

The Yoga Sutras

By Patanjali

BOOK 1

On Concentration

1. Now then Yoga is being explained.
2. Yoga is the suppression of the modifications of the mind.
3. Then the seer abides in Itself.
4. At other times the seer appears to assume the form of the modifications of the mind.
5. They (modifications) fall into five varieties, of which some are 'klista' and the rest 'aklista'.
6. (They are) pramana, viparyaya, vikalpa, (dreamless) sleep, and recollection.
7. (Of these) perception, inference, and testimony (verbal communication) constitute the pramanas.
8. Viparyaya or illusion is false knowledge formed of a thing as other than what it is.
9. The modification called 'vikalpa' is based on verbal cognition in regard to a thing which does not exist. (It is a kind of useful knowledge arising out of the meaning of a word but having no corresponding reality.)
10. Dreamless sleep is the mental modification produced by the condition of inertia as the state of vacuity or negation (of waking and dreaming).
11. Recollection is mental modification caused by reproduction of the previous impression of an object without adding anything from other sources.
12. By practice and detachment these can be stopped.
13. Exertion to acquire sthiti or a tranquil state of mind devoid of fluctuations is called practice.
14. That practice when continued for a long time without break and with devotion becomes firm in foundation.

15. When the mind loses all desire for objects seen or described in the scriptures it acquires a state of utter desirelessness which is called detachment.
16. Indifference to the gunas or the constituent principles, achieved through a knowledge of the nature of Purusha, is called paravairagya (supreme detachment).
17. When concentration is reached with the help of vitarka, vichara, ananda, and asmita, it is called samprajnata-samadhi.
18. Asamprajnata-samadhi is the other kind of samadhi which arises through constant practice of paravairagya which brings about the disappearance of all fluctuations of the mind, wherein only the latent impressions remain.
19. While in the case of the videhas or the discarnates and of the prakrtilyas or those subsisting in their elemental constituents, it is caused by nescience which results in objective existence.
20. Others (who follow the path of the prescribed effort) adopt the means of reverential faith, energy, repeated recollection, concentration and real knowledge (and thus attain Asamprajnata-samadhi).
21. Yogins with intense ardor achieve concentration and the result thereof quickly.
22. On account of the methods being slow, medium, and speedy, even among those yogins who have intense ardor, there are differences.
23. From special devotion to Isvara also (concentration becomes imminent).
24. Isvara is a particular Purusha unaffected by affliction, deed, result of action, or the latent impressions thereof.
25. In Him the seed of omniscience has reached its utmost development which cannot be exceeded.
26. (He is) the teacher of former teachers because with Him there is no limitation by time (to His omnipotence).
27. The sacred word designating Him is pranava or the mystic syllable Om.
28. (Yogins) repeat it and contemplate its meaning.
29. From that comes realisation of the individual self and the obstacles are resolved.
30. Sickness, incompetence, doubt, delusion, sloth, non-abstention, erroneous conception, non-attainment of any yogic stage, and instability to stay in a yogic state -- these distractions of the mind are the impediments.
31. Sorrow, dejection, restlessness of body, inhalation, and exhalation arise from (previous) distractions.

32. For their stoppage (i.e. of distractions) practice (of concentration) on a single principle should be made.
33. The mind becomes purified by the cultivation of feelings of amity, compassion, goodwill, and indifference respectively towards happy, miserable, virtuous, and sinful creatures.
34. By exhaling and restraining the breath also (the mind is calmed).
35. The development of higher objective perceptions called visayavati also brings about tranquillity of mind.
36. Or by perception which is free from sorrow and is radiant (stability of mind can also be produced).
37. Or (contemplating) on a mind which is free from desires (the devotee's mind gets stabilised).
38. Or by taking as the object of meditation the images of dreams or the state of dreamless sleep (the mind of the yogin gets stabilised).
39. Or by contemplating on whatsoever thing one may like (the mind becomes stable).
40. When the mind develops the power of stabilising on the smallest size as well as on the greatest one, then the mind comes under control.
41. When the fluctuations of the mind are weakened, the mind appears to take on the features of the object of meditation-whether it be the cogniser (grahita), the instrument of cognition (grahana) or the object cognised (grahya) -- as does a transparent jewel, and this identification is called samapatti or engrossment.
42. The engrossment, in which there is the mixture of word, its meaning (i.e. the object) and its knowledge, is known as savitarka samapatti.
43. When the memory is purified, the mind appears to be devoid of its own nature (i.e. of reflective consciousness) and only the object (on which it is contemplating) remains illuminated. This kind of engrossment is called nirvitarka samapatti.
44. By this (foregoing) the savichara and nirvichara engrossments, whose objects are subtle, are also explained.
45. Subtlety pertaining to objects culminates in alinga or the unmanifest.
46. These are the only kinds of objective concentrations.
47. On gaining proficiency in nirvichara, purity in the inner instruments of cognition is developed.
48. The knowledge that is gained in that state is called rtambhara (filled with truth).

