



**Yashwantrao Chavan
Maharashtra
Open University**

Generic Elective Audit Course

GEN 401

Yoga (Optional)





Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra
Open University

Yoga (Optional)

Translated in to English by
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Yoga syllabus

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- 1.3 Haṭhayoga Pradīpika
- 1.4 GhērañḍaSamhita 20 marks

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Chapter – 1 *Yoga Śāstra*

Part – 1

Unit Structure

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- 1.1 – Introduction
- 1.2 – Significance
 - 1.2.1 – Definition, Nature and Scope of Yoga
 - 1.2.2 – What is Patanjali's *Yogadarśan*?
 - 1.2.3 – Why is *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* called *caturanga yoga*?
 - 1.2.4 – What is *Ghērañḍa Samhita*?

1.0 Objectives

By the end of this unit, the student will be able to:

- 1) Understand the definition, meaning, nature and scope of *Yoga*.
- 2) Understand the eight limbed *yoga* of *Patanjali*.
- 3) Know different aspects of *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā*.
- 4) Know the seven limbs of *Ghērañḍa Samhita*.

1.1 Introduction

In today's scientific era, man has achieved success in many fields. Internet has brought the world communities together. Within hours, we can travel across the world. Man has already stepped on the moon and even wishes to land on other planets as well. With the advancements in the medical field, organ transplantation is now a reality. Though man has been able to design and develop time-and-labour-saving machines that provide physical comforts, yet he is not happy.

Today's new generation is leading a fast paced life that was never heard before, which on one hand is providing them with financial independence and technological advancements but on the other hand they are leading a

very stressful life with strained relationships. They can hardly enjoy the fruits of their labour as they are highly stressed out. Stress has given rise to many diseases like insomnia (lack of sleep), diabetes, high blood pressure (B.P), irritation and many such problems as if these diseases are a curse on our generation. We and our society are responsible for this state of affairs. Faulty lifestyles, wrong food habits, environmental imbalances caused by humans, undue emphasis on competitiveness and carnal pleasures, social, financial and psychological insecurities, low nutritional food and many such factors are affecting individual's as well as societal wellbeing. Even the tremendous scientific developments in the modern era are unable to address the problems concerning our health and wellbeing.

Yoga, one of the great traditional systems of ancient India is a perfect remedy for all the physical, mental, emotional maladies that the modern man is suffering from. In fact, *Yoga* is the only ray of hope that can bring holistic wellness to the human beings. Therefore the study of the *yogaśāstras* is the need of the time. *Yoga* is not merely a physical exercise or a treatment or technique but is a way of life in which the body, mind, intellect and the soul are aligned and integrated with the collective consciousness. Thus *yoga* is a way of life. It is based on the philosophy of unity and oneness. Just as a limb separated from the body or a branch separated from a tree cannot survive, similarly a person disconnected with others, nature or soul, emotionally or otherwise, cannot remain happy for long nor can he progress in life. *Yogasādhanā* is not just physical postures (*āsana*), regulated breathing (*prāṇāyāma*) or an effort to achieve concentration; it is also not just 'a one hour of practice in the morning' but a twenty-four hour integration with that unitary self that has

manifested itself into myriad bodies and forms of the visible world. In this lesson, we will learn about the nature and various streams of *yogaśāstra*.

1.2 Significance

The greatest contribution of India to the world community is its gift of *yoga*. Today's disintegrated and stressful living is necessitating every individual to choose a yogic way of life. In fact, in *yoga* the body, mind, and the intellect are united with the indwelling soul. This union further extends into integration of an individual with the family, family with the society, society with the nation, and nation with the whole universe. Even though the need for such an integration might not be felt by an individual at every level, nevertheless every individual experiences a compelling desire to look inward, calm, and free the mind from the unending flow of thoughts and remain 'settled' in the self at one time or the other. This natural urge of human beings is the reason for the spread of *yoga* far and wide. Of late, in many European countries and in America, it has been made compulsory to establish *yoga* departments in hospitals and clinics. Now-a-days, the 21st of June is observed as the International Yoga Day. In the backdrop of this growing popularity of *yoga*, we must try to understand what exactly *yoga* is all about? *Yoga* is universal. *Yoga* is the great legacy of ancient India, which every individual must incorporate as his/her lifestyle. The need of the hour is to acquire exhaustive knowledge of this great wealth called *yoga*.

1.2.1 Definition, Nature and Scope of Yoga

- **Nature of *yoga***

In this chapter, we will discuss about the nature, scope, various definitions of *yoga* and try to understand *Patanjali's Yoga Darśan*. We will also discuss

about various schools of *yoga* and the concept of *caturanga yoga* in *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā*.

The word *yoga* is derived from the *Sanskrit* root 'Yuj', *Yuj* means to join / unite or integrate with the 'oneness'. *Yoga* is the experience of that eternal happiness which one gets after overcoming all the duality and uniting with the absolute truth. It is an instrument that frees us from suffering, disease and mental activity. It enables us to maintain equanimity (stability of mind) and remain peaceful and composed even while being part of worldly sufferings.

Yoga is an art of realizing the self and the ultimate truth. *Sage Patanjali* defined *yoga* as 'cittavrttinirodhah' i.e. arresting of mental activity. References to *Yoga śāstra* can be found in the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*. (Typically the *Vedas* consist of three parts: *Samhita* (*Mantra*) portion which is the core of the *Vedas*, the *Brāhmaṇa* part or the procedural aspects and the *Araṅyakās* in which *Upanishads* form a part.) Though not much is written in the *samhita* part of the *Vedas* about *yoga*, a lot can, however, be found in the *Upanishads*. For example, the *Kaṭh* *Upanishad* describes the nature of *yoga* and its methods of practice. A good deal of information on *yoga* is also found spread in other *Upanishads*. The *Bhagavad gita*, which is considered as the essence of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*, contains eighteen chapters and each chapter is named after *yoga*. It begins with 'Vishād Yoga' (yoga of melancholia) in chapter one and concludes with 'Moksha Sannyās Yoga' (yoga of renunciation for liberation) in the last chapter. In *Gita*, the 6th chapter is completely dedicated to *Yoga śāstra* and its practice. *Yoga* means "citta vrtti Nirodhah" i.e. arresting the fretting mind and its activities. *Bhagavad Gita* tells us that this control can be attained in a number of ways, through various techniques, tools and means. It

describes a variety of techniques such as ‘*Dhyāna Yoga*’, ‘*Karma Yoga*’ ‘*Bhakti Yoga*’, etc., to attain the ultimate objective of human life - the liberation of soul (Moksha). One can choose the path he/she likes. We find references to *āsana*s or specific body postures at the end of ‘*Nārad Purāṇa*’. Some treatises like ‘*Vishṇu Purāṇa*’, ‘*Garud purāṇa*’ and ‘*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*’ also make allusions to *yoga*.

Indian philosophy is also known as *darśana śāstra* that contains six *vaidik darśana*s. One of them is ‘*Yogaśāstra*’. Maharshi Patanjali, who is believed to have lived around 2500 CE, successfully elevated the stature of *yogaśāstra* to the level of *darśana śāstra* by systematizing it. But *yoga* has been described in the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Puranas* long before sage Patanjali systematized it. This raises the question as to who was the first propounder of *yoga*. According to the ‘*Yādnyavalkyasmṛiti*’, *yoga* first emanated from the teachings of ‘*Hiraṇyagarbha*’. Sage Patanjali only systematized and documented *yogaśāstra* as taught by *Hiranyagarbha*. Therefore Patanjali gave due credit to the pioneers of *yogaśāstra* by beginning his treatise with the words – ‘*Atha Yogānuśāsanam*’ which means ‘here I am presenting the discipline of *Yoga*’. With the use of ‘*anu*’ in the first aphorism, Sage Patanjali disowned the credit of being the first proponent of *yoga*.

- **Scope of Yoga :**

Now-a-days, many are attracted towards *yoga*. In fact, in many western countries, learning *yoga* has become a fad. Now-a-days, even in India, everyone is slowly turning to *yoga*. 21st June is being celebrated as the International Yoga Day and therefore it is imperative for us to know the scope of *yoga* and understand what precisely *yoga* is all about.

- **Yoga - An Art**

Life is an art of living. *Yoga* raises the standard of living. Therefore study of *yoga* is also an art. Its practice leads to towering thoughts of the practitioner and helps the person to wade through the difficult times of life bravely. Therefore *Shri Krishna* calls it '*Yogahkarmasu kauśalam*' or an art of living. It helps in the conservation and promotion of qualities like objectivity, friendship, devotion, happiness, satisfaction, concentration and non-accumulation of what is not needed and results in the formation of a virtuous and ideal human being.

- **Yoga – A Science**

Just as in other fields of science, there is importance of observation and experimentation in *yoga* too. *Yoga* has a great scope for research. *Yoga* is the science of body and mind in which one gains control on mind by restraining the body. Practice of *Yoga* results in healthy and happy life. By achieving balance between the body and the mind, the path to self realization gets well laid. This balance in life is achieved through *yoga* by skillful and systematic practice.

- **Yoga – A Philosophy**

Ordinarily, man is very emotional in nature. He is often troubled and tormented by the duality of sadness-happiness, insult-praise, and failure-success affecting his mind and body. But a practitioner's mind is unaffected by such tumults of life. This is because he acquires the teaching of being unfazed by such emotional drama in life and maintains equanimity in all situations.

Yoga is a philosophy that elevates a person in search of the ultimate truth, from the mundane sensual world to the spiritual sphere in a systematic way. Such is the universality of application of *yoga*.

Let us now see some definitions of *yoga*.

● **Definitions of Yoga :**

1) *Yogāścittavrtti nirodhah:*

Yoga means arresting of all the mental activities. Such is the definition given in the second aphorism(*sūtra*) of *Samādhi Pāda*, the first chapter in the Patanjali's *Yogadarśana*.

2) '*Swaswarūpé samāsannata*'

This definition of *yoga* is given in *Vedānta*.

3) '*Yujyate anéna iti yogah*'

Yoga is a process of joining/uniting. It is the union of individual consciousness with the universal consciousness. It is the realization of non-duality of all existence.

4) '*Manah prashamanōpāyah yoga ityabhidhīyate*' (*Laghu Yoga Vaśiṣṭha* 3.9.32)

Yoga is the technique of calming the mind.

5) '*Samatvam yoga uccaté*'. (Bhagavad Gita 2.48)

Yoga is equanimity.

6) '*Yogah karmasu kauśalam*' (*Bhagavad Gita* 2.48)

Yoga is the skilfulness in action. *Yoga* means the ability to act effectively.

Thus a variety of definitions of *yoga* are given by different sages, the Vedas and the Gita.

Today there can be seen many currents and trends in *Yoga* but the most ancient and the most widely accepted one is the Patanjali's *Yoga darśan*. In addition to it, the treatises of *Haṭha yoga* namely, *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* and *Ghérañḍa Samhita* are also popular. Among them, we are going to study Patanjali's *Yoga Darśan* in detail.

1.2.2 *Ashṭānga Yoga* in Patanjali's *Yoga Darśan*

The credit for raising the status of *Yoga śāstra* to that of a *darśana śāstra* goes entirely to sage Patanjali. He compiled the entire *Yoga śāstra* into 196 aphorisms or *sūtras* and presented them in his *yoga darśana*. This treatise even today is considered as the most authentic and foundational work on *yoga*. In fact, the story relating to the miraculous birth of Patanjali is also very interesting.

- **The Story of Miraculous Birth of Patanjali**

Once, as Lord Vishṇu was half asleep on the serpentine coils of *Sesha Nāg*, Lord Śiva began performing his magical dance (*tāṇḍav*). Having witnessed this enchanting dance of Śiva, Lord Vishṇu became overjoyed with exuberance. He was so glad that his body started to bloat up owing to his overflowing happiness. This raised his weight immensely. This increase in weight of lord Vishnu became unbearable for *Sesha Nāg* and so he started hissing. Seeing this, Laxmi, the consort of lord Vishnu woke him up from his ecstasy. Having learnt the reason for his ecstasy and subsequent increase in weight, even *Sesha Nāg* wished to experience the same and expressed his desire to witness the dance of Lord Śiva. Lord Vishnu then commanded him to be born as a human being for the fulfilment of his desire. A childless woman named 'Gāñika' was living in the country of Gonarda and was doing penance to beget a child. One day as she was offering water to the Sun god with folded hands, *Sesha Nāg* fell into her hands in a subtle form and later became a child. Gāñika accepted him as her son. He was named Patanjali as he fell (*patah* in Sanskrit means falling down) in the folded hands (*anjali*).

- **Patanjali's Education**

Patanjali was educated in Takshaṣīla (Ravalpindi district of Punjab Province in modern Pakistan). He did penance at Chidambaram (in modern day Tamil Nadu) and desired to see the ‘*tāṇḍav*’ dance of Lord Śiva. Lord Śiva consented and performed his captivating magical dance and instructed Patanjali to preserve his experiential wisdom of what he witnessed in the written form. And so, Patanjali wrote his monumental work in Chidambaram. Patanjali also wrote the *Mahā bhāshya* or detailed exposition on Pāṇini’s Sanskrit grammar. He also wrote the aphorisms of *yoga śāstra* as was originally transmitted from Hiraṇyagarbha. He is also credited to have written a commentary called *Carakavārtika* on the treatise called *Caraka Samhita*, a monumental work on Āyurveda by sage Caraka. Thus he is the systematizer and compiler of all these three great sciences viz., *Yoga śāstra*, Sanskrit grammar and *Āyurveda śāshtra*. These treatises are considered as the standard works on the respective subjects even today owing to the extraordinary scholarship of this genius called Patanjali. For this very reason, King Bhartrhari praised and saluted him in the following verse:

Yogéna cittasya padéna vāchām

Malam śarīrasya ca vaidyakena |

Yöpā karottam pravaram munīnām

Patanjalim prānjali rānatosmi ||

I salute sage Patanjali, the great sage who, with his *yoga* purges the mind; with grammar cleanses the language; and with his medical text cleanses the body of its defilements.

The knowledge of *yoga* which was scattered all across the Vedas, the Upanishads, *Purāṇās*, and various other places was collected and compiled in a systemic way in the form of aphorisms by sage Patanjali in

such a simple yet illuminating and comprehensive way that it received the status of a *darṣna*. Even today it is considered as the standard and authoritative work.

The 196 sūtras are arranged in four parts called pādās. –Patanjali presented the tenets of yoga śāstra as consisting of eight limbs and hence it is called aṣṭāṅgayoga. They are: Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prāñāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhāraṇa, Dhyāna and Samādhi.

The four pādās in the Patanjali's Yoga darṣana are: 1) Samādhi pāda 2) Sādhana pāda 3) Vibhūti pāda 4) Kaivlya pāda.

1) Samādhi Pāda: There are 51 *sūtras* included in this chapter. It describes kinds of mental activity called *vṛttis*, their sub-categories and the ways and means to arrest the mental activity. Various techniques for tranquilizing the mind, impediments on the path of *yoga*, distractions, etc., are described here. This chapter also describes various levels of mental absorptions called *sampradnyāta*, *asampradnyāta*, *Sabīja* and *nirbīja samādhis*.

2) Sādhana Pāda: It includes 55 *sūtras*. This chapter describes first five limbs of yoga viz., *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāñāyāma* and *Pratyāhāra*, which ultimately lead the practitioner to liberation. These five preliminary limbs of yoga are called outer or *bahiranga yoga*. This chapter is titled as Sādhana pada as the steps described here help the practitioner as instruments leading him/her to liberation. Penance (tapas) self study (*svādhyāya*) and devotion to god (*īshwara prañidhāna*) are described here as *kriyā yoga*. Yoga is presented in this chapter as consisting of eight limbs. Five restraints (Yama), five observances (Niyama), body postures (āsana) in three aphorisms, *Prāñāyāma* and the concept of five afflictions

(kleshas) and their remedy etc., are mentioned in this chapter.

3) Vibhūti Pāda (Trutīya Pāda): It has 56 *sūtras*. *Vibhūti* means supernatural accomplishments – or *siddhis*. Regular and serious practice of *yoga* enables one to accomplish *siddhis*. Hence this chapter is called *vibhūti pāda*. *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi* which are called *antaranga yoga* or inner *yoga* and the various kinds of supernatural powers accomplished by a practitioner by practicing inner *yoga* are also described here. Patanjali also forewarns the practitioners not to be ensnared by these alluring supernatural *siddhis* and move ahead to achieving the ultimate objective of human life – liberation.

4) Kaivlya Pada: It has 34 *sūtras*. Constant and diligent practice of the *ashṭānga yoga* rids the aspirant off the ignorance called *rajas* and *tamas* qualities. The light of knowledge illuminates the purified *citta* which becomes inward oriented. The *prakṛti* or the Nature vanishes and the whole universe disappears as the yogi merges with the Supreme Consciousness. This state is called *kaivalya* or the ultimate merger. In this state one unites with the universal self. One becomes supremely conscious and experiences a pure self. Hence this chapter is titled as *kaivalya pāda*.

Sage Patanjali also presented many aphorisms on the nature of human mind. The concept of mind had been exhaustively deliberated in the Indian philosophy and culture for eons and in fact, all the *darśanas*, *Upanishads* and ancient literature that India had produced, revolve round the concept of mind. Mind is central to everything that we experience. For Āyurveda, mind is but a sense organ. *Yoga* is a science that teaches how to bring the mind under control. Patanjali's *Yoga darśana* details the

nature of mind comprehensively. Swami Vivekananda called the *Yoga darṣana* of Patanjali as Rajayoga. In the book titled Raja Yoga, in fact, he elaborated on the *yoga sūtras* of Patanjali. It is interesting to note that Patanjali has not mentioned about any kinds of *āsana*, *prāñāyāma*, or *dhyāna* and only discussed their philosophical aspects. He only defined the eight limbs of *yoga*, their underlying philosophy and their benefits.

1.2.3 Why Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika is Called *Caturanga Yoga*?

Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika was written in 12th century CE. It is one of the several treatises on *Haṭha yoga* that also include treatises like Ghērañḍa Samhita, Śiva Swarodaya, Yoga Tārāvali, Goraksha Samhita, etc. It is important to understand the etymological significance of the term Haṭha Yoga. '*Ha*' means 'the sun' and '*ṭha*' means the moon. Human body is considered as a microcosm or a miniature replica of the macrocosm or the universe. *Haṭha yoga* is the path of balancing the solar and lunar aspects in our body. The ultimate aim of *Haṭha yoga* is to attain *kaivalya* or *Samādhi*.

Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika: This treatise, written by Swami Svātmārāma, describes four-fold *yoga* and hence also it is called *caturanga yoga*. Svātmārāma calls *yoga vidya* as *haṭha yoga vidya*. Each part of *caturanga yoga* is called an *upadēśa* (teaching or precept). These four parts or limbs are: *āsana*, *prāñāyāma*, *mudra* and *nādānusandhāna* or *samādhi*. The treatise concludes with *aushadhī kathan* that describes various ailments and their remedy.

1) Prathamopadēśa (First Teaching): It consists of 67 verses. The first 16 verses provide guidelines regarding the preliminaries such as place,

time, seat, diet and daily routine, regimen for diet and recreation, conducive and non-conducive states of mind, etc. In some books reference regarding ten *Yamas* and ten *Niyamas* are also given, instead of traditional number of five each. In this teaching, detailed description of 15 *āsanas* is given along with the resulting benefits. By practicing *āsanas* one builds a balanced, healthy and flexible body. In this, the word '*Sthir*' is synonymous with the word '*Sthairyam*'. This treatise describes some *āsanas* expounded by sage Vaṣiṣṭha and Matsyéndranāth. The *āsanas* that are described are *Swastikāsan*, *Gomukhāsan*, *Vīrāsan*, *Kūrmāsan*, *Kukkutāsan*, *Dhanurāsan*, *Uttāna kūrmāsan*, *Matsyendrāsan*, *Pashchhimottānāsan*, *Mayūrāsan*, *Padmāsan*, *Siddhāsan*, *Bhadrāsan*, etc. As already stated, this treatise enumerates ten *Yamas* and ten *Niyamas*. The ten *Yamas* are: *Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Satya* (truthfulness), *Astēya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacarya* (celibacy), *Kshama* (forgiveness and patience) *Dhruṭi* (courageousness and resoluteness). *Daya* (compassion), *Ārjava* (honesty), *Mitāhar* (moderate diet) and *Ṣaucha* (internal and external cleanliness and purity). The ten *Niyamas* are: *Tapa* (penance), *santosha* (satisfaction or contentment), *Āstikya* (faith in god and permanence of soul) *Dāna* (charity), *Iṣvara Pūjana* (worship of god) *Siddhānta vākya ṣravanam* (listening attentively to philosophical discourses), *Lajja* (modesty), *Mati* (attentiveness and reflective thinking), *Japa* (repetition of a mantra) and *Huta* (ritualistic sacrifice). The significance of practice of these restraints and observances was expounded but they were not considered as limbs or parts of *yoga*. It is stated that one should practice *yoga* with enthusiasm, gladness, courageousness, resoluteness and with proper understanding of *yoga* principles. One should practice *yoga* only under the guidance of a *guru* or preceptor.

