

Dialogues With the Masters

Volume 2: Yoga Sutras

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Dialogues With the Masters

Note to the Web Edition

Dear friends,

We are making available the first two volumes of *Dialogues With the Masters* on our website because we hope the material will be found valuable by sincere spiritual aspirants. Without concern for style or presentation, these texts are yours to freely read online or download. These texts will likely find their way to a publisher in the future, so we ask that you vigorously observe all copyright obligations.

Dialogues With the Masters

Introduction

The *Dialogues With the Masters* series presents texts that are integral to the path of authentic yoga. As the reader will discover, many of these teachings were originally composed in terse statements which require significant contemplation to understand. The brevity of the ancient sages is intentional. The curious reader is not spoon-fed with pre-chewed intellectual fodder. Rather, the texts are designed for deep examination and meditation by the sincere aspirant. To appreciate these writings takes years of study and spiritual practice. It is no exaggeration to state that each verse is a treasure chest to be opened, unpacked, and the riches within relished.

I have presented these texts in three complimentary components. First, is a Roman transliteration of the original Devanagari, the script of the Sanskrit language in which they were originally composed. Second, is a word-by-word translation so the student can probe the intention behind the Sages' thoughts. Third, I have provided a rendering of each verse, rather than an exact translation. The purpose of the rendering is twofold. As the reader will see, each verse is so concise that a formal translation of an individual verse would rarely consist of even a full sentence. In addition, the rendering serves to flesh out the meaning of the verse, so there is no necessity of an additional commentary.

Providing a transliteration, translation, and even a rendering of the verses are all fairly traditional aspects of presenting yogic works. I have also taken the liberty of generating a dialogue from the material, with a questioning student approaching the Master, inquiring from him an understanding of yoga. I hope this format brings the text to life by making it more personal and allowing for a greater sense of how each text is arranged in a flowing, organic, yet intellectually consistent structure. Each verse has a question preceding the translation, serving as an introduction to the topic of the verse. The transliteration and rendering follow in italics, presenting the verse as an answer and explanation to the student.

This work was developed over a period of many years. My own study and practice within the paradigm of these texts have completely convinced me they are a reliable and trustworthy guide to higher states of consciousness. I found that I would sometimes get "stuck" on a verse, not being able to understand or translate something. I would place the text aside, go about my spiritual practices and daily life, then return at some point to the book and recognize I now understood what the author was describing. The beauty and grandeur of the yoga scriptures was something I had heard described, and it became my own intimate experience that these writings are truly capable of inspiring and guiding the aspirant.

I have tried to repay the kindness and generosity of my gurus by making these texts accessible. I hope this small effort may serve you well.

Prem Prakash
May 6, 2015

Yoga Sutras

Chapter 1: samādhi pāda - Meditative Absorption

Q. Sage Patanjali, I have heard you are a man of great wisdom and compassion. I humbly ask you to instruct me.

atha yogānuśānam (1)
 atha – now, auspiciously
 yoga –the art and science of spiritual union
 anuśānam – expounded

I will share with you the art and science of spiritual union called yoga. Now, in a spirit of auspiciousness, please pay very close attention.

Q. What is yoga?

yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ (2)
 yoga – yoga
 citta – individual consciousness
 vṛtti – agitation
 nirodha - stilling

Yoga is the stilling of agitations in individual consciousness.

Q. What happens when yoga is accomplished?

tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpe'vasthānam (3)
 tadā – then
 draṣṭṛ – the seer
 svarūpa – essential form
 avasthāna – abiding

When yoga is accomplished, the individual abides in his essential form, one with the eternal Seer, Universal Consciousness.

Q. What happens when yoga is not accomplished?

vṛttisārūpyamitaratra (4)

vṛtti – agitation
sārūpya – takes the same form (here: identifies with)
itaratra – otherwise

When there is no yoga, the individual identifies with the agitations in consciousness.

Q. What are these agitations in consciousness?

vṛttayah pañcatayyah kliṣṭākliṣṭāḥ (5)
vṛtti – the agitations
pañcataya – fivefold
kliṣṭa – binding
akliṣṭa – not binding

The agitations are classified as being fivefold, and they are either binding (contribute to bondage) or non-binding (contribute to liberation).

pramāṇaviparyayavikalpanidrāsmṛtayah (6)
pramāṇa – accurate conception
viparyaya – misconception
vikalpa – imagination
nidrā – sleep
smṛti – memory

They are: accurate conception, misconception, imagination, sleep, and memory.

Q. What is accurate conception?

pratyakṣānumānāgamāḥ pramāṇāni (7)
pratyakṣa – direct perception
anumāna – inference
āgama – valid testimony
pramāṇa – accurate conception

Accurate conceptions are agitations arising from direct perception, inference, and valid testimony. An example is seeing smoke and either directly perceiving it as fire, assuming correctly there is fire, or being told by a reliable authority of a fire.

Q. What is misconception?

viparyayo mithyājñānamatadrūpapraṭiṣṭham (8)
viparyaya – misconception
mithyā – erroneous

jñāna – knowledge
 atad – not that
 rūpa – form
 pratiṣṭha – based upon

Misconceptions arise from erroneous knowledge not based on the true form of what is perceived. An example would be seeing a rope as a snake.

Q. What is the agitation of imagination?

śabdajñānānupātī vastuśūnyo vikalpaḥ (9)
 śabda – mental creation
 jñānānupātī – knowledge coming from
 vastu – object
 śūnya – void, without substance
 vikalpa – imagination

Imagination is the mental creation of an object with no substance. An example would be fantasizing about fish that fly.

Q. What is sleep?

abhāvapratyayālambanā vṛttirnidrā (10)
 abhāva – non-occurrence
 pratyaya – impressions, contents of consciousness
 alambana – foundation, basis
 vṛtti – agitation
 nidrā – sleep

Sleep experiences arise when there is no present sensory experience but consciousness is still active. This includes the state of deep sleep, as well as the images that arise as dreams.

Q. What is memory?

anubhūta viśaya āsampramoṣaḥ smṛtiḥ (11)
 anubhūta – previously experienced
 viśaya – object
 āsampramoṣa – not releasing
 smṛti – memory

Memories arise when a previously experienced object is not released from consciousness. An example would be the thoughts of your childhood.

Q. How can I still these agitations?

abhyāsavairāgyābhyām tannirodhaḥ (12)

abhyāsa – practice

vairāgyābhyām – by detachment

tannirodhaḥ – these are stilled

Agitations are stilled through regular practice and detachment.

Q. What do you mean by regular practice?

tatra sthitau yatno'bhyāsaḥ (13)

tatra – in that

sthiti – stable

yatnah – deliberate effort

abyāsa – practice

Practice is the deliberate effort to stabilize the state of stillness.

Q. How can I succeed with my practice?

sa tu dīrghakālanairantaryasatkārāsevito dr̥ḍhabhūmiḥ (14)

sa – it

tu – but

dīrgha – prolonged

kāla – time

nairantarya – without interruption

satkāra – proper manner

āsevita – performed

dr̥ḍha – firm

bhūmi – grounded

Practice becomes firmly grounded when it is performed in the proper manner, without interruption, over a prolonged period of time.

Q. What do you mean by detachment?

dr̥ṣṭānuśravikaviṣayavitr̥ṣṇasya vaśīkārasamjñā vairāgyam (15)

dr̥ṣṭa – what is seen

ānuśravika – what is heard of

viṣaya – objects

vit̥r̥ṣṇa – not craving

vaśīkāra –self-control

saṁjñā – known as
vairāgya – detachment

What is known as detachment is a self-control whereby one does not crave any object, either already seen or heard of as existing.

Q. How can I become detached from my cravings?

tat paraṁ puruṣakhyāterguṇavairṣṇyam (16)

tad – that

para – supreme

puruṣa – One Self

khyāti – beholding

guṇa – fundamental aspect of Nature

vairṣṇya – cessation of all craving

As a result of beholding the One Self, the supreme level of detachment will arise. This will bring about a cessation of all craving for any form of Nature.

Q. If I practice yoga and become detached, what will I experience?

vitarkavicārānandāsmītānugamāt saṁprajñātaḥ (17)

vitarka – with reflection

vicāra – with exploration

ānanda – with joy

āsmīta – with "I am" identity

anugamāt – accompanied

saṁprajñāta – higher wisdom

You will experience higher wisdom, which is accompanied by reflection, exploration, joy, and a union in identity.

Q. What is higher wisdom?

virāmapratyayābhyāsapūrvāḥ saṁskāraśeṣo'nyaḥ (18)

virāma – elimination

pratyaya – impression, contents of consciousness

abhyāsa – practice

pūrvā – previous

saṁskāra – causal impulse

śeṣa – residual

anya – other

In higher wisdom, there are no significant agitations. Consciousness contains only residual causal impulses left over from the previous practice of attempting to eliminate agitations.

Q. Can I one day become a person of higher wisdom?

bhavapratyayo videhaprakṛtilāyanām (19)
bhava – becoming
pratyaya – impression, contents of consciousness
videha – bodiless
prakṛti – primal Nature
laya – merged into

Not quite. Impressions of becoming can only lead to the bodiless state of merging into primal Nature. The personal consciousness, which is a product of Nature, must be transcended. This is a state of being, not becoming, a state beyond time.

Q. What traits do I need to tread the path of higher wisdom?

śraddhāvīryasmṛtisamādhiprajñāpūrvaka itareṣām (20)
śraddhā – faith
vīrya – courage
smṛti – memory, recollection
samādhi – absorption in meditation
prajñā – wisdom
pūrvaka – preceded by
itaresam – of the others

Higher wisdom is preceded by faith, courage, continuous recollection of aspiration, and absorption in meditation.

Q. When will wisdom arise?

tīvrasaṁvegānāmāsannaḥ (21)
tīvra – extremely
saṁvega – dedicated
āsanna – sitting near

For one who is extremely dedicated, wisdom is near.

