

A practical approach to **Classical Yoga**



The Yoga Institute



our legacy



PARAMHAMSA MADHAVADASJI (FOUNDER'S GURU)

His Holiness Paramhansa Madhavadasji was born in 1798 to a Mukhopadhyaya family in Bengal. His environment and his parental influences inspired in him a devotional attitude and faith. A lawyer in the courts during the British Raj, he left his home at the tender age of 23 in search of higher pursuits. His early association with Bhakti rituals could not satisfy the reformist concepts he was looking for. He learnt from different traditions and after traveling in Assam, Tibet, the Himalayas, etc., he was able to get a first-hand knowledge of technical yoga.

In 1916, at the age of 118, Paramhansa Madhavadasji was in Mumbai at Madhavbaug for a discourse where he met Yogendraji (then known as Mani). A strong bond developed between the teacher and student, and he personally guided and trained Mani on the path of yoga.



FOUNDER SHRI YOGENDRAJI

Shri Yogendraji was born as Mani Haribhai Desai in 1897 in Gujarat. Through a chance meeting, he found his Guru, Shri Paramhansa Madhavadasji, and learnt all about yoga from him. With the blessings of his Guru, Yogendraji went on to spread what was then considered the secret knowledge of yoga among the masses, as he believed it could improve the lives of householders.

He founded The Yoga Institute at 'The Sands', the residence of Dadabhai Naoroji in Versova, in 1918. At The Sands, he used therapeutic yoga to cure various ailments. Later, he traveled to America and founded a Yoga Institute in Harriman, New York, in 1920. A lot of research work, along with doctors and scientists of repute, was carried out under his guidance on the subtle physiological and psychological effects of yoga.

Shri Yogendraji then returned to India and, following the wishes of his father, married and remained a 'householder yogi'. He has written many authoritative texts on yoga based on ancient scriptures. Some of his books are preserved in the Crypt of Civilization for posterity; they are to be opened after 6000 years. Along with his wife, Sitadevi Yogendra, he continued to teach and spread awareness of authentic classical yoga at The Yoga Institute, Santacruz, until his death in 1989.



our legacy



SMT. SITADEVI YOGENDRA (FOUNDER'S WIFE)

Smt. Sitadevi Yogendra, fondly known as Mother, married Shri Yogendraji in 1927 and joined him in his mission of spreading the knowledge of yoga in the world. She began teaching women and children at The Yoga Institute and has written many articles and books on the subject. Her book *Yoga Physical Education for Women* is also preserved in the Crypt of Civilization, to be opened 6000 years later. Mother Sitadevi passed away in 2008 at the age of 97.



DR. JAYADEVA YOGENDRA (PRESIDENT OF THE YOGA INSTITUTE)

Born in 1929, Shri Yogendraji's son, Dr. Jayadeva Yogendra, was a simple man and a true Yogi. Having seen his complete dedication to a life of discipline and simplicity, the sadhakas of the Institute considered him as their true Guru. Born in a family of Yogis, he was spiritually inclined since childhood. Until February 2018, when he passed away, as President of The Yoga Institute, he carried on the Founder's legacy in his silent and sincere way. He was also the Editor of the Institute's monthly Journal, "Yoga & Total Health," published since 1933. Dr. Jayadeva completed his Masters in Samkhya and Yoga at the Bombay University in 1952. In 1955, he was awarded the Hargobindas scholarship for a Ph.D (Dr. of Philosophy) for his thesis on 'Moksha Parvan'. At the Institute, he introduced several courses, and did pioneering work in Yoga Education and Therapeutics. Students at the Institute still continue to draw inspiration from his wisdom, compassion, wit, and unflinching commitment to truth.



our legacy



SMT. HANSAJI JAYADEVA YOGENDRA (DIRECTOR OF THE YOGA INSTITUTE)

A dynamic and charismatic personality, Smt. Hansaji, wife of Dr. Jayadeva Yogendra and present Director of The Yoga Institute, has dedicated her life to the running of the Institute and to teaching yoga as a way of life in a completely practical way. She is perhaps best known throughout the nation due to her involvement in the popular television series 'Yoga for Better Living', first aired in 1980.

She was recognized for her contribution to Women's Health through the award presented by SPARC. She has conducted several seminars and lecture tours in India and in Europe, Australia, Canada, Pakistan, Hong Kong and United States of America. She has also authored many Yoga books and articles. She was invited by the National Council for Education Research and Training along with Dr. Jayadeva to advise on formulating a Yoga education syllabus for schools nationwide.

Bharat Gaurav award honours given to Dr. Hansaji Yogendra (Director- The Yoga Institute) for extraordinary contribution and excellence in the field of yoga. The honours were conferred at the UK House of Commons in British Parliament in London on July 19th, 2019 by Sanskriti Yuva Sanstha which was graced by many luminaries from the UK government and Yoga fraternity worldwide.

contents

Origins of Yoga	1
Introduction to Classical Ashtanga Yoga	2
Making of a yogi!	3
Who can practice yoga?	4
Yoga Practice for Mental and Physical wellbeing	5
How to bring a Yogic mindset in to your life?	6
Cultivate-Discipline. Relaxation. Equilibrium	7
How to practice gratitude daily?	8
Building and managing relationships with yoga	9
Bhavas	10
Breathing and management of Emotions	11
Practicing awareness all day	12
Yoga can help you find your purpose in life	13



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origins of yoga

For most, the origins of Yogic history may be enveloped in obscurity and uncertainty due to the fact that all Vedic and post Vedic ancient knowledge usually weren't attributed to a single author or written down. They were all contributed to various individuals that acquired this knowledge through Āgama or "that which has come down", which meant that the source was unknown and divine.

Śrutis (the Vedic literature which also had yogic teachings as a part of it) was considered author-less, and that were transmitted verbally across centuries. This non-changing oral transference of sacred texts also had secrecy as part of its teachings, to ensure accuracy. Many of the early sacred notes on yoga were written and rewritten on fragile parchment paper, which was easily damaged, destroyed or lost.

Yogic history has various stages of knowledge transfer that we know of and is considered much older than the Indus-Sarasvati civilisation. The 4 stages of knowledge transfer are –Vedic (from unknown origins and embedded deep in the ritualistic mystic hymns of Vedas), Pre classical (interpreted and transformed into various secretive forms of knowledge by hermit yogis who lived in jungles), Classical (polished and defined for daily practice by all, minor version of the pre classical), Postclassical (New forms of yoga developed and are developing, but are more of an outward – bodily form of the classical).

Prior to 400 CE, in the classical age of yoga, Patanjali, synthesised the Vedic knowledge about yoga from older traditions and multiple schools of thought, to create the Yoga Sūtras. Patanjali wrote 196 Sūtras and divided them into 4 chapters - pada. Chapter 1 with 51 sūtras – Samadhi Pada, chapter 2 with 55 sūtras - Sadhana Pada, chapter 3 with 56 sūtras - Vibhuti Pada, chapter 4 with 34 sūtras - Kaivalya Pada.