2) Dvītīyopadēṣa: In this teaching (chapter), the procedure for doing *prāñāyāma* is elaborately described. This chapter has 78 verses. As long as there is vital force called *prāṇa* in the body, the life continues. There is mutual correlation between *prāṇa* and the mind. In the very first *sloka*, Svātmārāma emphasizes the need to learn sitting steadily and comfortably in a specific body posture (*āsana*) as a preparation to practicing *prāñāyāma*. Thus Swami Svātmārāma underscores the significance of steadiness and comfort in sitting posture in *Siddhāsana*, *Padmāsana* and *Vajrāsana*. These *āsanas* are conducive for attaining higher meditative states. Svātmārāma repeatedly underscores the need to attain steadiness in *āsanas* before venturing to practice *prāñāyāma*. He states:

Athāsane dhruḍhe yogī vashī hitamitāṣanah |

Gurūpadishta mārgena prāñāyāmān samabhyasét || //H.P. 2//

Besides the steadiness in postures, the importance of healthy and limited diet and the need to take guidance of a guru in *Prāñāyāma* is also suggested. The relationship between the mind and breath is explained in a lucid way in the following verse:

Chalé vāté chalam cittam, niṣchale nischalambhavét |

Yogī sthāñutva māpnoti, tato vāyu nirodhayét. || //HP 2-2//

If the wind becomes still, the mind automatically becomes still. The practice of *Prāñāyāma* is important because without *Prāṇā*, life cannot sustain.

In the *dvītīyopadēṣa* it is stated that there is a need to cleansing the *nāḍīs* before practicing *prāñāyāma*. While considering the relation between *prāñāyāma* and exploration of *nāḍīs* (*nāḍī ṣodhan*), it is important to note that there are 72,000 *nāḍīs* in our body and their cleansing is very

essential as *nadis* are the channels for the flow of *prāṇa*. Without cleansing the *nāḍīs* one can't attain desired objective. To make the *nāḍīs* capable of carrying the currents of *prāṇa*, it is advised that the *yogi* should first practice the technique of cleansing the *nāḍīs* through *nāḍī śuddhi prāṇāyāma*. This *nāḍī śuddhi prāṇāyāma* being the fundamental one, is stated to cleanse the central *nāḍī*, the *Suṣumna*. The proper procedure for practicing this *prāṇāyāma* is described in the verses 8-13. In this technique, the practitioner must sit in *padmāsana* or lotus posture and inhale slowly and steadily through the left nostril or lunar *nāḍī*. This filling of air through in-breathing is called *Pūraka*. Then the practitioner must try to retain the breath as long as it is comfortable for him and then exhale gently through the right or solar *nāḍī*. Exhaling is called *Récaka*. Again the practitioner must then inhale through the right nostril, retain the breath as long as he/she can and then exhale through the left nostril. This practice is to be repeated four times a day and each time 80 such repetitions are to be carried out. With an unbroken practice for three months the *nāḍīs* get cleansed of their defilements. It should be practiced in a slow manner in the beginning. Practicing this *prāṇāyāma* properly in correct manner will lead to a healthy life, free from diseases. But if it is practice incorrectly then one may even have to face ill health and disorders.

- **Purification Techniques to be Practiced before *Prāṇāyāma*:** *Dhauti*, *Basti*, *Neti*, *Trāṭak*, *Nauli* and *Kapalbhati* are the cleaning processes. These are called *shatkarmas*. In the following verse, their method of practice and benefits are described:

Dhautirbastistathā nētistraṭakam naulikam tathā |

Kapālabhātiscaitāni shat karmāṇi pracakshate || //HP2-2.2//

Those who are suffering from *kapha* (phlegm), and obesity, for them the above purification processes are advised before practicing *prāṇāyāma*. After this, in the 44th verse, 8 types of *kumbhak* i.e. *Ashṭa kumbhak* are given. After describing these 8 types of *Pūraka* three kinds of locks *bandha* called *tribandha* are presented. It is stated that after releasing the *bandha*, one should perform *Récakaa* or exhalation. The eight kinds of *kumbhaka*, *Pūrakaa* and *Récakaa*, their procedure and benefits are described. Finally in the last 73rd verse, *kévala kumbhaka* is described. One, who masters this state, attains the *Rāja yoga*, the kingly grand path of *yoga*. Practise of *kumbhaka* helps the flow of *prāṇa* through the *suṣumna nādī*. This leads to the activation of *Kundalini*. This *kundalini* activation is the aim of *Haṭha yoga*.

3) Trtīyopadéṣa: It consists of 126 verses. *Mudras* are the unique feature of *Haṭha yoga*. In *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*, 10 types of *Mudras* have been described. They are: *Mahā Mudra*, *Mahā bandha*, *Mahā védha*, *Khécari*, *Uddiyāna*, *Mūlā bandha*, *Jālandhara bandha*, *Viparita karaṇi*, *Vajroli* and *Shakticālini*. It is mentioned that practice of *mudras* is vital for activating the *kundalini*. Even for the attainment of *Mahā siddhi* practice of *Mudras* is underscored. The ten *mudras* stated in the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* are given by *Ādinatha* and are of high eminence, whose practice keeps oldage at bay. Even the great eight *siddhis* can also be accomplished by their practice. *Yogis* are particularly fond of these *Mudras*. *Viparīta karaṇi*, *Paṣiṇi* and *Aṣvinī Mudras* are the *Mudras* which are akin to *Āsana*. *Svātmārāma* says, one who attains the true knowledge of *Mudras* is only the real *Guru*. He, who masters these eight *Mudras* attains the eight *siddhis* and gets liberated from the cycle of birth and death. The description of *kundalini* is given in the first five verses. In these verses, it is mentioned that the human body consists of 72000 *nādīs*,

of which 3 are major *nāḍīs* namely *Idā*, *Piṅgalā* and *Sushumna*. Of these, the *Sushumna nāḍī* originates from the *mūlādhāra cakra* in the perineum region near the anus. Its branches are spread all over the body. In the *mūlādhāra cakra*, the *prāṇa śakti* lies in the dormant state. This dormant *prāṇa śakti* is referred as *kundalini*. *Kundala* means coil. Because it lies coiled at the base like a snake, and hence it is called *kundalini*. It is assumed that it is coiled in three and half rounds. The dormant *prāṇa śakti* in the *kundalini* when activated, flows upwards through the *Sushumna* and reaches the *Brahma randhra* at the fontanel. At the fontanel on the top of the head lies the *sahasrāra cakra* or thousand petalled lotus. When the upward moving *kundalini* gets dissolved at this place, the *yogi* attains *moksha* or final salvation. Practice of activating the *kundalini* shall be done only under the grace and guidance of a perfect mentor (*guru*). It is only through the *sushumna nāḍī*, that the piercing (dissolution) of all the *cakras* is made possible. *Sushumna nāḍī* is the grand trunk road that originates at the base *cakra* and culminates at the *sahasrāra*. It is through this grand path that the activated *kundalini* rises upwards. The *sushumna nāḍī* is also known as *Śūnyapadavi* (vacuum state), *Brahma randhra* (immense orifice), *Mahāpatha* (grand path), *Smashan* (cremation ground), *Śāmbhavi* (consort of Śambhu) and *Madhya mārḡa* (middle path). For opening the door of *sushumna*, the *yogi* makes efforts to synergize the currents of solar energy flowing through the *Piṅgalā nāḍī* (Ha) and the lunar energy currents from the *Idā nāḍī* (ṭha). Therefore this practice is called Haṭṭhayoga. In *Haṭṭha Yoga Pradīpika*, the *Kundalini* is compared with the *śeṣha nāg* (cobra). The *kundalini* sustains the entire edifice of *Yoga* just as the *śeṣhanāg* bears the world (Earth).

4) *Caturthopadēṣa*: This *upadēṣaa* describes the nature of *Samādhi*. It consists of 114 verses. In the very beginning itself, Swami Svātmārāma salutes Lord Ṣiva, the first teacher of *yoga* who takes the *yogis* towards the illumination of knowledge and then proceeds to describe about *Samādhi*. *Samādhi* is a state of dissolution of body and the mind. It is the ultimate aim of *yoga*. Even in the *Ashtānga Yoga*, Patanjali had mentioned *samādhi* as the last limb of *yoga*. In the state of *samādhi*, all the functions of body and mind come to a standstill. All the awareness about the body and mind disappears and the individual gets united with the supreme consciousness or the god. To reach this state, Swami Svātmārāma recommends prolonged practice of *Āsanas*, *Ṣuddhi kriyas*, *Prāñāyāma* and *Mudras* under the guidance of a Guru. With the help of *Āsanas*, *Prāñāyāma* and *kriya yoga*, *prāñā* gets redirected into the *Sushumna* channel resulting in the void state of the mind. This state is variously extolled as *Rāja Yoga* (kingly path), *Samādhi* (total mental absorption), *Unmañi* (merger of *prāñā* with mind state), *Manonmañi* (merger of *prāñā* with mind at the abode of eternal self beyond the junction of eyebrows), *Amaratva* (eternity), *Laya tattva* (dissolution principle), *Ṣūnyāṣūnya* (void and non-void at the same time), *Paramapada* (ultimate abode), *Amanaska* (no mind state), *Advaita* (non-dual state), *Nirālamba* (support-less state), *Niranjana* (speckles/pure state), *Jeevanmukti* (state of liberation while still alive), *Sahaja* (natural state) and *Turia* (the fourth state). The importance of *Khécari* and *Ṣāmbhavi Mudras* in attaining the state of *samādhi* is underscored. It is said that with the practice of these *Mudras* one can create a void state of the mind.

After the description of the *samādhi*, Swami Svātmārāma narrates the procedure for the exploration of *nāda* or the primal sound

(*Nādānusandhāna*). *Nādānusandhāna* means focusing the mind on the primordial sound. Amongst the one hundred and twenty five crore techniques given by *Ādinātha Sri Śankara* to attain *Samādhi*, the technique of *Nādānusandhāna* is the superior most one. *Nadopāsana* advocated by *Gorakshanath* can be followed easily by everyone. The person who doesn't even have knowledge of *yoga* can also practice this technique. He just has to sit in *muktāsana* posture, perform *Śāmbhavī Mudra* and concentrate the mind on the inner sound. By performing the *Shañmukhi Mudra* also, one can hear the sound that sounds like tinkling bells (*kin, kin*). It has four stages. 1) *Ārambha*, 2) *Ghata*, 3) *Parichaya* and 4) *Nishpatti*.

- 1) **Ārambha:** When the *Brahma granthi* (in the heart) is pierced through by *Prāñyāyama*, then a sort of happiness is experienced in the vacuum of the heart, and the *anāhata* sounds, like various tinkling sounds of ornaments, are heard in the body. Upon its experience, the *yogi* becomes physically attractive, healthy as well as strong. Body becomes fragrant.
- 2) **Ghata:** At the throat, *viśuddhi cakra* and *vishṇu granthi* are pierced. At this time, sound can be heard like *bherī nāda* (beating of kettle drum). *Yogi* becomes healthy, brilliant and radiant.
- 3) **Parichaya:** At the forehead, *Ādhyā cakra* and *Rudra granthi* are pierced where upon sounds like beating of a large drum are heard. The *yogi* attains natural bliss. He overcomes hunger, thirst and sleep.
- 4) **Nishpatti:** The flow of *prāṇa* reaches *brahma randhra* (at the fontanel) and dissolves there. Sound of veena (a traditional string instrument of India) playing is heard. This is called *nādānusandhāna*. Initially, loud sounds are heard but, as the *yogi* becomes more focussed and his concentration becomes stronger and stronger, he gets to hear subtle

sounds. With the *Nadānusandhāna*, the *yogi* becomes absolved of all his sins and his *citta* and *prāṇa* get dissolved.. Through the accomplishment of *Haṭha yoga* and *Laya yoga* in this way, the *rāja yoga* is attained.

5) Panchamopadéśa: This teaching describes the manifestation of disorders. The prime culprit for causing diseases is stated to be *vāta dōsha*. To get oneself rid of this *dōsha* one is advised to practice different types of *prāṇāyāma*. This is explained in 24 verses along with details about various kinds of *prāṇāyāma*. Due to imbalance in the *tridōshas*, diseases are caused. *Tridōsha* means imbalance in *vāta*, *pitta* and *kapha*. The region from feet to naval is of *vāta*. From naval to chest it is of *pitta* and from the chest upwards is *kapha*. Therefore proper and deep breathing should be practiced. Ghee should be included in the diet. Unctuous and oily substances are to be included in the diet, which counter *vāta* and *pitta* imbalances. If, in the region of *kapha vāta* is experienced, then hot milk and ghee should be included in the diet. And it is also mentioned in the *Haṭha Yoga* that by meditating on the throat *vāruṇi dhāraṇa* must be practiced.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* has emphasized on the significance of *Shatkarmas*. Before practicing *yoga*, internal cleaning of the body is very important and as such the *shatkarmas* are designed precisely with this objective in mind. And more than the act, the emphasis is on the result. Cleansing can be done either by *prāṇāyāma* or *shatkarma*. Such type of cleansing of the body is called as *Nādī śuddhi*. In *Haṭha yoga* there is detailed information about *shatkarmas* given in the form of four *upadéśhās*. While *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāma* are to be practiced on daily basis for purification, *śuddhi kriyas* need not be performed daily but instead, may be undertaken

whenever disorders are felt in the system and continued till balance is restored. The *Shatkarmas* of *Haṭha yoga* are as follows:

- 1) *Dhauti*: 1) *Antar dhauti* 2) *Danta dhauti* 3) *Hrud dhauti*
4) *Mūlā shodhana*
- 2) *Basti*: 1) *Jalabasti* 2) *Ṣushkabasti*
- 3) *Néti*: 1) *Jala néti* 2) *Sūtra néti* 3) *Danda néti* (Rubber)
- 4) *Trāṭak*: 1) *Bindu Trāṭak* 2) *Jyoti Trāṭak*
- 5) *Nauli*: 1) *Madhya Nauli* 2) *Vaama Nauli* 3) *Dakshiṇa Nauli*
4) *Nauli cālana*.
- 6) *Kapala bhāti*: 1) *Vātakrama* 2) *Vyutakrama* 3) *Ṣitakrama*

1.2.4. What is *Ghéraṇḍa Samhita*?

Ghéraṇḍa samhita is a teaching conducted by rishi Ghéraṇḍa to his disciple king Canda Kāpāli on *yoga*. It is believed that this treatise might have been written in the later part of seventeenth century. It consists of 317 verses and belongs to the *Nāth Sāmpradāya*. The text contains seven *upadéśaas* or teachings. This treatise is also referred as '*Saptāṅga yoga*' because it describes seven *yogic prakriyas* in seven *angas*. The teaching edifies that there is no great sin than laziness; there is no strength superior to *yoga*; there is no better kin than knowledge and there is no worst enemy than the ego. This should be kept in mind. Just as one begins to learn and practice alphabets before one becomes adept in understanding great treatises, similarly repeated practice of *yoga* will render one eligible to gain the knowledge of the Supreme. Ghéraṇḍa Samhita begins with this first teaching. In this, the body is compared to a *Ghata* (earthenpot). The good and bad deeds determine the kind of body one gets in this life and just as an earthen pot is created and dismantled again and again, similarly one continues in the cycle of births and deaths unceasingly owing to the accumulation of past good and bad *karmas*. He acquires

merits and demerits in each birth and accordingly, receives appropriate body. If one wishes to release himself from this birth and death cycle, one has to purify oneself in the intense fire of *yoga*. Therefore, this *Samhita* calls *yoga* as *Ghatastha Yoga* (*yoga* of pot). This body made of defilements is like a unsmouldered earthen pot; if it were to wade through the ocean of *samsāra* and attain liberation from rebirth, then one should keep practicing *yoga*, such is the advice by rishi Ghērañḍa. He has not only advised but also mentioned the seven steps that are helpful in this endeavour: *Śódhana*, *Druḍhata*, *Sthairya*, *Dhairya*, *Lāghava*, *Pratyaksha* and *Nirlipta*. *Śódhana* means purification of the body, *Druḍhata* means strengthening, *Sthairya* means bringing in steadiness, *Dhairya* means bringing in fortitude, *Lāghava* means gaining lightness, *Pratyaksha* means focusing on the sensory experiences and *Nirlipta* means acting with detachment. For this, seven kinds of *yogic prakriyas* are enumerated. With the help of *shatkarma*, *Śódhana* can be practiced; with *āsanas*, *druḍhata* can be developed; with the help of *mudras*, *sthairya* is attained; by practicing *pratyāhāra*, *dhairya* is gained, with *prāñcāyāma* occurs *lāghava*, *dhyāna* bestows clairvoyance (Apparent power to perceive things that are not presented to the senses) and by the practice of *samādhi*, occurs *nirlipta* and the *yogi* becomes liberated. In this way, seven *yogic prakriyas* are expounded through seven teachings (*upadēśaas*) which can be attained by practicing the seven limbs (*angas*) as given in *Ghērañḍa Samhita*. Hence it is also called *saptāṅga yoga*. In this text, 102 types of *yogic* processes are mentioned.

- **Prathamopadēśa:**

In this *shatkarmas* i.e. cleaning processes are mentioned. It consists of 59 verses. Since it contains teachings on *Shatkarmas*, this first teaching is also known as *shatkarma sādhana*. Before starting the practice of *yoga*,

one should remove all the impurities from the body only then the effective results will be visible. The first 5 verses mention the importance of *yoga* and the importance of being born as a human and the necessity for its purification.

Dhautirbastistathā nétirlaulikī trāṭakam tathā

Kapālabhātis chaitāni, shatkarmāṇi samācarēt ||451-12||

It is said that *Dhauti*, *Basti*, *Néti*, *Laulikī*, *Trāṭaka* and *kapāla bhāti* are the 6 processes to be performed in *yoga*. These are also classified further into subtypes; *Dhauti* into 13 subtypes, *Basti* into 2 sub types, *Néti*, *Tratakā*, and *Nauli* into 1 subtype each and *Kapālabhāti* into 3 sub types.

Types of shatkarmas:

Various types of Dhauti are as follows: *Antar dhauti*, *Danta dhauti*, *Hrud dhauti*, *Moola śódhana*, *Vātasāra*. *Vārisāra*, *Vanhi sāra*, *Bahish kruta*, *Danta mūladhauti*, *Jihvā śódhana*, *Kapāla randhra śódhana*, *Danda dhauti*, *Vastra dhauti*.

As such in *Basti* there are two kinds: *Jala Basti* and *Sthala Basti*. There are three kinds in *kapāla bhāti* - *vātakrama*, *vyutakrama*, *ṣītakrama*. Cleansing the body from within, cleaning of teeth, cleaning heart of its defilements, cleaning of throat are 4 types of *dhauti* through which body can be purified. Cleaning with the help of air, water and fire along with expelling out the impurities are also the four ways of *dhauti*. Mould the mouth in the shape of crow's mouth and fill the air within stomach slowly. Rotate this air in the stomach and slowly release the air out. This is the *vātasāra dhauti*. Due to this *dhauti*, our body becomes relieved of impurities and healthy; our appetite also increases.

Drink the water slowly and fill the belly full. Rotate this water in the stomach and release out through the anus. This is the *vārisāra dhauti*.