49. (That knowledge) is different from that derived from testimony or through inference, because it relates to particulars (of objects).

50. The latent impression born of such knowledge is opposed to the formation of other latent impressions.

51. By the stoppage of that too (on account of the elimination of the latent impressions of samprajnana) objectless concentration takes place through suppression of all modifications.

BOOK 2

Practice

1. Tapas (austerity or self-discipline), svadhyaya (repetition of sacred mantras or study of sacred literature), and Isvara-pranidhana (complete surrender to God) are Kriya Yoga (yoga in the form of action).

2. Kriya Yoga (should be practised) for bringing about samadhi and minimising the klesas (afflictions).

3. Avidya (misapprehension about the real nature of things), asmita (egoism), raga (attachment), dvesa (aversion), and abhinivesa (fear of death) are the five klesas.

4. Avidya is the breeding ground for the others whether they be dormant, attenuated, interrupted, or active.

5. Avidya consists in regarding a transient object as everlasting, an impure object as pure, misery as happiness, and the non-self as self.

6. Asmita is tantamount to the identification of Purusha or pure consciousness with buddhi.

7. Attachment is that (modification) which follows remembrance of pleasure.

8. Aversion is that (modification) which results from misery.

9. As in the ignorant so in the learned, the firmly established inborn fear of annihilation is the affliction called abhinivesa.

10. The subtle klesas are forsaken (i.e. destroyed) by the cessation of productivity (i.e. disappearance) of the mind.

11. Their means of subsistence or their gross states are avoidable by meditation.

12. Karmasaya or latent impression of action based on afflictions, becomes active in this life or in a life to come.

13. As long as klesa remains at the root, karmsaya produces three consequences in the form of birth, span of life, and experience.
14. Because of virtue and vice these (birth, span, and experience) produce pleasurable and painful experiences.
15. The discriminating persons apprehend (by analysis and anticipation) all worldly objects as sorrowful because they cause suffering in consequence, in their afflictive experiences and in their latencies, and also because of the contrary nature of the gunas (which produces changes all the time).
16. (That is why) pain which is yet to come is to be discarded.
17. Uniting the seer or the subject with the seen or the object, is the cause of that which has to be avoided.
18. The object or knowable is by nature sentient, mutable, and inert. It exists in the form of the elements and the organs, and serves the purpose of experience and emancipation.
19. Diversified (visesa), undiversified (avisesa), indicator-only (lingamatra), and that which is without any indicator (alinga), are the states of the gunas.
20. The seer is absolute knower. Although pure, modifications (of buddhi) are witnessed by him as an onlooker.
21. To serve as objective field to Purusha, is the essence or nature of the knowable.
22. Although ceasing to exist in relation to him whose purpose is fulfilled, the knowable does not cease to exist on account of being of use to others.
23. Alliance is the means of realising the true nature of the object of the knower and of the owner, the knower (i.e. the sort of alliance which contributes to the realisation of the seer and the seen is this relationship).
24. (The alliance has) avidya or nescience as its cause.
25. The absence of alliance that arises from lack of it (avidya) is the freedom and that is the state of liberation of the seer.
26. Clear and distinct (unimpaired) discriminative knowledge is the means of liberation.
27. Seven kinds of ultimate insight come to him (the yogin who has acquired discriminative enlightenment).
28. Through the practice of the different accessories to Yoga, when impurities are destroyed, there arises enlightenment culminating in discriminative enlightenment.
29. Yama (restraint), niyama (observance), asana (posture), pranayama (regulation of breath), pratyahara (withholding of senses), dharana (fixity), dhyana (meditation) and samadha (perfect concentration) are the eight means of attaining Yoga.