While there are many other schools of thought on yogic practices - Hatha Yoga, Gyana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Tantra-Mantra Yoga and many more. Patanjali YogaSūtras



are the most widely read are considered one of the prime source of knowledge for modern yoga practices.

Yogic ideas and practices can be found derived from almost all dharmic traditions; it is a philosophy which has its basis in ancient sciences. Roots of Yoga can be found in prominent ancient and classical scriptures from - Vedas, Samkhya, Upavedas, Vedangas, Upanishads to Vedanta; also in Gita and Mahabharata.

The history of Bharatvarsha (Indus-Sarasvati civilisation) is largely a culture of Yoga.



introduction to classical ashtanga yoga

The true meaning of Yoga is ‘Union’

Yoga stems from the Sanskrit word Yuj, which means “to unite.” To practice yoga is to unite the practice of the physical, the mental and the spiritual self and the ultimate union of all three that leads to self-realisation. As the ancient sage Patanjali says through his Sūtras, yoga is - the eradication of the ego-led life, to a life where one detaches oneself from the world and finds the infinite within – that for any human being the ultimate path of joyousness is the path that leads inwards.

The entire essence of Yoga for a householder yogi is to work with and on the mind to ultimately be in control of it and recognising that it is the only primary obstacle that prevents all humans from knowing our true nature.

Story of Patanjali

Patanjali was the greatest exponent of Yogic Knowledge, lived sometime between 500 and 200 B.C. Mythology portrays Sage Patanjali incarnation of Anantha (Shesha-Naga), the celestial serpent on whom Vishnu reclines in Yoga Nidra. Patanjali's origins are an enigma to modern historians.

Legend says Sage Patanjali was the son of Gonika (a powerful Yogini). She found Patanjali in the palm of her hand in the form of a small snake that changed into a little boy. Sage Patanjali was a blessing to the tapa she did for an offspring to whom she could pass on all her knowledge and wisdom. Gonika thus named her child Patanjali - Patta means falling and Añjali means joining palms of the hand.

Patanjali is said to be swayambhuv - self-manifested or self-incarnated in a human form to help humanity. Sage Patanjali teaches yoga as a Darshana – to look into a mirror (that shows us our true self). Yog - Darshanam which is a divine philosophy or divine truth also means ‘realisation of truth’. Sūtra literally meaning "a thread".



Sūtras of Patanjali are like a threaded mala, embodying the beads of divine truth.

Brief Introduction of Yoga Sūtras

The Yoga Sūtras are short and brief, as most texts in ancient times where each word was carefully chosen to create a sentence with immense inert meaning. The Sūtras themselves are difficult to perceive, yet deliver enormously contemplative meaning that is the scientific and systematic monograph of the yogic philosophy. The Sūtras are divided into four chapters (pada) as follows:

SAMADHI PADA –

With 51 Sūtras, Samadhi Pada gives insight into a possible blissful state of mind that leads to a personal existence beyond body and mind into a pure meditative state. This state of being is believed to be so beautiful, that anything we know or can imagine is non-existent, there is only pure bliss of truth. This first chapter provides a definition and the purpose of yoga - enlightenment, concentration and pure meditation. It outlines the process of become unwavering, steadiness and oneness. The sutras outline the obstacles one faces in achieving true state of meditation - Samadhi and the role of Abhyasa (uninterrupted practice), and Vairagya (detachment from worldly existence).

SADHANA PADA –

With 55 Sūtras Sadhana Pada outlines the practical practice and implementation of yogic system in daily life. Sadhana means divine practice or system and Sadhana Pada means the system of enlightenment or path of divine practice. The second chapter teaches us to systematically grow on our path to self-discovery through the knowledge of Kriya Yoga (a technique of controlling energy) and Ashtanga Yoga (8 limbs of Yoga).

VIBHUTI PADA –

With 56 Sūtras, Vibhuti Pada dives deeper into the last three limbs of yoga, together referred to as Samyama or Raja Yoga. This chapter teaches one to integrate the last 3 limbs and practice them all at once; a combined simultaneous practice of Dhāraṇā (concentration), Dhyāna (meditation) and Samādhi (oneness). It also defines the various stages of Samadhi and the supernatural powers (siddhis)



that a masterful yogi may be able to attain in the path of reaching such a state. It also warns against the temptations of these siddhis that hinder a yogi from achieving higher levels of Raja Yoga.

KAIVALYA PADA –

With 34 Sūtras ,Kaivalya Pada give us a glimpse of what is an inner experience and an elevated spirit; a state of absolute enlightenment. It helps understand how yogic practice leads to the beginning of true wisdom of reality and meaning These sutras unmask the concept of consciousness and a blueprint of its construction. It also attempts to examine and explain what occurs when the union of Prakriti (worldly you) and Purusha (divine you) happens. The oneness and nothingness are Kaivalya.

8 Limbs of Yoga

In the second chapter, Patanjali outlines the path to Kaivalya through Ashtanga Yoga - 8 limbs of Yoga. Ashtanga Yoga is considered the fundamental system to travel the path of yoga. Associating Asana and Pranayama with yoga is not a very modern concept, yet one will not read about a single Asana or Pranayama in Ashtanga Yoga. It, in essence, is a master plan to life and beyond. The 8 limbs serve as an instruction for one's morality, ethical conduct and self-discipline which ultimately leads to - universal realisation.

The Eight fold Path of Yoga:

YAMAS help us govern our external relations, our social behaviour, how we treat others and the world around us. Yamas are social principles, the do's and don'ts: Ahimsa – non- violence, Satya - truthfulness, Asteya - non-stealing, Brahmacharya - abstinence, and Aparigraha - non-hoarding

NIYAMAS help us govern relation with self; discipline, duty and responsibility. They define how we treat ourselves: Saucha - cleanliness of body and mind, Santosha - contentment, Tapas - Austerity or self-discipline, Svadhyaya - self-study or contemplation, and Ishvara-pranidhana - devotion to the divine.

ASANAS are the various postures and their right practice in yoga. Our body is a temple for our conciseness - a divine spirit, it is our primary duty to take care of it



and this is an important stage on our yogic path. Through the practice of asanas, yogis prepare their body for meditation. When we master our asanas, we reach a state of 'Sthiram Sukham Asanam' The pleasantness in body and mind which becomes a consistent state of being when asanas are mastered and done with steadiness and ease.

PRANAYAMA the expanding and regulating of breath. Prana is also known as the life force or energy that exists everywhere and flows in our bodies riding on the breath. "Prana" means bio-energy and "Ayama" means to control or regulate. There are various types of Pranayamas and their benefits in daily life are unlimited. The rhythmic breath in pranayama gets us in touch with the rhythm of the universe. Pranayamas abolish distractions of body and mind, paving the path for concentration and meditation.