Even by this our body gets cleaned. In *agnisāra dhauti*, the navel is pulled inside until it touches the backbone and then it is released. This should be performed 60-100 times. Through this one can attain *yoga siddhi*. In this way, the methods of cleaning the body are described in 12 - 44 verses in Ghērañḍa Samhita. *Danta dhauti* includes cleaning of teeth, gums, tongue, tongue root, ear passages and the fontanel at the top of the head. All these five *kriyas* put together constitute *danta dhauti*.

- **Dvītīyopadēṣa:** In this *upadēṣa* there is a description of *Āsanas*. It is said that Lord Śiva described 84 lakh *āsanas* which equal the number of types of created living organisms. Among these, 84 *āsanas* are important and description of 32 important *Āsanas* is given in the Samhita. These are mentioned as the following: 1) *Siddhāsana* 2) *Padmāsana* 3) *Bhadrāsana* 4) *Muktāsana* 5) *Vajrāsana* 6) *swastikāsana* 7) *Simhāsana* 8) *Gomukhāsana* 9) *Veerāsana* 10) *Dhanurāsana* 11) *Mrutāsana* 12) *Guptāsana* 13) *Matsyāsana* 14) *Matsyendrāsana* 15) *Gorakshāsana* 16) *Paschimottānasana* 17) *Utkatāsana* 18) *Samkatāsana* 19) *Mayūrāsana* 20) *Kukkutāsana* 21) *Kūrmāsana* 22) *Uttānmandūkāsana* 23) *Mandūkāsana* 24) *Vrukshāsana* 25) *Uttānakūrmāsana* 26) *Garudāsana* 27) *Vrushabhāsana* 28) *Shalabhāsana* 29) *Makarāsana* 30) *Ushṭrāsana* 31) *Bhujangāsana* and 32) *Yogāsana*. These 32 *āsanas* help to gain *siddhis*. These *āsanas*, their postures and benefits are described in this teaching. Through *Gorakshāsana*, one attains *siddhi* while *Bhujangāsana* has the power to activate *kundalini*.
- **Tritīyopadēṣa:** Description of about 23 *Mudras* in 70 verses is given in this *upadēṣa* that facilitate acquirement of various *Siddhis* by the *yogis*. *Mudras*, though are performed at the physical level, influence the mind and emotions and hasten the spiritual progress which in turn helps in attaining *siddhi*. Practice of *mudras*, if done regularly, leads to *Moksha*.

In this *Upadēṣa*, *Mahā Mudra*, *Nabhó mudra*, *Uḍḍiyāna*, *Jālandhara Bandha*, *Moola Bandha*, *Mahā vedha*, *Khécari*, *Viparīta Karaṇi*, *Yoni*, *Vajrolī*, *Shakti cālinī*, *Tadāgī*, *Māñḍūkī*, *Ṣāmbhavī*, *Pancha dhāraṇa*, *Aṣvinī*, *Pāṣini*, *Kākī*, *Mātangī*, *Bhujanginī* are the 25 *Mudras* described. It is mentioned that some *Mudras* have greater bearing than the others. *Uddiyana bandha* is said to be '*Mrutyumātanga kesari*' (like a lion for the elephant of death) and is extolled as '*Mukti Swabhāviki Bhavet*' i.e. liberation becomes a natural process. *Moola bandha* is called *Samsāra sāgara tāraṇakāra* (that which helps wade through the ocean of *samsāra*). *Mahā bandha* fulfills all the wishes. *Khécari* and *Yoni mudra* expedite the spiritual progress. *Ṣāmbhavi Mudra* is called superior to others and is stated to be '*Ṣāmbhavīyo vijānīyātsa ca brahmana nā cānyathā*' (3-67) (He who masters *Ṣāmbhavi Mudra* becomes none other than the *Brahman*).

- ***Caturdhopadeṣa - Pratyāhāra:*** It consists of just seven verses. In this *upadeṣa*, it is suggested to gain mind control by gaining control over the senses – the eyes, ears, skin, nose and tongue.
- ***Panchamopadeṣa - Prāñāyāma:*** Interestingly, rishi Ghéraṇḍa dealt with *Prāñāyāma* after *Pratyāhāra* and **not** before that, as in the case of Patanjali's Aṣṭanga Yoga. This teaching consists of 91 verses. In the very first verse itself it is said that *Prāñāyāma* has the power to transform the human being into God. In the next 32 verses preparations for practicing *Prāñāyāma* are described such as right place, ideal time and dietary regimen. Starting from the 5th verse that begins with '*Sudeṣé dhārmiké Rājyé*' till the 7th verse the criteria for choosing the right place are described. From 8th - 15th verses selecting the ideal time and seasons for commencing the practice of *Prāñāyāma* are described. For example, out

of the six seasons, four seasons (i.e. *Hemanta*, *Śishira*, *Grīshma*, *Varsha*) are to be avoided as it causes diseases and ailments.

Vasanté vāpi sharadi yogārambham tu samācarét |

Tadā yogo bhavetsiddho vināyāsena kathyate || }}G5-15||

Dietary Regimen: After this in 16 - 33 verses the rules for regulated diet and significance of limited intake of food quantity are mentioned. If there is no control on diet then it is an open invitation to many disorders. A list of foods that are to be consumed or avoided, the number of times and quantity etc., are described. Ghee and milk should be consumed during afternoon or evening before commencing *Prāñāyāma*. After this, the method for preparation of seat for *yoga* is described. The seat should be made up of *kuṣāsan* (made of a special kind of grass called *kuṣā*), *Mrigāgina* (deer hide), *Vyāghrāgina* (tiger skin) and blanket. It is also advised that one should sit facing east or north while practicing the *Nādiśuddhi Prāñāyāma*.

Nādiśuddhi: In verses 34 – 45, the procedure for *Nādiśuddhi* is described. How can a person perfect the method of *Prāñāyāma* or understand the intricate *yogic* philosophy as long as his *nādis* are full of defilements? Hence it is recommended that a practitioner must first perform *Nādiśuddhi* and remove impurities from the *nādis* without which the effort will be ineffective and futile.

Malākulāsu nādīshu, māruto naiva gacchati |

Prāñāyāmam katham siddhyen tatvadnyānam katham bhavet ||

Tasmānnādiśuddhimādau prāñāyāmam tatoabhyāsét ||GH5 - 35||

Nādiśuddhi is of two types. Out of these two types, '*Samānu śuddhikriya*' should be done together with *prāñāyāma (sabīja)* and the other, namely

'*nirmānu ṣuddhikriya*' should be performed in association with *dhauti kriya*.

Nādiṣuddhirdvidhā proktā, samanunirmanastathā |

Bījena samanum kuryāt, nirmānum dhauti karmañā ||GH5-36||

After this, *Nādiṣuddhi prāñāyāma* technique is explained. In this process, along with a *bijamantra*, *Pūraka* (inhalation) – *Kumbhaka* (retention)– *Récaka* (exhalation), should be done in the ratio of 16:64:32. In *Nādiṣuddhi prāñāyāma*, *Pūraka* should commence through the left nostril, followed by *Récaka* through the right nostril; again *Pūraka* be started through the right nostril, followed by *kumbhaka* and finally, *Récaka* should be done through the left nostril. in this way one cycle gets completed.

- ***Ashṭakumbhaka***: The text then describes *Ashṭa kumbhaka*. They are: *Sahita*, *Sūryabhedana*, *Ujjāyi*, *Shītalī*, *Bhastrika*, *Bhrāmari*, *Mūrchha* and *Kevali*. *Sītkāri* and *Plāvani prāñāyāma* are not mentioned in *Ghérañda Samhita*. *Sahita prāñāyāma* is of 2 types - *Sagarbha* and *Agarbha* (also called *nigarbha*) *prāñāyāma*. Such *prāñāyāma* which is performed along with the recitation of a *mantras* is called *sagarbha* while *prāñāyāma* performed without *mantras* is called *Agarbha*. This *prāñāyāma* should also be done in the ratio of 16:64:32. *Prāñāyāma* that has a ratio of 20:80:40 is the superior one; the one which has a ratio of 16:64:32 is the medium one and 12:48:24 is considered as the inferior one. The sign for successful practice of *kanisṭha* (inferior) *prāñāyāma* is perspiration of the body. A feeling of uncontrollable trembling and quaking is experienced along the spine in the moderate (*madhyama*) *prāñāyāma* and the superior causes *bhūmityāga* (floating/levitation of body in the air). Once mastery

is gained in *prāṇāyāma* all the diseases get eliminated, *kundalini* gets activated and one gets to experience no-mind state, thus it is stated in the next verse.

From verse 58 onwards other kinds of *prāṇāyāma* are described. In the verses 73-77 it is stated that through the practice of *Bhrāmari prāṇāyāma*, *Anāhat Nāda* can be heard. Later on *Mūrchcha* and *Kévali prāṇāyāma* are described in 78 - 84 verses. Shorter the depth of breath, shorter is the life. If the air taken in is retained inside, death can not occur. *Kevali Pranayam* is the state when the air inhaled is held absolutely still inside the body. It should be done 8 times a day. Once this is mastered, the whole world is at your feet! So says the last (91) verse.

- ***Shashtopadéṣa - Dhyāna:*** It consists of 22 verses about *Dhyana* (meditation). Three kinds of *Dhyāna* are described. They are *Sthūla*, *Jyoti* and *Sūkshma*. For practice of *Dhyāna*, guidance of *guru* is mandatory. In the *Sthūla Dhyāna*, one should concentrate his mind on the deity of his choice (2-14). In the *Jyoti dhyāna*, one should meditate on the *jyoti* present at the *Mūladhāra cakra*, (15 - 17 verses). *Sūkshma Dhyāna* is to be practiced in the *Ṣambhavi Mudra* (verses 18 – 22). In the 22nd verse it is said that *jyoti Dhyāna* is superior to *Sthūla Dhyāna*. *Sūkshma Dhyāna*, it is maintained, is difficult even for the gods.
- ***Saptamopadéṣa - Samādhi:*** It consists of 23 verses. In the very first verse itself it is said that *Sāmadhi* is the most coveted state that can be attained only by the luckiest who have the grace of *guru*. *Samādhi* is the state in which one transcends the body consciousness and merges with the god consciousness. In verses 1 - 6 general information of *Samādhi* is given followed by description of six types of *Samādhis* is given. With the *Ṣambhavi mudra* one should enter into *Samādhi of dhyāna yoga* and with

the help of *Bhrāmari Kumbhaka* the *yogi* should dissolve his mind in the *Bhrunganāda*. This is known as *Nāda yoga Samādhi*. *Rasānanda Samādhi* can be attained by doing *Khécari Mudra*. *Laya Siddhi* can be attained by *Yoni Mudra*. *Bhakti yoga Samādhi* is attained by Bhakti Yoga and *Mano mūrchha*. Such are the six types of *samādhis* and with the help of these, one can attain *Rājayoga Siddhi*. With the attainment of *samādhi*, one can be relieved from the cycle of birth and death. The *yogi* realizes that "I am of the nature of truth, consciousness and bliss, I am eternally free and by nature I am the *Brahman* and nothing else".

Thus the influence of Advaita Vedānta is apparent on *Ghérañḍa Samhita*.

Chapter 1: Practice Questions

Answer in one sentence.

- 1. What is the invaluable gift of India to the world?**
- 2. Which is the Sanskrit root word from which the word 'Yoga' is derived?**
- 3. What is meaning of 'Yuj'?**
- 4. Which chapter in *Bhagavad Gita* is exclusively dedicated to *yoga*?**
- 5. Who is the first propounder of *yoga*?**
- 6. How did Patanjali begin the *yoga Sūtras*?**
- 7. Enumerate the important works in *Haṭha Yoga*?**
- 8. In how many *sūtras* did *Patanjali* expound *yoga*?**
- 9. Where did *Patanjali* receive his education?**
- 10. Which work of *Patanjali* is an exposition on 'Panini's Grammar'?**
- 11. In how many parts did *Patanjali* describe *Yoga*?**
- 12. What are the four *Pādas* of *Patanjali Yoga sutras*?**

13. What are the eight parts of *Ashṭāṅg Yoga* described by Pantanjali?
14. How many yoga *sūtras* are there in '*Samādhi pāda*'?
15. How many yoga *sūtras* are there in the *Sādhana pāda* of *Patanjali's Yoga darśana*?
16. In how many *sūtras* did Pantanjali present the '*Trtīya pāda*'?
17. In how many *sūtras* did Patanjali describe '*Kaivalya Pāda*'?
18. In which century was the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* written?
19. What is the meaning of *Haṭha yoga*?
20. What is the aim of *Haṭha yoga*?
21. Who authored the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?
22. Why *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* is also known as *Caturanga yoga*?
23. What are the four parts of *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?
24. How many *ślokas* are there in the *Prathamopadeśa* of *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?
25. How many *ślokas* are there in the *Dvītīyopadeśa* of *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?
26. How many *ślokas* are there in the *Trtīyopadeśa* of *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?
27. Which are the ten *mudras* in *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?
28. Who presented the ten *mudras* in *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?
29. What are the purification processes to be practiced before *prāñāyāma*, as described in *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?
30. Which are the *Shatkarmas* in the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?
31. What is *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
32. Which king is mentioned in *Ghérañḍa Samhita* as being taught by *Rishi Ghérañḍa*?

33. Who wrote *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
34. How many verses (*ślokas*) are there in *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
35. In *Ghérañḍa Samhita*, what is the body compared to?
36. What is the name given to *yoga* in *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
37. How many types of *yogic* procedures described in *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
38. What are the *Shatkarmas* described in *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
39. Which are the types of *Dhauti*?
40. Describe in detail the *Saptāṅga Yoga* of *Ghérañḍa Samhita*.
41. How many *ślokas* are given in the Prathamopadeṣa of *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
42. How many verses (*ślokas*) are there in the Dvitīyopadeṣa of *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
43. How many verses (*ślokas*) are given in the Trtīyopadeṣa of *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
44. In which *upadeṣa* are *Mudras* described?
45. How many verses (*ślokas*) are given in the Caturdhopadeṣa of *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?
46. How many verses (*ślokas*) are there in the Panchamopadeṣa of *Ghérañḍa Samhita*?

Give Answers in Brief:

1. Explain the scope of *yoga*?
2. Give three definitions of *Yoga*?
3. Through which verse (*śloka*) *Raja Bhartrhari* saluted *Patanjali*? Explain.

4. Describe the *caturangaYoga* of *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* in 8 to 10 sentences?

5. Write elaborately on the *Shatkarmas* as described in the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika*?

6. How many types of *Dhauti* are there? Explain.

Chapter – 2 Patanjali *Yoga Darṣana*

Part – 2

Unit Structure

- 2.0 – Objectives.
- 2.1 – Introduction.
- 2.2 – Significance.
 - 2.2.1 – *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* of Patanjali.
 - 2.2.2 – *Antarāya* (impediments) in *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*.
 - 2.2.3 – Importance and types of Patanjali *Prāñāyāma*.
 - 2.2.4 – *Bahiranga Yoga* (outer yoga) and *Antaranga Yoga* (inner yoga).
 - 2.2.5 – Enumeration of some important *Yoga Sūtras*.

1.0 Objectives:

- 1) To understand the *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* of Patanjali.
- 2) To understand the *Antarāyas* (impediments) in yoga as described by Patanjali.
- 3) To understand the *Prāñāyāma* in *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* and understand its significance.
- 4) To understand *Bahiranga Yoga* (outer yoga) and *Antaranga Yoga* (inner yoga).
- 5) To understand the meaning of selected *Yoga sūtras* from Patanjali *Yoga darṣana*.

2.1 Introduction:

Generally, people are of the opinion that *Yoga* means only *āsana* and *prāṅṅāyāma*. But in fact, it is not just limited to *āsana* and *prāṅṅāyāma* alone; these are among the eight limbs of *yoga*, all of which, *rishi* Patanjali has recommended to practice. The eight *angas* or limbs of *yoga* are: *Yama* (restraint), *Niyama* (observance), *Āsana* (body postures), *Prāṅṅāyāma* (controlled breathing), *Pratyāhāra* (abstraction), *Dhāraṇa* (concentration), *Dhyāna* (meditation) and *Samādhi* (spiritual absorption). These are called the *angas* or limbs of *Yoga* because, just as every organ has specific utility and contributes to the overall functioning of the body, similarly each part or limb of *yoga* has its own significance and contributes to the overall success of *yoga*. If the practitioner falls short in any of them, the practice of *yoga* will remain incomplete and crippled. Just as body's overall health is dependent on each and every part of the body and if even one part or organ is missing or malfunctioning, the entire body is affected, in the same way *Yoga* and its limbs have similar relationship. But it does not mean that all are of the same importance. For example, a practitioner should strictly adhere to *Yamas*, non-compliance of which will render downfall of the practitioner whereas flexibility is allowed in the practice of *Niyamas*. Similarly, one should practice *Āsana* and *Prāṅṅāyāma* according to the physical constituency and health conditions of respective individuals. But *Pratyāhāra* must be practiced mandatorily. The first 5 *angas* are *Bahiranga sādhanā* or outer practices and the last 3 are *Antaranga sādhanā* or inner practices. The practice of last three limbs of *Yoga* is declared as mandatory. From the Indian philosophical perspective, *Yoga* is retirement from worldly pleasures and an orientation towards spiritual consciousness.

The human body is viewed as a wealth. This body of flesh and bones is made from 5 great elements (*Panca bhūta*) namely *Prthvi* (earth), *Jala* (water), *Teja*

(fire), *Vāyu* (air) and *Ākāśa* (space). These five elements in turn produce five subtle essences namely sound, touch, form, taste and smell which are experienced by the sense organs ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose respectively. The five sense organs with the help of the five subtle elements experience the external world through auditory (hearing), tactile (touching), visual (seeing), gustatory (tasting) and olfactory (smelling) sensations. The processes like holding by hand, walking by legs, talking by mouth as well as excretion by anus and reproduction by the sexual organ are all carried out by their respective motor organs. These 10 *indriyas* (five sense organs and five motor organs) perform their respective duties under the command of the mind. The mind is controlled by the intellect (*buddhi*) and so, man is able to acquire knowledge through the senses and otherwise. This control of *buddhi* on *mana* also brings restraint on the actions one performs. To not let the intellect swayed away by the ego and driven on a wrong path, man applies his wisdom, controls his intellect and thus, strives to lead a purposeful life.

Real healthy living is one which ensures the wholesomeness, health and wellbeing of body, senses, mind, intellect, ego substance and the storage repository of memories (*citta*). The scope and meaning of health is wide and includes physical, moral, mental and intellectual wellbeing. Though superficially they may appear different, their interrelation comes to the fore when we begin to diagnose ailment at any of these levels. The effect of disorders can encompass body, organs, brain, nervous system, mind, intellect, ego and the *citta* but we many not realize the extent of the malady. Unfortunately the ailment of *citta* is not yet covered under the ambit of the modern medicine. According to the traditional view, even health is of three types namely *Sātvika*, *Rājasika* and *Tāmasika*. The concern to maintain only physical health is *tāmasika*; upkeep of the health of senses, mind and ego at

moral and mental planes is *rājasika* and wellbeing and maintaining the health of *buddhi* and *citta* at the intellectual level is the *sātvika* wellbeing.

Illness one gets at physical level due to unclean and untreated food can be readily recognized. But its affect on mind can't be recognised easily and is visible only after sometime. There is not much difference between health and habits. The habits one acquires during childhood require constant practice. Even at the tender age of suckling the thumb, the child's *citta* is contaminated with the six enemies like lust (*kāma*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*), delusion (*moha*), vanity (*mada*) and jealousy (*matsara*). Therefore there is a need to develop right habits and discipline as one begins to grow. *Sanskāra* or habits and disciplines developed during the childhood are the foundation on which ethical superstructure is to be built for the lifetime. The *Yama-Niyamas* expounded by Patanjali are the *Sanskāras* carried out on the body, sense organs, mind, ego, intellect and the memory repository (*citta*). *Ahimsa*, *satya*, *Astēya*, *Brahmacarya* and *Aparigraha* are the 5 restraints prescribed under *Yama* and *ṣauca*, *santosha*, *tapas*, *svādhyāya* and *Ishwara prañidhāna* are 5 directives under *Niyama*. These are suitable for one and all. *Yama-Niyamas* help in restraining the mind from following the wrong path. For example, practicing non-violence does not only mean not to be violent in action alone but it also means eliminating the tendency of violence altogether from our body, motor organs (*karmendriya*), sense organs (*Dyanéndriya*), mind (*Mana*), Ego (*Ahankāra*) and intellect (*Buddhi*). Similarly *Brahmacarya* also signifies ethical conduct in respect of family and marriage, while one is in the stage of a householder (*grihastāśrama*).

