

# **Yoga Education**

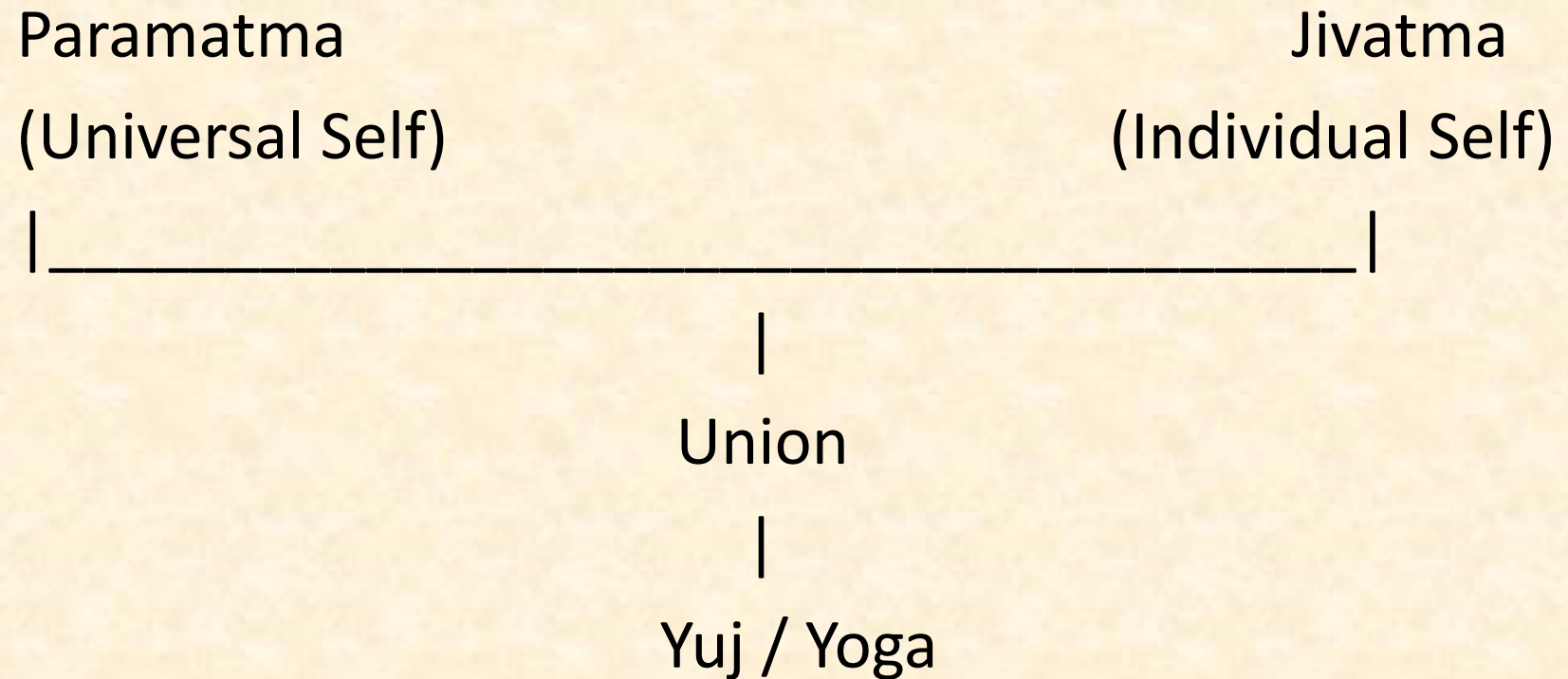
**Self Understanding and Development**

# **Introduction to Yoga**

# Meaning and Initiation

- Yoga has become very popular in every part of the world
- promoting positive health and well-being
- practice in their daily life to maintain their fitness level and poise
- protect oneself from the hypokinetic diseases
- tool to enhance memory power, intelligence, creativity
- awakening consciousness

‘Yoga’ has been derived from the verbal roots as ‘Yuj’ in Sanskrit which means to join, to attach, to bind, yoke or union.



- According to Sage Patanjali,

*'Yoga Citta Vritti Nirodhah'*

*'Tada Drastuh Swarupe Avasthanam'*

- According to Bhagwat Gita

*'Yoga Karmasu Kausalam'*

- 'Yoga-Vasistha'

*'Manah Prasamanopayah Yoga Ityabhidhiyate'*

Therefore, Yoga is:

- a skillful science of gaining mastery over the mind,
- a process or a technique to reach the ultimate state of perfection or complete self-realization,
- as the state of higher powers and potentialities and
- a process to realize ultimate state of silence or bliss.

# History of Development of Yoga

The development of Yoga can be track down back to over 5000 years ago but some researchers opined that Yoga may be in practice more than 10,000 years ago.

Classical Yoga was the part of the Vedic tradition.

Sage Patanjali compiled the teachings at a later period.



