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CHAPTER III

GROWTH OF YOGA

3.1. PATANAJALI YOGA SUTRA

The period between 500 BC and 800 AD is considered as Patanjali’s period. Patanjali systematized yoga in the form of sutras. Patanjali was the author of classics in three important fields. He wrote a treatise on grammar; the Mahabhasya. He has also written book on Ayurveda. He has the credit of compiling Yoga sutra. Patanjali’s yoga sutra consists of 196 sutras, it is divided into four chapters, and they are,

1) Samadhi Pada: It deals with the nature of Samadhi.

2) Sadhana Pada: It deals with the methods for refining the body mind and senses.

3) Vibhuti Pada: The properties of Yoga and art of integration through concentration, meditation and absorption. The manifestation of super natural power is discussed.

4) Kaivalya Pada: In this final section, Patanjali draws the attention of the Yogi to the soul. The various types of Samadhi are explained.

In the Yoga Sutras, Patañjali prescribes adherence to eight "limbs" or steps (the sum of which constitute "Ashtanga Yoga", the title of the second chapter) to quiet one's mind and achieve kaivalya. The Yoga Sutras form the theoretical and philosophical basis of Raja Yoga, and are considered to be the most organized and complete definition of that discipline. The Sutras not only provide yoga with a thorough and consistent philosophical basis, they also clarify many important esoteric concepts which are common to all traditions of Indian thought, such as karma.
The Ashtanga or eight "limbs" prescribed in the second pada of the Yoga Sutras are: Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

The practice of yoga is an art and science dedicated to creating union between body, mind and spirit. Its objective is to assist the practitioner in using the breath and body to foster an awareness of ourselves as individualized beings intimately connected to the unified whole of creation. In short it is about making balance and creating equanimity so as to live in peace, good health and harmony with the greater whole. This art of right living was perfected and practiced in India thousands of years ago and the foundations of yoga philosophy were written down in the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali, approximately 200 AD. This sacred text describes the inner workings of the mind and provides an eight-step blueprint for controlling its restlessness so as to enjoying lasting peace.

The core of Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra is an eight-limbed path that forms the structural framework for yoga practice. Upon practicing all eight limbs of the path it becomes self-evident that no one element is elevated over another in a hierarchical order. Each is part of a holistic focus which eventually brings completeness to the individual as they find their connectivity to the divine. Because we are all uniquely individual a person can emphasize one branch and then move on to another as they round out their understanding.

In brief the eight limbs, or steps to yoga, are as follows:

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Pratyahara : Control of the senses

Dharana : Concentration and cultivating inner perceptual awareness

Dhyana : Devotion, Meditation on the Divine

Samadhi : Union with the Divine

The first two limbs that Patanjali describes are the fundamental ethical precepts called yamas, and the niyamas. These can also be looked at as universal morality and personal observances. Yamas and niyamas are the suggestions given on how we should deal with people around them and our attitude toward oneself. The attitude one has toward things and people outside oneself is yama, how one relates to oneself inwardly is niyama. Both are mostly concerned with how one uses ones energy in relationship to others and to oneself.

The yamas are broken down into five "wise characteristics." Rather than a list of do’s and don’ts, "they tell us that our fundamental nature is compassionate, generous, honest and peaceful." They are as follows:

3.1.1. YAMAS (UNIVERSAL MORALITY)

1. Ahimsa – Compassion for all living things

The word ahimsa literally mean not to injure or show cruelty to any creature or any person in any way whatsoever. Ahimsa is, however, more than just lack of violence as adapted in yoga. It means kindness, friendliness, and thoughtful consideration of other people and things. It also has to do with one’s duties and responsibilities too. Ahimsa implies that in every situation a person should adopt a considerate attitude and do no harm.
2. Satya – Commitment to Truthfulness

Satya means "to speak the truth," yet it is not always desirable to speak the truth on all occasions, for it could harm someone unnecessarily. A person has to consider what he/she has to say, how to say it, and in what way it could affect others. If speaking the truth has negative consequences for another, then it is better to say nothing. Satya should never come into conflict with one’s efforts to behave with ahimsa. This precept is based on the understanding that honest communication and action form the bedrock of any healthy relationship, community, or government, and that deliberate deception, exaggerations, and mistruths harm others.

3. Asteya - Non-stealing

Steya means "to steal"; asteya is the opposite-to take nothing that does not belong to us. This also means that if a person is in a situation where someone entrusts something or confides in him/her. The person should not take advantage of him or her. Non-stealing includes not only taking what belongs to another without permission, but also using something for a different purpose to that intended, or beyond the time permitted by its owner. The practice of asteya implies not taking anything that has not been freely given. This includes fostering a consciousness of how one asks for others’ time for inconsiderate behavior demanding another’s attention when not freely given is, in effect, stealing.

4. Brahmacharya - Sense control

Brahmacharya is used mostly in the sense of abstinence, particularly in relationship to sexual activity. Brahmacharya suggests that one should form relationships that foster ones understanding of the highest truths. Brahmacharya does not necessarily imply
celibacy. Rather, it means responsible behavior with respect to our goal of moving toward the truth. Practicing brahmacharya means that sexual energy should be used to regenerate our connection to spiritual self. It also means that this energy should not be used in any way that might harm others.

5. Aparigraha - Neutralizing the desire to acquire and hoard wealth

Aparigraha means to take only what is necessary, and not to take advantage of a situation or act greedy. One should only take what one has earned; if more is taken then it is exploiting someone else. The yogi feels that the collection or hoarding of things implies a lack of faith in God and in himself to provide for his future. Aparigraha also implies letting go of our attachments to things and an understanding that impermanence and change are the only constants.

The Yoga Sutra describes what happens when these five behaviors outlined above become part of a person's daily life. Thus, the yamas are the moral virtues which, if attended to, purify human nature and contribute to health and happiness of society.