If we observe the state of affairs of humans in the modern times, we will realize that the root cause of all the ailments that the modern man suffers from is due to the non-adherence to these rules and regulations and his uncontrolled craving for sensual gratification. The physical and mental healths are dependent on each

other. Human behavior, conduct, his duty-boundness and the mental peace are related to each other. Practice of *Yama-Niyamas* and wholehearted acceptance of *Yogasūtras* save oneself from wrongdoings in life. Similarly, striving to arrest mental activities means our willingness to lead a peaceful life through the practice of *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*.

2.2 Significance:

A lot is written about *Mana* or Mind in *Upanishads*, *Mahābhārata*, *Purāṇas* etc. Sifting through these treatises and minutely observing the nature of mind, the Patanjali *Yoga Darśana* was written. In *Yoga Darśana*, Sage Patanjali has presented the knowledge of *yoga* systematically in the form of *sūtras* that was scattered all across the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Purāṇas*, etc. His compilation was so simple, complete and illuminating that *Yoga Śāstra* received the status of a *darśana śāstra* and is considered as the foundational treatise of *yoga* even today. Patanjali's *Yoga Darśana* consists of 196 *sūtras* and is divided into 4 parts. *Yoga Śāstra* is presented in 8 limbs (parts), therefore it is called *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*. The eight limbs are: *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*. These 196 *sūtras* are placed in 4 parts called *Pādas* that are –

1) *Samādhi Pāda* 2) *Sādhana Pāda* 3) *Vibhūti Pāda* 4) *Kaivalya Pāda*.

Sage Patanjali felt the need to extract the *Yoga Śāstra*, which is embedded in the *Vedānta Brahmavidya* and compile it in the form of aphorisms and present the *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* in four *Pādas*. The first *pāda* is called *Samādhi Pāda* and consists of 51 *sūtras*. In this chapter, Patanjali described five kinds of mental activities called *vritti* and further categorized them into two subtypes. This chapter also mentions methods for arresting the mental activities (*nirodha*), different techniques for *citta prasādana*, impediments (*Antarāya*) on the path of *yoga*, mental distractions (*Vikshépa sahabhuva*) along with their description. It also mentions about various kinds of *Samādhis* such as *Sampradṛṇyāta*, *Asampradṛṇyāta*, *Sabīja*, *Nirbīja*, as well as *Rutambharā Pradṛṇya*. At the same

time *sūtras* concerning the last limb of *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*, namely *Samādhi* are also included in this chapter. This chapter is called *Samādhi Pāda* because it describes the methods for *Citta vritti Nirodhah* and attaining *Samādhi*.

The second *Pāda* i.e. *Sādhana Pāda* consists of 55 *sūtras*. In this *Pāda*, the first five of among the eight limbs of *yoga* that take the practitioner towards *Samādhi* are mentioned. They are *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāñāyāma* and *Pratyāhāra*. These tools are external practices that enable the practitioner to attain *Samādhi* and hence this chapter is named as *Samādhi Pāda*.

Tritiya Pāda or the third chapter is *vibhūti Pāda*. It consists of 56 *sūtras*. *Vibhūti* means *siddhi*. It consists of *sūtras* concerning *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*. These last three limbs together are called *Antaranga Yoga*. Strict practice of these three limbs of *Yoga* leads to attainment of many *siddhis*. *Sūtras* related to *vibhūti* (supernatural powers) are given in this chapter and hence it is named as *Vibbhūti Pāda*.

Caturtha Pāda is called *kaivalya Pāda*. It consists of 34 *sūtras*. By the practice of *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* one rids oneself off the impurities called *Rajas* and *Tamas* qualities which leads to the enlightenment of the *citta* and the practitioner becomes inward oriented. This is a state where the *yogi* unites with the pure consciousness of the self and is well established in his primal nature. This state is of *Kaivalya or Moksha*. In this way, Patanjali has presented his *sūtras* in 4 parts and elaborated on the definitions, philosophical significance and benefits of the eight limbs of *yoga*.

2.2.1. Aṣṭāṅga Yoga of Patanjali?

All the credit goes to *Muni Patanjali* for compiling the entire *Yoga Śāstra* in the form of aphorisms (*sūtras*) and elevating its stature to that of a *darśana śāstra*. Sage Patanjali presented the concepts of *yoga* in the form of eight limbs called

Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prāñāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhāraṇa, Dhyāna, and Samādhi. These 8 limbs or facets of *yoga* are given in following verse:

यमनियमासन प्राणायाम प्रत्याहार धारणा ध्यान
समाधयोऽष्टावड. गानि ॥ पा.यो.सू. २-२९॥

*Yama Niyama Āsana Prāñāyāma Pratyāhāra Dhāraṇa
Dhyāna Samādhīyo Aṣṭāṅgāni //P.Y.S. 2-29//*

Maharishi Patanjali has defined *yoga* as “*Yogāscitta vritti Nirodhah*” meaning *yoga* is arresting the mental activity. And the aim of human life is to try for the unification of the individual soul with the universal soul and this process is described as consisting of *Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prāñāyāma, Pratyahar, Dhāraṇa, Dhyāna and Samādhi.* Hence it is called *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*. Just as the oil hidden in sesame seeds, fragrance hidden in the flowers and clarified butter (*Ghee*) hidden in the milk can't be obtained easily without making effort, in the same way soul immanent in the body can't be experienced without straining the body, mind and the intellect. Therefore practice of *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* should be done. In the first limb *Yama*, the ethical restraints for social conduct are included. They are *Ahimsā* (non-injury), *Satya* (truthfulness), *Astēya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacarya* (countenance and celibacy) and *Aparigraha* (non-avarice). The second limb i.e. *Niyama* includes *Ṣauca* (hygiene and cleanliness), *Santosha* (being happy), *Tapas* (penance), *Svādhyāya* (reading of philosophical texts conducive for spiritual upliftment) and *Iṣvara prañidhāna* (devotion towards God) which are personal in nature. With these two *Yogic* practices, the emotions and propensities are brought under control and let the practitioner maintain cordial relationship with others. *Āsanas* constitute the 3rd limb whose practice is meant to keep the body healthy and fit and gain mental balance and tranquility. With the practice of *Āsanas*, the body becomes disease free and strong and becomes attuned with the nature.

With the practice of *yoga* the body consciousness declines and control over bodily functions is gained which in turn enables the practitioner to make the body a vehicle for spiritual realization. These 3 limbs are called *Bahirang Sādhana* (externalities). The fourth limb *Prāṇāyāma* includes inhalation and exhalation of breath in a regularized and rhythmic manner. And in the fifth limb *Pratyāhāra*, the techniques for controlling the 5 senses are described. These 2 limbs of *Yoga* are known as *Antaranga Sādhana* (inner practices). *Dhyāna* the next limb describes the technique for fixing the body, senses and mind on one object and being absorbed with that object of concentration. *Samādhi*, the last limb describes complete merger of subject-object duality. The practitioner realizes the truth that God resides in the form of indwelling soul in all of us. *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi* – these 3 lead to the self realization and attainment of the Godhead.

Let us study these 8 limbs in detail:

1) *Yama* – Ethical/Moral Vows of Social Conduct:

Yama means to control. These are the restraints imposed on the self that comprise of five vows of restriction. Since very ancient times, man has been a social creature. He cannot live in isolation. As a member of the society, he has certain duties and rights. And he has to follow certain rules and regulations for the happiness of others and himself.

अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहाः यमाः ।

जातिदेशकालसमयानवच्छिन्नाः सार्वभौमा महाव्रतम् ॥ (पा.यो.२/३०,३१)

Ahimsāsatyāsteya brahmacaryāparigrahāḥ: Yamāḥ: |

Jātidēṣakālasamayānavachchitrah sārvabhaumā mahāvratam ||

//P.Y. S. 2/30,31//

The 5 directives given by Patanjali for social conduct are:

Ahimsā (non-violence), *Satya* (truthfulness), *Astēya* (not to steal) *Brahmacarya* (well controlled sexual conduct) and *Aparigraha* (non-avarice).

These universal ethical values are not limited to any birth, place, time or context. It means that they can be followed by a person of any birth, at any place, time. With due to adherence to these qualities, purification of the mind occurs.

In other *yoga samhitas* too, there are many prescriptions mentioned for purifying the mind from the root. For example, in the *yogópanishad* there are 10 directives under the title *Yama*, which are: *Ahimsā*, *Satya*, *Astéya*, *Brahmacarya*, *Kshama*, *Dhruti*, *Iṣvara Nishṭā*, *Daya*, *Mitāhāra* and *Ṣauca*. *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* also describes these ten prescriptions for social conduct.

- **1. *Ahimsā* :**

Himsa refers to absence of love. Violence arises from the feeling of animosity. Love has the power to keep everyone united. At the core of *yoga*, there is no scope for violence; it is filled only with love for every creature. Violence is an aftermath or result of fear, selfishness, anger and faithlessness. *Ahimsā* is just the opposite of *himsa* or violence. *Ahimsā* means giving due respect to all the existence. Importantly, *Ahimsā* is a state of mind.

Patanjali states that the one who eschews even the thoughts of violence completely and walks on the path of *yoga* automatically gets rid of the feelings of hatred and jealousy.

- **2. *Satya* :**

“Speak the truth, speak in a pleasing way, but never speak even the truth in an unpleasant manner. And at the same time do not speak a lie even if it is pleasing to the listener”. This is the advice given in the *Mahābhārata*.

According to the *Darṣanópanishad*, the proof that we get from the experience of 5 *dñyāéndriyas* is the truth or *satya*. According to the *yoga śāstra*, agreement in what is comprehended by the mind and the intellect is the only truth and this is the only right knowledge.

The practice of *yoga* should trickle down into our conduct through our speech, thoughts and actions. The one who lies is more dangerous than a snake. It is said that the tongue doesn't have a bone and therefore can bend in anyway and therefore it is important to control it. It is not possible to say when it will leave the path of truth and tread on the path of falsity.

- **3. *Astéya* (Non-stealing) :**

Patanjali ordains not to steal. It means only to ask for what rightfully belongs to one. And to steal or desire for others' belongings or unnecessary desire for material wealth also comes under stealing.

The one who follows *astéya* is blessed with wealth, eventhough he does not desire for it and he uses his wealth for his necessities as well as welfare of others.

- **4. *Brahmacarya* :**

It is not the mere observance of celibacy but practicing licit sexual conduct within the ambit of marriage. Kalidāsa, the most illustrious poet of India in his *Raghuvamṣam* described about ideal kings of the Sun clan (*Surya vamsa*) in the following verse.

त्यागाय संभृतरथानां प्रजार्थं गृहमेधिनाम् (रघुवंश १/७)

Tyāgāya sambhrurtārthānām prajārtham gruha medhinām (Raghuvamsha 1/7)
(The kings of *Surya* clan had desired money only for charity (*Tyāga*) and cohabited with a woman only for progeny.)

Kāma is included in the four *purushārdhas* (objects of human pursuit) and is certainly one of the powerful driving forces of human life. But it requires to be properly guided and controlled. The married couple shall have to be loyal to each other and discharge their respective duties with diligence. Uncontrolled desires surely take one to the bottom.

- **5. *Aparigraha*:**

It is the fifth directive (*Yama*). *Parigraha* means to stock or hoard or collect. To collect the material beyond our needs or requirements is *Parigraha* while averting such greed is *Aparigraha*. If the tendency to hoard becomes a habit it would be very difficult to come out of it. To some extent, we need to keep things e.g., storing annual requirement of grains. Each person needs to store things to sustain his body. This is not considered as hoarding. The source of hoarding is in the desire for the objects. Even while praying to the God we beg for many things. This kind of prayer is not a selfless prayer. He who is not attracted toward unnecessary objects and physical comforts, only he can be free from the malady called avarice. Patanjali says he who readily abdicates the feeling of 'I' and 'Mine' only he can understand the things in the right perspective.

How does this *Aparigraha* help?

अपरिग्रहस्थैर्ये जन्मकथन्तासंबोधः //३९//

Aparigrahasthairyai Janmakathantāsambodhaha //P.Y.S. 2-39//

Permanent stability in non-possessiveness produces perfect knowledge and understanding of birth(s) and incarnations. *Aparigraha* enable us to understand our past and future births as well as the present one. If we avoid hoarding or stocking unnecessary things, tensions and stresses reduce. The cluttering of thoughts also reduces. The mind becomes stress free. All worries about safety, loss and gain disappear. Open-mindedness and free attitude develop. This results in the knowledge of past and future lives and a complete understanding of the Self.

2) Niyama - Observances

Patanjali enlists *Niyamas* in this aphorism that prescribes the obligatory observances pertaining to both body and mind:

शौचसंतोषतपस्वाध्यायश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः । (यो.सू.२/३२)

Ṣauca santosha tapah svādhyāya Iṣvaraprañidhānāni Niyamāh //P.Y.S.2/32//

External and internal cleanliness, contentment and happiness, penance, study of scriptures conducive for spiritual progress, devotion and dedication to the God are the prescriptions (*Niyama*) for self development. In other texts, there is a mention of seven more *niyamas* or observances. They are: *Āstikya* (faith in the god and permanence of the soul), *dāna* (charity), *hri* (fortitude), *mati* (attentiveness), *japa* (repetition of a sacred *mantra*), *siddhānta-vākya śravaṇa* (listening to the philosophical discourses), and *Vrata* (fasts and vows).

• **1. *Ṣauca*:**

The term '*Ṣauca*' refers to the external and internal cleanliness of both the body and the mind. Apart from the cleansing of the sense organs, *ṣaucha* includes those habits that are conducive to the wellbeing and good health. For example, using own cloths to avoid contagious diseases, consuming foods that are soft and require less mastication – these and similar habits eventhough are for the external cleanliness, their practice leads to the internal cleansing of the body as well as the mind.

Physical cleanliness is of two types - external cleaning that includes bathing, cleaning of the teeth, gargling, putting oil in the ears, washing the eyes 3-4 times a day, etc., which should also be practiced regularly.

Internal cleasing, especial of the digestive oregans is important. External substances contantly enter the body. They included toxic liquids, germs, chemical etc, which cause disorders. Also, due to air pollution, the impurities keep on entering the respiratory system constantly, only to erupt as respiratory aliments. To combat these, *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* has advised six types of cleaning methods or *Ṣuddhi kriyas*.

• **2. *Santosha*:**

The term '*Santoshā*' refers to the state of contentment. Contentment is a state of the mind that helps in the physical and mental health and is conducive for one's progress. Greed and envy that crop up from the discontentment can never be satiated. On the other hand, with contentment the mind becomes balanced and thereby the practitioner experiences real happiness. This contentedness (*Santoshā*) is regarded as a divine attribute.

- **3. *Tapas*:**

Tapas or penance is a constant attempt to keep the purity of the mind and speech and decimate all kinds of inclinations and temptations from within. Practice of vow, fasting on auspicious days, maintaining brotherly and courteous conduct, curbing the activities of the senses – these are called bodily penance. Not to trouble others and not to entertain bad and negative thoughts – these are called mental penance. Similarly, judicious use of speech only to extol the virtues of the God is the vocal penance. With the practice of penance, the bodily and mental impurities are removed and one gains control on the senses. With the regular practice of *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma*, penance becomes fortified.

- **4. *Svādhyāya*:**

Having discharged the responsibilities, attempting to focus the energies of body, mind and intellect in the search for the Ultimate Truth is called *svādhyāya*. Whether the practitioner is in the waking state, dream state or in deep sleep, his mind should always be in the constant state of meditation.

- **5. *Ishwara Prañidhāna*:**

Doing one's duties with detachment and offering the fruits of the actions to the Almighty – this is the real nature of devotion. As all desires get exterminated, the practitioner becomes one with the God.

The above code of conduct is not just restricted to the *yoga* practitioners but is universal in its appeal. Hence, these prescriptions can be found in almost all the religions. But the next limb, viz., *āsana* is found exclusively in the *yoga* alone.

3) **Āsana**

Āsanas are *yoga's* special feature. *Āsanas* help the practitioner to use this very body as a tool for spiritual progress. Āsanas are not only the starting point of *yoga* but also are the very foundation for the *Yoga vidya*. There is a general misunderstanding that Patanjali did not give *Āsanas* the place they deserve in his *yoga sūtras* and focused only on spiritual practice (*sādhana*). It is also normally believed that Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika, on the contrary, focuses fully on physical practices and only makes passing references to spiritual practice. But both of these are wrong views.

In the first chapter (*Adhyāya*) of Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika there is only superficial description of *yama* and *niyama* because their universal application is presupposed in it. Hence this work begins with the exposition on the third limb of *yoga* viz., *āsana* and culminates in *samādhi*. In other words, this treatise begins with the entanglements at the body level and describes every subsequent step till one attains a state of liberation from entanglements, i.e., *moksha*.

Āsana is a special state of the body which assumes the body as the seat or abode of the God. Āsana must be stable so as to provide a stable seat for the indwelling God. As the practice of *āsanas* (specific body postures) progresses, the bodily pain gets reduced and stability in the body postures is attained. This state is called 'victory in the body postures' ('Āsana-Jaya') and the practitioner becomes skilled. With the stability, comes comfort in the posture. At this state, the practice of *āsana* is not carried out from the body or mind but rather, it is executed by the indwelling soul ('Antaratma'). In this condition the *sādhaka* not only gains control on his body but even the dichotomies and dualities of the

mind disappear leaving the *citta* (storage of memories, alternately, the base mind) and *ātma* (soul) united. Sage Patanjali defined *āsana* as '*sthira sukhamāsanam*' (Y.S. 2/46). It means *āsanas* accord stability to the body and comfort the mind. Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika also describes *āsana* in a similar way. Alternatively, it also means that *āsana* is one which is stable and comfortable.

Body and mind are closely intertwined and interdependent. Physical discomfort affects the mind and reciprocally, mental disturbances have a bearing on the body. With the unbroken practice of *yogāsana*, the mind becomes well prepared and cleansed and all the impediments it encounters in its activities are removed. *Āsanas* ascribe health, balance, agility and immunity to the practitioner. The secret behind victory over the body lies in the control one masters on *āsanas*. Only from this important limb of the *yoga* that the practitioner begins his spiritual journey.

4) Prāñāyāma – Breath Control

Prāñāyāma means breath control. Due to *prāñāyāma*, the practitioner (*sādhaka*) gets mental peace, and body's neural activity becomes well controlled. The endurance of the body and mind is enhanced. In the Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika the benefits of *prāñāyāma* are stated in the following *śloka*:

प्राणायामेन युक्तेन सर्वरोगक्षयो भवेत् ।

Prāñāyāména yukténa sarvarógakshayo bhavet /

(With the right practice of *prāñāyāma* procedure, all bodily ailments are cured.)

With the right practice of breath control, the beating of pulse becomes stable and regularized. Body becomes flexible and skin becomes resplendent and glowing. Patanjali states the effect of *prāñāyāma* in the following *sūtras*:

ततः क्षीयते प्रकाशावरम् । धारणासु च योग्यता मनसः । (यो.सू. ५२,५३)

Tatah kshīyaté Prakāśāvaram |

Dhāraṇasu ca yogyatā manasah ||

//PYS2.52, 53//

With the practice of *prāṇāyāma*, the layers of ignorance covering the natural illumination of the self are gradually worn out and the mind becomes fit for the practice of the next limb of the *yoga* namely, *dhāraṇa*.

Prāṇa means (*vāyu*), the breath or the *elan vital*, the force of life. *Āyāma* means expansion in the length, breath and depth.

$$Prāṇāyāma = Prāna + Āyāma$$

The methodical and systematic elongation of in-breath, out-breath and the intermediate pause is called *prāṇāyāma*.

