

Yoga: Toward the Self

In the Light of the Scriptures

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An English Transcreation

A contemplative exploration of yoga as the return of the seer to its own nature, in the light of Patanjali, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, Sankhya, and the living stream of yogic wisdom.

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Chapter 1 - What Yoga Is - and What It Is Not

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 1.2

Meaning: Yoga is the stilling of the movements of chitta, the mind-field.

The entire ground of yoga is contained in this one sutra, yet if it is understood too quickly, yoga is lost. Chitta is not merely the thinking mind. It is the whole inner field in which memory rises, imagination rises, fear rises, love rises, desire rises, identity rises. Vritti is the ripple in that field. Nirodha is not suppression. In suppression, mind fights mind. In nirodha, the mind-field returns to its own source and rests there. A lake is not made still by beating the water; when the wind ceases, the ripples naturally subside. Yoga is that condition in which the Self stops running after its own reflections.

In the modern world, yoga has often been reduced to posture, flexibility, fitness, stress relief, and a beautiful body. These may be side benefits, but they are not the heart of yoga. The body can be a doorway, but yoga is not limited to the body. Breath can be a field of practice, but yoga is not a display of vital force. Meditation is a limb of yoga, but yoga is not simply sitting with closed eyes. Yoga is the inquiry of the whole human being: Who am I? Why am I bound? What is the nature of the one who knows all experience?

Modern life turns everything into usefulness. Yoga becomes a method to feel better, sleep better, look better, perform better. There is no need to reject these benefits, but Patanjali does not appear merely to make the mind comfortable. He points to the root of mind. He does not come to decorate the personality; he comes to clarify identity. Yoga is not a technique for making life more successful. It is a path that reveals the seer of both success and failure.

तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम्॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 1.3

Meaning: Then the seer abides in its own nature.

When does this happen? When the modifications of chitta have become still. The seer does not become new. It returns to its own place. When clouds clear, the sky is not produced; it is simply revealed. The seer was always present, but identification with the movements of chitta concealed it. Yoga does not manufacture the seer. It brings about the recognition that the seer is not the seen. The more subtle this recognition becomes, the more clearly it is seen that suffering comes less from events themselves and more from mistaken identity around events.

वृत्तिसारूप्यमितरत्र॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 1.4

Meaning: At other times, the seer appears to take the form of the vrittis.

This is the ordinary condition of human life. Anger comes, and one says, I am angry. Fear comes, and one says, I am afraid. Desire comes, and one says, I want. Memory rises, and one says, I am what happened to me. Each wave of chitta paints the seer in its own color. Yoga does not violently erase the colors. It simply reveals that the color is being seen, and therefore you are not the color. What is seen cannot be the seer. This subtle discrimination is the first light of yoga.

ब्रह्मवादिनो वदन्ति।

किं कारणं ब्रह्म कुतः स्म जाता जीवाम केन क्व च सम्प्रतिष्ठाः।

अधिष्ठिताः केन सुखेतरेषु वर्तामहे ब्रह्मविदो व्यवस्थाम्॥

- Source: Shvetashvatara Upanishad 1.1

Meaning: The knowers of Brahman ask: What is the cause? What is Brahman? From where are we born? In what are we established? Under whose rule do we live through pleasure and pain?

This question is the original fire of yoga. Yoga does not merely ask how the body can become healthy, how the mind can become calm, or how life can become successful. It asks: Under what power do I move? What is the basis of birth, death, desire, fear, joy, and sorrow? When this question rises with the whole being, a person becomes a seeker. Yoga is no longer exercise. It becomes the oldest human question asked with the whole body, the whole breath, the whole mind, and finally the whole silence.

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः।

उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः॥

- Source: Bhagavad Gita 2.16

Meaning: The unreal never truly is; the real never ceases to be. The seers of truth have discerned the nature of both.

The discrimination of yoga stands upon this line. What changes is not final. What is final does not change. The body changes, the mind changes, emotions change, roles change. Yet there is a strange continuity in that which knows these changes. Yoga is the discipline of recognizing that continuity. Without this recognition, yoga remains bodily discipline. With it, the same posture, breath, and silence become a journey toward the Self.

Yoga is not bodily exhibition. It is not a collection of experiences. It is not miracle-seeking. It is not the pursuit of powers. It is not escape. It is not hiding in private peace while life remains unexamined. Nor is it a harsh attempt to force the mind into silence. In Patanjali's yoga there is discipline, but not violence; clarity, but not dryness; stillness, but not death. Yoga brings the living human being to the root of himself.