Q. I must admit I am not extremely dedicated. Can I still progress?

mṛdumadhyādhimātratvāt tato'pi viśeṣaḥ (22)

mṛdu – mild
 madhya – medium
 adhimātratva – intense
 tatas – hence
 api – also
 viśeṣa – difference

Yes, though there will be a difference in progress for those who are mild, medium, and intense.

Q. Is there something in common for all degrees of aspirants?

tīśvarapraṇidhānād va (23)

tīśvara – God
 praṇidhāna – surrender
 vā - regardless

There is; regardless of your degree of dedication, surrender to God.

Q. God? I thought our goal was realization of the One Self, Universal Consciousness?

kleśakarmavipākāśayairaparāmṛṣṭaḥ puruṣaviśeṣa tīśvaraḥ (24)

kleśa – obstruction
 karma – action
 vipāka – results
 āśaya – foundation
 aparāmṛṣṭa - untouched
 puruṣa – One Self
 viśeṣa - difference
 tīśvara – God

That is correct, but we relate to God as the One Self on a experiential level. Unlike your sense of self, God has never being touched by obstructions, actions, and results.

Q. If all is One Self, then what is the difference between me and God?

tatra niratiśayaṁ sarvajñabījam (25)

tatra – in Him
 niratiśaya – limitless
 sarva – all
 jñabījam – seed of knowledge

In Him, the seed of knowledge is limitless. What is potential in you is eternally present in God.

Q. Can I relate to God?

sa pūrveśāmapi guruḥ kālenānavacchedāt (26)
pūrveṣam - earliest
api – also
guru – spiritual teacher
kāla – time
anavaccheda – not bound

Yes, God is the primal spiritual teacher, unbound by time.

Q. How can I call on God?

tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ (27)
tasya – his
vācaka – vibratory sound
praṇava – sacred syllable

God's name is a vibratory sound, the sacred syllable, "aum."

Q. Can I call on God by this name?

tajjapastadarthabhāvanam (28)
tat – that
japas – repeated recitation
tat – that
artha – meaning
bhāvana – develop

Yes, you can develop God awareness by sincerely and repeatedly invoking and evoking the sacred syllable.

Q. If I seek God what will happen?

tataḥ pratyakcetanādhigamo'pyantarāyābhāvaśca (29)
tatas – then
pratyakcetanā – turning consciousness inward
adhigamah – attainment
api – also
antarāya – obstacles
abhāva – don't develop

ca – and

Obstacles will cease to develop and you will attain an inward-turning consciousness.

Q. What are these obstacles?

*vyādhistyānasamśayapramādalāsyāvīratibhrāntidarśana-
alabdhabhūmikatvānavasthitatvāni cittavikṣepāste'ntarāyāḥ (30)*

vyādhī – illness
 styāna – dullness
 samśaya – doubt
 pramāda – negligence
 ālasya – lethargy
 avīratī – indulgence
 bhrāntidarśan – illusory vision
 alabdha – non-attainment
 bhūmikatva – grounded state
 anavasthitatva – unstable
 citta - individual consciousness
 vikṣepa – distraction
 te – these
 antarāya – obstacles

The obstacles are distractions of consciousness. They are: illness, dullness, doubt, negligence, lethargy, indulgence, illusory vision, non-attainment, and unstable attainment.

Q. What is the experience of those oppressed by these distractions?

duḥkhadaurmanasyāṅgamejayatvaśvāsapraśvāsā vikṣepasahabhuvāḥ (31)

duḥkha – pain
 daurmanasya – depression
 aṅga – limb
 ejayatva – tremble
 śvāsa – improper inhalation
 praśvāsa – improper exhalation
 vikṣepa – distraction
 sahabhuva - accompany

The distractions are accompanied by pain, depression, nervousness, and weak vitality.

Q. How can I overcome the distractions?

tatpratiṣedhārthamekatattvābhyāsaḥ (32)

tad – that
pratiṣedha – counteract
artha – meaning
eka – one
tattva – principal
abhyāsa – practice

Distractions can be countered by the practice of keeping awareness on one meaningful principal.

Q. What do you mean, “one meaningful principal?”

maitrīkaruṇāmuditaupekṣāṇām sukhaduḥkhaṇyāpuṇyaviṣayāṇām (33)
bhāvanātaścittaprasādanam
maitrī – friendliness
karuṇā – compassion
muditā – cheerfulness
upekṣā – equanimity
sukha – pleasure
duḥkha – pain
puṇya – advantageous
apuṇya – disadvantageous
viṣaya – objects and relationships
bhāvanāta - cultivating
citta –consciousness
prasādana – serene

The principal of serenity. Your consciousness will become serene by cultivating friendliness, compassion, cheerfulness, and equanimity towards all objects and relationships, whether they seem pleasurable or painful, advantageous or disadvantageous.

Q. Are there additional means of cultivating serenity?

pracchardanavidhāraṇābhyām vā prāṇasya (34)
pracchardana – discharge (here: exhale)
vidhāraṇa – retention
vā – or
prāṇa – life force (here: breath)

Yes, for instance, utilizing breathing exercises, such as exhaling and deliberately retaining the breath.

viṣayavatī vā pravṛttirutpannā manasaḥ sthitinibandhanī (35)
viṣaya – objects and activities
vatī – in relation

vā – or
 pravṛtti – activity
 utpanna – arisen, functioning
 manas – cognitive mind
 sthiti – stable
 nibandhanin – establishing

Also, by establishing stability even while your cognitive mind is functioning in relation to objects and activities.

viśokā vā jyotiṣmatī (36)
 viśokā – sorrowless
 vā – or
 jyotiṣmatī – illuminating

Also, by the illumination of the sorrowless state.

vītarāgaviṣayaṃ vā cittaṃ (37)
 vīta – without, beyond
 rāga - attraction
 viṣaya – objects and relationships
 vā – or
 citta –individual consciousness

Also, by fixing your consciousness in the state beyond the attraction of objects.

svapnanidrājñānālabanaṃ vā (38)
 svapna – dream
 nidrā – sleep
 jñāna – knowledge
 ālabana – foundation, basis
 vā – or

Also, by knowledge of the foundation upon which sleep and dreams arise.

yathābhimatādhyānādvā (39)
 yathā – as
 abhimata – desiring, yearning
 dhyāna – meditation
 vā – or

Also, by meditation with yearning.

Q. Serenity seems to imply self-control. Is this accurate?

paramāṇuparamamahatvānto'sya vaśikārah (40)

parama – supreme

aṇu – atom

parama - supreme

mahatva – greatest expanse

anta - extends to

asya – his

vaśikāra – self-control

Yes, the self-control of a master yogi applies to the way he relates to everything, from the most minute atom to the greatest expanse.

Q. What is the experience of a yogi who has decreased agitations, surrendered to God, and cultivated serenity?

*kṣīṇavṛtterabhijātasyeva maṇergrahītrgrahaṇagrāhyeṣu tatsthatadañjanatā
samāpattiḥ (41)*

kṣīṇa – decreased

vṛtti – agitations

abijāta - translucent

iva – similar

maṇi – pure crystal

grahītr – subjective experiencer

grahaṇa – instruments of experience

grāhya – objects of experience

tad – that

stha – abide

tad – that

añjanatā – take the form

samāpatti – meditative fusion

He experiences the state of samapatti -- meditative fusion. The agitations decrease so significantly that individual consciousness becomes translucent, like a pure crystal. The subjective experiencer, the instruments of experience, and the objects of experience abide as aspects of a synergistic whole.

Q. How does a yogi in meditative fusion perceive the world?

tatra abdārthajñānavikalpaiḥ saṁkṛṇā savitarkā samāpattiḥ (42)

tatra – in that

śabda – sound, inner dialogue

artha – meaning

jñāna – knowledge

vikalpa – imagination

saṁkīrṇa – mixed together
 savitarka – with reflection
 samāpatti – meditative fusion

In the stage of savitarka samāpatti -- meditative fusion with reflection -- perception occurs within a paradigm containing elements of inner dialogue, meaning, knowledge, and imagination.

smṛtipariśuddhau svarūpaśūnyevārthamātranirbhāsā nirvitarkā samapattiḥ (43)
 smṛti – memory
 pariśuddhi – purification
 svarūpa – essential form
 śūnya – void
 iva – similar
 artha – meaning
 mātra – singularly, only
 nirbhāsa – shining
 nirvitarkā – surpassing reflection

In the stage of nirvitarkā samāpatti-- meditative fusion surpassing reflection -- spiritual purification eradicates the influence of memory over present perceptions. The essential form of objects is void of associations and only spiritual meaning is illuminated.

Q. How does a yogi in meditative fusion perceive his own thoughts and feelings?

etayaiva savicārā nirvicārā ca sūkṣmaviśayā vyākhyātā (44)
 etayā – by this
 eva – thus
 savicāra – with exploration
 nirvicāra – surpassing exploration
 cha – and
 sūkṣma – subtle
 viśaya – object
 vyākhyāta – explained

The states of savicāra samāpatti and nirvicāra samāpatti– meditative fusion with exploration, and meditative fusion surpassing exploration – relate to subtle objects, such as thoughts, with the same dynamics of perception as explained above (1.42-43).

Q. What is the ultimate experience of meditative fusion?

sūkṣmaviśayatvaṁ cālīṅgaparyavasānam (45)
 sūkṣma – subtle
 viśayatva – essence of object
 ca – and

aliṅga – non-differentiated
paryavasāna – termination

At the conclusion of meditative fusion, the subtle essence of all objects is perceived to arise from, exist within, and terminate in a return to non-differentiated Nature.

Q. Is it correct that meditative fusion occurs in relation to something, whether external or internal?

tā eva sabījaḥ samādhiḥ (46)
tāḥ – these
eva – thus
sabīja – with seed
samādhi – forms of meditative absorption

Yes, as there must be something for the meditator to fuse with. The stages of meditative fusion are called sabīja samādhi, meditative absorption with seed. “Seed” refers to the object upon which the meditation is based.