After attaining expertise in *Āsana*, making the breathing process deeper, subtler and more rhythmic is called *prāṇāyāma*.

➤ **There are three important processes in *Prāṇāyāma*:**

- ***Récaka***- Exhalation of the *prāṇa vāyu* (out breath) from the body. The vital breath *prāṇa vāyu* lies centred at the navel region. At the time of exhalation, it moves upwards, enters the region of heart and through the lungs, comes out of the nostrils. This is the right method of exhalation according to *yoga*.
- ***Pūraka***: Inhalation of the *prāṇa vāyu* (vital air) into the body. The clean air from outside enters the body through the nostrils, and via the lungs and heart, reaches the navel region. This is the right way of inhalation according to *yoga*.
- ***Kumbhaka***: Retention of breath. *Kumbha* in Sanskrit means pot. Just as a pot can be either filled or empty, in the same way, there are two states of *Kumbhaka*. The retention of breath after inhalation and pausing the

breathing process is called *antara kumbhaka* and holding of the breath after exhalation (when the lungs are empty) is called *bahir kumbhaka*.

- ***Kévala Kumbhaka***: This is the third type of *kumbhaka* which is the advanced form of breath retention. In this state there is no awareness of inhalation or exhalation and the breath is held impromptu. This state, where there is no awareness of in-breath, out-breath, time or place, is experienced when the *yogi* is completely absorbed in a deep meditation.

Another advantage with *prāñāyāma* is that the practitioner will have an opportunity to practice repetition of a sacred *mantra* (*japa*) or practice with fervent devotion. *Japa* means unbroken iteration or repetition of either a sacred *mantra* or the sacred syllables ‘*ham sah*’. ‘*Ham*’ means ‘I’ or the ‘self’ and ‘*saha*’ means ‘He’. The meaning of ‘*hamsah*’ is “I am Him”. With every inspiration (in-breath) the *jivātma* or the fettered soul says “*Ham*” or “I am” and with every expiration (out-breath), says “*saha*” or “Him”. This recitation continues unconsciously starting from the birth until the death. Hence this repetition of *hamsa* is called ‘*ajapa hamsa vidya*’. Conversely it is also express as ‘*soham*’.

Just as the devotee merges with the form of the God, in the practice of devotion, similarly in case of *prāñāyāma* also, the practitioner unites with the universal consciousness. In the *antar kumbhaka* he gets into communion with this primordial energy of the indwelling spirit and in *bāhya kumbhaka*, he unites himself with the universal consciousness.

5) **Pratyāhāra Indriya Samyamana**

Our five sense organs come into contact with the external world under the direction of the mind. Attracted by the objects and in anticipation of the carnal pleasures, the sense organs always remain outward oriented. Seated in a

comfortable posture (*sukhāsana*), directing the sense organs inward is called *pratyāhāra* also known as *indriya samyamana* (sense control).

- The method of obtaining self knowledge is as follows: The collective action of objects, sense organs, mind and soul results in acquirement of knowledge. Absence of any of them or any obstruction in the process of mutual contact among them, results in the delinking or abatement of the process of acquirement of knowledge. We all know that when the mind is absent, even though the senses are in contact with their respective sensory stimuli, they are not registered in the mind. But this state of mind is not *pratyāhāra* but absentmindedness or being lost in thoughts or dreams. This is an involuntary act but whereas in *pratyāhāra*, the mind is intentionally diverted from the sense organs inward. Thus the energies of the mind which are normally expended in the outward activity are saved in *pratyāhāra*. When the mind caught in the mire of carnal pleasures, comes out of it and begins to focus inwardly, then control on the sense organs is automatically attained. This control on the sense organs and turning them inward is called *pratyāhāra*.

6) ***Dhāraṇa***

देशबन्धश्चित्तस्त्वा धारणा । (योगे.सू.३/१)

Déṣabandhascittasya dhāraṇa (Y.S.3/1)

‘To focus fully on the self’ is the definition given by Patanjali for *dhāraṇa*. In the *Śāndilyopanishad*, five ways are stated for attaining *dhāraṇa*. To focus the *citta* (mind) on the soul, to develop internal imagery of the mind, to contain the five elements present in the body along with their qualities and features, constant contemplation on *Brahman* or *Iṣvara*, and meditating upon the tutelary deity.

Under the influence of the five subtle elements such as scent, taste, form, touch and sound, the mind vacillates here and there. The experience of these subtle elements is received through the five sense organs viz., nose, tongue, eyes, skin and ears. The technique of diverting the mind from their influence and bringing it inward is to be learnt through practice. The state where, the mind, intellect and ego become completely dependent on the soul is called *dhāraṇa*. As the practitioner masters *dhāraṇa*, he prepares himself for the next limb, i.e., *dhyāna*.

7) ***Dhyāna:***

Staying put in a prolonged state of *dhāraṇa* unmindful of place and time is called *dhyāna*. In the state of *dhyāna*, in the unbroken flow of meditation, the body (*Sharir*), vital energy (*Prāṇa*), mind (*Mana*), intellect (*Budhhi*) and ego *Ahankar* (ego) lose their independent identity and merge in a unified state of universal consciousness. The immersion of the individual self into the universal soul is called *dhyāna*.

8) ***Samādhi:***

The eighth and the last part of *yoga sādhana* is *Samādhi*. Just as the river loses its independent identity after merging into the sea, in the same way when one gets merged in the universal soul his identity gets destroyed. In this state, one is fully absorbed in a state of meditation. *Dhyāni* (one who is meditating), *Dhyāna* (meditation), *Dhyāna Lakshya* (object of meditation) all these three get unified into one entity. The meditator experiences a state of bliss that is beyond happiness, suffering and worry.

Shri Krishna in *Bhagvad Gita* says:

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्महविः ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्म समाधीना ॥

Brahmārpaṇam brahmahaviḥ brahmāgnou brahmañā hutam /

Bramhaiva tena gantavyam bramha karma Samādhinā //

(In the state of *samādhi*, the practitioner offers the oblation of the self into the fire of *Brahman*. This leads to its purification and the soul gets unified with the universal soul).

Sādhak (practitioner) is like an archer. He takes the bow in hand, concentrates his mind on the aim of soul and leaves the arrow of *citta* at the right time of actualization and attains the ultimate target of self realization. At that time, all the duality gets destroyed. There remains no difference between Archer i.e. *sādhak*, his weapon (*Śastra*) and the aim (*Lakshya*).

Success comes from following the *Yogānushṭān* in a sequence of *bahiranga sādhana*, *antaranga sādhana* and *antarātma sādhana*. Just as at *prayāg* the confluence of *Ganga*, *Yamuna* and the invisible *Saraswati* takes place, similarly the junction where *Bhakti mārg*, *Karma mārg* and *Dh̄yana mārg* meet, that is the ultimate point of *yoga sādhana*.

It may be misunderstood based on this broad description of *Ashṭānga Yoga* that it is meant only for those whose sole object is liberation. But indeed, it is for everyone. It is even for those who have no understanding of *ātma* and *paramātman* nor have the intellectual capacities to comprehend the Absolute or who do not have faith in these teachings or those who are fully engaged in worldly pleasures. Therefore, let the person be anyone, of any caste, religion, tribe, sex, language, country or community – with the practice of *yoga*, one gets elevated in both mundane and spiritual spheres. The only precondition for the practice of *yoga* is unbiased approach and the readiness to acquire what is conducive for one's betterment. The rules and regulations prescribed in *Yama* and *Niyama* are for the good of the individual and the society and there is nothing that is beyond the reach of any individual. *Āsana - Prāñāyāma* can be

easily learned from the *Guru* or by observation and can be learnt with diligent effort. Their results can also be seen fast. With the practice of *Āsana* - *Prāṇāyāma*, even the *Yama* - *Niyama* get incorporated into one's life effortlessly. The dietary and recreational habits get regulated. Habits, practices, thoughts, etc., become refined. *Dhāraṇa* and *dhyāna* will also be attained to some degree. Along with these benefits, the practice of *āsana* & *prāṇāyāma* bestows the practitioner with physical, mental, and emotional health and peace of mind. Intellectual acumen, zeal and cheerfulness also increase and balance among body, mind and intellect is achieved.

The 8 limbs of yoga described by Patanjali contribute to the overall good in the following way:

- **Yama** : It consists of restraints for maintaining societal order.
- **Niyama**: It consists of rules for the self.
- **Āsana**: This part explains the benefit of *āsanas* for physical health.
- **Prāṇāyāma**: This limb emphasizes the control over breath for mental health.
- **Pratyāhāra**: This limb explains the ways and means to have control over *indriyas* (sense organs).
- **Dhāraṇa**: Provides techniques for concentration.
- **Dhyāna**: Describes meditation on God.
- **Samādhi**: This is the last part meant to attain *Moksha* or *Kaivalya*.

It can be observed that they are all interdependent and linked with each other. Though outwardly they may seem to have different outward manifestation, they all are constituents in attaining the same objective. Health of body depends on its organs or parts. The loss of even a single organ affects the efficiency of whole body. The same rule applies even for *yogaśāstra* and its 8 limbs (*Aṣṭāṅga*). Even if a single part is not practised or followed, one may not be led to the ultimate aim. Even those who are not inclined yet toward

spirituality can learn *yoga* for the health benefits it offers. Whatever the aim of the practitioner be – be it a happy worldly life or *Moksha (Kaivalya)*, at the end, he is always in need of good physical and mental health. Believers, non-believers and agnostics – all get the same results from the *yogavidya*. In fact, there are several instances where many atheist and agnostics turned into *āstikas*, after treading on the path of *Yoga*. The speciality of the Patanjali's *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* is that everyone gets benefitted without any distinction. Because the benefits of health and equipoise gained through the practice of *yoga* are beneficial to one and all, one who desires either good health, peace of mind or concentration of *citta* is certainly benefitted through this path. Practice of eight limbs of *yoga* leads to the purification of body, mind and intellect. Knowledge increases, the mind remains alert and wisdom dawns. Therefore there is great significance for *Aṣṭāṅga yoga* in *Yogavidya*.

2.2.2: *Antarāya* in *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*

There are many obstacles/impediments on the path of *Aṣṭāṅga*. Patanjali calls these obstacles as '*Antarāya*' and the following *sūtra* describes them:

व्याधिस्त्यान संशय प्रमादालस्याविरति भ्रान्तिदर्शनालब्धभूमिकत्व-
अनवस्थितत्वानि चित्तविक्षेपास्तेऽन्तरायाः ।।पा.यो.सु.१-३०।।

Vyādhisthāna samśaya pramādālasya avirati bhrānti darśanālabdhabhumiktva

Anavasthitatvāni cittavikshépaste antarāyah|| // P.Y.S 1-30//

In the above *sūtra* 9 *Antarayas* are mentioned. They are *Vyādhi*, *Styāna*, *Samśaya*, *Pramāda*, *Ālasya*, *Avirati*, *Bhranti Darśana*, *Alabha bhūmikatva* and *Anavasthitatva*.

These are the obstacles on the path of *yoga*. Let us know about them:

1) **Vyādhi:** The first obstacle on the course of *yoga* practice is *vyādhi*. *Vyādhi* is the physical or mental disorder. In a healthy body, the *tridoshas* i.e. *Vāta*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*, the seven *Dhātus*, *Karméndriya* (motor organs) and *Dñyānéndriya* (sense organs) and *Rasa* are all well balanced in the healthy body. If there develops imbalance in these elements, then disorders occur. And as all of us know, with an ailing body, it is not possible to practise *yoga*. *Yoga* can be begun only after the treatment of *Vyādhi* and subsequent recovery. Some *yogic* processes are also helpful in eliminating the disorders.

Many a time, the disorders are due to improper diet and recreational habits of the practitioner and at other times, it is due to *adhidaivik*, *adhibhoutik* and *adhyātmik* causes. This is the first impediment in the practice of *yoga*. Now-a-days, in the *yoga* centres, we find more and more influx of people suffering from various diseases. Even separate batches are run for patients in the *yoga* centres. Yet people still hold the view that *yoga* is not for people suffering from ailments or diseases.

2) **Styāna:** It is the second obstacle. The meaning of *Styāna* is mental lethargy. It is disinclination to work. The qualities of '*Rajas*' and '*Tamas*' overpower the person and create in him an unwillingness to work. When the *Sātvic* quality dominates, *Rajas* and *Tamas* are subdued, the negative attitude reduces, the mind is happy and positive attitude is on the rise. The *Tamasic* quality creates inertia, lethargy, laziness, stupidity and rigidity whereas *Rājasic* quality tempts us to indulge in pleasure seeking. 'Indiscipline and improper diet increase the *Rajas-Tamas* qualities and the person feels no inclination to practice *yoga*. This is the biggest obstacle as it is fundamentally opposed to any activity including *yoga*.

3) **Samśaya:** It is the third obstacle. '*Samśaya*' means doubt or mistrust or suspicion. There is a direct opposition to any idea that is presented. There is a suspicion about the benefits even before commencing the practice of *yoga*. This suspicious attitude becomes an obstacle resulting in the failure of an act before its commencement. 'Will *yoga* prove really beneficial?' 'If not, then why do it?' 'Why give up objective pleasures for the sake of *yoga*?' 'What will happen if there is no progress?' 'Is it very difficult?' Many such questions and doubts thwart the person before beginning the practice of *yoga*. As there is no faith, there is no success or progress and the result is disappointment. Therefore suspicion is also an obstacle.

4) **Pramāda:** It is the fourth obstacle. *Pramāda* refers to deliberate act of wrong doing. In spite of the knowledge of a thing as being detrimental to one's progress, if one continues doing it, then it is called *pramāda*. Keeping oneself away from the beneficial ways is also *Pramāda*. In spite of the remarkable benefits derived from the practice of *yoga* such as cheerfulness, improvement in health, positivity etc., man finds excuses and avoids taking up *yoga*. This is *Pramāda*. E.g. Just as a person knows that smoking and chewing tobacco is harmful, he keeps on with his habit. It is difficult to wake up a person who pretends to be asleep. Therefore *pramada* is also a major obstacle to overcome. *Mahābhārata* maintains that *pramada* leads a man to death. Lord Sri Krishna emphasized the need to have right dietary and recreational habits and actions in *Bhagavad Gita* for the *yoga* to become a tool for the alleviation of suffering. (*yuktāhāra vihārasya... B.G. 6th Chapter*).

5) **Ālasya:** It is the fifth obstacle. It resembles *Styāna*, but *Styāna* is a mental laziness while *Ālasya* is both mental and physical laziness. Man is fully aware of the benefits he would derive; yet his desire is not strong enough to overcome the lethargy. This is physical laziness and once it overpowers there is no practice of *yoga*. This is a common problem among people and it deters them

from practicing *yoga*. Maybe, it is in human nature to be under the influence of inertia. There is no will to act until there is a problem. When some *Vyādhi* occurs, then one thinks of doing *yoga*. Instead of waiting for some disorder to occur, if *yoga* is adopted beforehand then there is no ailment and only happiness.

6) ***Avirati***: *Avirati* is given to be the sixth obstacle on the path. The term '*Rati*' is used in the sense of absorption, deep engrossment in mundane articles and pleasures. *Virati* is opposite of *Rati* i.e. detachment from the mundance or temporal aspects. And *Avirati* is again the opposite of *virati* thus implying lack of inclination for detachment. Mind and the senses constantly run after the sense objects, sometime resulting in undesired outcomes. Unless the mind and senses are reined in, practice of *yoga* and deriving of benefits is not possible. Many times, the practitioner tries to control his senses and mind externally; but within he is still clinging for the sensual pleasures. During such times, at the opportune moment the desire for sensual gratification overpowers, distracting the practitioner completely. The more one indulges in sensual gratification, the more the craving grows. And consequently, practice of *yama* and *niyama* will be overlooked resulting in the downfall. Hence it is important to develop control on the mind and senses.

7) ***Bhrānti Darśana***: It is the seventh obstacle. It means experience of illusions. When we enter *yoga*, we are advised about various benefits and experiences we are going to encounter. In due course of time, the practitioner begins to experience them partly. The aspirant begins to compare them with what he learnt and sometimes even derives wrong interpretations as well. E.g. With the constant practice of *Omkāra japa*, one may begin to hear the sound of *Omkāra* at odd times and may believe that the *Kundalini* has become triggered. Such illusions retard our growth and progress. We begin to think that we need not exert ourselves anymore. This is '*Bhrānti Darśana*' or illusion or false

perception. If at all a practitioner does get any experience, he/she should confide this with his preceptor (*guru*) and seek clarification.

8) ***Alabdhabhūmikatva:*** It is the eighth obstacle. It means the aspirant is not able to reach his desired goal. Even after trying, one is not able to gain the desired result. Each person progresses at his/her own pace. Some have to try more and some can easily reach the stage of *Dhyāna*. Some may take a longer time. When one is not able to fulfill his expectation, frustration sets in. This develops the tendency to give up the practice of *yoga*. Solution to this problem is to persist with the practice and not to give up *yoga*.

9. ***Anavasthitatva:*** It is the 9th obstacle. This shortcoming refers to the failure to retain oneself at any specific stage of progress. This failure is attributed to the wavering mind. Therefore there is no steadiness, the person becomes disappointed and tends to give up. The solution is to resolve one's mind and faithfully pursue the practice of *yoga*.

These obstacle or *Antarāyas* mentioned by Patanjali, are experienced by all of us and we tend to turn away from *yoga* because of them. Many more disruptions accompany these obstacles. They are *Vikshépa sahabhuvaha* (botherations). They are narrated in the following verse:

दुःख दौर्मनस्याङ्गमेजयत्व श्वास प्रश्वासा विक्षेपसहभुवः ॥ पा.यो.सु. १-३१ ॥

Duhkha daurmanasyāṅgamejayatva śvāsa praśvāsā vikshépa

sahabhuvah // P.Y.S.1-31 //

Physical pain, mental worry or pain or restlessness, shaking of the body and uncontrolled breathing are the five problems, which are called *Vikshépasahabhuvah*. They are so called because mental restlessness, when accompanied by the obstacles/impediments cited before, invariably causes the above mentioned five disruptions.

A disease or disorder leads a man to pain or worries. This, in turn, results in the loss of breath control. The six obstacles from *Styāna* to *Bhranti darṣana* obstruct the progress at the mental level. Afflicted mind gives rise to mental weakness. When one fails to achieve steadiness while practicing *āsanas*, it results in the trembling of limbs, tingling sensations, etc. These symptoms of *Angaméjayatva* deter aspirant's progress and that in turn leads to '*Alabdhabhūmikatva*' which is the eighth obstacle discussed. Ninth obstacle, '*Anavasthitatva*', also leads to the symptoms of '*Angaméjayatva*', as well as, loss of breath control. Both, body and mind, become unsteady. In short, '*Vyādhi*' the first obstacle, is directly responsible for '*Dukkha daurmanasya*', while the next six obstacles lead to '*daurmanasya*' and '*śvās-praśvās*'. Thus the disturbances accompany the obstacles to a more or less extent.

Patanjali provides solution to the problem of eliminating or combating these obstacles as well as disruptions in the following aphorism:

तत्प्रतिषधार्थमेकतत्त्वाभ्यासः ।। पा.यो.सू.१-३२ ।।

Tatpratishadhārthamekatatvābhyāsah // P.Y.S.1-32//

The sage Patanjali advises the aspirant to focus his mind on one single object (thought/idea/principle) and not to lose one's faith. This guidance is applicable for success in any other field as well. '*Sthitau yatnaha*' is the characteristic feature of practice, which implies constant efforts without getting frustrated. Unswerving resilience is the only way to success. The combination of effort and faith takes care of obstacles as well as the disruptions. Their domainace gradually subsides. Mind develops virtuous attitude and begins to get focussed. Following the eight precepts (*Yama-Niyama* and so on) is nothing but the *yogic* practice.

The technique to combat the nine impediments/obstacles (*antarāya*), the five kinds of *citta*

vikshepa such as *dukkha*, etc., and *sahabhuva* or disruptions is called *citta prasādana* which is described in the next *sūtra*.