Practice

Sit without needing any special posture or technique. Notice the strongest movement in the mind-field right now. Do not change it or suppress it. Simply recognize: this is being seen. Returning to the one who sees is the beginning of yoga.

Chapter 2 - Sankhya: The Map on Which Yoga Walks

Yoga is the journey; Sankhya is the map. Without a map, seekers get lost among experiences. One takes the body to be the Self, another takes emotion to be truth, another takes thought to be knowledge, another takes peace to be liberation. Sankhya places everything in order and says: whatever changes belongs to Prakriti; that which sees belongs to Purusha. This distinction is not dry philosophy. It is a precise diagnosis of human suffering.

दुःखत्रयाभिघाताज्जिज्ञासा तदभिघातके हेतौ।
दृष्टे सापार्था चेन्नैकान्तात्यन्ततोऽभावात्॥

- Source: Sankhya Karika 1

Meaning: Because of the affliction of the three kinds of suffering, inquiry arises into the means of removing them. Ordinary remedies are insufficient, for they are neither certain nor final.

Sankhya begins with suffering, but not with despair. There is bodily suffering, mental suffering, and suffering born of the world and unseen forces. External remedies may give temporary relief, but they do not cut the root. Sankhya says: as long as you take yourself to be the movement of Prakriti, suffering returns. The cure is not merely outside. It lies in identity. Yoga takes this insight and makes it living.

The twenty-five tattvas of Sankhya unfold the structure of experience. Prakriti, mahat or buddhi, ahamkara, manas, the senses, subtle elements, gross elements, and Purusha - this is not a lifeless list. It reveals that the one who says I is a constructed mechanism. Intellect judges, ego appropriates, mind alternates, senses run toward objects. Purusha is none of these. It is the witness of them all.

त्रिगुणमविवेकि विषयः सामान्यमचेतनं प्रसवधर्मि।
व्यक्तं तथा प्रधानं तद्विपरीतस्तथा च पुमान्॥

- Source: Sankhya Karika 11

Meaning: The manifest and the unmanifest Prakriti are composed of the three gunas, non-discriminating, objective, common, unconscious, and productive. Purusha is opposite in nature.

The three gunas are not abstractions. They are the texture of every moment. Tamas is heaviness, inertia, confusion, sleep, dullness. Rajas is movement, desire, restlessness, urgency. Sattva is clarity, harmony, transparency, balance. At every moment these qualities are at work. Yoga does not hate them. It sees them. When seen, they no longer bind in the same way. When unseen, they become destiny.

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत।

अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥

- Source: Bhagavad Gita 2.28

Meaning: Beings are unmanifest in the beginning, manifest in the middle, and unmanifest again at the end. Why grieve over this?

This does not deny grief. It illumines grief. Whatever is born will change; whatever appears will return to the unmanifest. Prakriti is appearance, transformation, and disappearance. Yoga does not stop this cycle. It reveals the Purusha who is not trapped in the cycle as an object. Grief becomes sacred when it is bathed in discrimination.

मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम्।

तस्यावयवभूतैस्तु व्याप्तं सर्वमिदं जगत् ॥

- Source: Shvetashvatara Upanishad 4.10

Meaning: Know Prakriti to be maya, and the Great Lord to be the wielder of maya. This whole world is pervaded by His parts.

Here Sankhya and the Upanishadic vision meet. Prakriti is the seen; Purusha is the seer. But this distinction is not for hatred of the world. It is for freedom. Understand Prakriti so you are not bound by it. Recognize Purusha so you may rest in its quiet. Know maya so you do not drown in it. One who understands maya no longer treats the world as an enemy; it becomes transparent.

तस्माच्च विपर्यासात् सिद्धं साक्षित्वमस्य पुरुषस्य।

कैवल्यं माध्यस्थ्यं द्रष्टृत्वमकर्तृभावश्च ॥

- Source: Sankhya Karika 19

Meaning: From its contrast with Prakriti, the witnesshood, aloneness, neutrality, seeing nature, and non-doership of Purusha are established.