PRATYAHARA is a very interesting stage and it opens up your inner Self. Prati A Ru – Means go towards your own source. It is a means to lean towards our consciousness, to exit the external world/stimuli by withdrawing the use of our sensory organs namely our eyes, ears, our sense of touch, taste and smell. This withdrawal allows one to objectively observe our desires: when we detach from senses, we detach from desire and stop them from interfering with our inner growth.

DHARANA or concentration for short term with conscious effort. Dharana in daily life helps to execute each task with ease and saves time because when one is focused, one tends to make fewer errors. In practice of concentration, which presages meditation, one has to slow down the thinking process by concentrating on a single object or objective: through mantras, chanting, and image or a goal. Through this process, our focus would constantly shift and we have to constantly realign them. We naturally become self-aware and use this awareness to control our mind.

DHAYANA is meditating for a long period of time by rejecting the external object or external perception and meditating purely on the internal self. When Dharana is done for a long period of time it becomes Dhyana or meditation. Dhayana is how we slowly train our mind to remain without thoughts for a long period of time and this relaxes the mind. This spills over into everything you do in a non-meditative state too. You experience bliss in every state of awareness.



SAMADHI is a state of blissful, joyous, detached ecstasy, The second sutra says that to reach to that blissful stage of Samadhi, you must have the Bhavana - desire to cultivate Samadhi first. Your state of mind is balanced, peaceful, full of wisdom because it is only in this state that wisdom comes. With Samadhi comes discriminative knowledge. The most beautiful stage of Yoga. When Samadhi becomes ripened (Paripakva) – it is the final stage of Samadhi. The difference between the material world and consciousness is realised.

Types of Chitta

Chitta is the mind/ or personality complex - conscious mind and the sub-conscious mind, it is beyond the definition of conventional mind. It is the seat of our Samskaras - past and present impressions, memories of our consciousness and vasanas-desires. It is one of the 4 internal sense organs (Antahkaranas)' that help us think, feel, access our intellect and imagine.

Chitta is defined and affected by the universal 3 gunas viz :Sattva (Purity), Rajas (Activity) and Tamas (Intertia). As we grow in the practice of yoga the chitta moves from Rajas and Tamas to a Sattvic state of mind. When the 3 gunas are in effect a person shifts between various states of the Chitta.

MUDHA is a dull state of mind, primarily governed by the Tamas guna. A person with Mudha Chitta will constantly be sleepy, delusional, fearful and lazy., They may suffer from lust, anger, greed, and a constant state of addiction and vice. They are at the lowest state of Chitta and have a superficial outwardly outlook in life. KSHIPTA is a distracted state of mind, primarily governed by the Rajas guna. A person with KSHIPTA Chitta will be constantly be in pain, worry, be fickle minded and selfish, they may suffer from attachment, hatred and selfishness. They will be on a quest of virtue but will be inflicted with vices. They are at the general state of Chitta and have a superficial outwardly outlook in life.

VIKSHIPTA is a partially concentrated state of mind, partially governed by the Sattva guna. A person with VIKSHIPTA Chitta will constantly feel joy, patience, virtuous qualities and selfless actions. They may experience, selflessness and righteousness. They will be on a quest of knowledge, virtue and spiritual prosperity. They are at the aspirant state of Chitta and have an inwardly outlook in life and are at the beginning stage of Samadhi.



EKAGRA is a one-pointed state of mind, completely governed by pure Sattva guna. A person with EKAGRA Chitta will constantly feel increased state of detachment and lower dispassion. They may experience discriminative wisdom. They are at the yogic state of Chitta and are one-pointed in life and are at the stage of lower Samadhi.

NIRUDDHA is a controlled state of mind, beginning of involution of the gunas. A person with NIRUDDHA Chitta will constantly be abiding in self and supreme dispassion. They may experience, Kaivalya or Liberation. They are perfected yogis with extreme self-control and are at the highest level of Samadhi.

Types of Vrittis

Vrittis are the various fluctuations of our Chitta. Just the way the gunas affect the states of Chitta, they all create Vrittis in our Chitta. The highest state of Chitta have no Vrittis and lower state of Chitta have maximum Vrittis. To stop or minimise the Vrittis, we first need to know what they are:

PRAMANA is right knowledge and is the Vritti of the highest state of Chitta. A person with Pramana is at the highest state of knowledge and this knowledge is acquired in the following ways: Pratyaksha - direct experience using our five senses; Anumana - inference by applying logic and reasoning; Upamana - inference through comparison; Arthapatti-knowledge through supposition of facts; Anupalabdhi-knowledge through non-apprehension; Sabda - knowledge through verbal testimony.

VIPARYAYA is wrong knowledge and is the Vritti of the lowest state of Chitta. A person with Viparyaya is at the lowest state of knowledge and this knowledge is acquired by wrong usage or interpretation of our 5 senses. Such knowledge can be misconstrued and Viparyaya Vritti can give us deceptive concept of reality.

VIKALPA is our imagination and is the Vritti of the general state of Chitta. A person with Vikalpa is constantly imagining the future in various circumstances without having any knowledge. It is governed by tamas guna and is constantly leaning towards the negative. If we make our imagination positive, we can harness the power of imagination and visualisation to manifest its outcomes.

NIDRA is a state of deep dreamless sleep and emptiness and is the Vritti of the



higher state Chitta. A person with NIDRA can experience deep and restful sleep. If night sleep is disturbed, it reflects on one's awakened state. Our sixth sense works when all our senses are in control and this is possible with true peaceful sleep.

SMRITI is our memory. Memory is an amalgamation of impressions gathered from our past and present life; sensations and emotions which are stored in our subconscious mind and are responsible for our belief systems, habits, fears and storing and retiring of knowledge.

Chitta Vritti Niroddha

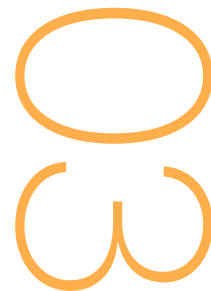
This is the ultimate goal of yoga - The meaning of this sutra is, chitta, meaning “personality complex”; vritti, meaning “fluctuations”; and nirodha, meaning “cessation”. It is also not just to do away with the negative but also the positive, becoming unopinionated and egoless is the first step towards unveiling your true consciousness.

All human beings are part of the divine super consciousness, we tend to forget that due to our constant association with Maya, the existential world. While our external world including our human form is truly exiting and wondrous, our true consciousness is even more so. To get in touch with our true selves we need to understand Maya for what it is, and let go of our attachment to it. When you get to the state of ‘Chitta Vritti Niroddha’, you do not leave Maya behind, you just get above it, it becomes even more blissful as you learn to see it all as an observer and not a participant.