In conclusion, sabīja samādhi (meditative absorption based on a seed) consists of:

A. Meditations based on an external object

Stage 1. savitarka samāpatti -- meditative fusion with reflection (v.42)

Stage 2. nirvitarkā samāpatti -- meditative fusion surpassing reflection (v.43)

B. Meditations based on subtle objects, such as thoughts

Stage 3. savicāra samāpatti -- meditative fusion with exploration (v.44)

Stage 4. nirvicāra samāpatti-- meditative fusion surpassing exploration (v.45)

Q. What is the experience of a yogi in the state of meditation with seed?

nirvicāravaiśāradye’ dhyātmaprasādaḥ (47)
nirvicāra – surpassing exploration
vaiśāradye – lucid tranquility
adhyātman – soul
prasāda – serenity

The highest state of meditative absorption with seed, nirvicāra samāpatti (1.45), is a lucid tranquility which expresses the profound serenity of the soul (the individual consciousness in communion with the One Self).

ṛtambharā tatra prajñā (48)
ṛtambharā – filled with truth
tatra – in that
prajñā – wisdom

In that state, one's wisdom is filled with the truth.

Q. Isn't all wisdom filled with truth?

śrutānumānaprajñābhyāmanyaviṣayā viśeṣārthatvāt (49)
 śruta – conventional thinking
 anumāna - inference
 prajñābhyām - from this wisdom
 anya – other
 viṣaya – object
 viśeṣa – difference
 arthatva – meaning

This wisdom brings forth a direct realization of the truth underlying gross and subtle objects. This is different than the meaning found in second-hand inference or conventional thought.

Q. In wisdom, do agitations in consciousness still arise?

tajjaḥ saṃskāro'nyasaṃskārapratibandhī (50)
 tajjaḥ – born of that
 saṃskāra – causal impulse
 anya – other
 saṃskāra – causal impulse
 pratibandhin – impede

No, causal impulses born of wisdom impede any other type of inferior, agitating impulses.

Q. What happens when even the causal impulse of wisdom is stilled?

tasyāpi nirodhe sarvanirodhānnirbījaḥ samādhiḥ (51)
 tasya – of this
 api – also
 nirodha – stilling
 sarva – all
 nirodha – stilling
 nirbīja – without seed
 samādhi – meditative absorption

When even wisdom-based causal impulses are stilled, the yogi experiences nirbīja samādhi (meditative absorption without seed). He meditates directly on his own Self, without focusing on any object or thought. This is the summation of the process of stilling individual consciousness.

Yoga Sutras

Chapter 2: sādhana pāda - Spiritual Practice

Q. How am I to practice yoga?

tapahsvādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāni kriyāyogaḥ (1)

tapas – spiritual discipline

svādhyāya – introspection

īśvara – God

praṇidhāna – surrender

kriyā – action

yoga – the art and science of spiritual union

Yoga is the active practice of spiritual discipline, introspection, and surrender to God.

Q. Can you tell me what this practice will produce?

samādhībhāvanārthaḥ kleśatanūkaraṇārthaśca (2)

samādhi – meditative absorption

bhāvana – develop

artha – purpose

kleśa – obstruction

tanū - diminish

karaṇa – making possible

artha – purpose

cha – and

Kriya yoga – the acts of yoga – are for the purposes of developing meditative absorption and making possible the diminishment of the obstructions.

Q. What are the obstructions?

avidyāsmītārāga dveṣābhīniveśāḥ pañcakleśāḥ (3)

avidyā – spiritual ignorance

asmītā – egoic identity

rāga - attraction

dveṣa – repulsion

abhiniveśa – clinging to form
 pañca – five
 kleśa – obstruction

The five obstructions are: spiritual ignorance, egoic identity, attraction, repulsion, clinging to form.

Q. What is spiritual ignorance?

avidyā kṣetramuttareṣām prasuptatanuvicchinnodārāṇām (4)
 avidyā – spiritual ignorance
 kṣetra – field
 uttara – other
 prasupta – latent
 tanu – diminish
 vicchinna - impede
 udāra - provoke

Primal ignorance is the field of the other obstructions. They will be latent, diminished, impeded, or provoked.

anityaśuciduḥkhānātmasu nityaśucisukhātmakhyātiravidyā (5)
 anitya – temporal
 aśuci – impure
 duḥkha – pain
 anātman – not-soul (here: personality)
 nitya – eternal
 śuci – pure
 sukha - pleasure
 ātman – soul
 khyāti - beholding
 avidyā – spiritual ignorance

Spiritual ignorance is beholding the temporal as eternal, the impure as pure, the painful as pleasurable, and one's personal identity as his soul.

Q. What is egoic identity?

dṛgdarśanaśaktyorekātmatevāsmitā (6)
 dṛś – seer
 darśana – vision
 śakti – power
 eka – one
 ātmatā – soul

iva – as if, indistinguishable
asmitā – egoic identity

Egoic identity occurs when the soul is not distinguished from the power and experience of cognition. This produces a sense of limited, individual personality.

Q. What is attraction?

sukhānuśayī rāgaḥ (7)
sukha – pleasure
anuśayin – abides in
rāga – attraction

Attraction abides in the idea of pleasure.

Q. What is repulsion?

duḥkhanuśayī dveṣaḥ (8)
duḥkha - pain
anuśayin - abides in
dveṣa - repulsion

Repulsion abides in the idea of pain.

Q. What is clinging to form?

svarasavāhi viduṣo'pi tathā rūḍho'bhiniveśaḥ (9)
sva – essence, primal
rasa – intrinsic feeling
vāhin – flowing
viduṣo'pi – even in the astute
tatha – thus
rūḍha – growing
abhiniveśa – clinging to form

Clinging to form is the attempt to make static that which is ever-changing. This grows as an primal, intrinsic but futile search for security and happiness, found even in those who are intellectually astute.

Q. How can I overcome these obstructions?

te pratiprasavaheyāḥ sūkṣmāḥ (10)

te – these
 pratiprasava – counter movement
 heya – overcome
 sūkṣma – subtle

These obstructions prompt consciousness towards the external world, so they are overcome by a subtle counter-movement by the involution of consciousness towards its source.

Q. What is the difference between the obstructions and the agitations?

dhyānaheyāstadvṛttayaḥ (11)
 dhyāna - meditation
 heya – overcome
 tadvṛttayaḥ – these agitations

The agitations (1.6) are the result of the obstructions, and are overcome through meditation.

kleśamūlaḥ karmāśayo dr̥ṣṭādr̥ṣṭajanmavedanīyaḥ (12)
 kleśa – obstructions
 mūla – root, source
 karma – action
 āśaya – foundation
 dr̥ṣṭa – seen, present
 adr̥ṣṭa – unseen, future
 janma – birth
 vedanīya – to be experienced

The obstructions are the root motivators of binding actions, and the foundation precipitating all experiences in this or future births.

Q. How do the obstructions manifest?

sati mūle tadvipāko jātyāyurbhogāḥ (13)
 sati - existence
 mūla – root, source
 tadvipāka – these results
 jāti – birth
 āyus – lifetime
 bhoga – worldly enjoyment, success

The obstructions are the source which produce the results of: birth circumstances, the duration of life, and the degree of worldly success.

Q. Are you saying my life is pre-determined?

tehlādaparitāpaphalāḥ puṇyāpuṇyahetuvāt (14)

te – these

hlāda – delight

paritāpa – distress

phala – fruit, results

puṇya – advantageous

apuṇya - disadvantageous

hetutva – cause

As long as you are oppressed by the obstructions, yes, you are bound by your karma, the law of cause and effect. Your past is resulting in your present delight or distress, advantage or disadvantage.

Q. What if I feel helpless and depressed thinking I am bound by karma?

pariṇāmatāpasamṣkāraduḥkhaiguṇavṛttivirodhācca duḥkhameva sarvaṁ vivekinaḥ (15)

pariṇāma – transformation

tāpa – misery

samṣkara - causal impulse

duḥkha – pain

guṇa – fundamental aspect of Nature

vṛtti – agitation

virodha – discord

cha – and

duḥkha – pain

eva – thus

sarva – all

vivekinaḥ – to the discriminator

Good. To one of discrimination, all worldly experiences are painful because of the misery in the erratic transformation of events, the pain of the ignorance-based causal impulses, and the discordant agitations in the fundamental aspects of Nature.

Q. If I am bound by karma, how can I ever become free?

heyam duḥkhamanāgatam (16)

heya – overcome, prevented

duḥkham – pain

anāgata – yet to arrive

The pain which is yet to occur can be prevented from manifesting.

Q. Please tell me how I can prevent forthcoming pain?

draṣṭṛdrśyayoḥ saṁyogo heyahetuḥ (17)
 draṣṭṛ – seer
 drśā – the seen
 saṁyoga – association
 heya – overcome, prevent
 hetuh – cause

By overcoming the cause of pain-- the confusion of the Seer with what is seen.

Q. What is the nature of the seen?

prakāśakriyāsthitiśīlaṁ bhūtenḍriyātmakaṁ bhogapavargarthaṁ drśyam (18)
 prakāśa – light
 kriyā – activity
 sthiti – inertia
 śīla – trait
 bhūta – element
 indriya – sense organ
 ātmaka - encompassing
 bhoga – worldly enjoyment
 apavarga - liberation
 artha – purpose
 drśya – the seen

The seen is that which has a beginning and an end. It has three traits: light, activity, and inertia. It encompasses the elements and sense organs, and its purpose is to provide for worldly enjoyment and liberation.

Q. Isn't what you are describing the entire world?

viśeṣāviśeṣaliṅgamātrāliṅgāni guṇaparvāni (19)
 viśeṣa – difference, particulars (individual body/mind)
 aviśeṣa – without difference (collective consciousness)
 liṅgamātra – with traits, manifest nature
 aliṅga – without traits, primal nature
 guṇa – fundamental aspect of Nature
 parvan – planes

Yes, the seen includes all the planes of the fundamental aspects of Nature: primal nature as pure potential, manifest nature as time and space, the collective experience of the world, and the personal experience of an individual.