Purusha does not act; it sees. The mind fears this, asking: If I am not the doer, how will life move? But Sankhya does not stop life. Prakriti acts. Intellect decides, body moves, speech happens. Bondage begins when Purusha appropriates these movements as I. Yoga brings non-doership into lived experience. Then action continues, yet an inner lightness appears. Sankhya shows the map. Yoga says: now walk.

Practice

Pause three times today and notice which guna is dominant: tamas, rajas, or sattva. Do not judge any of them. See them as movements of Prakriti. The one who sees them is the direction of Purusha.

Chapter 3 - Ashtanga Yoga: Eight Steps, One Roof

Patanjali does not leave yoga as vague inspiration. He gives its limbs. Yet these limbs are not separate compartments. They are the branches of one living tree. Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, samadhi - this is the movement from outer disorder toward inner transparency. But when the inner becomes clear, the outer too is seen in that same light.

यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टावङ्गानि॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 2.29

Meaning: Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi are the eight limbs of yoga.

Patanjali immediately tells us that yoga is not meditation alone. If the foundation of life is violence, dishonesty, greed, indulgence, and accumulation, meditation becomes another form of ego. A distracted, aggressive, and untruthful mind cannot meditate; it can only perform meditation. Therefore yama and niyama come first. They are not moral decoration. They are the science of purifying the mind-field.

अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहा यमाः॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 2.30

Meaning: Non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, brahmacharya, and non-possessiveness are yamas.

Vyasa's commentary sees ahimsa as the root of all yamas. Violence is not only striking another. Hatred in thought is violence. Living in self-deception is violence. Throwing one's energy into unconsciousness is violence. When ahimsa deepens, the mind becomes soft enough for truth. Then non-stealing, chastity of energy, and non-possessiveness begin to become natural. Yoga does not begin with stretching the body. It begins by bringing life into truth.

शौचसंतोषतपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 2.32

Meaning: Purity, contentment, discipline, self-study, and surrender to Ishvara are niyamas.

Niyama is the inner culture of the seeker. Shaucha is not only external cleanliness; it is inner clarity. Santosha is not laziness; it is a quiet acceptance of what is. Tapas is not punishment of the body; it is the gathering of scattered energy. Svadhyaya is not merely reading scripture; it is reading oneself. Ishvara-pranidhana is not fatalism; it softens the center of ego. Without these, practice lacks strength.

स्थिरसुखमासनम्॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 2.46

Meaning: Asana is a posture that is steady and easeful.

Today asana is often measured by difficulty. Patanjali measures it by steadiness and ease. The body should become a support, not an obstacle. The purpose of asana is not to display victory over the body, but to harmonize the body so that chitta can turn inward. The Hatha Yoga Pradipika gives importance to bodily and pranic preparation, but its deeper aim also points toward raja yoga. The body is an instrument, not the final goal.

तस्मिन् सति श्वासप्रश्वासयोर्गतिविच्छेदः प्राणायामः॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 2.49

Meaning: When asana is established, pranayama is the regulation or suspension of the movements of inhalation and exhalation.

Breath is the nearest companion of the mind. When mind is disturbed, breath changes; when breath becomes refined, mind is affected. Pranayama is not a harsh control of breathing. It is listening to the rhythm of prana. The Hatha Yoga Pradipika says that when prana moves, the mind moves; when prana becomes still, the mind becomes still. But the essence is subtlety, not force.

स्वविषयासंप्रयोगे चित्तस्य स्वरूपानुकार इवेन्द्रियाणां प्रत्याहारः॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 2.54

Meaning: Pratyahara is the withdrawal of the senses from their objects, as if they follow the form of chitta.

Pratyahara is not escape. Closing the eyes is not pratyahara. It happens when the senses are no longer slaves of their objects. Sound comes, but the mind does not instantly build a story. A form appears, but craving need not arise. Touch is felt, yet identity does not tremble. The senses turn inward like a tortoise withdrawing its limbs. This is not repression; it is rest from outward compulsion.

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु।

बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च॥

- Source: Katha Upanishad 1.3.3

Meaning: Know the Self as the lord of the chariot, the body as the chariot, intellect as the charioteer, and mind as the reins.

This is one of the most beautiful images of yoga. The body is the chariot, the senses are horses, the mind is the rein, the intellect is the charioteer, and the Self is the master of the chariot. If the

reins are loose, the horses run wild. If the intellect sleeps, the chariot loses direction. Yoga does not destroy the chariot. It awakens the charioteer, steadies the reins, and disciplines the horses.