Cittaprasādana (Purification Of Citta)

मैत्रीकरूणामुदितोपेक्ष

ाणां सुखदुःखपुण्यविषयाणां भावनातश्चित्तप्रसादम् ।।पा.यो.सू.१-३३।।

Maitrikaruṇā

Muditópékshāṅām Sukhadukkhapuṇyavishayānām Bhāvanātaścitta Prasādanam // P.Y.S.

1-33 //

This *sūtra* says that the practitioner of *yoga* should practice friendliness (*maitri*) towards happiness (*sukha*), compassion (*karuṇā*) towards sorrows (*dukkha*), happiness / joyfulness (*mudita*) towards merit (*puṇya*), and nonchalance (*upéksha*) towards merit and demerit (*apunya* or *pāpa*). Many good or bad incidents keep on happening in the day-to-day life. Many waves (feelings) of happiness and unhappiness rise and fall in the *citta*. The above *sūtra* provides guidance regarding the kind of emotions one should cultivate in a particular situation, so that the *citta* remains tranquil in all conditions.

It says that one should be disposed with a feeling of friendliness and happiness during the moments of happiness. We should feel delighted and happy in the happy occasions of others. When you feel happy for others and share their happiness the *citta* experiences joyful feelings. But we find that it is not generally the case with many people. Many times others good fortune creates envy causing turmoil in the *citta* and this becomes an obstacle on the path of *yoga*. Purification of the *citta* is very important for the practice of *yoga*. The feeling of '*maitri*' of friendship should be from the core of the heart. We should congratulate and wish well for others, even pray for their continued welfare.

Now, when we come across an unhappy person, we should feel compassionate towards him/her. We should have the feeling that 'this should not have happened' and we should share his pain, grievances and give comfort with some direct or indirect help or at least through the words. We should pray that he be given the strength to bear the pain. We should offer solace and consolation, and try to pacify the sorrow. We should not point out his mistakes or faults and aggravate his/her feeling of pain. Hurting others will only cause hurt to us. Compassion always calms the *citta*. Sometimes, some mishap/calamity occurs somewhere such as an earthquake and we could just do nothing about it. We may, at that time pray to God to provide them with enough mental strength to face the calamity and pray fervently that such a calamity may never recur in their lives. This kind of mental frame will provide peace of mind to the practitioner.

One may cultivate a feeling of happiness whenever one encounters a virtuous or righteous (*punyavān*) person. The saints carry good many virtues and merits with them. One should seek their proximity at all times. Their very presence makes the atmosphere auspicious. Never envy, hate or treat them with contempt. Such behaviour does not disturb or matter much to them in any way but it definitely pollutes and dirties our *citta*. Good acts always grant merit to the doer. In the company of saints we always end up doing good deeds and this brightens our fortune. Whenever we come across an evil or sinful person or situation it is best to avoid and ignore them. We read about many heinous crimes in the newspapers daily. It is advised that one may learn to insulate oneself from the impact of such news and learn to be indifferent. This helps in keeping the mind unagitated.

2.2.3: Importance, Significance and Kinds of Patanjali's

Prāñāyāma

It is important to understand that the physical strength required for practicing *prāṇāyāma*, *dhāraṇa* and *dhyāna* does not come from the strength of the muscles, but rather is an outcome of balanced *prāṇa*. For gaining balance of *prāṇa* one needs to develop stability of the mind. Both the mind and body are to be firm. For gaining the flexibility of a strong mind, softness of a firm mind, transparency of a stable mind and for making the mind profound, tranquil and focussed, *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma* are devised by the sages. Bypassing *āsana* and directly embarking on the practice of *prāṇāyāma* or attempting to directly commence *dhyāna* is not only incorrect but may prove detrimental. Patanjali is not only an adept *yogi* but is a scientist who assimilated the art of *yoga* to the core. The structuring of *yoga*, its method and its technique are not only practical but are artistic as well. Sage Patanjali designed the eight limbs of *yoga* in such an organized way as to not cause any doubt or confusion in the mind of the practitioner and enable steady progress. Similarly *dhāraṇa* is placed before *dhyāna*. This sequential arrangement of the eight limbs of *yoga* proves suitable even for a slow paced practitioner.

Sage Patanjali explained the significant concepts, definition, kinds and the effects of *prāṇāyāma*, the fourth limb of *yoga*, in four aphorisms. Patanjali defined *prāṇāyāma*, in the following aphorism:

तस्मिन्सति श्वासप्रश्वास योर्गतिविच्छेदः प्राणायामः ॥ पायोसू२.४९ ॥

Tasmin sati śvāsprāṣavāsyorgati vichhedaha Prāṇāyāmah //PYS 2-49//

After gaining stability in *Āsana*, breaking the pace of breathing (by decreasing, increasing or holding the breath - all these three) is called *Prāṇāyāma*. '*Tasmin*' the first word refers to the preceding part of *prāṇāyāma*, i.e., *āsana*. It means, one is eligible for the practise of *Prāṇāyāma* only when one has attained steadiness in *āsana* and whose mind is in the state of '*Samapatti*' (equanimity). This is pointed out at the very outset. If one practises

Prāṇāyāma while moving around then it will lead to adverse effects. This is because physical movements, mental vacillations, affect the breathing pattern which makes it difficult to control the breath and practise *Prāṇāyāma*. Therefore, initially it is insisted to gain the stability in *Āsanas*. Through *Āsana* one can attain physical balance and comfort (*sthīrasukham Āsanam*), conscious relaxation (*prayatnaśaithilya* and *prayatnāt śaithilya*) and relaxation through conscious efforts and these two results in concentration of mind (*ananta sampatti*) and because of all these the mind becomes '*Tato dvandvānabhīghātaḥ*' (decisive) and only then one can be ready for the practise of *Prāṇāyāma*. In *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*, *Prāṇāyāma* is the only one which may lead to adverse effects or disorders if practiced incorrectly. This is everyone's experience that after the mastery in *Āsana*, breathing rate slows down and there comes steadiness in our body. Thus *Prāṇāyāma* can be practised for longer time in relaxed, steady posture and mind gets calm and focused.

After '*Tasmin Sati*', change in the breathing pattern is referred as *Prāṇāyāma*. Usually the rate of breathing is about 15-18 breaths/min. Breathing consists of inhalation, exhalation and retention. When the rate of breathing is changed consciously from normal to 12, 11, 10, 9 or 20, 21, 22, 23,..... or held (stopped) completely, then this is called *Prāṇāyāma*. It is important to alter the breathing in uniform rhythm and speed.

Holding (*Vichcheda*) of breath is called *kumbhaka*. It is to be performed in a specific manner. There is always a pause between inhalation and exhalation and vice versa even in normal breathing. Such brief gap or the stoppage of breathing after death cannot be called as *kumbhaka*. '*Vichcheda*' is a specific manner of holding the breath (*chhedā*) i.e. changed or held consciously with awareness for a specific reason. Only then it is a part of *Prāṇāyāma*. This should be brought about slowly, gradually and as per capacity (*yathāśakti*) only then the

Prāṅāyāma will be effective and fruitful. Patanjali has stated in his next sūtras about *Prāṅāyāma*.

सूत्र ५०: बाह्याभ्यन्तरस्तम्भवृत्तिदेशकालसंख्याभिः परिदृष्टो दीर्घसूक्ष्मः ॥

Verse 50: "Bahyābhyantara stambhavritti deṣakālasāmkhyābhiḥ:

Paridrusto dīrghasūkshmah".

In this sūtra, 3 types of *Prāṅāyāma* (or breaking the pace of *ṣvās praṣvās*) are mentioned. These 3 type are *Bāhya* (external) , *Abhyantara* (internal) and *stambha* (retention). These *Prāṅāyāmas* vary by *deṣa* (place), *kāla* (Timespan) and *samkhya* (number), and are either *dīrgha* (extended) or *sūkshma* (deepened and subtle). When the breath is exhaled completely, it is called ' *Bāhya vritti* ' and when it is pulled in, then it is called *antara vritti*. When the air is held, it is called ' *stambha vritti* ' or *kumbhaka*.

In all these 3 types, depending on the *deṣa*, *kāla* and *samkhya*, *Prāṅāyāma* becomes *dīrgha* or *sūkshma*. In *Prāṅāyāma*, '*deṣa*' means effect on surrounding organs and muscles during inhalation, exhalation or retention of the breath. The abdominal organs, the back muscles and the heart, diaphragm etc. get affected during inhalation and exhalation.

Kāla (timespan) is the length of breathing time. As the timespan of *Prāṅāyāma* increases, the rate of breathing decreases to less than 15 per minutes. Duration of *pūrak* and *récak* increases. This time span is refered to as '*kala*'. In the same way, the depth of *kumbhaka* or the duration of retention followed by *pūraka* or *récaka* is also counted in the '*kala*'. Based on the time duration, *Prāṅāyāma* is categorized as *dīrgha* or *sūkshma*.

'*Samkhya*' is the number of the *pūraka-récaka-kumbhaka* performed. The number of rounds should be increased gradually as per our capacity. These rounds shuold be increased gradually over a period of weeks, months or years so that there will not be any adverse effect. It should be done under the guidance

of an expert and as per the capacity (*Yathā śakti*) of the individual. The practise should be stopped immediately if one feels any discomfort, tiredness, headache or dizziness.

In this way, as the *Prāñāyāma* elongates in terms of *déśa*, *kāla* and *samkhyā* and the *Pranvrutti* becomes steady it becomes subtle too. The *vrittis* of mind start becoming subtle and focused. Everyone knows that while concentrating on a thing, the breath is naturally held or it slows down for a few seconds. We hold our breath while threading the needle. Many a time, when we need to focus our mind we hold our breath. Thus the mind which has become focused through the practise of *Prāñāyāma* gets the ready for the practise of *Pratyāhāra-Dhāraṇa-Dhyāna*. This is the subtle aspect of *Prāñāyāma*. In the next *sūtra*, *Patanjali* further elaborates on *Prāñāyāma*.

सूत्र ५१: बाह्याभ्यन्तरविषयाक्षेपा चतुर्थः ॥

Verse 51: Bāhyābhyantara viśhayākshepā chaturthah: ॥

In this sūtra Patanjali describes the forth *kumbhaka*. '*Kévala kumbhaka*' is called the 4th type of *Prāñāyāma* as it is a kind of *kumbhaka* which transcends the *pūraka*, *récaka* and *kumbhaka*. The *Kévala kumbhaka* described in Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika must be an equivalent to this fourth *kumbhaka* described here. While practicing *dīrgha* and *sūkshma Prāñāyāma* one may suddenly notice complete cessation of the movement of *prāna*. In this state, neither the *pūraka*, *récaka* nor the *kumbhaka* take place. This is the state where the body's oxygen requirement comes to the bare minimum owing to minimal bodily and mental functions that result due to the stability attained through *āsana* ('*sthīrasukhamāsanam*') absence of any effort (*prayatna śaithilya*) acquirement of a mood of infinitude (*anantasamāpatti*) and subtleness of mental activities. Whatever little the oxygen requirement is, it is fulfilled by the automatic and effortless movement of air in and out. This happens when one is completely

abosorbed in *dhyāna*. Activites of mind are at the zero level and the journey advances towards the '*Nirvikalpa Samādhi*'.

Results of *Prāñāyāma*

सूत्र ५२: ततः क्षीयते प्रकाशावरणम् ।

Verse 52: "Tatah kshīyaté Prakāṣāvaraṇam" ||

The effect of *Prāñāyāma* is such that the layers of ignorance covering the luminous inner core of the self get worn off. By its very nature, *citta* is luminous and light; but is covered by the layers of defilements of *rajo-tamo gunas*. Just as the clouds cover the brightness of the sun and as they move away, the sun again shines in its pristine glory, similarly, the *citta* is covered with *rajo-tamo gunas*. *Prāñāyāma* clears the *citta* of its defilements and lets it shine bright with *sātvik* quality. One can experince the true knowledge. With the control of *prāñā*, *vrittis* of *moha*, *māya*, etc., which reside in the sense organs, mind and intellect gradually get effaced. The mind becomes ready for self realization through the steps of *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna*, etc. This is explained in the following *sūtra*:

सूत्र ५३: धारणासुच योग्यता मनसः ॥

Verse 53: Dhāraṇāsuca Yogyatā manasah //

As the *prāñā* is controlled with the practice of *Prāñāyāma*, the *rajo-tamo gunas* begin to experience dissolution. The innate propensities (*vāsana*) become weaker and weaker. The layers of ignorance over the *sātvik vrittis* become transparent. The attraction of sense organs towards the objects is reduced and they are prepared for the next steps, the *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇa*, etc. As the movement of *prāñā* becomes subtle, mind becomes tranquil, subtle and focussed. Concentration of the mind is important for the practise of *Dhāraṇa* and *Dhyāna*. This state the can be achieved only after mastering *Prāñāyāma*.

Therefore only after the practise of *Prāṅāyāma* one becomes eligible for *Dhāraṅa* and *Dhyāna*.

Effects of *Prāṅāyāma* in Brief:

- 1) Working capacity of respiratory system and lungs is increased and greater amount of oxygen is inhaled.
- 2) The functioning of the endocrinal glands is improved.
- 3) Mind and intellect become sharp and focussed.
- 4) Owing to *nāḍīśuddhi*, body becomes healthy.
- 5) Good effects on the functioning of the heart.

2.2.4: *Bahiranga yoga* and *Antaranga yoga*

❖ *Bahiranga yoga* :

Out of the eight limbs or *angas* of Patanjali's *Aṣṭāᅅga yoga*, the first 5 *angas* or limbs are called *Bahiranga yoga* and the last 3 are called *Antaranga yoga*. This is because, in the 1st five limbs (*Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāṅāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*) arresting the activities of *citta* is not the main focus but their practice is a prelude to such future practice. In the last 3 limbs, the practice of *citta nirodha* is carried out directly but only after the practise of '*Bahiranga yoga*'. In fact, for the practise of *Dhāraṅa*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhī*, *Bahirang yoga* is recommended as our body is the temple of our soul. Just as entering a serene temple stimulates positive thoughts, similarly a body cleansed of defilements, is a right medium for spiritual practice. Body is the medium given by the god for the exploration of the self. Just as a selfish merchant uses all the material at his disposal for gaining maximum profit, in the same way a *sādhaka* must take advantage of the body that is made fit with the practise of *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāṅāyāma*. For the practice of *yoga* a fit and healthy body is a prerequisite. Keeping the body clean and disease-free is the first step

toward *kaivalya* or liberation and that is ' *Bahiranga Shuddhi* ' or *Sādhana* or purification of body.

यमनियमाऽऽसनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टवङ्गानि ।

(पातंजल योगसूत्र, साधनपद, सूत्र २९)

Yama Niyama Āsana Prāñāyāma Pratyāhāra Dhāraṇa Dhyāna /

Samadhayo Ashtāngāni //PYS 2-29//

Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prāñāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhāraṇa, Dhyāna, Samādhi are the 8 limbs of *Yoga*. All parts of body are necessary. Some are more important than the others. If these less important limbs are not practiced, the *Yogasādhana* will remain incomplete only to that extent. But some parts are very important. If one does not practice them, then such a person can be called as ' *Yogabhrashta* ' (an aspirant, whose *yogasādhana* has stopped or who has fallen from the path). Some body parts like heart, kidneys, brain work relentlessly. But some other parts such as legs, work only as per the need. In the same vein, some limbs of *yoga* require constant practice, whereas others may be practices as per the requirement. In the following *sūtras*, information regarding each limb is given.

1) *Yama*:

अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहाः यमाः (पातंजल योगसूत्र, साधनपाद, सूत्र ३०)

Ahimsāsatyāstyeyabrahmacaryāparigrahā Yamāḥ: //PYS2-30//

Ahimsā, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha are the 5 Yamas.

Yama determines our relation and interaction with nature and others therefore traditionally, observance of *Yama* is considered as the most important and inviolable. *Yamas* are the rules to be observed when living in the society. Without the practice of *Yama*, other limbs of *yoga* cannot be fruitful. In this way, for *Yogasādhana*, *Yama* is the most important thing.

Unless practising *yama* resolutely, one cannot progress in *yogasādhanā*. Not only this, one who has advanced afar can also fall down and can be deflected from the path of *Yoga* - might have to start his journey afresh again like *Viṣvāmitra*. *Yoga* is a lifestyle which is based on oneness and unity of all sentient and non-sentient beings. Therefore our relationship with the society i.e. '*Yama*' *Sādhanā* should be based on oneness and integration. If we practice *Ahimsa*, *Satya*, without appreciating this principle of integration, then our effort is misguided. All the facets of *Yama* should be understood properly.

❖ **Ahimsā :**

- We should not hurt others by our thoughts, words or actions. Our actions shall not cause disharmony to the unbroken nature of existence.
- In *Mahābhārata*, *Śrikrishna* orders *Arjuna* to fight and the same *Śri Krishna* is yet called as *Yogēśvara*. If we look at this superficially, then both seem contradictory but if we got to know the real meaning of non-violence then only the true meaning can be properly comprehended. The reason behind this is that it is the duty of a Kshatriya to protect the unity of existence. *Kauravas* went against *dharma* (the universal moral code) and in this way their conduct was against the principle of universal integration. And it was the duty of *Arjuna* to contain such people who harm the oneness of existence. *Arjuna* was hesitant and reluctant to discharge his duty. And *Yogēśvara Śri Krishna* counselled him about his duty through *Bhagwad Gita* – which is also called *Yoga Śāstra*. Non-violence is not at personal level. It doesn't mean that if there is a terrorist attack and yet we say that we are the followers of non-violence and hence as such we will only try to work on their hearts for their transformation. Tolerating violent actions of violent people which create disturbance in the society is also an act violence. Similarly, the soldiers who protect the

borders and freedom fighters who saved Indians from the tyranny of British rule are also to be considered as followers of non-violence.

❖ **Benefits of *Ahimsā*:**

- After every limb of *yoga*, Patanjali has mentioned about the benefits. The one who truly follows *Ahimsā* truly serves the purpose of existence through right communion. A person who truly believes in *Ahimsā* in his mind and heart never harms anyone and hence his very presence ends enmity and hatred. Even persons with a long history of mutual enmity also leave aside their enmity when they come in the proximity of a truly non-violent person. Also, the whole environment around such a person turns non-violent.

❖ ***Satya*:**

- The 'One' has become many. Therefore what is beyond many is nothing but the '*Atman*'. Therefore practise of *satya* is a message delivered through words and actions that protects the eternal oneness, whose base is truth or *satya*.
- *Satya sādhana* is the outward expression of what is contained in our mind through words or actions in our day-to-day life. Fake behaviour or impressing others has no relevance in *Yogasādhana*. Transparent and straight forward behaviour is what is required. Truthfulness is nothing but the practice of '*Satya*'.
- Some people say that, ' I am straight forward or I speak whatever I have in my mind without hesitation'. But in fact neither they are practicing *satya* nor *ahimsa*. Because their conduct hurts others. *Satya Sādhana* should be hand in glove with the practice of *Ahimsa*. Therefore, the principles of speaking truth are as follows:

Satyam bruyāt priyam bruyāt na bruyāt satyamapriyam /

Priyam ca nānṛutam bruyāt esha dharmah sanātanah: //

सत्यं ब्रूयात् प्रियं ब्रूयात् न ब्रूयात् सत्यमप्रियम्।

प्रियं च नानृतं ब्रूयात् एष धर्मः सनातनः।।

Speak that truth which is pleasing and beneficial to all. We should not speak truth in a manner that will hurt others. Truth speaking should be integrating, not divisive. Our language should not cause pain to others. Others should feel pleased talking to us.

● ***Benefits of satya sādhana:***

The one who practices truth gains such a power that his very words manifest objects and actions. Hence a true follower of truth/*satya* gains such a power that his words automatically result into actions. Divine power is developed within, and he gains the desired result without struggling for them.

● ***Astéya :***

➤ *Astéya* means not to steal. Everyone will feel that at least we follow this 'Yama' as we do not steal. But we need to know the exact meaning of 'Astéya'. In *Bhagwad Gita* (3.12) the definition of a thief is given as 'The one who eats for himself without offering in oblation (*Yadñya*)'. We should perform oblation or sacrifice for the collective being. In this way the practice of *Astéya* means practicing the five great sacrifices (*pancha maha yadñya*).