3.1.2. NIYAMA (PERSONAL OBSERVANCES)

Niyama means "rules" or "laws." These are the rules prescribed for personal observance. Like the yamas, the five niyamas are not exercises or actions to be simply studied. They represent far more than an attitude. Compared with the yamas, the niyamas are more intimate and personal. They refer to the attitude one adopts towards ourselves as one creates a code for living soulfully
1. Sauca - Purity

The first niyama is sauca, meaning purity and cleanliness. Sauca has both an inner and an outer aspect. Outer cleanliness simply means keeping ourselves clean. Inner cleanliness has as much to do with the healthy, free functioning of our bodily organs as with the clarity of our mind. Practicing asanas or pranayama are essential means for attending to this inner sauca. Asanas tones the entire body and removes toxins while pranayama cleanses our lungs, oxygenates our blood and purifies our nerves. "But more important than the physical cleansing of the body is the cleansing of the mind of its disturbing emotions like hatred, passion, anger, lust, greed, delusion and pride."

2. Santosa - Contentment

Another niyama is santosa, modesty and the feeling of being content with what we have. To be at peace within and content with one's lifestyle finding contentment even while experiencing life’s difficulties for life becomes a process of growth through all kinds of circumstances. One should accept that there is a purpose for everything - yoga calls it karma – and we cultivate contentment 'to accept what happens'. It means being happy with what one has rather than being unhappy about what one does not have.

3. Tapas – Disciplined use of our energy

Tapas refers to the activity of keeping the body fit or to confront and handle the inner urges without outer show. Literally it means to heat the body and, by so doing, to cleanse it. Behind the notion of tapas lies the idea one can direct ones energy to enthusiastically engage life and achieve ultimate goal of creating union with the Divine. Tapas helps to burn up all the desires that stand in ones way of this goal. Another form of
tapas is paying attention to what ones eats. Attention to body posture, attention to eating habits, attention to breathing patterns - these are all tapas.

4. Svadhyaya – Self study

The fourth niyama is svadhyaya. Sva means "self" adhyaya means "inquiry" or "examination". Any activity that cultivates self-reflective consciousness can be considered svadhyaya. It means to intentionally find self-awareness in all our activities and efforts, even to the point of welcoming and accepting our limitations. It teaches to be centered and non-reactive to the dualities, to burn out unwanted and self-destructive tendencies.

5. Isvarapranidhana - Celebration of the Spiritual

Isvarapranidhana means "to lay all the actions at the feet of God." It is the contemplation on God (Isvara) in order to become attuned to god and god's will. It is the recognition that the spiritual suffuses everything and through our attention and care one can attune ourselves with our role as part of the Creator. The practice requires that one set aside some time each day to recognize that there is some omnipresent force larger than ourselves that is guiding and directing the course of ones life.

3.1.3. ASANAS (BODY POSTURES)

Asana is the practice of physical postures. It is the most commonly known aspect of yoga for those unfamiliar with the other seven limbs of Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra. The practice of moving the body into postures has widespread benefits; of these the most underlying are improved health, strength, balance, and flexibility. On a deeper level the practice of asana, which means "staying" or "abiding" in Sanskrit, is used as a tool to calm the mind and move into the inner essence of being. The challenge of poses offers the
practitioner the opportunity to explore and control all aspects of their emotions, concentration, intent, faith, and unity between the physical and the ethereal body. Indeed, using asanas to challenge and open the physical body acts as a binding agent to bring one in harmony with all the unseen elements of their being, the forces that shape the lives through responses to the physical world. Asana then becomes a way of exploring our mental attitudes and strengthening will as one learns to release and move into the state of grace that comes from creating balance between our material world and spiritual experience.

As one practices asana it fosters a quieting of the mind, thus it becomes both a preparation for meditation and a meditation sufficient in and of itself. Releasing to the flow and inner strength that one develops brings about a profound grounding spirituality in the body. The physicality of the yoga postures becomes a vehicle to expand the consciousness that pervades every aspect of one's body. The key to fostering this expansion of awareness and consciousness begins with the control of breath, the fourth limb – Pranayama. Patanjali suggests that the asana and the pranayama practices will bring about the desired state of health; the control of breath and bodily posture will harmonize the flow of energy in the organism, thus creating a fertile field for the evolution of the spirit. "This down-to-earth, flesh-and-bones practice is simply one of the most direct and expedient ways to meet yourself. … This limb of yoga practice reattaches us to our body. In reattaching ourselves to our bodies we reattach ourselves to the responsibility of living a life guided by the undeniable wisdom of our body."

3.1.4. PRANAYAMA (BREATH CONTROL)

Pranayama is the measuring, control, and directing of the breath. Pranayama controls the energy (prana) within the organism, in order to restore and maintain health and
to promote evolution. When the in-flowing breath is neutralized or joined with the out-flowing breath, then perfect relaxation and balance of body activities are realized. In yoga, is concerned with balancing the flows of vital forces, then directing them inward to the chakra system and upward to the crown chakra.

Pranayama, or breathing technique, is very important in yoga. It goes hand in hand with the asana or pose. In the Yoga Sutra, the practices of pranayama and asana are considered to be the highest form of purification and self discipline for the mind and the body, respectively. The practices produce the actual physical sensation of heat, called tapas, or the inner fire of purification. It is taught that this heat is part of the process of purifying the nadis, or subtle nerve channels of the body. This allows a more healthful state to be experienced and allows the mind to become more calm. As the yogi follows the proper rhythmic patterns of slow deep breathing "the patterns strengthen the respiratory system, soothe the nervous system and reduce craving. As desires and cravings diminish, the mind is set free and becomes a fit vehicle for concentration."

