



A STUDY ON THE ESSENTIAL OF YOGA PHILOSOPHY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

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ABSTRACT

Yoga is the scientific approach to way of life. It expresses hygienic mental and physical health. The Yoga philosophy is an invaluable gift of the great Indian sage Patanjali to all bent upon spiritual realization. It is a great aid to those who wish to realize the existence of the spirit as an independent principle, free from all limitation of the body, the senses and the mind. It is known as the Patanjali system after the name of its founder. The value of yoga as an important method of realizing the spiritual truth of Indian Philosophy has been recognized almost all the Indian systems. Yoga is reducing the mental stress; reduce the disease, because Yoga practice is necessary for the contemporary world.

KEYWORDS: *Yoga practice, Spiritual truth, Realization, Mental health and Physical health, Hygienic.*

INTRODUCTION

Yoga is an ancient Indian body of knowledge that dates back more than 5000 years ago. The word “Yoga” came from the Sanskrit word “Yuj” which means “to unite or integrate”. Yoga then is about the union of a person’s own consciousness and the universal consciousness. Ancient Yogis had a belief that in order for a man to be in harmony with himself and his environment, he has integrated the body, the mind, and the spirit. For these three to be integrated, emotion, action and intelligence must be in balance. The Yoga is formulated a way to achieve and maintain this balance which done through exercise, breathing and meditation by the consists of three main Yoga structures.

SIGNIFICANCE OF YOGA PRACTICING

In *Yoga*, the body is treated with care and respect for it is the primary instrument in man’s work and growth. *Yoga* Exercise improves blood circulation, stimulate the abdominal organs, and put pressure on the glandular system of the body, which can generally result to better health. Breathing techniques were developed based on the concept that breath is the sources of life. In *Yoga*, students gain breathing control as they slowly increase their breathing. By focusing on their breathing, they prepare the minds for the next step- Meditation. There is a general misconception that in mediation your mind has to go blank. It doesn’t have to be so. In meditation students bring the activities of the mind into focus resulting in a “quite” mind. By designing physical poses and breathing techniques that develop awareness of our body, *yoga* helps us focus and relieves us from our every stress.

VIABLE OPTION

The philosophy of *Yoga* puts forward, in non-technical or non-metaphysical terms, that you are essentially an all perfect entity totally free from any imperfection and not subject to any undesirable, imperfect, negative experience whatsoever. Every day from the time of your birth, you keep trying to avoid the discomfort and pain that is brought by hunger. You do not want to remain on an empty stomach even for of an hour or two beyond your usual time of breakfast or lunch. If the lunch is missed, you are



very, very perturbed, very much disturbed, very much distressed. You become very morose and irritable also. This is such a daily and common experience, and such a routine experience, that no one pays any attention to it from the philosophical angle, from the analytical metaphysical angle. *Yoga* philosophy says “No you are really free from all these things, you have no affliction, and you have no hunger, no thirst, no sleep, and no fatigue. You have no pain, you have no pleasure and you have no distress, no agitation, no worry, and no anxiety. You are a being full of perfection, complete in yourself, lacking nothing, full of joy, full of peace, full of bliss.”

INDIAN THOUGHTS OF YOGA

Yoga is one of the six fundamental system of Indian thoughts collectively known as *darsana* .As one of the six *darsana*, *yoga* has its origin in the Vedas, the oldest record of Indian Culture. It was systematized as a special *darsana* by the great Indian sage *Patanjali* in the *Yoga Sutra*. Although this work was followed by many other important texts on *Yoga*, *Patanjali's Yoga sutra* is certainly most significant. The practice of *yoga* only requires us to be attentive to our actions. Each of us is required to pay careful attention to the direction we are taking so that we know where we are going and how we are going to get there; this careful observation will enable us to discover something new. Whether this discovery leads to better understanding of God, to greater contentment, or to a new goal is completely personal matter.

EIGHT LIMBS OF YOGA

- *Yama*
- *Niyama*
- *Asana*
- *Paranayama*
- *Prathiyahara*
- *Dharana*
- *Dhiyana*
- *Samadhi*

These are known as aids to *yoga*. When practiced regularly with devotion and dispassion, they lead to the attainment of *yoga* both *samprajunata* and *asamprajnata*. The first discipline of *Yama* or restraint consists in *Ahimsa* or abstention from all kinds of injury to any life, *Satya* or truthfulness in thought and speech, *Asteya* or non-stealing, *Brahamcharya* or control of the carnal desire and passions, and *Abrigha* or non-acceptance of unnecessary gifts from other people. Although these practices seem to be too well known to require any elaboration yet the *Yoga* explains all their details and insists that a *Yogin* must scrupulously follow them. The reason for this is obvious. It is a psychological law that a sound mind reside in a sound body. And that neither can be sound in the case of man who does not control his passions and sexual impulses. So also, a man cannot concentrate his attention on any object when his mind is distracted and dissipated by sin and crime and other evil propensities. This explains the necessity of complete abstention from all the evil courses and tendencies of life on the part of the *Yogin* who is eager to realize the self in the *Samadhi* or concentration.