30. Ahimsa (non-injury), satya (truth), asteya (abstention from stealing), brahmacharya (continence) and aparigraha (abstinence from avariciousness) are the five yamas (forms of restraint).

31. These (the restraints), however, become a great vow when they become universal, being unrestricted by any consideration of class, place, time, or concept of duty.

32. Cleanliness, contentment, austerity (mental and physical discipline), svadhyaya (study of scriptures and chanting of mantras) and devotion to God are the niyamas (observances).

33. When these restraints and observances are inhibited by perverse thoughts, the opposites should be thought of.

34. Actions arising out of perverse thoughts like injury etc. are either performed by oneself, done by another, or approved; performed either through anger, greed, or delusion; and can be mild, moderate, or intense. That they are the causes of infinite misery and unending ignorance is the contrary thought.

35. As the yogin becomes established in non-injury, all beings coming near him (the yogin) cease to be hostile.

36. When truthfulness is achieved, the words (of the yogin) acquire the power of making them fruitful.

37. When non-stealing is established, all jewels present themselves (to the yogin).

38. When continence is established, virya is acquired.

39. On attaining perfection in non-acceptance, knowledge of past and future existences arises.

40. From the practice of purification, aversion towards one's own body is developed and thus aversion extends to contact with other bodies.

41. Purification of the mind, pleasantness of feeling, one-pointedness, subjugation of the senses, and ability for self-realisation are acquired.

42. From contentment, unsurpassed happiness is gained.

43. Through destruction of impurities, practice of austerities brings about perfection of the body and the organs.

44. From study and repetition of the mantras, communion with the desired deity is established.

45. From devotion to God, samadhi is attained.

46. Motionless and agreeable form (of staying) is asana (yogic posture).

47. By relaxation of effort and meditation on the infinite (asanas are perfected).
48. From that arises immunity from dvandvas or opposite conditions.
49. That (asana) having been perfected, regulation of the flow of inhalation and exhalation is pranayama (breath control).
50. That (pranayama) has external operation (vahya-vritti), internal operation (abhyantara-vritti), and suppression (stambha-vritti). These, again, when observed according to space, time, and number become long and subtle.
51. The fourth pranayama transcends external and internal operations.
52. By that the veil over manifestation (of knowledge) is thinned.
53. (Moreover) the mind acquires fitness for dharana.
54. When separated from their corresponding objects, the organs follow, as it were, the nature of the mind, that is called pratyahara (restraining of the organs).
55. That brings supreme control of the organs.

BOOK 3

Supernormal Powers

1. Dharana is the mind's (chitta's) fixation on a particular point in space.
2. In that (dharana) the continuous flow of similar mental modifications is called dhyana or meditation.
3. When the object of meditation only shines forth in the mind, as though devoid of the thought of even the self (who is meditating), then that state is called samadha or concentration.
4. The three together on the same object is called samyama.
5. By mastering that (samyama), the light of knowledge (prajna) dawns.
6. It (samyama) is to be applied to the stages (of practice).
7. These three are more intimate practices than the previously mentioned ones.
8. That also is (to be regarded as) external in respect of nirvija or seedless concentration.
9. Suppression of the latencies of fluctuation and appearance of the latencies of arrested state, taking place at every moment of blankness of the arrested state in the same mind, is the mutation of the arrested state of the mind.