3.1.5. PRATYAHARA (CONTROL OF THE SENSES)

Pratyahara means drawing back or retreat. The word ahara means "nourishment"; pratyahara translates as "to withdraw oneself from that which nourishes the senses." In yoga, the term pratyahara implies withdrawal of the senses from attachment to external objects. It can then be seen as the practice of non-attachment to sensorial distractions as we constantly return to the path of self realization and achievement of internal peace. It means ones senses stop living off the things that stimulate; the senses no longer depend on these stimulants and are not fed by them any more.
In pratyahara, we sever this link between mind and senses is severed, and the senses withdraw. When the senses are no longer tied to external sources, the result is restraint or pratyahara. Now that the vital forces are flowing back to the Source within, one can concentrate without being distracted by externals or the temptation to cognize externals.

Pratyahara occurs almost automatically when one meditates because a person is so absorbed in the object of meditation. Precisely because the mind is so focused, the senses follow it; it is not happening the other way around.

No longer functioning in their usual manner, the senses become extraordinarily sharp. Under normal circumstances the senses become our masters rather than being our servants. The senses entice us to develop cravings for all sorts of things. In pratyahara the opposite occurs: the food should be eaten only when it has to be, not out of craving. In pratyahara, one tries to put the senses in their proper place, but not cut them out of our actions entirely.

Much of a person’s emotional imbalance is his own creation. A person who is influenced by outside events and sensations can never achieve the inner peace and tranquility. This is because he or she will waste much mental and physical energy in trying to suppress unwanted sensations and to heighten other sensations. This will eventually result in a physical or mental imbalance, and will, in most instances, result in illness.

Patanjali says that the above process is at the root of human unhappiness and uneasiness. When people seek out yoga, hoping to find that inner peace which is so evasive, they find that it was theirs all along. In a sense, yoga is nothing more than a process which enables us to stop and look at the processes of our own minds; only in this way can one understands the nature of happiness and unhappiness, and thus transcend them both.
3.1.6. DHARANA

Dharana means "immovable concentration of the mind". The essential idea is to hold the concentration or focus of attention in one direction. "When the body has been tempered by asanas, when the mind has been refined by the fire of pranayama and when the senses have been brought under control by pratyahara, the sadhaka (seeker) reaches the sixth stage, dharana. Here he is concentrated wholly on a single point or on a task in which he is completely engrossed. The mind has to be stilled in order to achieve this state of complete absorption."

In dharana, the conditions for the mind are created to focus its attention in one direction instead of going out in many different directions. Deep contemplation and reflection can create the right conditions, and the focus on this one point that one has chosen becomes more intense. We encourage one particular activity of the mind is encouraged and the more intense it becomes, the more the other activities of the mind fall away.

The objective in dharana is to steady the mind by focusing its attention upon some stable entity. The particular object selected has nothing to do with the general purpose, which is to stop the mind from wandering -through memories, dreams, or reflective thought-by deliberately holding it single-mindedly upon some apparently static object. When the mind has become purified by yoga practices, it becomes able to focus efficiently on one subject or point of experience. Now one can unleash the great potential for inner healing.

3.1.7. DHYANA

Dhyana means worship, or profound and abstract religious meditation. It is perfect contemplation. It involves concentration upon a point of focus with the intention of knowing
the truth about it. The concept holds that when one focuses their mind in concentration on an object the mind is transformed into the shape of the object. Hence, when one focuses on the divine they become more reflective of it and they know their true nature. "His body, breath, senses, mind, reason and ego are all integrated in the object of his contemplation – the Universal Spirit."

During dhyana, the consciousness is further unified by combining clear insights into distinctions between objects and between the subtle layers of perception. "We learn to differentiate between the mind of the perceiver, the means of perception, and the objects perceived, between words, their meanings, and ideas, and between all the levels of evolution of nature."

As the concentration is fine tuned and become more aware of the nature of reality it is perceived that the world is unreal. "The only reality is the universal self, or God, which is veiled by Maya (the illusory power). As the veils are lifted, the mind becomes clearer. Unhappiness and fear – even the fear of death – vanishes. This state of freedom, or Moksha, is the goal of Yoga. It can be reached by constant enquiry into the nature of things." Meditation becomes a tool to see things clearly and perceive reality beyond the illusions that cloud our mind.

Meditation has been a spiritual and healing practice in some parts of the world for more than 5000 years. The Word “Meditation” is derived from the Latin “Meditari”, which means to “engage in contemplation or reflection”.

Historically, religious or spiritual aims were intrinsic to any form of meditation, These traditional practices held some type of spiritual growth, enlightenment, personal transformation or transcendental experience as their ultimate goal. The practice of
meditation has become increasingly popular and has been adapted to the specific interests and orientation of western culture as a complementary therapeutic strategy for a variety of health related problems. Both secular forms of meditation and forms rooted in religious and spiritual systems have increasingly attracted the interest of clinicians, researchers, and the general public and have gained acceptance as important mind–body interventions within integrative medicine (the combination of evidence–based conventional and alternative approaches that address the biological, psychological, social and spiritual aspects of health and illness).

3.1.7.1. PURPOSE OF MEDITATION

Over the years people are telling “I don’t have any power of concentration”. But there is no valid basis for such thinking. Everyone, even a child can concentrate. While watching cartoons on TV. Children display great Concentration.

It is not true that humans cannot concentrate. What a person lack is the ability to concentrate our minds in everything, and under all circumstances. It is easy to concentrate on what is pleasant. The difficulty arises when one has to concentrate on something unpleasant. A student finds it hard to concentrate on a dull and uninteresting book, and a parishioner feels drowsy when listening to a boring sermon.

Yet, all that is pleasant is not necessarily good. On the other hand, What is unpleasant may be good and beneficial. One must learn to concentrate on whatever he/she does whether pleasant or unpleasant, as long as it is beneficial. Meditation “which is no other than training in concentration” can enable us to do this.
Concentration is indispensable in achieving success in life. Success in no area of human life can be attained without it. Vivekananda (1863-1902) used to say that the difference between a genius and an idiot is in their power of concentration.