Practice

Choose one yama and one niyama today. Live them not as rules, but as directions of the mind. Sit with the body steady and easeful. Feel the breath without forcing it. Ashtanga Yoga can begin now.

Chapter 4 - Chitta: The Mirror That Forgot Itself

Chitta is the central mystery of yoga. It is the problem and also the possibility. Chitta is like a mirror. If dust gathers on it, what is reflected appears distorted. If the mirror becomes fascinated by its own images, it forgets its own clarity. Human chitta is like this. It reflects experience, then identifies with the reflections. Yoga does not break the mirror. It cleans it until it remembers its nature.

अविद्यास्मितारागद्वेषाभिनिवेशाः पञ्च क्लेशाः॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 2.3

Meaning: Ignorance, ego-sense, attachment, aversion, and clinging to life are the five afflictions.

Avidya is not stupidity. It is mistaken identity. The impermanent is taken as permanent, the impure as pure, the painful as pleasurable, the not-Self as the Self. From this root arises asmita, the sense I am this body, I am this mind. Then comes raga, grasping what seems pleasant; dvesha, resisting what seems painful; and abhinivesha, the instinct to continue at any cost. The entire psychology of bondage grows from one error.

अविद्या क्षेत्रमुत्तरेषां प्रसुप्ततनुविच्छिन्नोदाराणाम्॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 2.4

Meaning: Avidya is the field of the other afflictions, whether dormant, weakened, interrupted, or fully active.

Every knot in chitta grows in the soil of avidya. If the root is not seen, cutting branches is not enough. Suppressed desire returns in another form. Suppressed fear becomes a hunger for control. Polished ego becomes spiritual ego. Yoga goes to the root. The root is this: the seer has taken itself to be the seen. Purusha has said I to Prakriti.

अनित्याशुचिदुःखानात्मसु नित्यशुचिसुखात्मख्यातिरविद्या॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 2.5

Meaning: Avidya is the misperception of permanence, purity, happiness, and Self in what is impermanent, impure, painful, and not-Self.

This sutra opens the whole human confusion. The body is impermanent, yet we seek final security in it. Relationships change, yet we demand permanence from them. The mind is full of restlessness, yet we believe its desires will bring lasting happiness. The not-Self is taken to be the Self, and chitta wanders. Yogic discrimination sees this again and again until identification loosens.

Yoga Vasistha repeatedly reveals the immense power of chitta. Chitta creates worlds, fears those worlds, and then seeks liberation from them. Yet the same chitta contains the power of

freedom. When it flows outward into objects, it becomes bondage. When it sees itself, it becomes the path. Therefore chitta should not be hated. It must be understood: its deceptions, its imagination, its exhaustion, and its capacity to become transparent.

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो अभिचाकशीति॥

- Source: Mundaka Upanishad 3.1.1

Meaning: Two birds, united companions, sit on the same tree. One eats the sweet fruit; the other, not eating, merely watches.

One bird is the embodied self entangled in chitta, tasting the fruits of pleasure and pain. The other is the witness - silent, untouched, seeing. They are not on separate trees. The seeker need not abandon the world and go elsewhere. On the same tree of body-mind, both are present. In yoga, the fruit-eating bird slowly turns toward the witnessing bird. This turning is the birth of meditation.

समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नोऽनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः।
जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति वीतशोकः॥

- Source: Mundaka Upanishad 3.1.2

Meaning: Immersed in the same tree, the helpless individual grieves in delusion. When he sees the other Lord and His greatness, he becomes free from sorrow.

Sorrow does not end by changing fruits. The individual keeps changing fruit - this relationship, that success, this pleasure, that experience - yet sorrow returns. When the witness is seen, direction changes. J. Krishnamurti spoke of attention rather than concentration. Concentration forces the mind upon a point. Attention allows the mind to meet itself wholly. In that attention, chitta begins to be purified.

तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम्॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 1.3

Meaning: Then the seer abides in its own nature.

This is Patanjali's quiet revolution. No great vision is necessary. No light, no sound, no power is required. The seer abiding in its own nature is yoga. Then chitta becomes a clear mirror. The world appears, but it does not bind. Thoughts arise, but they do not become identity. Experiences come and go, but the seer does not drown in them. Freedom is not far away. It is the maturity of seeing.