Q. Am I a creation of Nature?

draṣṭā dṛśimātraḥ śuddho'pi pratyayānupaśyaḥ (20)

draṣṭṛ – seer

dṛśi – seeing (here: vision)

mātra – only, singular

śuddha – pure

api – also

pratyaya – impressions, contents of consciousness

anupaśya – apperceives, identifies with

You are not. As Seer, you are pure vision. You are identifying with your perceptions.

Q. What is my relationship to Nature?

tadārtha eva dṛśyasyātmā (21)

tad – this

ārtha – purpose

eva – only

dṛśya – the seen

ātmā – soul

The purpose of the seen is only for developing the soul.

Q. But you said before (2.15) that all worldly experiences are painful?

kṛtārtham prati naṣṭamapyanaṣṭam tadanyasādhārṇnatvāt (22)

kṛta – accomplished

ārtha – purpose

prati – regarding

naṣṭa – no longer

api – also

anaṣṭa – still does

tad – this

anya – other

sādhāraṇatva– collective experience

For the accomplished yogi, the world no longer serves a purpose. For others, it still exists as a collective experience by which they spiritually mature.

Q. What purpose does the Self have in the world?

svasvāmiśaktyoḥ svarūpopalabdhihetuḥ saṁyogaḥ (23)

sva – essence

svāmi – master

śakti – energy, power

svarūpa – essential form

upalabdhi – brings forth

hetu – cause

saṁyoga – association

The association of the Seer and seen brings forth from the soul a mastery of the power that resided in him as potential.

Q. Isn't the Seer's interaction with the seen spiritual ignorance (2.3-5)?

tasya heturavidyā (24)

tasya – of this

hetu – cause

avidyā – primal ignorance

No. Spiritual ignorance is the confusion of Seer with the seen, not the cause of the interaction itself.

Q. What happens when spiritual ignorance is eradicated?

tadabhāvāt saṁyogābhāvo hānam tad dr̥śeḥ kaivalyam (25)

tad – this

abhāva – nonoccurrence

saṁyoga – association

abhāva – nonoccurrence

hāna - ceasing

tad – this

dr̥śi – of the seer

kaivalya – spiritual freedom

When primal ignorance no longer occurs, confusion ceases, leaving the Seer in a state of spiritual freedom.

Q. How can I bring forth this freedom?

vivekakhyaṭiraviplavā hānopāyah (26)

viveka – discrimination

khyāti – behold

aviplava – continual
hna – cessation
upāya – skillful means

Practice a system of yogic skillful means to end confusion, and behold with discrimination the difference between Seer and seen, Self and nature.

Q. Is this freedom the same for everyone?

tasya saptadhā prāntabhūmiḥ prajñā (27)
tasya – this
saptadha – sevenfold (here: multiple)
prānta – last, final
bhūmi – grounded
prajñā – wisdom

In the final analysis, yes, but it has multiple aspects.

Q. How can I facilitate freedom?

yogaṅgānuṣṭhānādaśuddhikṣaye jñānadīptirā vivekakhyāteḥ (28)
yoga - the art and science of spiritual union
aṅga – limb
anuṣṭhāna – performance
aśuddhi – impurity
kṣaya – reduction
jñāna – knowledge
dīptirā– summit of radiance
viveka – discrimination
khyāti -- beholding

Through the performance of the limbs of yoga, your impurities will be reduced. At the summit of spiritual knowledge, you'll find the radiant vision of discrimination.

Q. What are the limbs of yoga?

yamaniyamāsanaprāṇāyāmapratyāhāradhāraṇādhyānasamādhayo'ṣṭāvaṅgāni (29)
yama – restrained conduct
niyama – unrestrained conduct
āsana – proper posture
prāṇāyāma – control of life-force
pratyāhāra – interiorization
dhāraṇā – contemplation

dhyāna - meditation
 samādhi – meditative absorption
 aṣṭa – eight
 aṅga – limbs

The eight limbs of yoga are: restrained conduct, unrestrained conduct, proper posture, control of life force, interiorization, contemplation, meditation, and meditative absorption.

Q. What is the first limb of yoga, conduct that should be restrained?

ahimsāsatyāsteyabrahmacaryāparigrahā yamāḥ (30)
 ahimsā – non-violence
 satya – truth
 asteya – not-stealing
 brahmacarya - continence
 aparigraha - greedlessness
 yamah – restrain

The five restraints are: non-violence, truthfulness, not-stealing, continence, and not being greedy.

Q. Are there exceptions to this conduct?

jātideśakālasamayānavacchinnāḥ sārvaḥaumā mahāvratam (31)
 jāti – birth
 deśa – place
 kāla – time
 samaya – circumstance
 anavacchinna – irrespective
 sarvaḥauma – all worlds
 maha – great
 vrata – vow

No. This is the great vow, to be practiced always and everywhere, irrespective of social status, place, time, or circumstances.

Q. What is the second limb of yoga, conduct that should be unrestrained?

śaucaḥsaṁtoṣatapaḥsvādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāni niyamāḥ (32)
 śauca – refinement
 saṁtoṣa – contentment
 tapas - spiritual discipline
 svādhyāya – introspection
 īśvara – God

praṇidhāna – surrender
niyama – without limit

These are the practices of: refinement, contentment, spiritual discipline, introspection, and surrender to God.

Q. What can I do if I find it difficult to regulate my conduct?

vitarkabādhane pratipakṣabhāvanam (33)

vitarka – reflection
bādhana – repelling
pratipakṣa – opposite
bhāvana – cultivate

Before you act, while you are reflecting on detrimental behavior, repel the negative thought by cultivating the opposite quality.

Q. Why do you lay such importance on proper conduct?

*vitarkā hiṃsādayaḥ kṛtakāritānumoditā lobhakrodhamohapūrvakā
mṛdumadhyādhimātrā duḥkhājñānānantaphalā iti pratipakṣabhāvanam* (34)

vitarkā – reflection
hiṃsā – violence
ādi – et cetera
kṛta – done
kārita – made,
anumodita – sanctioned,
lobha – greed
krodha – anger
moha – delusion
pūrvaka – preceding
mṛdu – mild
madhya – medium
adhimātra – intense
duḥkha – pain
ajñāna – foolishness
ananta - unending
phala – fruit
iti – thus
pratipakṣa – opposite
bhāvana – develop

Because detrimental behavior -- such as violence, etc. --arises from anger and delusion. Regardless of the degree – mild, medium, or intense – and if it is personally done, made to be done, or sanctioned; it produces the unending fruit of pain and foolishness.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing non-violence?

ahiṃsāpratiṣṭhāyām tatsaṃnidhau vairatyāgaḥ (35)
 ahiṃsā – non-violence
 pratiṣṭhāya – based upon, steadfast
 tad – that
 saṃnidhi – proximity, sphere of influence
 vaira – hostility
 tyāga - relinquish (here: subdue)

When a yogi is steadfast in the practice of non-violence, hostility is subdued in his sphere of influence.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing truthfulness?

satyapraṭiṣṭhāyām kṛiyāphalāśrayatvam (36)
 satya – truth
 pratiṣṭhāya – based upon, steadfast
 kṛiyā – action
 phala – fruit, result
 āśrayatva – intended

When a yogi is steadfast in the practice of truthfulness, his actions inevitably bring about their intended result.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing not-stealing?

asteyapraṭiṣṭhāyām sarvaratnopasthānam (37)
 asteya – not-stealing
 pratiṣṭhāya – based upon, steadfast
 sarva – all
 ratna – jewel, prosperity
 upasthāna – manifest

When a yogi is steadfast in the practice of not-stealing, all manner of prosperity will manifest for him.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing continence?

brahmacaryapraṭiṣṭhāyām vīryalābhaḥ (38)
brahmacarya – continence
praṭiṣṭhāya – based upon, steadfast
vīrya – vitality
lābha – obtain

When a yogi is steadfast in the practice of continence, great vitality is obtained.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing generosity?

aprigrahasthairye janmakathamṭasambodhaḥ (39)
aparigraha – greedlessness, generosity
sthairya - unswerving
janmakathamṭa – process of birth (here: reincarnation)
sambodhah – comprehends

When a yogi is unswerving in the practice of generosity, he comprehends the cycle of reincarnation.

Q. What is the benefit to the practice of refinement?

śauchāt svāṅgajugupsā parairasamsargah (40)
śauca – refinement
svāṅga – one's own limbs (here: one's body)
jugupsā – distance, dispassion
para – other
asamsargā – separation (here: free from disturbance)

With the practice of refinement, the yogi develops a sense of dispassion and freedom from disturbance in his relationship to his own body and the bodies of others.

sattvaśuddhisaumanasyaikāgryendriyajayātmadarśanayogyatvāni ca (41)
sattva – balance
śuddhi – purity
saumanasya – cheerfulness
ekagrya – one-pointedness
indriya – sense-organ
jaya – mastery
ātma - soul
darśana – vision
yogyatva – capability
ca – and

Refinement also brings about balance, purity, cheerfulness, one-pointedness, mastery over the senses, and the capability for the vision of the soul.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing contentment?

saṁtoṣādanuttamaḥ sukhālābhaḥ (42)

saṁtoṣa – contentment
anuttama – unsurpassed
sukha – pleasure
lābha -- obtain

Through the practice of contentment, unsurpassed pleasure is obtained.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing spiritual disciplines?

kāyendriyasiddhirauddhikṣayāt tapasaḥ (43)

kāya – body
indriya – sense organ
siddhir – perfection
aśuddhi – impurity
kṣaya – extinguish
tapas - spiritual discipline

Through the practice of spiritual disciplines, impurities are extinguished, and the body and sense organs are perfected.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing introspection?

svādhyāyādiṣṭtadevatāsaṁprayogaḥ (44)

svādhyāya – introspection
iṣṭa – chosen
devatā – deity
saṁprayoga – contact

Through the practice of introspection, one contacts his chosen deity.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing surrender to God?

samādhisiddhirīśvarapraṇidhānāt (45)

samādhi – meditative absorption
siddhir – perfection
īśvara – God

praṇidhāna – surrender

Through the practice of surrender to God, the yogi gains perfection in meditative absorption.