Some say that meditation is good for health. It removes stress by relaxing the body and mind. It reduces high blood pressure. It helps slow down the aging process and improves memory. Some also say that meditation helps in gaining supernatural powers. While these claims may be true, the sages tell us that these are not the best reasons to meditate. Rather, Meditation has a much higher purpose. The highest goal of Meditation is God, realization of experiencing the Ultimate Truth.

According to the sages, meditation should be done in order to achieve the highest goal of human life – experiencing the Ultimate Truth. It should be clearly understood that meditation or Dhyana is only a means. It is not the goal itself. The most mature form of meditation is Samadhi. In Samadhi, the mind becomes free from all thoughts and is absolutely still. Patanjali calls this state of mind Yoga. Even Samadhi is only means to an end.

According to Patanjali, Yoga is the control of the modifications of the mind. The mind leads a person to bondage or liberation, is the link between the consciousness and the physical body. For this reason Patanjali places great emphasis on the study of the mind and provides for all possible means to control its modifications and unfold its power for higher attainment.

3.1.8. SAMADHI

The final step in the eight-fold path of Yoga is the attainment of Samadhi. Samadhi means "to bring together, to merge." In the state of samadhi the body and senses are at rest,
as if asleep, yet the faculty of mind and reason are alert, as if awake; one goes beyond consciousness. During samadhi, what it is to be an identity is realized without differences, and how a liberated soul can enjoy pure awareness of this pure identity. The conscious mind drops back into that unconscious oblivion from which it first emerged.

Thus, samadhi refers to union or true Yoga. There is an ending to the separation that is created by the "I" and "mine" of our illusory perceptions of reality. The mind does not distinguish between self and non-self, or between the object contemplated and the process of contemplation. The mind and the intellect have stopped and there is only the experience of consciousness, truth and unutterable joy.

The achievement of samadhi is a difficult task. For this reason, the Yoga Sutra suggests the practice of asanas and pranayama as preparation for dharana, because these influence mental activities and create space in the crowded schedule of the mind. Once dharana has occurred, dhyana and samadhi can follow.

These eight steps of yoga indicate a logical pathway that leads to the attainment of physical, ethical, emotional, and psycho-spiritual health. Yoga does not seek to change the individual; rather, it allows the natural state of total health and integration in each of them to become a reality.

3.2. AFTER VEDIC PERIOD

The time after Patanjali up to today is known as post Patanjali Period. The yoga developed gradually after the period of Patanjali. Many classical texts about yoga were written during these periods. Followed by the Upanishads great epics Mahabharata and Ramayana were written. Bhagavat Gita has become a part of Mahabharata. It became
popular in India. It aimed at teaching values of life. Bhakthi Yoga, Karma Yoga, Gnana Yoga became the route of reaching salvation.

3.2.1. ADHVAITHA-VISHISTATHWAIDHA-DHWAITHA

Ignorance is the state of dullness, headlessness, unskilfullness, Because of ignorance, we keep generating new sankaras and keep defiling our mind with fresh negativieties (S.N. Goenka, 2003)

The great personalities of yoga and their texts on yoga during this phase are as follows.

Shankaracharya (8th Century)

Sri Shankaracharya proposed Advaita Philosophy. He has written Yoga Taravali, which tells about Hatha Yoga and Saundarya lahari that explains Kundalini Yoga. He has also written commentary on Patanjala Yoga Sutras.

Ramanujar (11th Century)

He has written the book Tantra Sara that explains Kundalini yoga. He proposed Vishistadvaita philosophy. After Ramanujar, Mathwa’s Bhashyam created some argument about the oneness of Jeevathma and Paramathma. He claimed that these two can never become one. His philosophy was called ‘Dhwaitham’.

3.2.2. AHAMAS

It has been said that the Upanishads and the Agamas branched off from the same stem, namely the Vedas, and that the two dealt with the theory and the practice of philosophic thought respectively. The general assumption that the Agamas deal only with temples and temple worship is wrong. Agamas deal with the philosophy and spiritual knowledge behind the worship of the deity, the yoga and mental discipline required for this
worship, and the specifics of worship offered to the deity. Each Agama consists of four parts. The first part includes the philosophical and spiritual knowledge. The second part covers the yoga and the mental discipline. The third part specifies rules for the construction of temples and for sculpting and carving the figures of deities for worship in the temples. The fourth part of the Agamas includes rules pertaining to the observances of religious rites, rituals, and festivals.

Elaborate rules are laid out in the Agamas for Silpa (the art of sculpture) describing the quality requirements of the places where temples are to be built, the kind of images to be installed, the materials from which they are to be made, their dimensions, proportions, air circulation, lighting in the temple complex etc. The Manasara and Silpasara are some of the works dealing with these rules. The rituals followed in worship services each day at the temple also follow rules laid out in the Agamas.

The Agamas state three essential requirements for a place of pilgrimage - Sthala, Teertham, and Murthy. Sthala refers to the temple, Teertham, to the temple tank and Murthy to the deity(ies) worshipped. A temple may also be associated with a tree, called the Sthala Vriksham. For instance, the Kadamba tree at the Madurai Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple is the Sthala Vriksham. A lone banyan tree that adorns the spacious courtyard of the Ratnasabha at Tiruvalankadu is the Sthala Vriksham.

3.3. SONG OF GOD – THE BHAGAVAT GITA

As the cause is, so the effect will be. As the seed is, so the fruit will be. As the action is, so the result will be. (William Hart, 1988)
The Bhagavad Gita - or, in translation from Sanskrit, the Song of God - is the most important part of the Indian epic poem Mahabharata. The latter describes events that took place about 5000 years ago. The Bhagavad Gita is a great philosophical work that played the same role in the history of India, as the New Testament did in the history of the countries of the European culture. Both these books powerfully proclaim the principle of Love-Bhakti as the basis of spiritual development of man. The Bhagavad Gita also presents with a complete notion about such fundamental problems of philosophy as what is man?, what is God ?, what is the meaning of human life ?, and what are the principles of human evolution ?.

