

Complete Yoga Sastra, sutras only

CHAPTER I

The gist of yoga study

1: Now, the instruction for contemplative union in harmony.
(yoga)

2: Yoga is the restraint of mental modifications.

3: Then the seer remains in its own essential nature.

4: At other times, the identification is with the modifications.

Modifications

5: The modifications are fivefold, some labored (painful) and others spontaneous (not painful). (klisha and aklisha)

6: They are: real cognition, unreal cognition, imaginary cognition, deep sleep, and memory.

7: Direct perception, inference, and authoritative verbal testimony are the valid means of real cognition.

8: Unreal cognition is misconception, not established on essential nature.

9: Knowledge arising from words and devoid of objective reality is imaginary cognition.

10: Deep sleep is the modification that has the cognition of non-existence for its substratum.

11: Memory is the not slipping away of experienced impressions.

Restraining the modifications

12: They are restrained by repetitive practice and detachment.

13): Of these, repetitive practice is the effort to maintain steadiness.

14: And this is firmly grounded, being well-attended to for a long time without interruption and with devotion.

15: Detachment is the consciousness of mastery in one who is free from thirst for seen and heard of enjoyments.

16: That is the highest *vairagya*: through awareness of the Self, there is freedom from the least desire for the three qualities of nature.

17: Cognitive absorption is accompanied by the appearance of perceptual confrontation, presentation of an idea, experience of value, or identification with the center of one's consciousness.

18: The cessation of cognition preceded by repetitive practice is the other (*asamprajnata samadhi*) in which the residue of registered and preserved impressions remains.

19: The cognition of being for those who are bereft of body identification and those who are merged with nature.

20: For others absorption is preceded by faith, energy, memory, and discernment.

21: Samadhi is near for those with intense ardor.

22: Also, a further differentiation is made of mild, moderate, and intense.

Isvara

23: Or, by continuous contemplation on Isvara.

24: Isvara is a distinct purusha unaffected by the propensities of affliction, action, and fruition.

25: In that Isvara the seed of the omniscient is not exceeded.

26: That is the teacher of the ancients also, not being limited by time.

27: Isvara's signifier is pranava (AUM).

28: By its constant repetition and dwelling upon its meaning in the mind.

29: Also, from the repetition of the pranava mantra, the attainment of the disappearance of obstacles and the turning inward of consciousness.

Obstacles

30: Physical pain or distress, mental depression, doubt, exaggeration, laziness, hankering after objects, insanity, having no firm ground for spiritual orientation, instability—these obstacles cause the distraction of the mind.

31: Pain, despair, shakiness, and hard breathing are the companions of distraction.

32: For removing these obstacles: repetitive practice of one truth or principle.

Patanjali's suggestions for stabilizing the mind:

33: The mind is clarified by cultivating friendliness toward happiness, compassion toward misery, gladness toward virtue, and equanimity toward vice.

34: Or, by the expiration and retention of breath.

35: When absolute interest is shown to a sensory experience or activity, that will bring the mind to a steady state.

36: Also by meditating on the sorrowless state of inner joy one can attain luminosity of intelligence.

37: Also the mind fixed on freedom from attachment to sense experience acquires steadiness.

38: Also by contemplating on the knowledge derived from the dream state and the dreamless sleep state.

39: Or by contemplation as desired by oneself.

Regarding seeded absorption, or *sabija samadhi*:

40: The yogi's mastery extends from the finest atom to the greatest infinity.

41: In one whose mental modulations have been attenuated, consciousness remains stabilized in the cognizer, the act of cognition, or the cognized, taking the form or color of that, like a transparent crystal.

42: In the stabilization of consciousness in an object of perception, word, meaning, and idea are commingled in confused cognition.

43: In unobstructed consciousness, the memory is purified, as if devoid of its own form, and the object alone is illuminated.

44: By this, *savicara* and *nirvicara* (consciousness with and without conceptual configuration), having the subtle for their objects, are also explained.

45: And the province of subtle concepts extends up to the noumenal.

46: These are only seeded absorption.

Regarding unseeded absorption, or *nirbija samadhi*:

47: Upon the undisturbed flow of consciousness, clarity of the higher Self.

48: Therein pure consciousness, pregnant with truth.

49: It is different from word-testimony and inference, as the meaning of specific objects arises from transparent consciousness.

50: Registered and preserved impressions born from truthful consciousness prevent the registration and preservation of other impressions.

51: All being restrained, by the restraint of that also comes seedless absorption.

CHAPTER II

Practical yoga

1: Self-purification, self-study, and continuous contemplation on Isvara constitute practical yoga.

2: For the purpose of bringing about absorption and attenuating afflictions.

The Afflictions

3: The afflictions are ignorance, ego identity, attachment, hatred, and lust for life.

4: Nescience (avidya) is the field for the others, whether they are dormant, attenuated, alternating, or expanded.

5: Nescience is taking the non-eternal, impure, painful, and the non-Self to be the eternal, pure, pleasurable, and the Self.

6: Asmita is the identification of the seer, as it were, with the power of seeing.

7: Attachment (raga) is that which accompanies happiness.

8: Hatred (dvesha) is that which accompanies pain.

9: Clinging to life (abhinevesha) is sustained even in the learned, as in the ignorant, by the dynamics of one's own deep-rooted interest.

10: These attenuated (afflictions) can be removed by a regressive reemergence into their origins.

11: Their modifications are to be removed by pure contemplation.

12: The root causes of the afflictions in the reservoir of conditioned or processed impressions of action are experienced in life in a visible or latent manner.

13: As long as the root cause is there it must fruition as a class programmed for a certain duration and experiences.

14: They (the seeded carriers of action propensities) have joy or sorrow for their fruit in accordance with virtue or vice.