Practice

When a strong feeling arises today, do not react at once. Feel it in the body first. Ask what story it is tied to. Then ask: Has the one who knows it actually changed? This is the first turn from chitta toward Purusha.

Chapter 5 - Meditation: When the Doer Is No Longer There

Meditation is perhaps the most overused and least understood word in modern spirituality. Some call sitting with closed eyes meditation. Some call stopping thoughts meditation. Some call imagination, visualization, or pleasant inner experience meditation. Patanjali defines it with precision: meditation is the uninterrupted flow of awareness toward its object, where the breaks of effort and self-reference become thin.

तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम्॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 3.2

Meaning: There, the one-pointed continuity of cognition is meditation.

In dharana, chitta is placed upon one point. In dhyana, that placement becomes a stream. Like a flow of oil that does not break, awareness continues. But this is not achieved by violence. Effort can prepare dharana; in meditation the effort becomes refined. Where someone is aggressively trying to meditate, there is still preparation. Meditation arrives when chitta has become sufficiently pure, steady, and simple.

देशबन्धश्चित्तस्य धारणा॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 3.1

Meaning: Dharana is the binding of chitta to one place.

Dharana is the field before meditation. A mantra, breath, form, point, heart-space, or subtle feeling may be chosen. The mind wanders; it is brought back. This returning is practice. If the return is made into war, the mind becomes tired. If it is made with tenderness, the mind learns. Slowly chitta becomes familiar with the object, and familiarity becomes steadiness.

तदेवार्थमात्रनिर्भासं स्वरूपशून्यमिव समाधिः॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 3.3

Meaning: When only the object shines forth and the meditator's own form seems absent, that is samadhi.

Samadhi is not theatrical unconsciousness. It is a delicate transparency of consciousness. The meditator's self-image becomes faint, and the object shines. Later, deeper still, even the object may dissolve into its source. But the seeker should not hurry into labels. The idea of samadhi can become an obstacle. Practice prepares the ground; the fruit is not to be grabbed.

The sixth chapter of the Gita is a complete scripture of meditation. Krishna does not separate meditation from life. He speaks of posture, food, movement, sleep, discipline, mind, and the Self. Meditation is not only an event of sitting. It is connected to the rhythm of living.

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते।
निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा॥

- Source: Bhagavad Gita 6.18

Meaning: When the restrained mind rests in the Self alone, free from longing for all desires, then one is called united.

United with what? With the Self. In meditation the mind withdraws from external grasping and rests in its source. Freedom from desire is not repression. When chitta touches the depth of the Self, the hunger for outer completion naturally weakens. A fulfilled mind does not beg from every object. Meditation does not empty the mind into deadness; it fills it with its own root-essence.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा॥

- Source: Bhagavad Gita 6.17

Meaning: For one whose food, recreation, activity, sleep, and waking are balanced, yoga becomes the destroyer of sorrow.

Krishna's meditation is practical. A deeply unbalanced life cannot support deep meditation easily. Too much food, too little food; too much sleep, too little sleep; excessive effort, excessive looseness - all disturb chitta. Yoga is the intelligence of balance. T.K.V. Desikachar and B.K.S. Iyengar, each in his way, preserved this practical intention of Patanjali: yoga must enter the conditions of life.

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम्।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत्॥

- Source: Bhagavad Gita 6.26

Meaning: Wherever the restless and unstable mind wanders, from there one should bring it back under the governance of the Self.

This governance is not harsh repression. The mind will wander; this is its old habit. The seeker brings it back not with punishment, but with remembrance. Every return is a bead in the mala of meditation. Sri Aurobindo distinguished ordinary thinking from yogic concentration: ordinary mind roams among thoughts; yogic concentration turns consciousness toward its source.

लघुत्वमारोग्यमलोलुपत्वं वर्णप्रसादः स्वरसौष्ठवं च।
गन्धः शुभो मूत्रपुरीषमल्पं योगप्रवृत्तिं प्रथमां वदन्ति॥

- Source: Shvetashvatara Upanishad 2.13

Meaning: Lightness, health, freedom from craving, brightness of complexion, sweetness of voice, pleasant fragrance, and moderation in bodily waste are said to be early signs of yoga.

These are signs, not goals. If the seeker grasps them, yoga again becomes body-centered. When chitta ceases fighting itself, the body and prana may naturally become more harmonious. But health is not the final aim of yoga; it may be a supportive fragrance. Meditation's deepest paradox remains: the one who tries to meditate is the one in the way. As doing becomes transparent, sitting remains, breath remains, awareness remains - and meditation happens.