The main hero of the Bhagavad Gita is Krishna - an Indian raja and an Avatar - an embodiment of a Part of the Creator, Who gave to people through Krishna the greatest spiritual precepts. Philosophical truths are expounded in the Bhagavad Gita in the form of a dialogue between Krishna and His friend Arjuna before a military combat. Arjuna had been preparing for this righteous battle. But when the day of the battle came and Arjuna with his army was standing in front of the warriors of the adverse party, he recognized among them his own kinsmen and former friends. And he, being provoked to it by Krishna, began to doubt his right to participate in the battle. He shared these doubts with Krishna. Krishna reproached him, asking to watch how many people gathered there laid their lives for him and the encounter is unavoidable! He also asked him that how those people can here to die, leave them at the very last moment! Since him, a professional warrior, took up arms, then fight for the righteous cause. And understand that the life of each of us in the body is but a short period of the true life.

Man is not a body and does not die with the death of the body. And in that sense, no one can kill and no one can be killed. Arjuna, intrigued by these words of Krishna, asked
Him more and more questions. And from Krishna’s answers it becomes clear that the Path to Perfection goes not through killing but through Love — Love, at first, for the manifested aspects of God-Absolute and then for the Creator Himself. These answers of Krishna are the essence of the Bhagavad Gita.

Gita addresses the discord between the senses and the intuition of cosmic order. It speaks of the Yoga of equanimity, a detached outlook. The term Yoga covers a wide range of meanings, but in the context of the Bhagavad Gita, describes a unified outlook, serenity of mind, skill in action and the ability to stay attuned to the glory of the Self (Atman) and the Supreme Being (Bhagavan). According to Krishna, the root of all suffering and discord is the agitation of the mind caused by selfish desire. The only way to douse the flame of desire is by simultaneously stilling the mind through self-discipline and engaging oneself in a higher form of activity.

However, abstinence from action is regarded as being just as detrimental as extreme indulgence. According to the Bhagavad Gita, the goal of life is to free the mind and intellect from their complexities and to focus them on the glory of the Self by dedicating one’s actions to the divine. This goal can be achieved through the Yogas of meditation, action, devotion and knowledge. In the sixth chapter, Krishna describes the best Yogi as one who constantly meditates upon him – which is understood to mean thinking of either Krishna personally, or the supreme Brahman – with different schools of Hindu thought giving varying points of view.
Three yogas in particular have been emphasized:

Bhakti Yoga or Devotion,

Karma Yoga or Selfless Action,

Gnana Yoga or Self Transcending Knowledge.

While each path differs, their fundamental goal is the same – to realize Brahman (the Divine Essence) as being the ultimate truth upon which our material universe rests, that the body is temporal, and that the Supreme Soul (Paramatman) is infinite. Yoga's aim (moksha) is to escape from the cycle of reincarnation through realization of the ultimate reality. There are three stages to self-realization enunciated from the Bhagavad Gita:

Brahman – The impersonal universal energy.

Paramatma – The Supreme Soul sitting in the heart of every living entity.

Bhagavan – God as a personality, with a transcendental form.

There are 6 arishadvargas, or evils that the Gita says one should avoid: kama (lust), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), moha (deep emotional attachment), mada or ahankar (arrogance) and matsarya (jealousy). These are the negative characteristics which prevent man from attaining moksha (liberation from the birth and death cycle).’”Surrender in all way to Paramatma, by his grace you will get permenant peace” (Sithbavanantha, 1990)

The Gita states that the man should not keep his interests on the fruition of deeds but rather on the tranquility produced in the mind by pursuing the deed itself.

“On action alone be thy interest, Never on its fruits. Let not the fruits of action be thy motive, Nor be thy attachment to inaction.”
3.4 CHRIST – SHOWING THE PATH OF DIVINITY

Jesus Christ advocated Christianity 2000 years ago. Christ is a Greek word which means a ‘sacred person’. It also means a person who unites God and human beings and who eradicates innocence and ignorance from the people showing the path of divinity. In divinity one’s heart gets closer to God.

The main message of the Christianity is the wonderful presentation of salvation. The good news of salvation in Jesus Christ is the fundamental message of the Scripture. Under this head there are many basic truths:

God created a majestic universe and crowned it by forming the first man and woman in sinless perfection.

Adam and Eve succumbed to temptation from Satan, and fell into sin and shame. The consequences of sin are obvious, but people everywhere still love to rebel against God.

Yet God did not abandon humanity on its course to destruction. He chose one person to demonstrate his special care and from them to provide a Savior for the whole world.

God sent his own son Jesus Christ to bear the awesome consequences of sin. God does not just blithely disregard sin, but he poured out all the terror of eternal condemnation on his son in those terrible hours of suffering and death on the cross.

In the resurrection of Jesus, God demonstrates his victory over sin and calls people everywhere to identify with this victory by faith in Jesus Christ.

In living in this salvation, it is known that life is not meaningless, but humans live surrounded by God's love, and bound for eternity with him.
Hence the basic principle of Christianity is ‘Love’. Christianity sees God in everything. Equality, Brotherhood, Kindness, Pardon, Tolerance are some of the other principles followed by Christianity.

3.4.1 CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

Love, Redemption, Faith are the three important teachings of Christianity. Christianity explains the importance of love, by highlighting its benefits.

3.4.1.1. LOVE

Jesus Christ loved all equally. His love found no differentiations between uneducated and educated; poor and rich;

He showered His love on the destitute, diseased, and handicapped.

He also loved those who were doing ‘sins’ as means for their lives.