15: To those with unitive discrimination all is misery on account of the pain resulting from change, anxiety, and the registration and preservation of impressions, as also on account of the conflict between the functions of the triple modalities of nature.

The task of the seer

16: The pain that has not yet come is to be avoided.

17: The cause of that which is to be avoided is the conjunction of the seer and the seen.

18: The seen consists of the elements and sense organs, is of the nature of illumination, activity, and stability, for the purpose of experience and liberation.

19: The stages of the triple modalities of nature are the particular, the universal, the differentiated, and the undifferentiated.

20: The seer is consciousness only; even though pure, it witnesses cognition.

21: The very being of the seen is for the sake of the seer alone.

22: Although it becomes non-existent for one whose purpose has been fulfilled, it does not cease to exist because of being common to others.

23: The conjunction of purusha and prakriti is the cause of the apprehension of the essential nature and powers of both.

24: Its cause is nescience.

25: The absence of the conjunction of prakriti and purusha is through the elimination of nescience; its absence is the liberation of the seer.

26: The unbroken discrimination between the Self and the non-Self is the means of eliminating nescience.

The eight limbs of Yoga

27: Wisdom is the final stage of its sevenfold way.

28: By the practice of the limbs of Yoga, the impurities are destroyed, and knowledge arises, which leads to discrimination between the Self and the non-Self.

29: Self-restraints, observances, posture, regulation of vital forces, withdrawal from distraction, holding the focus of the mind, contemplation, and absorption are the eight limbs of Yoga. (Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, samadhaya or samadhi)

30: The self-restraints are nonviolence, truthfulness, non-misappropriateness, adhering to uprightness in life, and non-acquisitiveness. (The yamas: ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya, aparigraha.)

31: Not conditioned by class, place, time, or occasion, the universal restraints constitute the great vow.

32: Purity, contentment, self-purification, self-study, and continuous contemplation on Isvara are the observances. (The niyamas: sauca, santosa, tapas, svadhyaya, isvara pranidhana.)

33: When disturbed by confrontation, cultivate the opposites.

34: Confrontations such as violence, whether done by oneself, instigated, or abetted, whether precipitated by greed, anger, or delusion, whether mild, medium, or intense, result in endless misery and ignorance; thus, cultivate the opposites.

35: In the presence of one firmly established in nonviolence, hostility ceases. (yama: ahimsa)

36: For one firmly established in truth, the fruits of action rest on truth. (yama: satya)

37: For one firmly established in honesty, all precious things present themselves. (yama: asteya)

38: One firmly established in walking the path of the Absolute gains energy. (yama: brahmacharya)

39: Non-possessiveness being confirmed, knowledge of the “how” and “wherefore” of existence arises. (yama: aparigraha)

40: From purity: disgust with one's own limbs and avoidance of contact with others. (niyama: sauca)

41: From inner purity: cheerfulness, one-pointedness, control of the senses, and fitness for the vision of the Self. (niyama: sauca)

42: Unsurpassed happiness comes from contentment. (niyama: santosa)

43: Perfection of the body and sense organs through destruction of impurity by self-purification. (niyama: tapas)

44: By self-study, union with the worshipped deity. (niyama: svadhyaya)

45: Accomplishment of absorption comes from continuous contemplation on isvara. (niyama: isvara pranidhana)

46: Posture should be steady and comfortable. (asana)

47: Apportioning the effort with continuous meditation on the endless nature of perfection. (asana)

48: Then no disturbance from pairs of opposites.

49: Upon this (perfection of asana) being accomplished: pranayama, the regulation of the movement of inspiration and expiration. (pranayama)

50: Its modifications are external, internal, or suspended, regulated by place, time, and number, prolonged and subtle. (pranayama)

51: That fourth variety of pranayama goes beyond external and internal objects of interest. (pranayama)

52: Then the covering of light is dissolved.

53: And the mind is fit for holding a focus.

54: When the senses do not come into contact with their own objects of interest and, as it were, follow the essential nature of the mind, that is withdrawal from distraction, *pratyahara*. (pratyahara)

55: Then the greatest mastery over the senses.

CHAPTER III: The last three limbs of Yoga

1: Holding the focus of the mind is *dharana*. (dharana)

2: In that, the continuous flow of consciousness in unitiveness is *dhyanam*. (dhyana)

3: In that, when the object alone shines, as if there is a void of one's form, that is *samadhi*. (samadhi)

4: The three (dharana, dhyana, samadhi) taken together as one are *samyam*.

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I asked editor Nancy Yeilding, about the provenance of the translation, and here is her reply:

About the translation: it requires a complicated answer. Originally, Guru often simply used a sutra translation from one of the Ramakrishna Mutt Swami's translations. Then, here and there, he gave his own really fresh and fabulous translation either word for word or in his commentary or both. When we first made copies (xerox) we added a note about his reliance on the swami's translation (I don't now remember which it was). For real publication we wanted something more authentic so first I built the glossary from Guru's definitions and explications given in his commentary. Then, when Vyasa Prasad came for that long stay, we cycled back through the sutras, with glossary in hand, and the aid

of about ten different translations (and their word meanings), and Monier, and worked to bring the sutras Guru hadn't directly translated in line with the ones he had, with consistent word meanings (although, as the text and glossary show, he often provided several word meanings for a given word). It was an exhaustive and illuminating process! The result was a translation that hopefully does more justice to his amazing commentary. But you will understand why no clear statement attributing the translation to him is there. Technically I suppose it would be appropriate to credit Guru, Vyasa Prasad, and myself, but I didn't want to make any claim at all for our efforts (though of course I'm willing to answer for any mistakes/shortcomings!!).