10. Continuity of the tranquil mind (in an arrested state) is ensured by its latent impressions.
11. Diminution of attention to all and sundry and development of one-pointedness is called samadhi-parinama or mutation of the concentrative mind.
12. There (in samadhi) again (in the state of concentration) the past and the present modifications being similar, it is ekagrata-parinama, or mutation of the stabilized state of the mind.
13. By these are explained the three changes, viz., of essential attributes or characteristics, of temporal characters, and of states of the bhutas and the indriyas (i.e., all the knowable phenomena).
14. That which continues its existence all through the varying characteristics, namely, the quiescent [the past], the uprisen [the present], or the unmanifest (which is a potent force) [the future], is the substratum (or object characterised).
15. Change of sequence (of characteristics) is the cause of mutative differences.
16. Knowledge of the past and the future can be derived through samyama on the three parinamas (changes).
17. Word, object implied, and the idea thereof overlapping, produce one unified impression. If samyama is practised on each separately, knowledge of the meaning of the sounds produced by all beings can be acquired.
18. By the realisation of latent impressions, knowledge of previous birth is acquired.
19. (By practising samyama) on notions, knowledge of other minds is developed.
20. The prop (or basis) of the notion does not get known because that is not the object of (the yogin's) observation.
21. When perceptibility of the body is suppressed by practising samyama on its visual character, disappearance of the body is effected through its getting beyond the sphere of perception of the eye.
22. Karma is either fast or slow in fructifying. By practising samyama on karma or on portents, fore-knowledge of death can be acquired.
23. Through samyama on friendliness (amity) and other similar virtues, strength is obtained therein.
24. (By practising samyama) on (physical) strength, the strength of elephants, etc., can be acquired.
25. By applying the effulgent light of the higher sense-perception (jyotismati), knowledge of subtle objects, or things obstructed from view, or placed at a great distance, can be acquired.

26. (By practising samyama) on the sun (the point in the body known as the solar entrance), the knowledge of the cosmic regions is acquired.
27. (By practising samyama) on the moon (the lunar entrance), knowledge of the arrangements of stars is acquired.
28. (By practising samyama) on the pole-star, motion of the stars is known.
29. (By practising samyama) on the navel plexus, knowledge of the composition of the body is derived.
30. (By practising samyama) on the trachea, hunger and thirst can be subdued.
31. Calmness is attained by samyama on the bronchial tube.
32. (By practising samyama) on the coronal light, siddhas can be seen.
33. From knowledge known as pratibha (intuition), everything becomes known.
34. (By practising samyama) on the heart, knowledge of the mind is acquired.
35. Experience (of pleasure or pain) arises from a conception which does not distinguish between the two extremely different entities, viz. buddhisattva and Purusha. Such experience exists for another (i.e. Purusha). That is why through samyama on Purusha (who oversees all experiences and also their complete cessation), a knowledge regarding Purusha is acquired.
36. Thence (from the knowledge of Purusha) arise pratibha (prescience), sravana (supernormal power of hearing), vedana (supernormal power of touch), adarsa (supernormal power of sight), asvada (supernormal power of taste) and varta (supernormal power of smell).
37. They (these powers) are impediments to samadhi, but are (regarded as) acquisitions in a normal fluctuating state of the mind.
38. When the cause of bondage gets weakened and the movements of the mind are known, the mind can get into another body.
39. By conquering the vital force (of life) called udana, the chance of immersion in water or mud, or entanglement in the thorns, is avoided and exit from the body at will is assured.
40. By conquering the vital force called samana, effulgence is acquired.
41. By samyama on the relationship between akasa and the power of hearing, divine sense of hearing is gained.
42. By practising samyama on the relationship between the body and akasa and by concentrating on the lightness of cotton wool, passage through the sky can be secured.

43. When the unimagined conception can be held outside, i.e., unconnected with the body, it is called mahavideha or the great discarnate. By samyama on that, the veil over illumination (of buddhisattva) is removed.

44. By samyama on the grossness, the essential character, the subtlety, the inherence, and the objectiveness, which are the five forms of the bhutas or elements, mastery over bhutas is obtained.

45. Thence develop the power of minification and other bodily acquisitions. There is also no resistance by its characteristics.

46. Perfection of body consists in beauty, grace, strength, and adamant hardness.

47. By samyama on the receptivity, essential character, I-sense, inherent quality, and objectiveness of the five organs, mastery over them can be acquired.

48. Thence come powers of rapid movement as of the mind, action of organs independent of the body, and mastery over pradhana, the primordial cause.

49. To one established in the discernment between buddhi and Purusha come supremacy over all beings and omniscience.

50. By renunciation of that (visoka attainment) even, comes liberation on account of the destruction of the seeds of evil.