3.4.1.2. REDEMPTION

When the people are not enlightened they lead a life of ignorance doing everything without analyzing their effects. The result is maximum suffering. Christ showed them ‘The Way’. He made them realize their mistakes and brought them back to the life of eternal bliss. He himself suffered ‘bloodshed’ to cleanse the ‘souls’ of the humans. This is redemption.

3.4.1.3. FAITH

Jesus Christ practiced ‘Love’ throughout his life. God’s ideologies have been taken as commandments and placed faith on them. Christianity tries to ensemble humanity as ‘One’.

3.4.2. TEN COMMANDMENTS

There is no other God except ‘the father’.

Idol worship of any form is prohibited.
Don’t waste the name of ‘the father’

Make your rest day a Holy day. (Hence holiday)

Respect your father and mother.

Restrain from killings.

Desist prostitution.

Restrain stealing from others.

Detest false promises/ don’t make false evidence.

Detest snatching the belongings of others.

3.5. THE QURAN – THE VERY WORD OF GOD ALMIGHTY

Muslims believe that the Quran is the very word of God Almighty: a complete record of the exact words revealed by God through the Archangel Gabriel to Prophet Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of God be upon him). The Quran is the principle source of every Muslim’s faith and practice. It deals with all subjects that concern human beings, including wisdom, doctrine, worship and law; but its basic theme is the relationship between God and His creatures. At the same time, the Quran provides guidelines for a just society, proper human conduct, and equitable economic principles. The word ‘Quran’ means ‘recitation’, and the first verse of the Quran to be revealed by the Angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad was a command to ‘Read (or recite)!"

The Quran's main message is to call people to turn to the Source of all being and the Giver of life, and to serve Him with a pure heart, free of idolatry or superstition. In Islam, 'One God' means just that: there is no concept of trinity, or anything else to
complicate one's understanding. Like the single nucleus of a cell or an atom, He Alone is the 'control Center behind it all; anything else would lead to chaos and confusion. God is Unique and without partner; He was not born and did not give birth; He is All-Compassionate and Merciful, Almighty and Just, and the only One humans need turn to for guidance and help. Anything that is allowed to come between humans and their Creator - even our own egos - is an idol. Wealth, fame, physical attraction and all the pleasures of this world will someday fade, and the humans will not be able to take them with them when they die. Only faith and good deeds will remain, to light their graves and be a beacon for them on the Day of Judgment.

The universal message of the Quran is humanity which was created by Allah for a purpose. Humanity can achieve this purpose by using the instrument Allah has given ‘Aql’ (intellect) to sift through the evidence presented by Allah in the form of signs and Prophets to achieve full submission. But humanity is constantly faced with choices. Human beings are given free will at each turn to decide what they can do. whether they do what their desires lead them to do? Whether they stand up for what they believe in? Whether they leave such serious topics for scholars and not give the question a second thought. To choose to exercise ones free will for the right thing, even if it is simply the act of questioning oneself what the right thing to do actually is, constitutes justice. Applying justice at every step of a person’s decision making processes brings closer to Allah. It can bring humans from the lowest of the low to the highest of the high. Justice calls to all, it is for us to decide to let our hearts hear it and our bodies submissive to it. And when Imam Mahdi appears, it is the establishment of justice throughout the world that Allah has promised us.
3.6. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SORROWS?

World is full of sorrows. What is sorrow? Who is responsible for sorrows? How can one overcome it? Buddhism gives answers to all the above questions. The answers are called “Arya Sathyas”. They are:

1) Sorrow,

2) Creation of Sorrow,

3) Redemption from sorrows,

4) Redemption methods.

Redemption in Buddhism is called attaining Nirvana, which is salvation through breaking the shells of selfishness and arrogance. This detached life and seeing oneness in everything is called Nirvana.

3.6.1. SORROWS

Birth, disease, ageing, death are considered sorrows in life. Also jealousy, hatred, and disappointments are sorrows.

3.6.2. CREATION OF SORROWS

Desire is the root cause for all sorrows. Desire is the reason for birth, and birth passes through all other sorrows.

3.6.3. REDEMPTION / RELIEF FROM SORROWS

‘Fire the desire in the Fire’, said Buddha to get relief from sorrows. Once a person is out of bondage of worldly desires he attains Nirvana.
3.6.7. TO LIVE WITHOUT SORROW

Buddha shows eight paths to lead a sorrow free life:

1. Truthfulness - Samyakthrushti
2. Good Thinking - Samya sangalpam Wisdom
3. Good Speech - Samyak Vana
4. Good Deeds - Samyak karmnitha Meditation
5. Good Life Style - Samyak Ajecvika
6. Good Attempt - Samyak uyabhar
7. Good Perspicacity - Samyak smrithi Healthy Mind
8. Good Redempt - Samyak samathi

The eight concepts are strictly followed in Buddhism. Buddhism accepts rebirth and fate. ‘Through a sin free, truthful life one can come out of his previous sins’, says Buddha. By doing good deeds etc., one can not only get relieved of his previous sins but also can attain Nirvana. Self esteem, divinity, and purification of consciousness are the results of moral and ethical living. Buddha also says that individuals are responsible for a good or bad society. Buddha’s Sath Pundarygam talks about ‘Sacrifices’ for attaining divinity.

One speaks or act with a pure mind, then happiness follows as a shadow that never departs (S.N.Goenga, 2013)

3.7. THIRUMULAR EVOLVED THE SYSTEM OF 'SIVA YOGA'

"Humanity at large is of one clan and the differences in the religions are superfluous, for God, the creator is one and the same" says Thirumular, the reputed author of
Thirumanthiram, the first and unique treatise in Tamil on yoga. The word 'yoga' means 'to become united' with the object being meditated. In the religious context, the one who is meditated is God. Hence, the treatises on yoga in both Sanskrit and Tamil deal with a system of yoga practice that results in the mystic experience of having personal contact with God.