- Yoga literature existed prior to Pantanjali's 'Yoga Sutra' in Puranas, Mahabharata and Upanishads
- The propounder of the yoga system is said to be Hiranyagarbha
- The origin of yoga can be traced back to the Rig Veda
- Lord Shiva is the greatest of the yogis, known as Adhinatha



The history of Yoga is generally categorized in five periods. They are:

- Vedic period
- Pre-classical period
- Classical period
- Medieval period
- Modern period

# Vedic Period

- In Sanskrit 'Vedas' means knowledge
- Four Vedas -

Rig Veda - collection of hymns that are in praise of higher power

Yajur Veda - knowledge of yajna

Sama Veda - knowledge of chants

Atharva Veda - knowledge of worldly affairs

- In this period, knowledge was revealed to sages from the universe through meditation, which comprises of three yogas:
  - a) Mantra Yoga - the power of mantras
  - b) Prana Yoga - through Pranayama
  - c) Dhyana Yoga - single thought, effortless, slowness, wakefulness and effortless expansion of mind

- In Maitrayani Upanishad, yoga is described as ‘Sadanga Yoga’, the uniting disciplines of the six limbs:

1. Pranayama – breath control
2. Pratyahara – withdrawal of senses
3. Dhyana – meditation
4. Dharana – concentration
5. Tarka – recalling and examination
6. Samadhi – transcendental state

# Pre-classical Period

- The formation of Upanishads that describe the inner perception of reality
- faithfulness to lord Brahma. It explains the following three subjects.

Brahma - the ultimate reality of the universe

Atma - transcendental self

The relation between Brahma and Atma.

- Hinduism as well as Buddhism shares some characteristics of Yoga
- Siddharta Gautama - first Buddhist who studied Yoga and enlightened himself at the age of 35 years

- Around 5000 B.C. 'Bhagavad Gita' was composed - a marvellous Yoga scripture
- It describes the four paths, guiding to establishing relationship with the Supreme

Karma Yoga - Yoga of perfect actions

Bhakti Yoga - Yoga of perfect devotion

Jnana Yoga - Yoga of perfect knowledge

Raja Yoga - Yoga of will power.

- The 'Bhagavad Gita' has 18 chapters. Each chapter is called Yoga, expressing the path of accomplishing the realization of the 'Ultimate Truth'.



# Classical Period

- Around 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.E. Sage Patanjali wrote 'Yoga Sutra' - 196 aphorisms or sutras, divided into 4 padas or chapters.
- Ashtanga Yoga or Eight Limbs of Classical Yoga (Raja Yoga):
  - Yama (social disciplines, social restraints or ethical values)
  - Niyama (individual disciplines or rules of conduct)
  - Asanas (physical exercises and postures)
  - Pranayama (breathing exercises or breath regulation)
  - Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses or discipline of the senses)
  - Dharana (concentration or focusing)
  - Dhyana (meditation or de-focusing)
  - Samadhi (self-realization or ecstasy)



- Buddha taught us the Eight-fold paths emphasizing on 'Vipasana'
- 'Vipasana' is the process of self-purification by self-observation or seeing things as they are in reality.

# Medieval Period

- 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.
- Great yogis like Matseyendranatha and Goraksanatha altered the system of meditation which Buddha had popularized
- ‘Bhakti Yoga’ developed which believed in a spiritual pathway within Hinduism and focused on devotion to Divine Power or God.
- ‘Hatha Yoga’ also known as the ‘Psychological Yoga’ or the Yoga of attaining physical and mental purity. ‘Ha’ means the mind and ‘tha’ means the prana or the vital energy.
- Purification internal body through ‘Satkarmas’
- Hatha Yoga texts - Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Gheranda Samhita Yoga, Shiva Samhita, Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati

# Modern Period

- ‘Integral Yoga or Purna Yoga’ meaning surrendering to the Devine and opening to the Devine Force - Sri Aurobindo
- ‘Bhakti Yoga and Devine Love’ - Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa - harmony of all religions
- ‘Parliament of Religions’ held in Chicago in 1893 - Swami Vivekananda - summarized and spread the teachings of Vedanta’s. His teachings are:

Each soul is potentially divine.

The goal is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling nature both external and internal.

Do this either by action (Karma Yoga) or worship (Bhakti Yoga) or psychic control (Raja Yoga) - by one or more or all of these and be free.

The doctrines or rituals or books are secondary details.

- Paramhansa Yogananda - arrived in Boston in 1920 - wrote 'Autobiography of a Yogi'
- 'International Society for Krishna Consciousness' (ISKON) was established in 1965 by Shрила Prabhupada in United States
- late 19th century - new styles and schools of "Yoga" - Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga, Bihar Schools of Yoga, Iyengar Yoga, Bikram Yoga, Viniyoga, Power Yoga, Kundalini Yoga
- 21<sup>st</sup> June annually since 2015 - United Nations General Assembly in 2014 declared that 'International Day of Yoga'

# YOGA

## Physical

1. Physical Purity
2. Prevent From Disease
3. Beautification of Body
4. Correct Posture of Body
5. Development of Muscles
6. Increase the efficiency of heart & Lungs
7. Increase Flexibility

## Social

1. Develop Social Qualities
2. Develop Social Relation

## Spiritual

1. Spiritual Development Through Asanas.
2. Increase Meditation Power
3. Increase Moral Values

## Mental

1. Reduce Mental Tension
2. Provide Relaxation
3. Develop Concentration Power
4. Increase Memory Power
5. Increase will Power