Q. What is the third limb of yoga, proper posture?

sthiraśukhamāsanam (46)

sthira – stable

sukham – pleasurable, comfortable

āsana – posture

The yogi's posture for meditation, asana, should be stable and comfortable.

Q. What kind of attitude should I bring to my meditation posture?

prayatnaśaithilyānantasamāpattibhyām (47)

prayatna – effort

śaithilya – relaxation

ananta – unending, infinite

samāpatti – fusion

With a relaxed effort, become fused with the infinite.

Q. What is the benefit of sitting with stability and comfort?

tato dvandvānabhighātaḥ (48)

tatas – hence

dvandva – pairs of opposites

anabhighāta – untouched

You will feel untouched by the pairs of opposites, such as pleasure and pain.

Q. After establishing proper posture and attitude, how should I proceed?

tasmin sati śvāsapraśvāsayorgativicchedaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ (49)

tasminsati – in this area (here: after asana is established)

śvāsa – inhalation

praśvāsa – exhalation

gati – movement

viccheda – impede, regulating

prāṇāyāma – control of life-force

After posture is established, begin control of the life force by regulating the movements of inhalation and exhalation.

Q. What is the fourth limb of yoga, control of the life force?

bāhyābhyantarastambhavṛttirdeśakālasaṁkhyābhiḥ paridr̥ṣṭo dīrghasūkṣmaḥ (50)

bāhya – external movement
 abhyantara – internal movement
 stambha –w/o movement
 vṛitti – agitation
 deśa – place
 kāla – time
 saṁkhyā – quantity
 paridr̥ṣṭa – regulation
 dīrgha - prolonged
 sūkṣma – subtle

Controlling the life force, prāṇāyāma, is the regulation of the volatile breath in it's three phases of respiration -- external, internal and motionless -- and three aspects -- place, time, and quantity -- so that it becomes prolonged and subtle.

Q. What happens when the breath becomes prolonged and subtle?

bāhyābhyantaraviśayākṣepī caturthaḥ (51)

bāhya – external movement
 abhyantara – internal movement
 viśaya – external object
 ākṣepin – transcending
 caturtha – fourth (here: beyond the three phases of respiration)

The breath is then experienced as a subtle dynamic, transcending the three phases of respiration.

Q. What is the benefit to practicing control of the life force?

tataḥ kṣīyate prakāśāvaraṇam (52)

tatas – then
 kṣīyate – decrease
 prakāśa – light
 āvaraṇa – covering, veil

Then the veils over one's inner light decrease.

dhāraṇāsu ca yogyatā manasaḥ (53)

dhāraṇā – contemplation
ca – and
yogyatā - capability
manas - cognitive mind

And the mind will become capable of contemplation.

Q. What is the fifth limb of yoga, interiorization?

svaviśayaśaṁprayoḡe cittasyasvarūpānukāra ivaindriyāṇāṁ pratyāhāraḥ (54)
svaviśaya – corresponding object
aśaṁprayoḡa – disunion, withdrawal
citta - consciousness
svarūpa – corresponding form
anukāra – replicating
iva – similar
indriya – sense organ
pratyāhāra – interiorization

Interiorization, pratyāhāra, is the withdrawal of consciousness from external objects. Similarly, the sense organs replicate this by withdrawing from the corresponding forms which activate their involvement in the external world.

Q. What is the benefit of practicing interiorization?

tataḥ paramā vaśyatendriyāṇāṁ (55)
tatas – then
parama – supreme
vaśyatā – governance
indriya – sense organ

Then there is supreme governance over the sense organs.

Yoga Sutras

Chapter 3: vibhūti pāda - Accomplishments

Q. What is the sixth limb of yoga, contemplation?

deśabandhaścittasya dhāraṇā (1)

deśa – place, subject

bandha – confine

citta – consciousness

dhāraṇā – contemplation

Contemplation, dhāraṇā, is the effort to confine consciousness to a designated subject.

Q. What is the seventh limb of yoga, meditation?

tatra pratyayaikatānatā dhyānam (2)

tatra – in that

pratyaya - impression, contents of consciousness

ekatāntā– one-pointed

dhyāna – meditation

Meditation, dhyāna, is the ability to focus one-pointedly on a designated subject.

Q. What is the benefit of contemplation and meditation?

tadevārthamātranirbhāsaṁ svarūpaśūnyamiva samādhiḥ (3)

tad – that

eva – by this

artha – purpose

mātra – only

nirbhāsa – shining

svarūpa – essence

śūnya – void

iva – same as

samādhi– meditative absorption

By one-pointedness, contemplation evolves into meditation, and then into the eighth limb, samādhi, meditative absorption. In absorption, only one's essence shines forth from the void.

In conclusion, the eight limbs of yoga are:

1. yama – *restrained conduct* (2.30-31, 33-34, 35-39)
2. niyama – *unrestrained conduct* (2.32, 40-45)
3. āsana – *proper posture* (2.46-48)
4. prāṇāyāma – *control of life-force* (2.49-53)
5. pratyāhāra – *interiorization* (2.54-55)
6. dhāraṇā – *contemplation* (3.1)
7. dhyāna – *meditation* (3.2)
8. samādhi – *meditative absorption* (3.3, 11)

Q. How are contemplation, meditation, and absorption related?

trayamekatra saṁyamaḥ (4)
 traya – triple
 ekatra – become one
 saṁyama – silent communion

The are increasingly subtle stages of the same process. Silent communion, saṁyama, occurs when these three -- contemplation, meditation, and absorption -- synthesize into one.

Q. Is silent communion the final stage of yoga?

tajjayāt prajñā lokah (5)
 tad – that
 jaya – mastery
 prajñā – wisdom
 alokah – flashes

No, this is the mastery of meditation that produces flashes of yogic wisdom.

Q. Is silent communion a one-time event?

tasya bhūmiṣu viniyogaḥ (6)
 tasya – this
 bhūmi – stages (here: progressively)
 viniyoga – application of yoga

Silent communion develops progressively through the continued application of yoga.

Q. What is the relationship between the limbs that comprise silent communion and the other limbs of yoga?

trayamantaraṅgam pūrvebhyah (7)

traya – three-fold
 antar – interior
 aṅga – limb
 pūrvebhyaḥ – previously mentioned

The limbs that comprise silent communion -- concentration, meditation, and absorption -- are the three-fold wisdom limbs. They are interior in relation to the limbs previously mentioned, such as physical posture and breath control (2.29).

tadapi bahiraṅgam nirbījasya (8)

tad – they
 api – also, similarly
 bahir – external
 aṅga – limb
 nirbīja - without seed

Similarly, when the three limbs that comprise silent communion have a gross or subtle object as a focus, they are considered external in relation to nirbīja samādhi– meditative absorption without seed (1.51).

Q. What takes place in consciousness when silent communion is developing?

*vyutthānanirodhasaṃskārayorabhibhavaprādurbhāvau nirodhakṣaṇacittānvayo
 nirodhapariṇāmaḥ (9)*

vyutthāna – emergence
 nirodha – stilling
 saṃskāra - – causal impulse
 abhibhava – prevent becoming
 prādur – materialize
 bhāva – becoming
 nirodha – stilling
 kṣaṇa – moment
 citta -consciousness
 anvaya – connection
 nirodha – stilling
 pariṇāma - transformation

First, causal impulses are stilled as they emerge, before they can materialize as actions or events. Then, the entire complex of consciousness is stilled into a moment. Finally, all experience of transformation is stilled.

Q. Does this stillness develop progressively?

tasya praśānta vāhitā saṃskārāt (10)

tasya – this
praśānta – peaceful
vāhitā – flow
saṁskāra – causal impulse

Yes, as a peaceful flow of causal impulses.

Q. What is the nature of the eighth limb of yoga, meditative absorption?

sarvārthataikāgratayoḥ kṣayodayau cittasya samādhi pariṇāmaḥ (11)
sarva – all
arthatā – the meaning
ekāgratā - one-pointedness
kṣaya – extinguish
udaya – uprising
citta - consciousness
samādhi – absorption
pariṇāma – transformation

The extinguishment of the tendency to seek meaning and identity in the external world, and the uprising of one-pointed attention, is indicative of consciousness undergoing the transformation of samadhi, meditative absorption.

Q. Is this what you meant by a peaceful flow?

tataḥ punaḥ śāntoditau tulyapratyayau cittasyaikāgratā pariṇāmaḥ (12)
tatas – then
punar – repeat
śānta – peace
udita – arisen
tulya – comparable
pratyaya – impressions, contents of consciousness
citta - consciousness
ekāgratā - one-pointedness
pariṇāma – transformation

Yes, the repeated uprising of peaceful impressions is indicative of consciousness undergoing the transformation of one-pointedness.

Q. Does this internal peace affect the perception of the external world?

etena bhūtendriyeṣu dharmalakṣaṇāvasthāpariṇāmā vyākhyātāḥ (13)
etena – by this

bhūta – element
 indriya – sense organ
 dharma – general characteristics
 lakṣaṇa – specific qualities
 avasthā – state of manifestation
 pariṇāma – transformation
 vyākhyāta – explained

Yes, this makes it possible to objectively perceive the interactions of the elements and senses; and how their general characteristics, specific qualities, and state of manifestation determine one's external world.

Q. What is this objective perception?

śāntoditāvvyapadeśyadharmānupātī dharmī (14)
 śānta – peace (here: static)
 udita – uprising
 avyapadeśya – unforecasted (here: potential)
 dharma – general characteristic of manifestation
 anupātī – commonality
 dharmī – base of characteristics

That there is an impersonal, common base to all forms in manifestation, whether static, arising, or potential.

Q. How do changes in forms take place?

kramānyatvaṃ pariṇāmānyatve hetuḥ (15)
 krama – sequence
 anyatva – differentiation
 pariṇāma – transformation
 anyatva – differentiation
 hetu – cause

The cause of the different transformations of matter are the result of different sequential processes in time.