Thirumanthiram, though classified amongst the Saiva hymnal literature, is really a scientific exposition of yoga philosophy banded down from the Vedas. According to the Saiva religion, there are three means of worship, namely, Sariya (service in the temple), Kriya (religious rites or the worship proper) and Yoga (meditation). They lead to the attainment of gnosis.

The significant aspect of the practice of yoga is that while it leads to God's bliss, it is accompanied by an enlivening of the whole body-system. The body attains 'deathlessness' while the soul within attains gnosis and emancipation from worldly bonds. "This is the final goal to be reached by man and he can reach this here and now. There is nothing to be reached in the other world" declares Thirumular. This is a unique declaration indeed in the context of widespread religious beliefs about the other world. Other Saiva saints like Manickavasagar speak of the world as the final birthplace if only one is blessed with God's grace. According to Thirumular the all-encompassing love cutting across castes, creeds, races and religions enriched by service to the living and accompanied by the practice of yoga will lead to that goal.

Thirumular is the first to successfully challenge the theory that the human body is base and mean. "A great amount of wealth is innate in the body. It may serve as an abode of God," says Thirumular, "hence One has to take immediate steps to preserve his physical energy". His considered opinion is that spiritual development and emancipation are not
possible beyond the limits of life and if only one knows how to lengthen one's life, one can gain time for this attainment. Yoga is a sure way for lengthening the lifespan, and for attaining spiritual bliss and emancipation from worldly bonds.

Thirumular evolved the system of 'Siva Yoga' which introduced the meditation of mantras. He explained yoga in the light of Saiva Siddhanta. He also explained the various aspects of Sakti, the Divine Energy and the female manifestation of the godhead. Thirumular prescribes a code of ethics and explains various virtues in the light of yoga. Chief among them are 'non-violence' (ahimsa) and love for all. Non-eating of flesh teetotalism and avoidance of illicit contact with women are also prescribed.

The forces involved in yoga are the life-force (prana sakti), the soul force (atma sakti), and the divine force (deiva sakti). According to Saiva Siddhanta the divine force is imminent in the other two. This is because God is all pervading. Pranayama and Pratyahara are the practices relating to the utilisation of the life-force (prana sakti) in full to awaken the soul-force (atma sakti). This is the most significant factor of yoga.

In the language of the mystics this is known as the awakening of the soul. In the philosophical language this is called 'Self-realization'. According to Saiva Siddhanta this is known as the first step of Pantijnana in which the divine entity itself helps one to know one's own 'self.

The practice of pranayama (regulating the respiration process) helps the adherent, not only to control the nerve-currents of the body, one on the left side and the other on the right (Idakalai and Pingalai nadis) but also to discover a new passage of medieval nerve-current namely, Sushumna nadi. Thirumular prescribes time duration for inhalation,
exhalation and stoppage. The pranayama is not just about the regulating of the breath. The word prana also denotes life.

All the powers of the body and all the functions of the senses and the mind are expressions of the force of prana, The divine force, as is imminent in the life-force is called Kundali. After gaining control over the medieval nerve current, the yogi starts the exercise of pratyahara which means 'control of the senses'. According to Thirumular, the yogi invokes the divine power by meditating a particular mantra to transform the semen into a dynamic life-force.

Thirumular mostly calls this as fire. The yogi directs it upwards. The medieval nerve-current conveys it to the six centres of consciousness (adharas) located on the medieval passage (spinal cord) namely, muladhara, swatishtana, manipuraka, anakata, visuddhi, and agna.

The area of these centres is divided into three divisions namely, agni mandala, surya mandala, and candra mandala in which the celestial powers Agni Surya, Candra, and the stars add their force to the life-force. The life-force thus energized with the divine and celestial forces keeps the senses under control. This process is followed by meditation and absorption (dhyana). As a result of prolonged practice, the yogi is blessed with divine visions. A new chapter is opened in his life, as he comes under the direct control of the divine power.

Another significant factor of this yogic attainment is the opening up of glands that had not functioned so far. Thirumular identifies two spots in the body in which these glands are situated, namely, the forehead and the top of the head. He calls the secretion 'nectar' (amudhu). According to him, this liquid makes the body live long. The practice of yoga
does not stop here. The yogi reaches higher states by taking the life-force to the top of his head. Thirumular says that with the help of a special device, the yogi discovers the opening on the pharyngeal part of the mouth and through it he directs his lift-force to the skull. There, at the particular spot called sahasrara, he gains contact with the cosmic space.

Hence, the space is called chitambararam by Thirumular. Chit means the wisdom of the soul and ambaram denotes the space. For the yogi, this is a unique experience of having simultaneously, the realization of God and of perceiving the space that has come in contact with him as full of radiance. Thirumular calls this the cosmic dance of Siva and equates the yogi's head to the 'golden hall' (ponambalam) at Chidambaram.

The vital part of Thirumular's system of yoga is Tiruambalacakra. It refers to his invention of a new set of five combinations of the five lettered mantra, Pancakshara. Meditation of mantras during the practice of yoga, as a device to evoke divine force was in a well-developed stage in Thirumular's time. The Sakta cult used the device in its tantric methods even in the 2nd century A.D. The impact of this cult on Thirumular is felt in his detailed description of Sakti, the female manifestation of Siva. But it is obvious that he was not overpowered by this impact, for he does not claim superiority for Sakti over Siva. One of the major evidence is the Tiruambalacakra in which their equal status is established.

Thirumular, besides being a full-blown yogi, takes the role of a teacher as he explains his yoga system step by step, first introducing Patanjali's Ashtanya Yoga and then adding details of the celestial powers, centres of consciousness, the divine force and the consummate mystic experience.
3.8. FIVE STAGES OF MIND

The mind is described in five stages, disturbed – ksipta, stupefied – mudha, restless – viksipta, one-pointed – ekagra and well-controlled – niruddha. The predominance of rajas and tamas causes the mind to be disturbed. Rajas makes it hyperactive while tamas makes it loose the quality of discrimination. In the second stage, the mind is dominated by tamas, which means by inertia, sleep, ignorance, sleep, and lethargy. Here, the mind looses its ability to think properly and becomes negative / dull. In the restless stage there is a predominance of rajas, the mind runs from one object to another but never stays anywhere consistently.