➤ Following *Astéya* means utilizing only that which is legitimately earned and consuming only whatever remains after oblation or offering to the collective or universal entities. (*Yadñyasistashinah:3.13 Bhagwad Gita*). When such *Yadñya* occurs in any society, then such society prospers and nobody feels dearth of anything. Eventually, *Astéya* is naturally followed

by one and all. Foreign historians wrote that, Indian homes did not have locks. Even today this is followed in some villages. It is possible because the practice of *astéya* renders everyone happy and contented in the society.

➤ ***Fruits of Astéya:***

The followers of *Astéya* are blessed with all temporal wealth and there is no dearth in their lives. This is because the abundance inherent in the universe opens its treasures to such persons.

● ***Brahmacarya:***

- A *Brahmacari* is not just one who is unmarried or who is away from sexual intercourse but it is much deeper than this. It is a process towards self realization through self-control. *Brhmacarya* means not getting trapped in the attraction with the opposite sex because this is one of the most powerful entrapments. The moment mind is distracted from its natural equanimous state it results in the manifestation of many mental activities which will affect the practice of *yoga*.
- Practicing *Brahmacarya* is necessary for keeping the environment within the family and society pure, so that development of a person goes in the proper direction. We can learn from the ills of present day Western society. Cases of unmarried mothers and fatherless children are on the rise. David Blackenhorn in his book 'Fatherless America' gives a rather sordid account of the state of affairs in America. He contends that the protection of women and children cannot be ensured by the law or by keeping them under the veil but only by following the practice of *Brahmacarya*. Practicing this '*Yama*' i.e., *brahmacarya* of *Aṣṭāṅga yoga* has been highly underscored even in the *Bhagwad Gita*. "*Yadichchanto Brahmacarya charanti*". Many times, terms like self-control (*Atmasamyama*), Conquering over senses (*Jitendriya*), sense control

(*indriya nigraha*), ability to govern and control the working of the mind (*yatātma*) etc, are used as synonyms for '*Brahmacarya*'. In life, everyone has options for growth and downfall. But one who follows *Brahmacarya* remains alert and faces less problems and failures.

➤ ***Brahmacarya Benefits:***

The one who truly follows *Brahmacarya* gains the necessary strength and dynamism to practice *yoga* exhaustively.

● ***Aparigraha :***

➤ *Aparigraha* means to partake things only to the extent of protecting, growing and feeding our body, mind and intellect. Acquisition of things not needed empties the society and the nature. When one practices for the oneness then their conduct should be in tune with the 'collective' (*samashti*) and the 'universal' (*srushti*) and be in consonance with the eternal. In this way, *Aparigraha* means not to hoard unnecessary things. Not only in things, some people are caught up in the past and sit worrying which leads to obstacles on the path of peacefulness.

➤ People collect many things thinking that their happiness lies in the material objects. But searching for the happiness in the material world is detrimental to *Yogasādhana*. Our mind which is trapped in materialistic desires is not conducive for the practice of *Yoga*.

➤ ***Fruits of Aparigraha :***

He who is well anchored in the practice of '*Aparigraha*' understands about his past and future births and gains the wisdom of leading the present life meaningfully.

After explaining the 5 features of *Yama*, Maharshi Patanjali states that:

//

**एतेजातिदेशकालसमयानवच्छिन्नाःसार्वभौमाःमहाव्रताः (पातंजल_योगसूत्र,
साधनपाद सूत्र३१)**

One should follow these *Yamas* irrespective of time, place, context, race, etc., in every situation. These are universal rules. By the following three elaborations we will learn more about them.

- Whatever be the age, religion, country, position, or stature, every child, woman and man should follow these five *Yamas* without exception.
- These rules are universal and should be practiced with the objective of preserving the oneness of existence. *Yudhisthira*, the eldest of Pāndavas deviated from his vow of speaking truth in the interest of saving the world from the unjust people.
- Other limbs of *yoga* can't be followed at all times eg. *Āsana*, *Prāñāyāma* or *Samādhi*. But these five *Yamas* should be followed by everyone at all times.

2) Niyama:

The 2nd limb or *anga* of *Yoga* is *Niyama*. It includes *ṣauca*, *Santosha*, *Tapas*, *Svādhyāya* and *Iṣvara Prāñidhāna*.

Ṣaucasantoshatapahsvādhyāya Iṣvara prañidhānaani Niyamāh // PYS //

शौचसंतोषतप स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः । (पातंजली योगसूत्र, साधनपाद सूत्र ३२)

Niyamas are internal and external cleanliness, contentment, penance, reading of scriptural texts, devotion and total surrender to the God. *Niyamas* are for self preparation and self-development. They are part of our *vrittis* (attitude). In this way, while the rules to be followed while living in the society are *yamas* and the rules that are to be followed at personal level are *Niyamas*.

❖ **Ṣauca:**

- It is the cleansing of our body and mind externally as well as internally. A dirty and uncouth person can not be the practitioner of *yoga*.
- Only ascertaining the cleanliness of the food that we eat is not enough; but whatever enters our sense organs such as nose, ear, eyes, skin should be clean too. Internal cleanliness mean discarding the mental defilements such as lust (*kāma*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*), delusion(*moha*), arrogance (*mada*), envy (*matsar*), vanity(*dhamb*), jealousy (*Asuya*), heartburn (*Eershya*), egoism (*Ahankār*), caustic speech (*kadvat sambhāshaṇa*), ignorance (*adñyan*), lethargy (*susti*), sleeping at wrong times etc., which are the products of *rajo* and *tamo gunas*.
- We can clean these internal mental defilements by cultivating thoughts of opposite kind.

vitarkabādhané pratipaksha Bhāvanam (Sādhana pāda sūtra. 33).

वितर्कबाधने प्रतिपक्ष भावनम् (साधनपाद सूत्र ३३)

eg: if we feel jealous of someone then we must think about their good qualities.

➤ **Fruits of ṣauca:**

Mind becomes clean and pure and body becomes energetic. Marked improvements in concentration power, self-control and jubilant mood are observed. The person becomes fit for self-realization.

❖ **Santosha:**

It refers to the state of contentment. One should be satisfied with whatever one has and should put it to optimum use. Many a time, people only complain about 'not having this, not having that' and therefore they don't even enjoy the

things they have. *Santosha* means to start with whatever one has and having faith in god that he would purvey all his requirements at the right time.

Due to the consumeristic mindset, the nature not only gets depleted, but even the human mind gets polluted with self-centeredness. Only this virtue called *santosha* can contain this menace of consumerism.

- Though effect of *yoga* may not be visible immediately, it helps in containing untoward circumstances in life, and encourages one to contribute to the common good. It also is a practice that leads to self-development.
- *Santosha* doesn't mean that we should stay put as we are and should not develop ourselves or should stop all efforts for development. This is a wrong explanation of *santosha*. *Santosha* means irrespective of whatever we have or don't have, without any feeling of remorse, we should stay happy and practice *yoga* for self development.

➤ ***Fruits of santosha:***

The one who dwells in *santosha* is bestowed with high quality happiness. Since every moment of life is filled with contentment, the real bliss is experienced now and at this very moment.

❖ ***Tapas:***

As mentioned in the verses 14-16 in the 17th chapter of *Bhagawad Gita* *Tapas* can be practiced at 3 levels – body (*Sharir*), mind (*Mana*) and speech (*Vaca*).

Devadvijaguruprāgdñyapujanam Śaucamārjavamkat /

Brahmcaryam Ahimsā ca sariram tapa uchyate //

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवमुक्तम् ।

ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ॥

*Anudvegakaram /vākyam satyam priyahitam ca yat /
Svādhyāyābhyāsanam caiva vāṅmayam tapa uchyaते //*

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥

*Manah prasāda saumyatvam maunmātmavinigraha /
Bhāvasamsuddhirityettapo Mānasamucyate //*

मनः प्रसाद सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः ।
भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत्तपो मानसमुच्यते ॥

- **ṣāririk (bodily) Tapa:** Prayer, respect for elders, teachers, and the meritorious, bodily cleanliness, softness and straightforwardness, non-violence and *Brahmacarya* constitute bodily penance.
- **Vācik (speech) Tapa:** Being polite, truthfulness, pleasing and beneficial talk, reading of sacred scriptures (*svādhyāya*) and learned speech.
- **Mānasik (mental) Tapa:** To face everything with positive attitude and self-control and remain soft, steady and equanimous.

Tapas means penance or austerity. *Sharir*, *Mana* and *Vāca* should be purified. Only then they become fit for higher level experiences. For serving the society, apart from developing collectiveness in attitude, developing the positive communication and pleasantness are also important.

In simple words '*Tapa*' means working hard for the development of physical body, mind and intellect. If body, mind and intellect are not disciplined then

they will not be fit enough to face the ups and downs on the path of *yoga*. For eg., only when we exercise the muscles that they develop the capacity to lift any weight and not by staying idle. In the present comfort and luxury oriented lifestyle, practicing austerities or *tapas* is a must.

➤ ***Fruits of Tapa:***

When one practices *Tapa*, the impurities get eliminated and the capabilities of body, mind and sense organs are considerably improved.

❖ ***Svādhyāya:***

Svādhyāya means self-study. It also means praying to the deity of our liking and studying scriptural texts regularly. This leads to sharpening of the intellect, thus enabling it to distinguish between the ephemeral and the eternal. By this we gain insights into the nature of things and phenomena which in turn directly or indirectly contributes to self-realization.

On a deeper note, the meaning of *Svādhyāya* is the study of scriptures (*Sāstra*). This helps to measure our self-development. If not, we try to convince ourselves that we are progressing without validating our claims. *Sāstra* is a medium to determine what is proper and what is improper in context of righteousness. Regular and repeated study of *Sāstras* is paramount. Since there are so many *Sāstras* to study, one may wonder which are to be studied.

Swami Vivekānanda compiled the the essence of various philosophies in his works in a very simple and easy to understand language. One can get to learn the essence of our scriptures through the writings of *Swami Vivekānanda*.

➤ ***Fruits of Svādhyāya:***

Through *Svādhyāya*, the wisdom dawns in man and through prayer, the deity of one's liking appears before the person who meditates on him.

❖ *Iṣvara Prañidhāna*:

- It means offering all the fruits of our actions to the God. By this our ego gets discarded. The feeling of doership and stress reduces and will lead to self-realization. The best example for this is *Shri Girishchandra Ghosh*. His guru was *Shri Ramkrishna Paramahansa*. As directed by his guru, he offered all his deeds to him and so, he became pure and attained higher spiritual state.
- '*Iṣvara Prañidhāna*' helps in eliminating one's ego. This helps one to work effeciently. In this way a true follower of *yoga* becomes a good person because his ego or 'I' gets eliminated.

➤ **Fruits of *Iṣvara Prañidhāna* :**

Spiritual absorption (*Samādhi*), self realization and realization of oneness of existence.

3) *Āsana*

- The 3rd facet in Aṣṭāṅga yoga is *Āsana*.
- The state in which both the mind and body are steady and happy is called the *Āsana*.
- When one arrests the natural temptation of moving the body parts and becomes firmly anchored and dissolves the mind in the infinity only then *Āsana* becomes stable and blissful.
- **Benefits of *Āsana*:** Once one is well anchored in steadiness, factors like anger, jealousy, happiness, grief etc., do not affect the person. We get to attain this '*Siddhi*'. When we go beyond the bodily identity, then we lose our body consciousness. We do not feel any pain or pleasure. Once the bodily identity of the ego disintegrates and the mind dissolves in the

infinite, one experiences incomparable bliss. Mind becomes completely relaxed. This is the real relaxation of body and mind.

It needs to be clear that the point of view regarding Āsana in the Ashtanga yoga is different from that of Haṭha Yoga. In *Haṭha yoga*, Āsanas are performed to lead healthy life and gain control over body and to maintain our body young, strong and sturdy.

4) *Prāṇāyāma*

The *sūtra* for *Prāṇāyāma* starts with the phrase '*Tasmin Sati*'. It means that after gaining command over *Āsanas*, we can venture into *Prāṇāyāma*. After one has become accustomed to the body postures and attained steadiness and comfort in *Āsana* only then he is eligible for the practise of *Prāṇāyāma*. After steadying the body one needs to practice stabilizing one's breath. The breath control can be practiced even while walking but such practice cannot be called as *Prāṇāyāma*. *Prāṇā* doesn't mean air or breath. *Prāṇā* is an energy that is universally present which is responsible for every movement. All the movements of the body and the subtle movements of the mind are due to *Prāṇā*. Therefore if we gain control over *Prāṇā* then we can also gain control over the physical movements of body and subtle movements (thoughts) of the mind.

In the beginning while practicing *Prāṇāyāma* we try to control our breath. Gaining control over breath is the easiest way to control the *Prāṇā*. The most important thing to note down for a *Sādhaka* is to gain control over the speed or rate of breath. We all know that when we become angry or excited our breathing rate increases and when we are relaxed our breathing rate slows down and gets deeper. For practice of *Dhyāna*, *Prāṇāyāma* is very supportive. Even for a peaceful mind, it is important to practice *Prāṇāyāma* so that we can become a useful instrument in the hands of God and we will perform our duties

faithfully and diligently towards the '*Samashti*' of family, society, nation and the nature.

➤ **Benefits of *Prāñāyāma*:** Mind gets subtle, quiet, concentrated and pure. In this way, it gets ready for *dhāraṇa*.

5) *Pratyāhāra*:

Our five *dñyānendriyas* (sense organs) – ears, skin, eyes, tongue, and nose come in contact with the objects but we get to experience them only when *citta* is also subtly involved. *Citta* experiences objective happiness through the sense organs. Normally, the sensory objects try to distract the *citta* that is involved in the practice of *yoga*. *Pratyāhāra* is a practice where eventhough the sense organs come in contact with the objects the practitioner does not let the *citta* to be diverted towards them so that the sense organs do not experience the sensory pleasures. Turning the sense organs inwards and being aware of only the pure consciousness is *Pratyāhāra*. Thus, in short, *Pratyāhāra* is drawing the senses inward from their natural tendency to move outward and seek external objects.

➤ **Benefits of *Pratyāhāra*:** With the help of *Pratyāhāra* we can fully attain self control i.e control on our *citta* and control on our sense organs.

❖ *Antaranga sādhana* (cleaning of mind or *mana*)

After the cleaning of the body, cleaning of mind is also very important. Therefore, first we need to understand the functioning of the mind. Nose, eyes, tongue, ears and skin are the five sense organs through which *citta* gets to know the world around and desires start to rise in the mind. To fulfill these desires, the sense organs constantly move outward and in this way mind gets trapped in the net of desires. Therefore to gain control over mind and the sense organs there is a need for internal cleaning.

Six enemies of the mind are: *Krodha* (anger), *Kāma* (lust), *Rāga* (inclination), *Lobha* (greed), *Mada* (vanity) and *Matsara* (jealousy). In the path

of search for supreme consciousness or self-realization, it is necessary to gain control over these enemies that create obstacles and it is possible only through *Prāṅāyāma* and *Pratyāhāra* (*Indriya sanyaman*). These two are the strongest weapons to combat these enemies.

In *Haṭha Yoga Pradipika*, the importance of breath is mentioned in the following verses:

Cale vāte Cala cittam niscala Niscalam Bhavét/

Yogi Stāñutvamāpnoti Tato Vāyu Nirodhayét//

चले वाते चल चित्तं निश्चले निश्चलं भवेत्।

योगी

स्थाणुत्वमाप्नोति ततो वायुं निरोधयेत्॥

(Due to unsteadiness in breath, our mind too remains unsteady. Steady breathing leads to steadiness of the mind. There is strong correlation between breath and mind therefore if breath is controlled properly and brought to steadiness, mind automatically gains steadiness and our life span increases.)

Also it is said that:

Indriyāñām mano nātho manonāthasthu mārutah/

Mārutsya layo nathah sa layo nādamāsrithah//

इंद्रियाणां मनो नाथो मनोनाथस्तु मारुतः।

मारुतस्य लयो नाथः स लयो नादमाश्रितः॥

(Sense organs are controlled by the mind; mind is controlled by the breath and breath is controlled by dissolution. And this dissolution is dependent on the primordial sound (*nāda*).

Internal cleaning can be attained only by controlling mind and the sense organs (*Indriyas*). Only through this that the *Sādhaka* develops self control and gets ready for next steps of *Antaratma* (soul) *Sādhana*.

6) *Dhāraṇa*

As we start the practice of *Antaranga sādhana*, *Bahiranga Sādhana* should also be continued. We should not set it aside nor does it become less important. Even after self realization, practise of *Yama*, *Niyama* etc., will continue naturally. In this way initially they are performed with effort but later it becomes habitual.

Dhāraṇa means focussing on an object or a part of body for long time in a steady state.

The fruits/benefits of all the five facets or *Angas* – *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra* are mentioned but the benefits of these last three *Angas* are not explicitly stated. Practicing these three limbs together is called '*Samyama*'. When we attain *samyama* what results one can get by focusing on a specific object or body part is mentioned in *vibhūti Pāda* of 'Patanjali's Yoga Darṣana'.

7) Dhyāna

Dhāraṇa means to concentrate on a particular object or place continuously. Continuous contemplation on these objects or place is called *Dhāraṇa*. As *Hanumān* was ever ready to work for *shri Rāma* thus thinking constantly on such traits means *Dhyāna*. In this way *dhāraṇa* is steadiness of mind over a particular place and *dhyāna* is steadiness of a particular thought in the mind.

8) Samādhi:

When *citta* has nothing but *dhyāna*, and the thought that 'I meditate on such thing' also disappears and when on that particular object flows the *citta vritti* as an unbroken current, that state is called *Samādhi*. After this *Samādhi*, the *sādhak* tries for '*Asampradṛyāta Samādhi*'. When the mental objects taken as the foundation for meditation begin to dissolve at various levels then '*Asampradṛyāta Samādhi* can be attained. Practice of *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi* together is referred as *samyama*'. When *samyama* is practised, the all illuminating knowledge is attained. Through *Samyama* some *siddhis* can be

attained, therefore *Rishis* warn us (*Tasya, Bhūmishu Viniyogah*) that these *siddhis* should be used only for *Asampradānyāta Samādhi* or *Nirbija Samādhi*. The *yogi* should not get trapped in the fame that comes from *siddhis* or else these *siddhis* will form obstacles on the path of *Nirbija Samādhi*.

When one decides to work at the same place for long time with full dedication or conducts himself with the constant thought of developing his merit in that particular place then he gets to earn respect, money and fame. This gets into his mind and he feels that whatever is achieved is because of his own merits and attainments. Thus the person's downfall begins and is called *Yogabhrashtatva* and then he get to experience obstacles in the last step of *Karmayoga*, the *Ātmasākshātkāra* (soul consciousness) which requires *Akartabhāva* or non-doership in the practice of *Karmayoga*.

Selected Sūtras:

।।श्रीपातंजलयोगदर्शनम्।।

अथ समाधीपादः

(प्रथम पाद)

अथ योगानुशासनम् ।

अथ योग अनुशासनम् ॥१.१॥

Atha YoganushĀsanam //PYS1-1//

(Now the teaching of *yoga sāstra*, which is a legacy received from Hiranyagarbha, is commenced.)

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः ।

योगःचित्त वृत्ति निरोधः ॥१.२॥

Yogashcitta Vrutti Nirodhah //PYS1-2//

Yoga means arresting the mental activities.

व्याधिस्त्यानसंशयप्रमादालस्याविरतिभ्रान्तिदर्शनालब्धभूमिकत्वानवस्थितत्वानि
चित्तविक्षेपास्तेऽन्तरायाः ।

व्याधि स्त्यान संशय प्रमाद आलस्य अविरति भ्रान्तिदर्शन अलब्धभूमिकत्व अनवस्थितत्वानि चित्त
विक्षेपाः ते अन्तरायाः ॥१.३०॥

*Vyādhistyānasamśaya pramādālasya virati bhrānti darśanālabdhabhumiktva
anavasthitatvāni cittavikshepāh te antarāyah //PYS1-30//*

Vyādhi is the disease and imbalance that is caused in the three *dhātus* (*Vāta*, *pitta* and *kapha*), *rasa* (the digested food transformed into a liquid which is absorbed into the blood), and *karaṇas* (five sensory and five motor organs). 2. *Styāna* is the lethargy that is produced in the *citta* 3. *Samśaya* is the doubt 4. Inability to stay put in an exalted state of *citta* is called *anavastitattv*, etc. Thus there are nine obstacles or impediments which hamper the progress of the practitioner on the path of *yoga*.