Practice

*Make the attempt to meditate a little softer today. Choose breath, mantra, or the feeling of the heart. When the mind wanders, return gently. See each return not as failure, but as practice.
Meditation arrives where the doer becomes quiet.*

Chapter 6 - Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga: Two Roads, One Destination

Not every seeker can sit in a cave, and sitting alone is not enough. Life is made of relationships, actions, choices, conflicts, duties, and consequences. If yoga does not enter life, it remains incomplete. This is the wisdom of Karma Yoga. Krishna teaches Arjuna on a battlefield, not in a monastery. The meaning is clear: yoga is possible in the middle of life.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥

- **Source: Bhagavad Gita 2.47**

Meaning: Your right is to action alone, never to its fruits. Do not be the cause of the fruits of action, and do not cling to inaction.

This verse is often reduced to: do not worry about results. But at depth it removes the doer. Attachment to results exists because the sense I am the doer is strong. If action moves in the field of Prakriti, guided by clarity and dharma, and if ego loosens from the center, the burden of fruit becomes lighter. Karma Yoga does not abandon action. It dissolves the fever of authorship.

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः॥

- **Source: Bhagavad Gita 3.30**

Meaning: Surrender all actions to Me, with the mind established in the Self; free from expectation and possessiveness, fight without fever.

Vigata-jvarah - without fever - is a luminous phrase. Act, but without the fever of expectation, fear, success, failure, honor, and self-importance. Karma Yoga does not make life passive. It frees life from inner fever. Then action becomes clearer, calmer, and cleaner. When obsession with fruit decreases, the quality of action often increases.

Jnana Yoga comes from another doorway. It asks: Who am I? Am I the doer? Am I the body? Am I the mind? The Vivekachudamani places viveka and vairagya at the beginning of awakening.

दुर्लभं त्रयमेवैतद्देवानुग्रहहेतुकम्।
मनुष्यत्वं मुमुक्षुत्वं महापुरुषसंश्रयः॥

- **Source: Vivekachudamani 3**

Meaning: Three things are rare and come by divine grace: human birth, longing for liberation, and the company of a great being.

Jnana Yoga is not an intellectual game. Without longing for liberation, knowledge remains dry. Without the company of wisdom, discrimination may become ego. Human birth means more than having a human body; it means having the capacity for self-examination. Viveka separates the eternal from the transient. Vairagya refuses to lose itself in what cannot last. These are the two wings of knowledge.

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति॥

- Source: Bhagavad Gita 4.38

Meaning: In this world, nothing purifies like knowledge. One perfected in yoga finds it in the Self in time.

Knowledge is not pasted from outside. It is found in the Self. Hearing scripture is the beginning, reflection is purification, and direct seeing is maturity. Knowledge is not information. It is recognition. When the movement of knower, known, and knowing becomes transparent, there is a purity the Gita calls jnana.

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः।
स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत्॥

- Source: Bhagavad Gita 4.18

Meaning: One who sees inaction in action and action in inaction is wise among humans, united, and the performer of all action.

Here the Gita brings karma and jnana together. Outwardly there is action; inwardly, no hard doer. Outwardly there may be sitting still; inwardly, the mind may be full of action. Karma Yoga purifies the mirror; Jnana Yoga looks into it and discovers not a reflection, but the looker. Ramana Maharshi called self-inquiry the highest yoga. Who am I? is not passivity; it is the most refined action of attention turning toward its own source.

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति।
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च॥

- Source: Bhagavad Gita 2.52

Meaning: When your intellect crosses the mire of delusion, you will become indifferent to what has been heard and what remains to be heard.

The fruit of knowledge is not more information, but silence. Much listening may be necessary, but eventually even listening becomes quiet. Action becomes offering. Knowledge becomes directness. Both end in the same place: the grip of ego loosens, and the seer returns toward its own nature.

Practice

Choose one ordinary action today - walking, writing, cooking, speaking. Do it with complete attention. In the middle of it, notice whether the mind is building a story around the result. Then ask: who is the doer? Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga meet there.

