the couplet says the physical body gets purified by water and whereas mind gets purified by the speaking truth. There are two types of purification, one is physical and other one is internal. The external purification includes purification of place, cloth, body, food and earning wealth through dharma (righteous way). The internal purification comes under keep away negative qualities of mind includes jealousy, false ego, hate, anger and misery. External purification possible, visible, and comparatively easier than the internal, but in short both purification needed and interconnected.

### Various Types of Yoga

There are various types of yoga. Each type of yoga has its own objectives, key features and limitation. Review of some of the yoga related to purity.



### 1. Bhakthi Yoga

The Bhakthi means devotions, devotions to god are central theme in this type of yoga.

Key activities related to purification include Purification of body, mind and soul. Purification of body via bathing at holy rivers, *abhisegam of vikragams* , *Viratham* ( fasting ) which leads of purification of digestion system. singing *keerthanai* ( songs ) for purification of mind.

### 2. Karma Yoga

In general karma means actions, both physical and mental action. Karma not just action but also the result of action. Understanding and following the cause and effect system is the central theme of this type of yoga. In general karmas are classified in to three as *Agamiya karma*, *Praraptha karma* and *Sanjeetha karmas*. Key activities related to purification of the above mentioned karmas.

### 3. Hatha Yoga

Ha means sun and tha means moon, union or balancing two forces within the body is hatha yoga. Hatha yoga advocates the shat kriyas, it says it is very much required before yoga activities. *Shat kriyas* helps to purify the three doshas. Key activities include, practices of *shat kriyas* which include Dhauti, Basti, neti, Trataka, nauli and kapalapathi. Dhauti- cleaning the digestive tract or stomach, Basti- cleaning the colon, Neti – cleaning the nasal passage, Trataka- gazing candle light without blinking for cleaning and strengthening eyes, Nauli- massaging of the abdomen, Kapalapathi- cleaning frontal lobes of the brain and the lungs.

### 4. Raja Yoga/Kundalini Yoga

Purification of Nadi, pranas and chakras is one of the central theme of this type yoga. According to Hatha yoga text, due to impurities of Ida and pingala nadi only sushuma nadi is not active.

### 5. Mantra Yoga

Mantra = man + tra, man represents mind, tra comes from trayati, which means “to protect”. Mantra chanting considered as the yoga of sound. Purification of negative energy through positive sound vibrations is one of the objective mantra yoga.

### 6. SKY Yoga

Simplified Kundalini yoga or SKY yoga is a type of modern yoga, founded by Vethathiri Maharishi. SKY yoga has innovative concepts of Genetic centre and Bio-magnetism. In short bio-magnetism is a Wave, emitting from life force particle and the center of wave emitting from genetic centre (vortex). Purification of genetic centre through Introspection technique is one of the central theme SKY yoga. According to SKY yoga. While man is doing activities through body or mind it gets imprinted. The imprint takes place in limbs, senses, brain, bio-magnetism, genetic centre, Soul and life force, only through suitable introspection practices, the sin imprints can be purified. It advocates (1) expiation; (2) super impose with good actions/habits and (3) erasing the sin imprints from the origin through meditation.

### Analysis

According to hatha yoga texts Gherndra samhita, the concept of *Ghata* means, the body is a like vessels, when we are using vessels it becomes dirt, every day we are cleaning the vessel to use it next day, similarly the body is to be purified in the same way. According to saiva siddhantha philosophy, Soul has inborn impurities of Ego, karmas and illusion. Ego can be purified by seva or service. Karmas can be purified suitable method of Meditation awareness and illusion can be purified by the knowing nature or developing the knowledge on nature.

**CONCLUSION**

From the above analysis we can easily come to conclusion that basically yoga is a purification process. Analysis of Bhakthi yoga, karma yoga, Hatha yoga, kundalini yoga/raja yoga and SKY yoga emphasis the purification of physical body, karmas, mind and soul.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. Vethathiri Maharishi, Mind, Vethathiri Publication, Erode.
2. Hatha yoga, yogi svatmarama, translation by pancham sinh.
3. Certification yoga professional, official book. P 77. 87,144,163, publisher excels books 2016.
4. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaucha>.