The world becomes more beautiful and blissful with yoga.



making of a yogi!



One pursuing the path of yoga can create an inner universe of bliss by mastering of body and mind which is the first step to starting a spiritual journey.

A Yogi is a master of his life, hence mastering of self becomes the foundation for spiritual advancement. The first step is the most difficult - a sense of self awareness at all time; we tend to linger in the past or think about the future most of the time. We use are sub-conscious more than the conscious mind. Our conscious mind, the seat of awareness and needed at all times to practice yoga. Just like our spiritual practice, the path of mastery on self unravels throughout our life. Our inward journey is dependant on our ability to stay in the present and aware at each living moment. This will determine a yogi's true progress.

Qualities of a Yogi

We take the word yogi too lightly in our daily lives.. When people practice difficult asanas with ease they think they have mastered yoga. A yogi is so much more than the one who practices asanas. Bhagavad Gita has a wonderful description of what a yogi is like;yogi is a human with qualities sometimes that precede the divine too.

A yogi is a child inside, always blissful and happy. Yogi observes the world with unbiased and unattached eyes. All are equal and there is no pain only bliss. Smallest of things are great and the greatest of them is immaterial.

When a human acts with complete detachment from the fruit of their action, they are a yogi. They don't imagine the future to consider the outcome of their actions, just concentrate on following the yogis rules of how to perform the right action in the present. A yogi doesn't fray from taking action in the world, nor do they need to take shelter in the serenity of the Himalayas ,they find the divinity in doing the right action in society itself One who doesn't need the riches to make them comfortable, they find their rest and peace in intrinsic happiness, immersed in



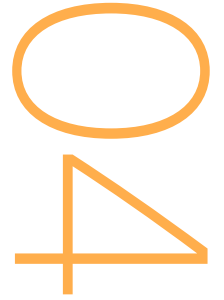
their inner world. Fortitude is the primary quality mentioned by Krishna in Gita. Fortitude comes from, right knowledge, from right action, detachment from results and constant awareness of the present. Fearless fortitude leads to true Steady Calm Self

A Yogi is well aware that all suffering comes from self. When we Blame the world for our sufferings, we are ignorant of our own karma and we are giving in to the Maya of the external world. A yogi is self-contained and knows nothing is truly suffering nor is it truly Happiness. All emotions and suffering are worldly, one true feeling in the world is a sense of bliss, which comes from knowing who we really are.

Understanding the qualities of a yogi is a step towards becoming one.



who can practice yoga?



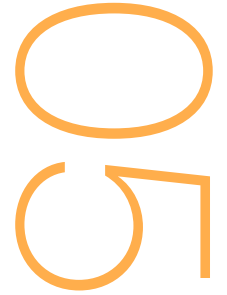
Many misapprehensions exist about yoga and yogic practice, that mar the introduction and eventual induction of yoga in one's life. Some of the most common one's are: I can't do yoga because I am not flexible enough or Yoga is only for young people or I am not fit enough for yoga. One of the common misapprehensions or excuse for men is that Yoga is only for women.

But have you ever wondered why yoga is so popular around the world? It is because it is meant to be for all. It is an empowering practice that offers something to everyone, regardless of one's age, gender, race, size or shape. Yes!- it is for you even if you are overweight or suffering from a cardiac problem. Yoga is for everyone who care for themselves and even if you are not at your best in life-mentally or physically. Yoga helps you to create a calm and balanced mind that in turn creates a strong and able body to live your life to the fullest.

Yoga provides you with something that no other form of expertise in the world provides you - getting to know yourself. Initially, it maybe difficult to inculcate into ones routine but if you keep at it, it provides you with many rewards. Many are stuck in their lives always wondering how to get out of the situation they are in - lack of physical, mental or emotional wellbeing. Most of the time the best way get to the desired state of wellbeing is to stay still and spend some time with one's own self. Yoga practice in your daily life is the key to experiencing that. Yoga is unique and divergent from any other form of physical exercise

People dissipate their physical and mental energy, thinking about the past or the future - in a state of regret, worry or just planning, or escaping into the world of gadgets and social media. Most of your growth in yoga sprout into the ability to unclog your mind and focus on the "right now" of life. Joy and satisfaction can only be found in the present.

Yoga is for everyone who wants to live a fulfilling joys life, irrespective of their present life conditions.



yoga practice for mental and physical wellbeing

Yoga has the ability to help resolve both physical and mental problems, also if you practice it long enough it also becomes a fall back for any obstacles that may present themselves in your life.. More recently, medical researchers provided further insight into the effects of daily yoga practice in overall human wellbeing - better sleeping patterns, heightened body awareness, weight management, and in general better mental health.

Yoga induces mindfulness naturally and effortlessly. When done right it stimulates compassion and gratitude. Evidence also go on to support that yoga can slow ageing on the cellular level, perhaps help a person reverse many of the ageing factors over time.

Basic practices of yoga to add to your daily routine:

Kriyas

Kriyas are purification techniques used in yoga to cleanse one's body and mind. Yogic hygiene –Sauch is one of the most important Niyama. Kriyas open up the invisible energy pathways of our body known as Nadis. When our body and mind are purified it enables prana to flow freely through our body and strengthen our heart which regulates energy flow throughout our body.

These Kriyas are hatha yoga techniques and are known as Shat-Kriyas or Shad-Karmas. Hatha yoga is a balancing practice, it balances the breath and inturn balances the body. Kriyas help cleanse eyes, sinuses, esophagus and digestive tract, internal organs, excretory tract, nasal passage and also balance our doshas.

Kriyas are performed before you start your Asana and Pranayama Practice.

Asanas

Asana (yoga postures) is the 3rd limb of Asthanga yoga. While Yama and Niyama



help us create better relationships with self and others; Asanas help our body and mind create synchronicity.

Yoga postures were designed to improve bodily functions and strengthen our spine and muscles. Through mindfulness of breath along with asanas, a person can maintain equanimity of mind while the body establishes itself in the specific poses. When we master a posture, it is almost meditative and it clears the mind and allows one to focus on the important things in life and channelise universal positivity in everything we do.

Some of the primary benefits of daily asana practice are - improves flexibility, corrects faulty posture, strengthens the spine and abdominal region, relieves stress, preventive as well as curative measures for various ailments etc. Asanas are a must for a well-planned wellness regime.

Pranayamas

It is said that we are all born with a finite number of breaths - one of the main reason why yogis have learnt to master their breathing techniques. Pranayama is a way to control our breath, it empowers a person to elongate the breath. The one's who can control their breath can control their mind and body; they can control their prana and ultimately control the world around them.

Pranayama activates sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system as, also the autonomic nervous system. This, in turn, helps to ease fear, stress, anxiety and tension; it also provides relief from depression, dullness and lethargy.