Q. How can I understand time and change?

pariṇāmatrayasaṃyamādatī tānāgatajñānam (16)
 pariṇāma – transformation
 traya – three-fold
 saṃyama – silent communion

atīta – past
anāgata – future
jñāna– knowledge

By silent communion on the three-fold transformation of matter, the yogi can gain knowledge of the past and future.

Q. Why is it so difficult to communicate with others?

*śabdārthapratyayānāmitaretarādhyāsāt saṁkarastatpravibhāgasamyamāt
sarvabhūtarutajñānam (17)*
śabda –inner dialogue, verbal designation
artha - meaning
pratyaya – impression, contents of consciousness
itaretara – one another
adhyāsa – superimposition
saṁkara – confusion
tad – these
pravibhāga – distinction
samyamā – silencing the mind
sarva – all
bhūta – beings
ruta – sound, language (here: communication)
jñāna – knowledge

Individuals become confused because verbal designations, meanings, and cognitive impressions are superimposed on one another. Through the practice of silent communion, the distinction is apparent and one gains a clear knowledge of the dynamics of communication in all beings.

Q. How do I know that reincarnation is factual?

saṁskārasākṣātkaraṇāt pūrvajātijñānam (18)
saṁskāra - causal impulse
sākṣāt – directly, penetrating
karaṇa – origin
pūrvā – previous
jāti – birth
jñāna – knowledge

By penetrating into the origin of existing causal impulses, the yogi gains knowledge of his previous lives.

Q. Can I know the previous lives of others?

pratyaṣya para-citta-jñānam (19)
 pratyaṣya – impression, contents of consciousness
 para – other
 citta - consciousness
 jñāna – knowledge

To an extent. By penetrating into the impressions of another, the yogi gains knowledge of the others consciousness.

na ca tat sālambanam tasyāviṣayābhūtatvāt (20)
 na - not
 ca – and
 tad - that
 sālambana – with foundation, basis
 aṣayi – without a corresponding object
 bhūtatvā – being

The yogi does not, though, gain knowledge of the corresponding object or experience which served as a foundation for the impression in another's mind.

Q. Are you saying the yogi develops psychic powers?

kāyarūpasāmyamāt tadgrāhyaśaktistambhe cakṣuḥprakāśāsāṁprayoge'ntardhānam (21)
 kāya – body
 rūpa – form
 sāmyama - silent communion
 tad – that
 grāhya - objects of experience
 śakti – power energy
 stambhe - w/o movement, ceasing
 cakṣus – visible perceptions
 prakāśa – light
 āsāmyoga – non-association, disruption
 antardhāna – invisibility

Yes, for instance, as a result of silent communion on the perceivable form of his body, the yogi can render himself invisible to others by disrupting the refraction of light off his body.

Q. Can the yogi also prevent the processes of the other senses?

etena śabdādyantardhānamuktam (22)
 etana -- by this
 śabda – sound

ādi – and others
antardhānam – invisibility
uktam – as described

Yes, the description of invisibility explains how hearing and other perceptions can also be disrupted.

Q. Can the yogi develop other powers?

sopakramam nirupakramam ca karma tatsaṁyamādaparāntajñānamariṣṭebhyo vā (23)
sopakramam– active
nirupakrama – dormant
ca – and
karma – action
tat – that
saṁyama - silent communion
aparānta – final conclusion (here: the future)
jñāna – knowledge (here: prophecy)
ariṣṭa – omen
vā - or

Yes, through silent communion on active and dormant karmas, as well as omens, the yoga can prophesise the future.

Q. What does the yogi do with these powers?

maitryādiṣu balāni (24)
maitrī – friendliness
ādi – also, etc
bala – power

The yogi expresses power through friendship, compassion, cheerfulness and equanimity (1.33)

Q. Is there a limit to the powers that can be attained?

baleṣu hastibalādīni (25)
bala – power
hastibala - power of an elephant (here: unlimited strength)
ādi – also, etc, additional

Additional powers can always be attained, like unlimited strength.

Q. Can you give another example?

pravṛtṭyālokanyāsāt sūkṣmavyavahitaviprakṛṣṭajñānam (26)

pravṛtṭi – activity
 āloka – yogic sight
 nyāsa – focusing
 sūkṣma – subtle
 vyavahita – concealed
 viprakṛṣṭa – distant
 jñāna – knowledge

By focusing yogic sight, the yogi gains knowledge of what is subtle, concealed, or distant.

Q. Does this yogi apply this communion to the larger universe?

bhuvanajñānam sūrye saṁyamāt (27)

bhuvana – subtle spheres
 jñāna – knowledge
 sūrya – sun
 saṁyama – silent communion

Yes, by silent communion with the sun, the yogi attains knowledge of the subtle spheres.

candra tārāvyūhajñānam (28)

candra – moon
 tārā – star
 vyūha - arrangement
 jñāna – knowledge

By silent communion with the moon, the yogi gains knowledge of the constellations.

dhruve tadgatiñānam (29)

dhruva – pole-star
 tad – that
 gati – movement
 jñāna – knowledge

By silent communion with the pole-star, the yogi gains knowledge of the movements of the stars.

Q. Is it true there are energy centers related to the body?

nābhicakre kāyavyūhajñānam (30)

nābhi – navel
 cakra – wheel

kāya – body
vyūha – arrangement
jñāna – knowledge

Yes, the centers are called chakras, literally, "wheels." They are vortexes of energy resulting from the organization of consciousness. By silent communion with the "wheel of the navel," the energy centered in the solar plexus, the yogi gains knowledge of the arrangement of the body.

kaṇṭhakūpe kṣutpipāsānivṛttiḥ (31)

kaṇṭha – throat
kūpa – well
kṣudh – hunger
pipāsā – thirst
nivṛtti - inactive

By silent communion on the "well of the throat," the energy centered in the throat, hunger and thirst become inactive.

kūrmanāḍyām sthairyam (32)

kūrma – tortoise
nāḍī – subtle channel
sthairya - unswerving

By silent communion on the "subtle channel of the tortoise," the energy centered in pelvis, the yogi becomes unswerving.

mūrdhajyotiṣi siddhadarśanam (33)

mūrdhan – head
jyotiṣi – illumination
siddha – adept
darśana – vision

Via illumination in the head, the energy centered in the forehead, the yogi has visions of the adepts.

prātibhādvā sarvam (34)

prātibha – intuitive brilliance
vā – or
sarvam – all

Via intuitive brilliance, centered at the crown of the skull, all is known.

hṛdaye cittasamvit (35)

hṛdaya – heart
citta –consciousness

samvid – understand

Via the energy centered at the heart, consciousness is understood.

Q. What happens if the yogi practices communion on the Self?

sattvapuruṣayoratyantāsamkīrṇayoḥ pratyayāviśeṣo bhogaḥ parārthāt svārthasamīyamāt puruṣajñānam (36)

sattva – balance

puruṣa – Self

atyanta – entirely

asamkīrṇa – unmodified

pratyaya – impressions, contents of consciousness

aviśeṣa - without difference, the same

bhoga - worldly enjoyment

para – other

arthatva – meaning

sva – essential, one's own

artha – meaning, feeling

samīyama – communion

puruṣa – Self

jñāna – knowledge

The natural radiation of Self, who remains entirely unmodified, produces impressions in the individual consciousness. These impression seem to dictate that Self and consciousness are identical. This prompts the pursuit of the worldly enjoyments found in consciousness. By silent communion on the meaning and purpose of Self and other, the yogi gains knowledge of the Self.

Q.Does this produce a power?

tataḥ prātibhaśrāvaṇavedanādarśāsvādavārtā jāyante (37)

tatas – hence

prātibha – intuitive brilliance

śrāvaṇa - hearing

vedanā – tactile sensations

ādarśa – sight

āsvāda – taste

vārtā – smell

jāyante – gives rises

This gives rise to intuitive brilliance in hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell.

Q. Is there any drawback to developing powers?

te samādhāvupasargā vyutthāne siddhayaḥ (38)

te – these
samādhi – meditative absorption
upasarga – problems
vyutthāna – expressed
siddhi – powers

These powers are expressions of spiritual development, but they can be problematic as they often distract aspirants from the true goal of yoga, meditative absorption.

Q. I do not feel myself to be consciousness, I feel like an isolated physical being. How does the yogi experience the body?

bandhakāraṇaśaithilyāt pracārasaṁvedanācca cittasya paraśarīrāveśaḥ (39)
bandha – confine
kāraṇa – origin
śaithilya – relaxation, unwinding
pracāra – movement away
saṁvedana – tactile experience
ca – and
citta –consciousness
para – other
śarīra - body
āveśa – entering

Like a set of clothing. By unwinding the origins of feeling confined in a physical body, and being able to move tactile experience away from the body, the yogi's consciousness can even enter into a different body.

Q. You mentioned breath before, how does the yogi commune with the breath?

udānājayājjalapaṅkakaṅṭakādisvasaṅga utkrāntiśca (40)
udāna – upper breath
jaya – mastery
jala – water
paṅka – mud
kaṅṭaka – thorn
ādi – also, etc
asaṅga – non-adhere
utkrānti – rising
ca - and

Through mastery of the upper breath, the yogi can prevent water, mud, thorns, etc. from clinging to him, and he can levitate.

samānajayājvalanam (41)
 samāna – middle breath
 jaya – mastery
 jvalana - effulgence

Through mastery of the middle breath, the yogi becomes effulgent.

Q. I have heard yogis believe in an elemental characteristic called “ether.” Is this accurate?

srotrākāśayoḥ sambandhasaṁyamāddivyaṁ śrotram (42)
 śrotra – hearing
 ākāśa – ether
 sambandha – relation
 saṁyama – silent communion
 divya - divine
 śrotra – hearing

Ether is the vibratory foundation within which the physical world exists. By silent communion on the relationship between hearing and ether, the yogi gains divine hearing.

kāyākāśayoḥ sambandhasaṁyamātlaghutūlasamāpattēścākāśagamanam (43)
 kāya – body
 ākāśa – ether
 sambandha – relation
 saṁyama – silent communion
 laghu – lightweight
 tūla – cotton
 samāpatti – fusion
 ca – and
 ākāśa – ether
 gamana –traveling

By silent communion on the relationship between the body and the ether, and fusing with the light weight of a substance such as cotton, the yogi gains the ability to travel through the ether.