The second discipline is *Niyama* or culture. It consists in the cultivation of the following good habits. *Sauca* or purification of the body by washing and taking pure food and purification of the mind by cultivating good emotions and sentiments, such as friendliness, kindness, cheerfulness for the virtues and indifference to the vice of the others, *Santosa* or the habit of being content with that comes of itself without undue exertion, *tabas* or penance which consists in the habit of enduring cold and heat etc., and observing austere vows, *svadhyaya* or the regular habit of study of religious books and, *Isvarapranithana* or meditation of and resignation to God.

The third discipline is *Asana* of the body and consists in the adoption of steady and comfortable postures. There were various kinds of *Asana* such as *padmasana*, *virasana*, etc. These can be properly learnt only under the guidance of experts. The discipline of the body is as much necessary for the attainment of concentration as that of the mind. If the body is not completely free from disease and other disturbing influences, it is very difficult to attain concentration. Hence the *Yoga* lays down elaborate rules for maintain the health of the body and making it a fit vehicle for concentrate thought. It prescribes many rules for preserving the vital energy, and strengthening and purifying the body and the mind. The *asanas* or postures recommended in it are effective ways by which the

body can be kept partially free from disease, and all the limbs , especially the nervous system, can be brought under control and prevented from producing disturbances in the mind.

Pranayama is the regulation of breath. It consists suspension of the breathing process either after exhalation or inhalation, or simply by retention of the vital breath. The details of the process should be learnt from experts. That respiratory exercise is useful for strengthening the heart and improving its functions is recognized by medical men when they recommend walking, climbing, etc, in a graduated scale, for patients with weak hearts. The Yoga goes further and prescribes breath control for concentration of the mind, because it conduces to steadiness of the body and the mind. So long as the function of breathing continues the mind out. If and when, it is suspended, the mind is in a state of undisturbed concentration. Hence by practicing breath, the yogin can suspend breathing for long time and there by prolong the state of concentration.

Pratyahara consists in withdrawing the senses from their respective external objects and keeping them under the control of the mind. When the senses are effectively controlled by the mind, they follow, not neither natural objects, but the mind itself. So in this state the mind is not disturbed by sights, sound etc., coming through the eye, the ear, and other sense, but keeps of all them under perfect control. This state is very difficult, although not impossible, of attainment. It requires a resolute will and long practice to gain mastery over one sense. The five disciplines of restraint and culture and control over the senses are regarded as the external aids to Yoga. As compared with these, the last three disciplines are said to internal to yoga, because they are directly related to some kind of Samadhi or yoga. These are Dharana, dhyana, Samadhi.

Darana or attention is a mental discipline which consists in holding or 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 eyebrows, etc., or it may be external to the body, like the moon, the images of gods, etc. The ability to keep the one's attention steadily fixed on some objects is the test of fitness for entering the next higher stage of Yoga.

Dhyana or meditation is the next step. It means the even flow of thought about, or rather, roundabout, the object of attention. It is the steady first contemplation of the object without any break or disturbance. This has effect of giving us clear and distinct representation of the object first by parts and aspects. But by long continued meditation, the mind can develop the partial representation of the object in to a full and live presentation of it. Thus Dhyana reveals the reality of the contemplated object to the yogin's mind.

Samadhi or concentration is the final step in the practice of yoga. In it the mind is so deeply absorbed in contemplation in the object of that it loses itself in the object and has no awareness of it. In the state of dhyana , the act and object of thought remain distinct and separate state of consciousness. But in Samadhi the act of meditation is not separately cognized; it takes on takes on the object and loses itself, as it were. So here only the object of thought remains shining in the mind, and we do not even know that there is a process of thought in the mind. It should be observed here that this smadhi as a discipline is different from the Samadhi or the yoga previously defined as 'restraint of the mind'. The former is but the means for the attainment of the latter which is its end. A long continued practice of the one leads to the other. The last three steps in the practice of yoga are called internal means. They should have the same object; the same object should be first attended to, then mediated and lastly concentrated upon. When thus combined they are said to constitute samanya which is very necessary for the attainment of Samadhi Yoga.

A yoga is believed to acquire certain extraordinary powers by the practice of yoga in its stages. Thus we are told that the yogins can tame all creatures including even ferocious animals, get any object by the mere wish of it, know directly the past, present, and future. Produce supernatural sights , sounds and smell and see subtle entities, Angels and Gods. They can also see through the closed doors, pass through stone walls, disappear from sight, appear at different places at the same time, and forth. While these may be possible, the yoga system warns all religious aspirants not to practice yoga with these ends in view. Yoga is for the attainment of liberation. The yogin must not get entangled in the quagmire of super normal powers. He must overcome the lure of yogic powers and move onward till he comes to the end of the journey, viz, liberation.

CONCLUSION

The yoga is one of the spiritual ways of life. Yoga philosophy offers the analogy of a perfectly clear crystal which is transparent and pure. The yoga philosophy is the all aspects of human life, including our relationships with others, our behaviour, our breathing and our meditation path. Finally Yoga Philosophy is the

healthy, scientifically, and naturally for the viable option for the dynamic force to way of life. The Yoga conception of the self as a transcendent subject which is quite distinct from the body and mind and the ego, is far removed from the common sense and the ordinary psychological concepts of it. The aims of Yoga is explore this region of genuine super –physical experience and to reveal the reality of man and the world – the real self, the, the Atman as eternally pure, enlightened and free, as the only true, unchanging happiness.

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