In our daily lives, our breath determines the state of mind and body we are in. When we are angry our breath is fast and our heart pumps faster and our mind is all over the place. When we are calm and happy our heart rate is naturally slow. To always be in a state of bliss we need to first control our breath and then slow it down, which will shut down the chatter in our brain.

Pranayama also stresses upon the sense of 'being in' the positive energy of the universe and 'letting go' all the negativity. When you breathe out, you should release and let go of all attachments, fears and past.

When you breathe in, you should be in a positive state of mind and concentrate on



the present. Initially, it can help resolve all the problems of life and eventually not let them arise.

AVAV

Balancing our life requires us to look at life holistically. Through the practice of balancing the 4 pillars AVAV - Ahar, Vihar, Achar, Vichar, one can lead a good life.

To start with Achar, one's behaviour with others and themselves should be loving, caring and filled with compassion at all times. These are the first two limbs of Asthanga Yoga - Yamas and Niyamas are the foundation of a wholesome life.

Also important are your Vicharas - your way of thinking should not be negative, but should be positive or neutral. We should convert our negativity to positivity and if we are unable to be positive then we should try to be neutral, but never to allow circumstances in life to pull us down.

Ahar defines what we eat, how much we eat, where we eat and how we eat. Ayurveda talks of how food has the power to control your wellbeing and lifespan, also the person you become.

Sattvic food (freshly cooked light meals) should be the dominant part of your daily meals. It creates a sense of balance and calm. Foods permitted are Milk and milk products, fresh fruits, seasonal and local vegetables, unrefined staples, grains and pulses, spices like ginger, black pepper, turmeric, honey, jaggery, ghee, and oil.

Rajasic food provides restless energy but is also required for people who are lazy or have tough physical life. These foods are difficult to digest like non-vegetarian food, garlic, onion, un-sprouted beans and pulses, unseasonal vegetables, spicy and rich food.

Tamasic food provides lethargic and lazy energy but are also required for all to calm rajas and induce a sense of inertia and restfulness. These foods are processed

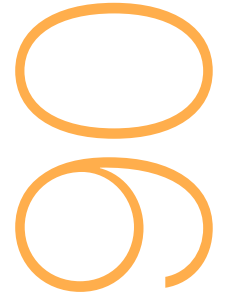
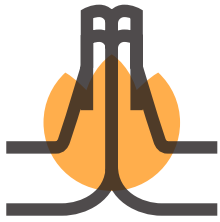
and are not fresh. Foods like pickles, jams, beverages, deep-fried dishes, alcohol, frozen foods and refined ingredients. Tamasic food is the least desirable of all food types.



Spending some time in recreational activities - which one enjoys and helps calm the mind is best suited to practice good Vihar. These activities relieve depression, fear and anxiety. They uplift one's mood and induce a feeling of wellbeing.

Creative activities like listening or playing musical instruments gardening, painting, volunteering-engaging in karma yoga (selfless deeds) reset all our senses and recharge our mind. Non-Competitive sports provide blissful exhilaration and contemplative long walks help elevate stress and create a meditative experience.

We have to cater to all the four pillars equally to be able to lead a healthy and wholesome life. Even if one of them is ignored, our life will get out of balance. This is a noticeable mention not only in Yoga Sutras but in Ayurvedic Texts and the Bhagwad Gita as well.



how to bring a yogic mindset into your life?

Chitta - Prasadnam is a blissful and serene state of mind also known as the Yogic mindset. This can be achieved by following some basic principles in life.

Start by consciously, inundating or cultivating (bhavanatah) oneself, to be friendly (maitri) towards the happy (sukha), compassionate (karuna) towards the unhappy (dukha), cheerful (mudita) with the virtuous (punya), and be indifferent or uninvolved (upeksha) towards the wicked (apunya), your mind will be disposed to be benevolent all the time (chitta-prasadnam).

In our origins, our inner self (Mahat) is unclouded and joyous. With the help of Mahat, our Chitta (mind) discovers the infinite splendor of our consciousness. A blissful state of mind naturally accompanies a Yoga practice. This is even true for individuals not actively seeking such an experience. Most people begin a Yoga practice for purely physical results but land up pursuing it for their whole life. This is because they inadvertently start to experience a spiritual transformation.

How does Yoga stimulate a state of bliss? Even if unanticipated, it is inevitable to have a brush with a state of bliss in the perusal of the Yoga practice. This is the first glimpse of one's deeper state or our inner self. When one experiences the denunciation of their ego, it is the first time they experience what it is like being an observer. Since the ego is a strong force, it will make an individual return to it again and again. But once one has tasted the nectar of egoless inner self, one will spend their whole life trying to experience it over and over again.

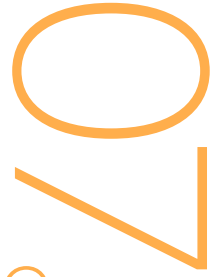
Friendliness towards happy people has an unequivocal outcome i.e. a tranquil mind. Compassion provides us with a tool that helps us deal with the outside world with a steady, unwavering mind that is readily reclaimed to calmness and tranquility. Lack of compassion will create a karmic cycle that will enthrall you in a loop of negative engagement with the external world and will finally create a troubling predicament for your mind and keep you from realizing your inner self. Our desires always defeat us as it is these desires that keep us from pursuing a



spiritual existence. Identifying oneself with the virtuous can help us enhance our understanding of spiritual dominion. This in turn pushes us to measure ourselves with those who are well ahead on the path of their spiritual rise.

Sage Patanjali in Sūtra 1-33, very categorically says it is necessary for a person who desires a yogic mindset to cleanse their minds through the cultivation of a cheerful outlook toward people spiritually superior to themselves. But one should also remember, they cannot always escape the cunning and wicked in this world, one must strive to avoid them at all costs. It is very important to be able to distinguish the virtuous from the wicked. One must rely on their intuition and discriminatory prowess to select the right people as companions.

It is important to know that, developing a blissful state of mind is the most important step in your journey of Yoga.



cultivate - discipline. relaxation . equilibrium

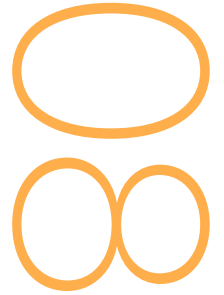
Practice or Effort (Abhyasa) and Dispassion or Surrender (Vairagya) are the two balancing sides of the scale of life. To cultivate discipline, one needs to practice regularly but also be detached or dispassionate about its outcome. The day we start to expect results from our practice, we start to lose our discipline. Similarly, we can achieve a state of relaxation and equilibrium when we harmoniously practice both together. Abhyasa and Vairagya are the 2 foundations of yogic life.

Abhyasa means consistent effort without interruption. Not letting any distraction or boredom discourage you from achieving a continuous practice. To become well established in a yogic state of mind, the scales of life need to be balanced for a long period of time persistently. Continuous practice or effort is not only necessary during your yoga routine, but also in everyday actions you do.