Chapter 7 - Kaivalya: Not Loneliness, but Fullness

The final word of Patanjali's system is kaivalya. It is often misunderstood as isolation or withdrawal. But kaivalya is not a sad aloneness. It is the complete self-abidance of Purusha. The gunas have fulfilled their purpose. Prakriti has given experience, maturity, and finally discrimination. When discrimination is complete, Prakriti's work is done. Purusha rests in itself - not bound, not fleeing, not seeking anything further.

पुरुषार्थशून्यानां गुणानां प्रतिप्रसवः कैवल्यं।
स्वरूपप्रतिष्ठा वा चित्तिशक्तिरिति॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 4.34

Meaning: Kaivalya is the return of the gunas to their source when they are empty of purpose for Purusha; or the establishment of consciousness-power in its own nature.

This is the final flower of the Yoga Sutras. Tamas, rajas, and sattva have served their purpose. They gave experience, ripening, and discrimination. Now Purusha does not need anything from them. This is not the end of experiences; it is the end of identity with experiences. Consciousness stands in its own nature. It is not a new state that comes and goes. It is recognition of what has always been the case.

Kaivalya does not mean that the world disappears. The body may move, the mind may function, speech may speak, actions may occur. But inwardly Purusha no longer says I to the waves of Prakriti. Yoga Vasistha describes the liberated one like a burnt rope: the form remains, but it can no longer bind. Personality may appear, but its binding power is gone.

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्य जन्तोर्निहितो गुहायाम्।
तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको धातुः प्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः॥

- Source: Katha Upanishad 1.2.20

Meaning: The Self is subtler than the subtle and greater than the great, hidden in the cave of the being. One who is free from desire and sorrow sees its glory.

The Self is neither small nor large; it is beyond measurement. It is in the cave of the heart, yet not confined by location. Only one whose seeing is not clouded by craving can recognize it. In kaivalya, the seeker does not become great by having a vast experience. He drops the measuring mind and sees that the Self was never limited.

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं
नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः।
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं

तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति॥

- Source: Katha Upanishad 2.2.15

Meaning: There the sun does not shine, nor the moon and stars, nor lightning, nor fire. By Its light all this shines.

Kaivalya is rest in the light by which all experience is illumined. The light of meditation, the light of knowledge, the light of the world - all shine by That. When the seeker returns to this original light, no outer confirmation is needed. This is not a light seen by the eyes. It is the luminosity of knowing itself. Patanjali's seer and the Upanishadic Self become one indication here.

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः
सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा।
कर्माध्यक्षः सर्वभूताधिवासः
साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च॥

- Source: Shvetashvatara Upanishad 6.11

Meaning: The one Deva is hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the inner Self of all, the overseer of action, the abode of all beings, witness, consciousness, alone, and beyond the gunas.

Kevala here is not emptiness of relationship, but fullness free from dependence. It is in all, yet bound by none. It is witness, yet not lifeless. It is the inner Self, yet not limited. Kaivalya is establishment in this aloneness of fullness. When the seeker recognizes that witnessing consciousness within, he is not cut off from others; he begins to see the same light in all.

तदा विवेकनिम्नं कैवल्यप्राग्भारं चित्तम्॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 4.26

Meaning: Then chitta inclines toward discrimination and moves toward kaivalya.

When purified by long practice, chitta's direction changes. Earlier it flowed toward objects; now it flows toward discrimination. Earlier it grasped; now letting go becomes natural. Earlier it made identities; now identities loosen. Kaivalya is not dropped upon the seeker from elsewhere. The whole direction of chitta turns, and then even that direction becomes silent.

अथ योगानुशासनम्॥

- Source: Yoga Sutras 1.1

Meaning: Now begins the teaching of yoga.

It is beautiful that the final chapter returns to the first sutra. Now yoga begins. When the seeker understands that kaivalya is not an experience, yoga truly begins. When it is seen that the path

was a circle and the center was always here, yoga begins. When the movements of chitta, tired of a lifetime of wandering, settle and leave the seer in its own nature, yoga begins.

This is not an ending. It is the same atha - now. Now, when seeking is tired. Now, when practice has matured. Now, when the seer is ceasing to forget itself. Yoga is the return toward the Self, and the Self never went anywhere. This is kaivalya: not loneliness, but immeasurable fullness.

Practice

Do not practice today in order to gain anything. Simply see that whatever comes and goes belongs to the movement of the gunas. Watch body, mind, thought, and role arise and pass. Then ask: does the one who sees also come and go? Rest a while in that stillness.