51. When invited by the celestial beings, that invitation should not be accepted nor should it cause vanity because it involves possibility of undesirable consequences.

52. Differentiating knowledge of the self and the non-self comes from practising samyama on moment and its sequence.

53. When species, temporal character, and position of two different things being indiscernible they look alike, they can be differentiated thereby (by this knowledge).

54. Knowledge of discernment is taraka or intuitional, is comprehensive of all things and of all times, and has no sequence.

55. (Whether secondary discriminative discernment is acquired or not) when equality is established between buddhisattva and Purusha in their purity, liberation takes place.

BOOK 4

On the Self-In-Itself or Liberation

1. Supernormal powers come with birth or are attained through herbs, incantations, austerities, or concentration.

2. (The mutation of body and organs into those of one born in a different species) takes place through the filling in of their innate nature.
3. Causes do not put the nature into motion, only the removal of obstacles takes place through them. This is like a farmer breaking down the barrier to let the water flow. (The hindrances being removed by the causes, the nature impenetrates by itself).
4. All created minds are constructed from pure I-sense.
5. One (principal) mind directs the many created minds in the variety of their activities.
6. Of these (minds with supernormal powers) those obtained through meditation are without any subliminal imprints.
7. The actions of yogins are neither white nor black, whereas the actions of others are of three kinds.
8. Thence (from the other three varieties of karma) are manifested the subconscious impressions appropriate to their consequences.
9. On account of similarity between memory and corresponding latent impressions, the subconscious impressions of feelings appear simultaneously even when they are separated by birth, space, and time.
10. Desire for self-welfare being everlasting, it follows that the subconscious impression from which it arises must be beginningless.
11. On account of being held together by cause, result, refuge, and supporting object, vasana disappears when they are absent.
12. The past and the future are in reality present in their fundamental forms, there being only difference in the characteristics of the forms taken at different times.
13. Characteristics, which are present at all times, are manifest and subtle, and are composed of the three gunas.
14. On account of the co-ordinated mutation of the three Gunas, an object appears as a unit.
15. In spite of sameness of objects, on account of there being separate minds, they (the object and its knowledge) follow different paths; that is why they are entirely different.
16. Object is not dependent on one mind, because if it were so, then what would happen when it is not cognised by that mind?
17. External objects are known or unknown to the mind according as they colour the mind.
18. On account of the immutability of Purusha who is master of the mind, the modifications of the mind are always known or manifest.

19. It (the mind) is not self-illuminating, being an object (knowable).
20. Besides, both (the mind and its objects) cannot be cognised simultaneously.
21. If the mind were to be illumined by another mind then there would be repetition ad infinitum of illumining minds and intermixture of memory.
22. (Though) untransmissible, the metempiric consciousness getting the likeness of buddhi becomes the cause of the consciousness of buddhi.
23. The mind-stuff being affected by the seer and the seen, is all-comprehensive.
24. That (the mind) though variegated by innumerable subconscious impressions, exists for another, since it acts conjointly.
25. For one who has realised the distinctive entity, i.e. Purusha, inquiries about the nature of his self cease.
26. (Then) the mind inclines towards discriminative knowledge and naturally gravitates towards the state of liberation.
27. Through its breaches (i.e. breaks in discriminative knowledge) arise other fluctuations of the mind due to (residual) latent impressions.
28. It has been said that their removal (i.e. of fluctuations) follows the same process as the removal of afflictions.
29. When one becomes disinterested even in omniscience one attains perpetual discriminative enlightenment from which ensues the concentration known as dharmamegha (virtue-pouring cloud).
30. From that, afflictions and actions cease.
31. Then on account of the infinitude of knowledge, freed from the cover of all impurities, the knowables appear as few.
32. After the emergence of that (virtue-pouring cloud) the gunas having fulfilled their purpose, the sequence of their mutation ceases.
33. What belongs to the moments, and is indicated by the completion of a particular mutation, is sequence.
34. The state of the self-in-itself or liberation is realised when the gunas (having provided for the experience and liberation of Purusha) are without any purpose to fulfil and disappear into their causal substance. In other words, it is absolute consciousness established in its own self.

THE END OF THE YOGA SUTRAS