Abhyasa also means being mindful in your everyday actions. The more focused one is in their every action (karma), the more expeditious will be their spiritual advancement.

Vairagya means being dispassionate towards the materialistic world, letting go of your ego, false identities, fears, complexes and all things that are out of your control. We do not need to go to the jungle and renounce the world, you can be surrounded by materialistic objects, friends and family, but one needs to recognise the impermanence of the materialistic world and be able to be dispassionate about them. Vairagya leads you on the path of spiritual progress. To practice Vairagya, one needs to learn to discriminate between the indispensable and dispensable of life.

It is the combination of expectation-less Effort and Letting Go of our passions that allows for a person to be disciplined in all aspects of their life, relaxed in any situation (dire or happy) and equanimity between their body, mind, and soul.



how to practice contentment and gratitude daily?

When a person can be happy with what they have within without looking at the external world for more, that person is experiencing true contentment. Contentment doesn't mean relinquishing the world and becoming complacent. It simply means accepting and appreciating who we are and what we have at the moment and moving ahead from there.

Santosha is the second Niyama of Patanjali's Eight Fold Path of Yoga. The Niyamas help us build a complete and positive relationship with ourselves, and contentment is one of the most difficult to achieve.

The world around us, our experiences and desires are constantly changing as they are part of the ever-changing world, whereas the true you is unchanged and always constant. To find steadiness in this every changing world, we need to practice contentment. A direct outcome of practicing contentment is a sense of gratitude towards life and all you have and are. By practicing gratitude, your level of contentment can be enhanced. By practicing both, you can experience this beautiful reciprocity that is difficult to find.

Gratitude can be practiced every day by making a list of what you are grateful for. By thanking the people in your life and the universe for who you are, can significantly augment your mental and physical well being.

What stands in the way of your practice are deep-rooted fears and beliefs. To overcome these, one needs to start by taking care of themselves to show gratitude towards life and one's self.

Begin with fresh meals, good daily physical and spiritual activities, regular sleeping habits. To add to these, try some of these asanas and pranayamas to achieve the correct practice of gratitude and contentment.

Asanas like Balasana, Paschimottanasana, SetuBandhasana, Uttanasana,

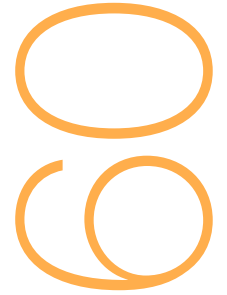


Talasila, Ustrasana and Savasana help in evoking a sense of contentment. Practicing Anulom Vilom (Alternate Nostril Breathing) and Pranayama No 4 (Diaphragmatic Breathing), helps achieve a well-balanced mind and breath.

By chanting OM for 108 times in a meditative posture can prove most effective.

Try and write a gratitude journal Each day write 5-6 new things you are grateful for, try to not repeat the list. Writing such a journal help one burn the negativity deep within.

It is very important to remember yoga of gratitude and contentment cannot be forced. If you are in a balanced state of mind it will emerge naturally from within.



building and managing relationships with yoga

Most relationships today are under a strain of complex human emotions and conditions. Yoga as a philosophy advocates righteous, moral and an ethical approach to life, both in the yogic practice and daily life. Yoga encourages us to turn to our inner self and accept responsibility for who we are, what we do and how we feel. In the majority of cases, this translates into acceptance of self. The practice of yogic principles also develops a thoughtful attitude and mindset in conflict situations, which leads to symbiotic, fruitful relationships.

Firstly, the central principle of maintaining good relationships in life is Awareness. Yoga advocates the practice of awareness throughout our life at every moment. We should become self-aware first & subsequently become aware of our surroundings and the people in it. Through this mindful awareness comes acceptance.

Acceptance is the second central principle to creating and keeping good relationships. Change is an integral part of our life. To succeed at living life, we should not resist changes but embrace it. Similarly, circumstances and life events change us and people around us, it is vital to accept yourself and others and let life flow naturally and not impose our thoughts and expectations onto others

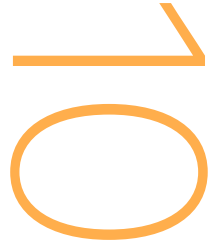
As we grow in life and explore the complexities of our connections through the yogic lens, we invariably encounter a distinct possibility that what we are truly seeking won't be achieved from the external. We can only find them all that we are looking for from the internal. Through awareness and acceptance, we can achieve this state of understanding, which in turn affords us a chance at growth, at both personal and interpersonal relationships. One realizes that it is because of these yogic traits that every relationship in our lives is truly fruitful.

While we think we are being kind to others we tend to make two common errors. If kindness is not from the inside it is false kindness. If the kindness I is just in your words and not in your actions then it is false kindness. Secondly, we give up too easily.



When we are trying to build healthy relationships with people around us, we make an effort but we give up after a few tries as it is too much hard work to stick to our resolve. One must practice genuine kindness and patience with the people they care about.

Last but not the least, you must believe that it is your karmic connection with others that brings them into your life and to pay your karmic debt it is essential to make an effort every day. You must love yourself and others as they are, that is the key to successful relationships.



bhavas

We need to cultivate and imbibe in every activity the 4 Sattvic Bhavas. When we do this imbibing and strengthening of the 4 Sattvic Bhavas in every thought, word and deed; we begin to live Yoga as a way of life.

As humans, if we do not have a proper direction to our life we remain at a very low, dull level which is a Tamasik or lethargic level. This is also the level where all kinds of diseases set in the body. To rise above these difficulties and problems of life we need to remain at the Sattvic level. It is at this Sattvic level that we also now begin to activate and imbibe the 4 Sattvic subconscious traits or Bhavas. Every time the Tamas guna is strong in us and we are confused, lethargic in life then the 4 Tamasik Bhavas automatically become active and get strengthened.