Q. Can I imagine this state and help bring it about?

bahirakalpitaḥ vṛttirmahāvidehā tataḥ prakāśāvaraṇakṣayaḥ (44)
 bahis – external (here: beyond)
 akalpita – unimaginable
 vṛtti – agitation
 mahant – great
 videha – bodiless
 tatas – hence

prakāśa – light
āvaraṇa – covering, veil
kṣaya – extinguish

No, imagination will not help. It must be attained by yoga practice. When the coverings of the light are extinguished, the yogi's experience is beyond any individual thought imaginable – he becomes the great, bodiless expanse.

Q. Are you saying the yogi becomes omnipresent?

sthūlasvarūpasūkṣmānvayārthavattvasaṁyamād bhūtajayaḥ (45)
sthūla – course (here: physical)
svarupa- essential form
sūkṣma –subtle
anvaya – connection, pervading
arthavattva – meaningfulness, purpose
saṁyama – silent communion
bhūta – element
jaya – mastery

For the greatest yogis, yes. Through silent communion on the five aspects of form – physical, essential, subtle, pervading, and purpose – the yogi is everywhere and gains mastery over the elements.

Q. With this mastery, what can the yogi do?

tato'ṇimāadiprādurbhāvaḥ kayasaṁpat taddharmānabhighātaśca (46)
tatas – hence
aṇiman – atomization
ādi – etc.
prādurbhāva – materialize
kāya – body
saṁpad – opulence
tad – that
dharma - general characteristics
anabhighāta – untouched
ca – and

This brings about the eight classic siddhis --powers-- such as atomization (and magnification, levitation, extension, irresistible will, mastery, lordship, fulfilling desires), the ability to materialize an opulent body, and indestructible characteristics.

Q. What is an opulent body?

rūpalāvaṇyabalavajrasaṁhananatvāni kāyasāṁpat (47)

rūpa – form

lāvaṇya – gracefulness

bala – strength

vajra – thunderbolt

saṁhananatva – robustness

kāya – body

saṁpad – opulence

A graceful form and the dynamic strength of a thunderbolt indicate the opulence of the body.

Q. Is it alluring to have such an attractive body?

grahaṇasvarūpāsmitānvayārthavattvasaṁyamādindriyahjayaḥ (48)

grahaṇa - instruments of experience

svarūpa – one's own form

asmitā - with "I am" identity

anvaya – connection

arthavattva – meaningfulness, purpose

saṁyama – silent communion

indriya – sense organ

jaya – mastery

Not for the yogi because he practices silent communion on the purpose of his instruments of experience, his form, and his sense of personal identity. In this way, the yogi gains mastery over the mind and sense organs.

Q. What is the result of this mastery of mind?

tato manojavitvaṁ vikaraṇabhāvaḥ pradhānajayaśca (49)

tatas – hence

manas – cognitive mind

javitva - swiftness

vikaraṇa – without mechanisms

bhāva –transpire

pradhāna – primal matter

jaya – mastery

ca – and

The cognitive mind can then move with a swiftness that transpires without use of physical mechanisms. In this way the yogi gains mastery over primal (unmodified) matter.

Q. Can there be anything higher?

sattvapuruṣānyatākhyātimātrasya sarvabhāvādhiṣṭhāṛtvaṁ sarvajñāṛtvaṁ ca (50)

sattva – balance; the most subtle of Nature's aspects

puruṣa – Self

anyatā – distinction

khyāti – beholding

mātrasya – fundamental

sarva – complete

bhāva – products, transformations

adhiṣṭhāṛtvaṁ – supreme

sarvajñāṛtvaṁ – all knowledge

ca – and

Yes, because the goal is not power; the goal is perfect and complete peace, love, and wisdom. The yogi who beholds the fundamental and total distinction between Self and even the most subtle of Nature's aspects and transformations, gains the highest state.

Q. Is this state permanent?

tadvairāgyādapi doṣabījakṣaye kaivalam (51)

tad – this

vairāgya - detachment

api – also

doṣa - impairment

bīja – seed

kṣaya - extinguish

kaivalya – freedom

It can be, as this detachment extinguishes the seed that impairs freedom.

Q. With yogic accomplishments, is there a danger of pride?

sthānyupanimatrane saṅgasmayākaraṇaṁ punaraniṣṭa prasaṅgāt (52)

sthānin – highly placed

upanimantraṇa – invitation

saṅga - companionship

smaya – pride

akaraṇa – without basis

punar – reappearance

aniṣṭa - unfavorable

prasaṅga – propensity

The yogi should have no basis for pride, even upon being invited into the companionship of higher beings, for this can bring about the reappearance of unfavorable propensities.

Q. When might I attain such a state?

kṣaṇatatkramayoḥ saṁyamādvivekajaṁ jñānam (53)

kṣaṇa – moment

tad – this

krama – sequence

saṁyama – communion

viveka - discrimination

ja – born

jñāna – knowledge

In this state, there is no time. If you practice silent communion on a single moment within the sequence of time, discriminatory knowledge will be born.

Q. Wouldn't everything blur all events into a big blob?

jātilakṣaṇadeśairanyatānavacchedāt tulyayostataḥ pratipattiḥ (54)

jāti – birth species

lakṣaṇa – specific qualities

deśa – place

anyatā – distinction

anavaccheda - not bound, nonexistent

tulya – comparable

tata – hence

pratipatti – discernment

Of course not. Rather, the yogi gains discernment between phenomenon of generalities, particulars, and spatial relationships that are comparable, and those whose distinctions are virtually non-existent.

Q. So there is nothing left unknown?

tārakaṁ sarvaviṣayaṁ sarvathāviṣayamakramaṁ ceti vivekajaṁ jñānam (55)

tāraka - traverse

sarva – all

viṣaya – object

sarvathā – in all ways

viṣaya – object

akrama – non-sequential

ca – and

iti – thus
viveka – discrimination
ja - born
jñāna- knowledge

Correct. The yogi who has this knowledge born of discrimination has traversed the spiritual path and can know all objects, in all ways, throughout space and time.

Q. Is there anything then left to be accomplished?

sattvapuruṣayoh śuddhisāmye kaivalyam (56)
sattva – balanced aspect of Nature
puruṣa – Self
śuddhi – purity
sāmya – both situated
kaivalya – freedom

Nothing. When Nature and the Self are both situated in their balanced and pure states, the yogi has gained freedom and his spiritual work has ended.

Yoga Sutras

Chapter 4: kaivalya pāda - Spiritual Freedom

Q. What are the means of developing yogic powers?

janmauṣadhimantratapaḥsamādhijaḥ siddhayaḥ (1)

janma – birth

oṣadhi – herbs

mantra – invocations

tapas – austerities

samādhī – meditative absorption

ja – born, generated

siddhi – powers

The yogic powers are generated by: birth karma, the use of herbs, mantras, and/or meditative absorption.

Q. Birth karma implies reincarnation. How does reincarnation function?

jātyantarapariṇāmaḥ prakṛtyāpūrāt (2)

jāti – birth species

antara – another

pariṇāma – transformation

prakṛti – Nature

āpūra – overflowing

Reincarnation is a fact for those who are yet to attain freedom. Overflowing Nature is responsible for the transformation of reincarnation.

Q. How does Nature precipitate reincarnation?

nimittamaprayojakaṁ prakṛtīnām varaṇabhedastu tataḥ kṣetrikavat (3)

nimittam – indirectly prompting

aprayojakam – not initiating

prakṛti – Nature

varaṇa – choices, possibilities (here: paths)

bheda – divergent

tu -- but

tatas – hence

kṣetrikavat – like a farmer

Nature does not actually initiate reincarnation or even indirectly prompt the process. Nature is simply the field in which individuals cultivated divergent karmic paths, like farmers tilling furrows.

Q. What is the hallmark of egoic individuality?

nirmāṇacittānyasmitāmātrāt (4)

nirmāṇa – constructed

citta –consciousness

asmitā - egoic identity

mātra - merely

The egoic individual is merely a construct in consciousness.

Q. What is beyond individual consciousness?

pravṛttibhede prayojakaṁ cittamekamaṇeṣām (5)

pravṛtti – activity

bheda – distinction

prayojaka – initiating

citta –consciousness

eka – one

aneka – many

The One awareness which initiates activities and distinctions in the many.

Q. How can a person ever become free of conditioning and karma?

tatra dhyānajam anāśayam (6)

tatra - in that

dhyāna – meditation

ja – born

anāśaya– without foundation

In an individual consciousness born from meditation there is no foundation for karmic activities.

Q. Is there a difference between the activities of a yogi and the karmic activities of others?

karmāśuklākṛṣṇaṁ yoginastrividhamitareṣām (7)

karma – action

āsukla – not bright/waning
 akr̥ṣṇa – not black/waxing
 yogin – one who practices yoga
 trividha – threefold
 itara - another

The activities of a yogi are neither positive nor negative; for others, karma is threefold --positive, negative, or neutral.

Q. Is this what informs a persons character?

tatastadvipākānuguṇānāmevābhivyaktirvāsanānām (8)
 tatas – hence
 tad – that
 vipāka – results
 anuguṇa – corresponding
 eva – only
 abhivyakti - emerge
 vāsanā – tendency

That is correct. The tendencies and habits of a person emerge as a result of corresponding karma.

Q. Does reincarnation affect karma?

jātidēśakālavayahitānāmapyānantaryam smṛtisaṃskārayorekarūpatvāt (9)
 jāti – birth
 deśa – place
 kāla – time
 vyavahita – separated by
 api – also
 ānantarya – sequence (of cause and effect)
 smṛti – memory
 saṃskāra – causal impulse
 eka – consistent
 rūpatva –uniformity

There is a consistency and uniformity in the sequence of causal impulses in memory, even when separated by birth, place, and/or time.

