

NOTES: LINKING THE MUNDANE WITH THE SPIRITUAL

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras contain 196 short threads of knowledge, 'sutras' in 4 short books. They discuss the 8-fold path of Yoga according to Patanjali. Yama and Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi

Book 1

- 1:01 Now the exposition of Yoga
- 1:02 The restraint of the modifications of mind-stuff is Yoga
- 1:03 Then the seer (Self) abides in its true nature

The other 194 sutras discuss the process of how to accomplish this. The Bhagavad Gita discusses Bhakti, Karma and Jnana Yoga - the basic nature of a seeker.

SATCHITANANDA (*Truth, Consciousness, Bliss*) is the nature of the seer (SELF)

So, it is the fluctuating 'mind-stuff' which interferes with us 'being' in the state of yoga, which is our birthright.

The purpose of yoga is to return to the SELF, the seer, or to 'BE' in the state of Yoga, which means we are conscious, aware, free, liberated from pain and sorrow, birth and death and residing in the state of ananda or bliss. Those few rare souls who master yoga, accomplish this. It's a long and arduous path, yet filled with grace and love or pain and hate - it is our choice.

What are some of the modifications of the mind? Joy/sorrow, beauty/ugliness, love/hate, creativity/destructiveness, light/darkness, harmony/chaos, good/evil, like/dislike, grace/disgrace.....etc. This is all divine energy which is split into the state of 'duality' by desire.

Our most **prime** desire is to reside permanently in the state of bliss/ananda - to return to the state of Yoga. The next most important desire is to serve unconditionally - this often involves sacrifice of other extroverted desires and surrender to what is happening now.

All our other extroverted desires are an attempt to seek this state of yoga, and result in the fluctuations of the mind. Once we accomplish our desire and experience the resulting joy, we discover that our joy is only temporary and we seek to fulfill the next desire. Perhaps the divine would like us to live a happy and joyful life, but still this is temporary, we will die, be reborn and have to do this again and again, until we seek to turn inward and return to the state of yoga permanently.

Donovan Bailey's comment on achieving the fastest man in the world, the highest accomplishment at the Olympics, the 100 metre gold medal race – "now what?"

CYCLE OF DESIRE

What is the solution? MEDITATION - the journey inward

We cannot dive into deep meditation all at once... it is a gradual process that progresses over lifetimes. Therefore we have ways and means to build into this process according to our nature. We have formal yoga practices, which actually benefit every other practice. Yogi Amrit Desai says "Just do your practices." Our whole bio/energetic structure transforms.

Different people have different temperaments: **Karma Yoga** - action oriented people.
Bhakti Yoga - devotional/emotional people **Jnana Yoga** - reason/knowledge oriented people.

TEACHING YOGA as *sadhana*, SPORT and ART are all high practices -

ATHLETES are most often Karma Yogis - action oriented people also must play/compete with heart (Bhakti Yoga) and head (Jnana Yoga)

Skills Needed

- fitness and technique
- focus, knowledge
- concentration
- relaxation
- release of struggle of 'trying'
- intuition
- flow/ meditation-in motion

Yoga Benefits

- prepares the body by making it pure and fit, strengthens the nerves so they channel prana
- develops focus
- pratyahara and dhayana
- leads to athlete's 'high', 'being in the flow' playing 'above one's head'
- intuition/meditation-in-motion

ARTISTS (musicians, painters, dancers actors, writers, poets, etc.) are most often Bhakti Yogis - emotional/feeling oriented people, who must also learn to be non-attached to the results of their work (Karma Yoga) and to develop a knowledge of their craft (Jnana Yoga).

Skills Needed

- techniques
- focus, knowledge
- concentration
- relaxation
- release of struggle of 'trying'
- intuition
- flow/creative genius

Yoga Benefits

- prepares the mind and body by making it pure and fit depending on the art form, strengthens the nerves so they can channel prana
- develops focus
- pratyahara and dhayana
- leads to becoming one with the art form
- becoming one with the art form/dancer becomes the dance, painter becomes a channel, etc.
- intuition/meditation-in-motion

The secret to yoga lies in a gradual RELAXATION of the modifications of mind-stuff, of desiring - a letting go of effort.

"The science of higher vibrations. Consciousness percolates up through our biology... through protons and neutrons. We individualize our experience through our nervous system. The deeper you go, the more life there is, the less material, the less dead energy - super-string field, pure intelligence, quantum world - the most concentrated field of intelligence in nature. How is knowledge lost? Because it's subtle. Knowledge of Enlightenment can easily be lost. Consciousness has to settle down completely - you cannot 'try' - that involves effort - this is the only way to connect." *Professor John Hagelin, Ph.D*

As we enter meditation, we relax into the deeper 'koshas', freeing blocked energy along the way.