The 1st Sattvic subconscious trait or Sattvic Bhava is called Dharma. Most of the times we tend to interpret Dharma as religion. However. In terms of our own Buddhi or Chitta, Dharma in this context means that trait which is capable of giving us a direction in life. This self-direction is enabled through what we call duty. So the word duty also comes very close to the concept of Dharma At every point in life we need to understand that one's duty is in that given situation. Prioritize the task and then move ahead. It is believed that one who is always on the path of Dharma is saved from all sorts of pain and suffering in life. Therefore, Yoga even outlines the hierarchy of duties which should be our priorities in life. One's first duty is to our own self, towards our physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. Then comes duty towards family and immediate friends. Third is duty towards place of work and finally comes duty towards society and humanity at large, if you have the time energy and inclination. Quite often we tend to neglect this hierarchy. For example, overworking without eating on time or eating wrong food or not resting sufficiently or indulging into social work without looking after the family etc. Neglecting this hierarchy leads to several conflicts and problems at the intra and interpersonal level. In order to be clear of our duty, it is important that we attain a calm, quiet and balanced state of mind that would be another dimension of Dharma. How do we cultivate a calm, quiet and balanced state of mind this is where Yoga and its



techniques and processes help us. All meditative asanas therefore belong to this Bhava of Dharma because they help us in conditioning our mind to quietness, calmness and balance that will enable us to become clear of our duties and our priorities and execute them with the right frame of mind. The other components of Dharma Bhava that will then allow us to practise and strengthen this 1st Sattvic subconscious trait are discipline, conditioning, acceptance as well the techniques of the Yamas and the Niyamas all of this give a certain direction to ourselves and to our lives and therefore Dharma is self-direction and duty. Acceptance and Faith are two important corner stones of Dharma that give direction to our life that in turn quietness our mind and gives us the inner capability to go in the direction that one has set for himself on the path of Yoga and that is our highest evolvment.

The opposite Tamasik Bhava subconscious trait of Dharma is Adharma. So every time we are unable to give a right a direction to our life, every time we are unable to do our duties or we are confused about our duties, and priorities, we are strengthen Adharma. every time our mind is in a state of disturbance, restlessness, unsteadiness, when our mind is imbalanced, our understanding and clarity of our duties itself goes for a toss and that is why a disturbed unbalanced mind does Adharma and strengthens this Tamasik trait of Adharma. Every time we are indisciplined, we are unable to follow the right kind of routines in life and life itself becomes imbalanced. Every time we are unable to accept the realities of life, people, situations as they are, we are in the state of disquiet and we are again strengthening the 1st Tamasik Bhava of Adharma. Adharma is therefore the exact opposite of Dharma. What is right and what is wrong is a question that we need to resolve for our own selves and Yoga through its guidelines of the Yamas and Niyamas tells us that which is right is Yamas. The Yamas are on the path of righteousness, on the path of right conduct, on the path of Dharma and therefore the ethics, principles and morality of the Yamas is an extremely vital component of the Dharma Bhava. Yoga therefore encourages us to practise Ahimsa and gives a direction to our mind and to our life, practise Satya non-stealing, practise Aparigraha non-greed and practise Brahmacharya control of the senses and sensory attractions. All of this is gives direction to our life and that is why these fall under Dharma. Our inability to practise these Yamas is therefore Adharma.

Any kind of action whether it is inner or outer requires concentration. Concentration is the attention centered at a given point or given task. It is the natural ability of the mind to grasp knowledge. Once our mind is fixed on to the object for example even a cat concentrates very well on its prey, The foundation



for such a concentration comes from the attention paid or the interest that we have about a particular object, thing or area of knowledge. This prior conditioning of the mind and the subsequent concentration is what allows us to be focused on a particular object. This is a necessity for us to acquire any kind of gyan.

The yoga gyan or knowledge is all that one needs to know and understand for a meaningful life and the ability to acquire this knowledge is actually present within each one of us. However it is covered due to the 2nd Tamasik Bhava that is trait of Buddhi that is Agyan. This is why we keep busy in the world outside looking for some purpose or some meaning in life. Most of the time this leaves us confused and frustrated. Gyan therefore in Yoga begins with awareness about ourselves at all levels the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. We therefore need to acquire gyan about how we can actualize our abilities at each of these levels. The various components of the Jnana Bhava therefore will be concentration, one pointedness, body awareness, co-ordination, synchronization, training of the breath, and training of the senses. Asanas for extremities of the body involving upper as well as sideward stretch and the asanas that involve twist of the spinal cord all belong to the Jnana Bhava. The pranayamas and the kriya of Tratak are also included in this Bhava, because of what they are generating in us is Jnana at different levels.

The 2nd Sattvic subconscious trait or Bhava of Buddhi is Gyan or Jnana as the Sankhya Yoga system says it. This Jnana aspect of Buddhi consists of both the internal and external knowledge. The external knowledge helps us in living our worldly life while the internal knowledge of our own self, of our own mind, our nature, our spirit leads to a complete and total understanding of self. Often the intellectualistic tendency leads us to a complete neglect of deeper aspects of our mind and intelligence. Traditionally, as far as the Yoga and the Sankhya system is concerned, the intellect is not information oriented or what intelligence test measures. Intelligence or the intellect in terms of the Sattvic Bhava includes holistic development and for that we need Vidhya or knowledge which is what the Jnana constituent of Buddhi is all about. The Yogic procedure of obtaining gyan is through the Ekagrahta- the steady one pointed state of mind.

The 3rd sattvic subconscious trait or bhava is Vairagya. Vairagya means to let-go, surrender, humble oneself before a Higher Reality. Forward bending Asanas, and various yogic relaxation techniques come under this 'Bhava'. When we hold our muscles tight, rigid and tense, we are not able to bend forward easily. We need to let go of the tension and rigidity, and only then we will be able to relax. When we



bend forward, we are supposed to relax and let go. If we hold them tight, we can't go down. If we let our body 'fall with gravity' rather than 'try hard to bend', we find it easier. Similarly when we do some action, we tend to take the entire credit for it, and we forget about the innumerable people as well as factors, involved in getting that action done. When you achieve something, it is not you alone who has accomplished it. This feeling is required to be inculcated in oneself to practice humility and let go of ego. We must remember we are a part of the whole. Gratitude and humility are necessary if we want to progress. We hold on tightly to our past, to our thoughts, our ideas, opinions, and all these things cloud our mind, as a result, we are unable to enjoy the present moment. We are not focused on the present at all. Therefore we need to let go of these thoughts and the past and become freer and lighter. The essence in vairagya is letting go of all the pettiness and useless cravings that cloud our minds. It is the principle of non-attachment that accepts the world as it is, performs actions whenever and whatever is needed according to one's capabilities. It allows a peaceful existence in the world without causing undue stress to oneself or others, resulting in a larger perspective of life. Raga or attachment is the greatest vice and is the opposite of Vairagya. It is a senseless clinging on to things, people and even one's thoughts. It inhibits growth of yourself as well as others' around. Deep attachments in different relationships create irresolvable conflicts. Raga creates aversion when expectations are not met. When these expectations remain unfulfilled, aversion and anger build up. The mind becomes dull or agitated when situations go out of control.