Q. How does reincarnation begin?

tāsāmanāditvam cāśiṣo nityatvāt (10)

tāsām – of these
anāditva – without beginning
ca – and
āśis – primordial gesture
nityatva – eternally

The original impulse of creation is the expression of a beginningless, eternal, primordial whim spontaneously arising in the One awareness.

Q. How can binding karma be diminished?

hetuphalāśrayālambanaiḥ saṅgrhātavādeṣāmbhāve tadabhāvaḥ (11)
hetu – cause
phala – fruit, karma
āśraya – substratum
ālambana – foundation
saṅgrhātatva – connection (here: resultant)
eṣām – of these
abhāva - nonoccurrence
tad – that
abhāva - nonoccurrence

When the cause of karma -- the egoic foundation of personality and its substrate of selfish, fear-based tendencies and habits -- no longer occurs, the resultant effects of karma also cease to occur.

Q. Is time a subjective or objective phenomenon?

aītānāgatam svarūpatostyadhvabhedād dharmāṇām (12)
aīta - past
anāgata – future
svarūpatas – in forms
asti – exists
adhvan – path
bheda – different
dharma – characteristics of Nature

Both. While time may be experienced subjectively in consciousness, past and future exist objectively as forms change based on the different paths of Nature's phenomenon.

Q. What are these different paths of Nature's phenomenon?

te vyaktasūkṣamāḥ guṇātmānaḥ (13)

te – these
 vyakta – exhibit, manifest
 sūkṣma – subtle, potential
 guṇātmāna – expression of fundamental aspects of Nature

Phenomena are exhibited (manifest) or subtle (potential) based on the degree of Nature's energetic activity.

Q. If objects are just energetic phenomenon, why do they appear solid?

pariṇāmaikatvādvastutattvam (14)
 pariṇāma – transformation
 ekatva - consistency
 vastu – object
 tattva – elemental principal

Objects appear solid due to consistent patterns of transformation of elemental principals.

Q. Does the world appear the same to everyone?

vastusāmye cittabhedāt tayorvibhaktāḥ pantāḥ (15)
 vastu – object
 sāmīya - differently situated
 citta –consciousness
 bheda – divergent
 tayorḥ – of both
 vibhakta - difference
 panthan - path, level

No, the world will be perceived differently based on the level of an individuals consciousness and his relationship to the objects perceived.

Q. Are you saying the reality of the world is based on the way it is perceived?

na caikacittatantram vastu tadapramāṇakam tadā kim syāt (16)
 na – not
 ca – and
 eka – one
 citta – consciousness
 tantra - dependent
 vastu – object (here: world)
 tad – this
 apramāṇaka – without cognition

tadā – then
kim – what?
syāt – happen

No, the existence of the world is not dependent on any individual consciousness. The relative consistency of objects remains even though an observer may not be perceiving.

Q. What determines an individuals perceptions?

taduparāgāpekṣitvāccittasya vastu jñātājñātam (17)
tad - that
uparāga – stimulation
apekṣitva – cognize
citta –consciousness
vastu – object
jñāta – known
ajñāta – not known

Desire. An object is perceived, or not, by an individual consciousness based on whether its stimulation is sought.

Q. If individual consciousness perceives objects, is there a perceiver of consciousness?

sadā jñātāścittavṛttayastatprabhoḥ puruṣasyāpariṇāmitvāt (18)
sadā – always
jñāta – known
citta – consciousness
vṛitt- agitation
tad – that
prabhu - lord
puruṣa – Self
apariṇāmitva – unchanging

The unchanging Self is the Lord of consciousness, the knower of the agitations in individual consciousness.

Q. How is individual consciousness known?

na tat svābhāsaṁ drśyatvāt (19)
na – no
tad – that
sva – own (here: innate)
ābhāsa – luminous

dr̥śyatva – being seen

The individual consciousness is not innately luminous. It is seen by the Self.

Q. When I am aware of myself as an individual, what is taking place?

ekasamaye cobhayānavadhāraṇam (20)

ekasamaye – simultaneously

ca – and

ubhaya – both

anavadhāraṇa – not contemplate

Individual consciousness cannot simultaneously contemplate both itself and its luminous source. The individual is known by the Self.

Q. Am “I” watching my own sense of “I?”

cittāntaradr̥śye buddhibuddheratiprasaṅgaḥ smṛtisamkaraśca (21)

citta –consciousness

antara – another

dr̥śya – the seen, perceived

buddhi – awareness

buddhi – awareness

atiprasaṅga – unending series

smṛti – memory

samkara - confusion of identity

ca - and

Not quite. “I” is being witnessed by Self. If functions in individual consciousness were being seen (perceived) by other functions in individual consciousness, there would be an unending series of limited awareness cognizing limited awareness, resulting in a confusion of identity and the impossibility of memory.

Q. How are individual consciousness and the witness related?

citer apratisamkramāyāstadākārāpattau svabuddhisamvedanam (22)

citi –consciousness

apratismkrama – changeless

tad – that

ākāra – features

āpatti - assumes

sva – one's own

buddhi – awareness

saṁvedana – tactile experience

Changeless awareness seems to assume the features of one's own sensory experiences in consciousness, without actually undergoing change.

Q. How can I become wise?

draṣṭṛdrśyoparaktam cittam sarvārtham (23)

draṣṭṛ– seer

drśya – the seen

uparakata - permeate

citta –consciousness

sarva – all, everything

artha - meaning

Since the Seer permeates the seen, consciousness can find meaning in everything.

Q. What is the reason or purpose of the individual?

tadmasamkhyeyavāsanābhiścitraṁ parārtham saṁhatyakāritvāt (24)

tad – that

asaṁkhyeya – countless

vāsanā – tendency

citra – filled

api – also

para – other

artha - meaning

saṁhatya – collaborate

kāritva - activity

Consciousness is filled with countless tendencies; its meaning is found only in its collaborative activity with the Seer.

Q. Is there a conclusion to this collaborative activity?

viśeḍarśina ātmabhāvabhāvanāviniṣṭtiḥ (25)

viśeṣa – difference

darśin – seeing

ātman - spiritual self

bhāva - cultivate

bhāvanā - develop

vinivṛtti – cessation of agitation

For one who sees the difference between the spiritual Self and individual consciousness, there is a cessation of the agitation of needing to grow and change.

Q. How does this cessation feel?

tadā hi vivekanimnaṁ kaivalyaprāgbhāram cittam (26)

tadā – then

viveka – discrimination

nimna - deep

kaivalya – freedom

prāk - previous

bhāra – heavy load

citta – consciousness

Deep discrimination produces freedom from the previous heavy load in consciousness.

Q. When situated in yoga, will individual consciousness still be active?

tacchidreṣu pratyayāntarāṇi saṁskārebhyaḥ (27)

tad – that

chidra - interval

pratyaya – impressions, contents of consciousness

antara – another, remaining

saṁskāra - causal impulse

There will be intervals when impressions continue to arise in consciousness due to remaining causal impulses.

Q. Should effort be applied to eliminate these impulses?

hānamesāṁ kleśavaduktam (28)

hāna – cessation

eṣāṁ – of these

kleśavat – as the obstructions

ukta – described

Yes, the cessations of these final causal impulses is by the same process as previously described regarding the obstructions (2.10).

Q. At this stage, is the effort to meditate still an impulse?

prasamkhyāne'pyakusīdasya sarvathā vivekakhyaterdharmameghaḥ samādhiḥ (29)

prasamkhyāna – high states
api – also
akusīda – not grasping
sarvathā – always
viveka – discrimination
khyāti – behold
dharmamegha – cloud of harmony
samādhi - meditative absorption

Somewhat. The yogi who does not grasp at even the high states of meditation, but always beholds with discrimination, reaches the state of meditative absorption called the "Cloud of Harmony."

Q. Is this the culmination of spiritual development?

tataḥ kleśakarmanivṛttiḥ (30)
tatas – hence
kleśa – obstruction
karma – action
nivṛtti – cessation

It is, as there follows the complete cessation of obstructions and compulsory actions.

Q. What then happens to the aspirant and to the world?

tataḥ kṛtārthānām pariṇāmakramasamāptirguṇānām (32)
tatas - hence
kṛta – done, accomplished
artha – meaning, purpose
pariṇāma – transformation
krama - sequence
samāpti – draws to a close, fulfilled
guṇa – fundamental aspect of Nature

Since the purpose of spiritual development has been accomplished, the sequence of transformations in the fundamental aspects of Nature draws to a close. What had been the mundane world is now the divine world.

Q. What separates the mundane world and the spiritual world?

kṣaṇapratiyogī pariṇāmāparāntanirgrāhyaḥ kramaḥ (33)
kṣaṇa – moment
pratiyogi – correlate
pariṇāma - transformation

aparanta – retrospection (here: ascertained)
 nirgrāhya – ascertain
 krama – sequence

The illusion of time. Time, as a subjective experience, exists when moments which correlate in transformations are ascertained as sequences. Time is real within the mundane world, but concludes into eternity in the spiritual world.

Q. Is this the conclusion of yoga?

*puruṣārthasūnyānām guṇānām pratiprasavaḥ kaivalyaṁ svarūpapraṭiṣṭhā vā
 citisakteriti (34)*

puruṣa – Self
 artha – purpose meaning
 śūnya - void, w/o substance
 guṇa – fundamental aspect of nature
 pratiprasava – counter movement, return movement
 kaivalya – spiritual freedom
 svarūpa - essential, true form
 praṭiṣṭhā – based upon
 va – or
 citi - universal consciousness
 śakti –power, energy
 iti – thus, conclusion

Yes. Full spiritual freedom occurs when the fundamental aspects of Nature no longer serve any purpose for the Self, and they return back into the void. Individual consciousness finds its basis to be the power of its own essential form, Universal Consciousness.