These three stages are negative and act as constraints in the path of growth. At this level one experiences pain and misery but the next two stages are more calm and peaceful. In the one pointed state there is a predominance of sattva, the lighter aspect of Prakrti. This is a tranquil state near to complete stillness in which the real nature of things are revealed. This is conducive to concentration and the aim of the Yoga system is to develop or maintain this state of mind for as long and as consistently as possible. In the well-controlled state of mind there is a pure manifestation of sattvic energy. When all the modifications cease and the state of stillness is acquired, then Purusa (Consciousness) sees its real nature reflecting from the screen of the mind.

The modifications of the mind are causes by nine conditions namely sickness, incompetence, doubt, delusion, sloth, non abstention, confusion, nonattainment of the desired state and instability in an attained state. These disturb the mind and produce sorrow, dejection, restlessness, and a unrhythmic breathing pattern. Yoga provides a method for overcoming these problems. Patanjali says that the mind and its modifications can be controlled through practice – abhyasa and detachment – vairagya. The former means
a particular type of effort through which the mind maintains stillness. Methods of practice would be discussed in conjunction with the eight limbs of yoga. The latter or vairagya does not mean to detach the world, rather it means to eliminate identification with the evolutes of nature and to understand oneself as pure Self, as a self-illuminating conscious being.

3.9. MIND AND BODY

3.9.1. MIND

When biomagnetic waves are passing through the brain. It functions as mind. When these waves function through five sense organs all the five senses are felt. As this, the biomagnetic wave continuously go out of the body through skin, tongue, eyes, nose and ears. When it passes out through eyes the light is felt. Through ears we feel the sound. Through nose the smell is felt and through skin the body contact with another object is felt.

3.9.2. FUNCTIONS OF THE MIND

1) Compresses and stores everything in a miniature form as imprints, 2) Expands them in full forms as thoughts

The enjoyment and experiences are contracted and stored at the genetic centre. Later expands them into ‘thoughts’.

The power of the biomagnetic wave ‘stores the light waves of an object, seen through the eyes, in the form of imprints in the genetic centre. These imprints bring back the ‘objects’ to our memory when required.

Needs, habits, and circumstances make the experiences available in the biomagnetic waves expand into ‘Thoughts’.
3.10. POWERS OF MIND

Mind is an important component in influencing our thoughts leading to conclusive actions. It can act as a powerful agent of influence. It can be positive or negative. Human beings are emotional beings and hence tend to love, hate, worry, fear etc etc. Mind being a highly fertile ground revolves around our thought processes emerging from various circumstances in life. Difficult situations makes us more prone to worry, fear, and negativity. It takes immense efforts to be positive in times of dire circumstances. This can only be done by working our mind in such a manner so as to motivate it towards hope, light, positivity.

Mind power is the ability to direct and focus the power of mind to create specific outcomes in life. Mind power is not magic. Mind power is not about being able to make someone else do something they don't want to do. Mind Power is not about controlling another person's mind or imbedding ones thoughts, beliefs, memories or images in another person's mind.

Mind power is personal. Mind power is something that one works with personally to create a specific outcome that you want. When the mind is focused, directed and working towards a specific goal you begin to tap into the power of the mind. This kind of mind power works in conjunction with the subconscious mind. The mind can directly impact the subconscious mind with thoughts and repeated phrases. This is the real power of the mind. It has the ability to interact with the subconscious mind. The real power of the mind is in the ability to change those thoughts and change those beliefs. When a person works with mind power he/she realizes that he/she is in control of his/her mind. One has the power to change thoughts that does not help to succeed. Humans have the power to create new beliefs.
3.11. CONSCIOUS, SUB CONSCIOUS, UNCONSCIOUS MIND

When mind functions as an extended activity of life force particles its function can been seen in three divisions.

1) Conscious mind, 2) sub- Conscious mind, 3) Super conscious mind.

The sub conscious mind connects the other two. Among these three, sub-conscious mind is important.

Feeling, enjoyment, prediction, thoughts, and making imprints are the five functions of mind. When the mind functions through the faculties (Senses) accordingly to the need, habit, circumstances, and opportunity all actions based on the ‘pressure’ they receive get imprinted in the conscious state of mind or sub conscious state of mind or super conscious state of mind.

When one exposes his professional skill repeatedly using body parts it becomes Gnana Karmendriyas imprints. These imprints are seen in the conscious state. The knowledge acquired on doing the action gets imprinted in subconscious state.

All these things get imprinted as dots in the Genetic centre and this state is super conscious mind.

3.12. POWER OF THOUGHTS

Thoughts have got immense power. However for most of them thoughts are only figments of one’s imagination. Generally, people consider thoughts as spare time entertainment, but the only reason for this is that they have never paid attention to the power of thoughts.
In fact, this entire world is a creation of thoughts. Gross material objects of physical world are nothing but the creation of subtle power of thoughts. The scriptures describe this entire Universe as the Creator’s urge to manifest as many. “Ekohm Bahusyami”. Even if one does not go that far, One can see the power of thoughts manifested all around him/her in the form of this evolved material world. All the material developments, arts, equipments, technological innovations, life-transforming literature are the result of the thoughts originated in the minds of their creators. First the possibility of such a creation arises in their thoughts, then contemplation and investigation on the same thought ultimately manifest as the creation. 'Thoughts become Things' has become a Universal Law. Hence, understanding the power of thought and using it constructively becomes the ultimate gateway to success in life.
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