The 4th sattvic subconscious trait or bhava is Aishvarya. Aishvarya means self-reliance, self-confidence. Once you have done your duty with knowledge and surrendered yourself, you experience self-confidence, a rise in will power; you have greater understanding of the world. So the challenging backward bending Asanas and Kriyas come under this 'Bhava'. These make us self-reliant and keep us disease-free. If we have a headache or a backache or a cold, we know how to handle it. When we practice any Asana, understand the Bhava behind the Asana, and keeping that Bhava in mind, will give us a different type of experience from the Asana – try it and experience it – Yoga is all about experiencing. Aishvarya bhava is revealed in clarity of thought and purpose. It is attainment of physical, mental, moral and spiritual knowledge. Aishvarya bhava manifests as assertiveness devoid of arrogance. Aishvarya bhava is reflected in the determination, strength, courage, self-confidence and power of the will of the individual, which arises from perceptive wisdom. When adharma, ajnana and raga dominate your mind and actions, there can be no peace. There is fear, insecurity, lack of faith, low self-



esteem resulting in depression. The integrated practice of the four positive bhavas encompasses every action that you perform in life, irrespective of how insignificant or how great the action may be.



breathing and management of emotions

All things in this universe have natural rhythms of their own. The planets, sun, moon, and all the stars have a cosmic vibrational rhythm. Earth's day and night have a rhythm too. Our mind, body, and our heart have a rhythm. As mentioned in the Vedas and not ratified by quantum physics is that all we are and the world around us are vibrations.

When we successfully go within and pay attention to our mind and body, we can notice our natural rhythm and this comes from our breathing and panic flow around our body. Once we sit quietly and start to pay attention to our breath we come in touch with our calm and centered emotions and the conscious voice deep within. When we let our emotions get the better of us, our natural rhythmic breathing changes and that affects our awareness and level of consciousness we spend our day in. When we let our emotions rule on a regular basis, the body accepts this agitated and non-rhythmic way of breathing as nature and this hampers our cognition, awareness and pushes us into lower levels of consciousness.

To gain real power over one's mind and in turn over one's body, we need to control our breath. Prana is the quintessential force that gives us life and keeps us alive. We can extend this life force by practicing pranayamas. The techniques of pranayama or breathing exercises help in controlling the life force in our body and also help every cell in our body to function at its optimum levels. Research shows that controlling breathing and mindful breathing patterns can help resolve mental, physical and especially emotional issues and expound our control on our mind and body.

Here are some of the techniques that can help control and mind and in turn your emotions:

Anuloma Viloma also known as Nadi Shodhanam - is an alternative nostril breathing technique and has an extremely strong balancing effect on your body.



When you perform this pranayama every morning and evening it helps in having an alert and

aware state of mind during the day and a relaxed deep sleep during the night. This balance in the body's rhythm helps balance your emotions.

Pranayama Number 4 or diaphragmatic breathing is ingenious yet very simple pranayama devised by The Yoga Institute. It provides both mastering of breath along with deep relaxation. This is a very powerful pranayama that helps in resolving diseases related to the abdomen, lower abdomen, lungs, and the back. It also helps in resolving deep-rooted emotions problems.

Other honorary mentions are - Bhastrika (Bellows Breath), Shunyak (Prolonged Suspension) and Kumbhak (Retention of Breath). Our Breath is the biggest gift given to us, it is the tool that can help us control and mold ourselves. Start your practice of pranayama today to become the most balanced and best version of you.



practicing awareness all day

As we practice yoga every day, it is natural to have a sense of our surrounding and inner self. Swadhyaya is a very important part of the Niyamas - second limb of Ashtanga yoga. Swadhyaya, as Patanjali suggests, is prescriptive for personal growth through the observance of self - Sva means “self” adhyaya means “inquiry”.

Some people try to learn hidden aspects of themselves through the practice of concentration on breath and contemplation. The process that cultivates self-reflective behavior can be considered Svadhyaya. It is important to intentionally find self-awareness in all of our activities and thoughts, this will lead to self-acceptance. Swadhyaya leads us towards being centered and non-reactive to our environment and people in it, by becoming aware of self-destructive behaviour and thoughts. Swadhyaya means finding your own process for self-inquiry and daily practice, despite all the ups and downs of facing distractions and negative chatter of your mind.

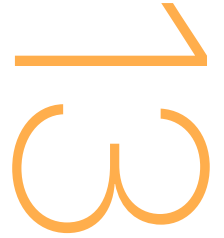
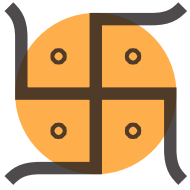
Another way to establish a connection with self is to become more aware of the choices you make every day, and how they affect you, your family, and the world around you. Self-awareness starts with basic things like taking better care of your body, helping people, you can also go bigger and think of the impact your daily activities have on our planet. Yoga practice empowers your body and senses to be more in tune, to bringing more conscious awareness to your practice and life situations. Whatever your intention, when you make positive changes grounded in self-awareness, you can connect with the truth of who you are and why you do what you do..

You can incorporate Swadhyaya into your daily yoga practice combining asana, pranayamas, and meditation with an objective in mind, to help bring into focus to yourself and eventually your environment. Try to find a quiet, tranquil space with some sounds of nature around you. Sit in Padmasana or Sukhasana, whichever makes you feel more comfortable. Start with concentrating and Taking deep-equal breaths, slowly close your eyes and place your hands on your lap. Think of specific



details about yourself or your environment and concentrate on it and contemplate on how it affects you - positively or negatively. Continue to concentrate on that detail until you can let it go.

By practicing this every day will help you become more aware and establish oneness with yourself and your environment.



yoga can help you find your purpose in life

Have you ever wondered why you were born? What is the purpose of your life?

We are all born with our Samskaras (impressions from previous lives), Vasanas (pre-conditioning desires) and Prarabdhakarma (a small part of the sanchitakarma- past life karma bank that is lined up to manifest in the present lifetime) to add to these we have the pre-conditioning through our childhood and our surroundings. These combine to create our personality complex, our perception of self and the world. It also gives us a sense of separation from the external world. Yoga can help to shed these impressions and pre-conditioning that hold us back from understanding who we really are and our 'purpose of life'.

When we don't realise our purpose in life, a feeling of being directionless or meaningless sets into our life which is one of the leading causes of depression and many other mental diseases. All of us are here for a reason and every individual has a role to play in the grand scheme of things. When we are connected to what we do, how we live our life and mindfully practice positivity, our life is beautiful. But when we are in discord with our surrounding and our self, everything seems grey; there is no ebullience, just complacency. Discovering and living your life with a purpose in mind comes with the practice of self-awareness.

With self-awareness, you gain clarity about your passions, combining that with a sense of duty-dharma, will lead you towards the true purpose of your life. You will soon feel the drive to start purpose-driven, duty-driven and passion-driven activities and enterprises that benefit not only you but the society as a whole. Dharma - Duty is a purpose that is balanced, virtuous and that advocates wellbeing of all, it means 'rooted in stability and perseverance'.

Just like the way threads are woven together to create a beautiful carpet, every step we take towards self-awareness and dharma, our life becomes an opportunity to practice the true purpose of our life. Living a purposeful life helps us look directly into what moves us, and makes us enriched in our spirit.