दुःखदौर्मनस्यांगमेजयत्वश्वासप्रश्वासा विक्षेपसहभुवः ।

दुःख दौर्मनस्य अंगमेजयत्व श्वासप्रश्वासाः विक्षेप सहभुवः ॥१.३१॥

*Dukkha daurmanasya angaméjayatva śvāsapraśvāsah vikshepa
sahabhuva //PYS1-31//*

Three kinds of suffering (*dukkha*) – *ādhibhoutika*, *ādhidaiivika* and *adhyātmika* together with mental disturbance is called feeble mindedness (*daurmanasya*); production of bodily tremors is called *angaméjayatva*; irregularity in breathing is called *śvāsapraśvāsah* – these are called *vikshépa sahabhuva*.

तत्प्रतिषेधार्थमेकतत्त्वाभ्यासः ।

तत् प्रतिषेधार्थम् एक तत्त्व अभ्यासः ॥१.३२॥

Tat pratishedhā rtham ekatatva abhyāsah //PYS1-32//

To combat the above mentioned *antarāya* and their accompanying *upadrava* called *vikshepa sahabhuva*, the practitioner must focus on one object, principle or thought.

ऋतंभरा तत्र प्रज्ञा ।

ऋतंभरा तत्र प्रज्ञा ॥१.४८॥

Rutambharā tatra pradñyā //PYS1-48//

Accomplishment of an exalted mental state that has arrested all mental activities is called *rutambharā* which in short, may be explained as complete detachment from the mediation of mental activities and experiencing and realizing the object in its truest nature.

अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहा यमाः ।

अहिंसा सत्य अस्तेय ब्रह्मचर्य अपरिग्रहाः यमाः ॥२.३०॥

Ahimsā satyāstéyabrahmacaryā parigrahā Yamāh //PYS2-30//

Non-violence (*ahimsā*), truthfulness (*satya*), non-stealing (*astéya*), non-hoarding (*aparigraha*) and celibacy/continence (*brahmacarya*) are called *yama*.

अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठां तत्संनिधौ वैरत्तागः ।

अहिंसा प्रतिष्ठां तत् संनिधौ वैर तागः ॥२.३५॥

Ahimsāpratishṭhāyām tatsannidhau vairatyāgah |2.35|

Non-arising of any kind of violent thought in mind is called *ahimsā*. Any person who comes in the proximity of a *yogi* fully anchored in the practice of *ahimsā* will have all his tendencies of animosity completely effaced.

सत्यप्रतिष्ठायां क्रियाफलाश्रयत्वम् ।

सत्य प्रतिष्ठायाम् क्रिया फल आश्रयत्वम् : ॥२.३६॥

Satya pratishṭhāyām kriyāphala āśrayatvam //PYS2-36//

A person well anchored in *satya* develops the power to manifest results without actually doing any act. His mere volition has the power to produce the desired results.

ब्रह्मचर्यप्रतिष्ठायां वीर्यलाभः ।

ब्रह्मचर्य प्रतिष्ठायाम् वीर्य लाभः ॥२.३८॥

Brahmacarya pratishthāyām Vīryalābhah //PYS2-38//

A *yogi* who is well grounded in *brahmacarya* develops necessary abilities and enthusiasm to undertake any task how so difficult ever it may be.

स्थिरसुखमासनम् ।

स्थिर सुखम् आसनम् ॥२.४६॥

Sthira sukhamāsanam //PYS2-46//

The body posture which ensures stability as well as comfort is called *āsana*.

प्रयत्नशैथिल्यानन्तसमापत्तिभ्याम् ।

प्रयत्न शैथिल्य अनन्त समापत्तिभ्याम्ः ॥२.४७॥

Prayatna śaithilya anantasamapattibhyām //PYS2-47//

Prayatna means the natural tendency of the body to move. When this tendency disintegrates and when the the *yogi* is fully absorbed in the contemplation of the infinitude, his *āsana* becomes stable.

Questions for practice- 2

Answer in one sentence

1. What are the limbs/parts of *yoga* described by Sage Patanjali?
2. What are the *Panca mahabhūtas*?

3. What are the five *Yamas*?
4. What are the five *Niyamas*?
5. What do you mean by *Ahimsā*?
6. Which are the four *Pādas* described by Patanjali?
7. Which are the *Antarayas* described by Sage Patanjali?
8. What do you mean by *Bahiranga yoga*?
9. What do you mean by *Antaranga yoga*?
10. What are the fruits of practice of non-violence (*Ahimsā sādhana*)?
11. What are the fruits of practice of Truth (*Satya Sādhana*)?
12. What are the fruits of practice of non-stealing (*Asteya Sādhana*)?
13. What are the fruits of practicing cleanliness (*śauca sādhanā*)?
14. What are the fruits of *Tapa sādhanā*?
15. What are the fruits of *Svādhyāya*?
16. What do you mean by '*Iṣvara Pranidhāna*'?

Answer the following questions briefly:

1. What do you mean by *Āsana*? What are the benefits of *Āsana*?
2. Describe *Prāṇāyāma* and its benefits?
3. What do you mean by '*Pratyāhāra*'?
4. What do you mean by '*Dhāraṇa*'?
5. Describe five *yoga sūtras* and their meaning?

Chapter – 3

Primordial Sound Syllable and Sun Salutation

Omkāra and Sūryanamaskāra

Unit Structure

- 3.0 – Objectives.
- 3.1 – Introduction.
- 3.2 – Significance.
- 3.2.1 – History and significance of *Omkāra*.
- 3.2.2 – History of *Sūryanamaskāra*.
- 3.2.3 – Chain of *āsanas* in *Sūryanamaskāra*.
- 3.2.4 – *Sūryanamaskāra* and *Prāñāyāma*.
- 3.2.5 – Practice of *Sūryanamaskāra* with *mantras* and their benefits.
- 3.2.6 – General estimate of *Sūryanamaskāra* and *Omkāra*'s benefits.

3.0 Objectives:

- 5) To understand the history of *Omkāra* and *Sūryanamaskāra*.
- 6) To understand the sequential steps (*āsanas*) in *Sūryanamaskāra*.
- 7) To understand *Sūryanamaskāra* and *Prāñāyāma*.
- 8) To know about the *mantras* chanted in the practice of *Sūryanamaskāra*.
- 9) To understand the benefits *Sūryanamaskāra* and *Omkāra Sādhana*.

3.1 Introduction:

Of late, human life has become very busy owing to industrialization and advancements in science and technology. There is tremendous increase in the machinery that provide luxuries to the human life. Humans are running after money to satiate their wants and needs, and are neglecting many valuable aspects their tradition offered them as a cultural legacy. One such valuable aspect which is overlooked these days is *Sūryanamaskāra*.

Every person submits himself before some divine power or the other. Each one of us holds one concept or the other about the divine powers. But sun is one such unique power which is directly visible. Hence every person in this world bows his head down reverentially to this great energy called sun. Worship of sun as a divine energy has been in vogue in India, especially in Maharashtra for thousands of years. Though outwardly *Sūryanamaskāra* is viewed as a kind of physical exercise but since it involves many embedded *āsanas* in its practice for spiritual elevation, it is also viewed as a method of worship. Practicing *Sūryanamaskāra* does not require any accessories nor does it involve any expenditure. All that is required is a bit of space and taking a little time out for practice. It does not require group of people for practice either. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that anybody and everybody male or female, young or old, ordinary or well respected – can practice this exercise, this meditative worship. Ideally *Sūryanamaskāra* shall be practice at the time of sun rise after attending to the nature's calls. If suffering from any ailment, *Sūryanamaskāra* may be practiced under medical guidance. Those whose physical condition does not permit may as well perform *Sūryanamaskāras* mentally.

Sūryanamaskāra is a complete package of *yoga* practice. With its regular practice, there will be marked improvement in the physical, mental and

emotional states and overall improvement can be noticed in the agility, activeness, health and wellbeing of the person.

In the modern times the 'scientifically advanced' human society is reeling under stressful conditions where interpersonal relations, economic condition, threat of war and many other turmoils of modern living pose many challenges. Locomotives and automobiles have greatly reduced physical exertion resulting in a generation that is feeble both physically and mentally. Unless some effective remedial measures are planned and implemented, the scope for improvement seems dismal.

However practice of *yoga* holds the key for all these maladies. But taking some time out for practice of *yoga* is also very difficult in the busy life of modern man and hence *Sūryanamaskāra* is the only solution that best fits the bill.

For relieving oneself of all kinds of stress and as an effective remedy both for physical and mental ailments, and for total health and wellbeing, one is advised to practice *Sūryanamaskāra* for 5-15 minutes. This has proven to produce surprising results.

The future generation is doomed to face all the more greater challenges and busier lifestyles. In such a scenario, it is advised to organize *Sūryanamaskāra* events to attract the new generation. In such events the participants must be acquainted with the twelve *mantras* (sacred spells) that are recited in tune with the twelve body postures (*āsanas*) and their benefits.

Sūryanamaskāra is one of the ancient ways of exercise and more than that it was the lifestyle of the ancient India. The term *Sūryanamaskāra* is coined from the two words viz. *Sūrya* and *Namaskāra*. The meaning of *Sūrya* is “the Sun” and *namaskāra* is the way of worshiping God through ‘salutation’. India receives full sunlight throughout the year and it is a country which lies on the

eastern part of the Globe. The sun is also treated as the God from ancient time. The life style of Indian people is closely intertwined with their religion.

Sūryanamaskāra is the type of exercise for endurance, flexibility and strengthening the muscles of whole body, done on the floor without any machine or weights.

3.2 Subject Deliberation. Significance:

The investment one makes in one's physical wellbeing is one's true wealth. The returns it yields not for a limited period but for the whole life. These days, people rush to gymnasias and health club as that is the fad of the modern times. But not everyone does a daily workout at a gymnasium. *Sūryanamaskāras* offer an opportunity to exercise the body within the confines of home. This is the most natural way of keeping oneself fit.

The *Sūryanamaskāra* or offering salutations to the Sun is practiced in the early morning or evening, facing the sun. The Sun is the revered and celebrated deity for health and long life. Being the immensely radiant and life-giving force on earth, the sun is the representation of the invisible Supreme Power that nurtures and sustains the universe.

A well-balanced growth of the body and mind alone is an essential prerequisite for a human being to live in the world in peace, and fulfil his or her aspirations. According to the sages of ancient India, a sickly body makes it impossible for the mind to reach the higher realms. In other words, diseased body is a serious obstacle on the path of spiritual development. Similarly, a healthy body and a keen mind, but with the inner spirit in deep slumber is like a castle of sand prone to destruction by the gushing waves of the sea. What is ideal is to strive for balanced development of the body, mind and spirit to achieve perfection. *Sūryanamaskāra* is a great tool to realise this goal.

Sūryanamaskāra is a well-devised, mixture of *yoga āsanās* and breathing. Before practitioners undertake the practice of advanced *yogic* postures and breathing exercises or *Prāñāyāma*, the spine and body muscles should be flexible enough. The practice brings flexibility to the spine and limbs, and also enables the practitioner to breathe the right way.

All in all, there are twelve postures each stretching various ligaments and giving different movements to the vertebral column. The vertebral column is bent forward and backward alternately with deep inhalation and exhalation of breath and a little of retention of breath in some cases. Whenever the body is bent forward, the contraction of the abdomen and diaphragm, throws out the breath. When the body bends backward, the chest expands and deep inhalation occurs automatically. In this way the body becomes flexible and the lungs begin to function better which results in correct breathing. In addition, the mild but effective postures boost circulation of blood. At the same time, the sun's life-giving rays play on the man's body, sucking away the toxins along with perspiration, invigorating circulation and imparting life to the human organism – the life which the sun alone can give. The life giving *Sūryanamaskāra* exercises render the inflexible muscles and spine of a person lose their stiffness.

3.2.1 History & Importance of *Omkāra*.

OMKĀRA

OM is the symbol that connotes divinity. Verbalizing *OM* symbolizes the noble, religious and affluent Vedic culture of which we are all should feel proud of. *OM* establishes a relation or an attachment of every Vedic follower to the Supreme Power. In fact, every person can establish such a link through recitation of *OM*. Our highly revered sages became cognizant of this attribute of

OM through their insight that they had gained through their long penance. Recitation of *Omkāra* is therefore taken up as an important feature of yoga practice. Some mysticism is also associated with *Omkāra*. However, its recitation is confirmed to be result oriented. Of course, there is always a scope for research.

➤ **The Background:**

Traditionally, a common aspirant follows his preceptor. A sincere disciple is not expected to question, to cross, to debate or to challenge preceptor. He often follows his experienced preceptor faithfully. As a result, questions concerning the origin and history of *Omkāra* remained rather unknown and therefore making it somewhat a mystic and occult subject. However modern scholars and researchers of the Vedic literature have extricated some details regarding the *Omkāra*.

The reference of *OM* is traced as old as to the times of *Yajurveda*. Later *OM* was venerated and was described by the *Upanishadas* too. The current graphical representation of *OM* is horizontal, while in the *Vedic* times, it was presented vertically. Today we come across such vertical presentation of *OM* in Balaji Tambe's hermitage at Karla.

In the nature, the sky is the initial creation of the Supreme Power. This creation was followed by the sound of Om which is believed to be the grunt of assent of the Supreme Power. This *Omkāra* is believed to be the creator of the rest of the nature, including the five great elements (*Pancmahābhūtās*). *OM* is regarded to be the primordial sound, i.e., *OM* has been in existence right from the birth of the universe. Lord Krishna, in Geeta, refers to *OM* by the title 'Ekākshara Brahma' which means the universe is consolidated in one sound. 'Pranav' is another term for *Omkāra*. It implies a meaning of drawing us towards the God. Though a Vedic term, 'Om' is also accepted and is preached

by other religions of the Indian origin. Moreover, sacred terms related to some western religions are analogous to *OM*, so Om claims a universal significance.

OM is regarded as the token symbol of divinity to such a degree that all Vedic auspicious functions, prayers begin with the recitation of *OM* besides other religious incantations (mantras). *OM* itself is regarded as single syllable incantation and is recited regularly by many followers. *Om* represents the deity *Ganesha* as well.

Dhyaneshwari is the most revered Marathi version-cum-translation of Gita. In that also, the first verse is dedicated to the honour of *Omkāra*.

Propitiation of *Omkāra* makes a person sagacious in spiritual matters. Its constant recitation helps to get introduced to the divine element of our own soul. Saint *Dhyaneshwar* describes the deity *Ganesha* as revealed in the configuration of *OM*.

➤ **The Configuration of *OM*:**

As is mentioned earlier, *Omkāra* is primordial sound occupying the entire universe. It is beyond the span of dimensions of the universe, called as '*Brahmānda*'. *Om* is more or less, a symbol. Phonetically it is presented as *OM*. Linguistically, two vowels (A and U) and one consonant (M) combine to produce the sound '*OM*'. Various significant attributes are associated with these three syllables. They are:

- Deity Brahma, creation, past, waking awareness, *tamas*.
- Deity Vishnu, state of being, present, dream, *rajas*.
- Deity Mahesh, future, dissolution, sleep, *Sattva*.

Propitiation of *Omkāra* is helpful in triggering '*Kundalini*' also.

➤ **Pronouncing and reciting *Omkāra*:**

Omkāra recitation is treated as one of the chief features of the *yoga* discipline. A guideline to pronunciation for the entrants is given here under:

- 1) Take a deep breath.
- 2) Part the lips about half an inch and start breathing out slowly, simultaneously pronouncing ‘A’ for about two seconds. Then pronounce ‘U’ for about three seconds. Shut the parted lips gradually during this period.
- 3) With the lips shut, ‘M’ is automatically pronounced due to the closure of air passage through the throat and the nose. This nasal sound should continue for about five seconds.

Thus one cycle of pronunciation takes about ten seconds. After this, take another deep breath and repeat the cycle. A common aspirant can complete five cycles every minute. The sound rises up from the naval, pierces through the chest and culminates by striking the head region.

Recitation:

The prerequisite for recitation is steady and peaceful mind as well as peaceful surroundings. With this background, adopt any comfortable posture and sit steady with erect back and in the *dhyān mudra* position. Shut the eyelids gently and try to slacken the entire body. Focus the attention on your breath. Having achieved the steady resolution of body and mind, proceed to salute Lord *Ṣankara* by offering salutation to *Omkāra* as follows-

Omkāra Bindu samyuktam, nityam dhyāyanti yoginah |

Kāmadam mokshadam caiva, Omkārāya namo namah ||

The pronouncing of ***Omkāra*** is distributed over ten seconds as explained earlier.

With practice, this period can be extended. These three pronunciations should merge fluently into one-another. No abrupt change is acceptable. The sound of

Omkāra should be steady like an unbroken trickle of oil, melodious like the sound of a bell, profound like the tone of a conch and elongated. With practice, a kind of rhythm shows up in it. Get well tuned with the melody of the *Omkāra*. Make no haste. Practise faithfully. Avoid vibrations in the sound. Daily practice should include at least eleven cycles of *Omkāra*. An aspirant may set on 21, 31, 51, or 108 cycles as well. Eyelids are lightly shut as per the earlier instructions. Hold them in this position for some more time, a few more minutes, after completing the cycles of recitation.

Try to hear the *Omkāra* sound present in the room. Enjoy the peace created in the mind. Then utter the words ‘*OM Śantih, Śantih Śantihi*’| Then place the palms on the closed eyes and slowly open the eyes from the cover of the palms. Lie in the *Śavāsana* position if required. Such practice reflects freshness with which the aspirant may proceed to his regular work. With regular *Omkāra* practice an aspirant automatically enters the meditation (*Dhyāna*). So *Omkāra* recitation is recommended at the beginning of meditation. As far as possible, this recitation should be continuous or without breaks. Moreover stick to your own pitch and level of sound. Never try to compete or show off. Such an attempt will distract your concentration and you will certainly lose the benefits promised.

The voice level for *Omkāra* recitation is classified into four classes viz. ‘*Vaikhari* (loud outward expression)’, *Madhyamā* (middle stage), ‘*Paśyanti* (visible or conceptualized) and ‘*Para*’ (transcendent)’, . Recite aloud in the beginning. With progress voice lowers to the level of self hearing. At higher stages of practice, there is no production of audible sound as such. Yet the aspirant is reciting *Omkāra*. This is constricted ‘*Parāvāni*’. At very high spiritual level, the aspirant receives *Omkāra* reflections emerging from his heart. This is described as the ‘*Paśyanti vāni*’.

➤ **Outcome of *Omkāra* Practice:**

Omkāra practice is compared to '*Kalpavriksha*', the desire granting tree. Common man's desires are confined to solving mundane problems while yogis desire spiritual heights. Constant practice of *Omkāra* recitation is claimed to fulfill all these desires. Many treatises have claimed a number of gains through *Omkāra*.

Praṣnopanishad- *Omkāra* propitiation fulfills all desires.

Varāhopanishad- Omkāra absorbs all your sins.

Omkāra recitation renders favorable effects on the five sheaths or '*koshas*'. The aspirant acquires physical health and that leads to a peaceful and focused mind. He achieves highly coveted blissful state of mind. The vibrations created by *Omkāra* recitation act favourably and instantly upon the brain, nervous system and pituitary gland. This pituitary gland exerts control on the functioning of other hormonal glands too. So upgraded function of this gland reflects upon the other glands and this, in turn, improves overall metabolism of the body. Various centres in the brain are duly activated. Functions of intellect, mind, '*citta*', and '*antahkaraṇa*' are raised to a higher level. Concentration, grasping, imagination, memory, reflex action, ability of decision making and such mental and intellectual facets are developed. Functioning of emotional outbursts are brought under control. Patience develops. Sympathetic as well as parasympathetic nervous systems improve and thereby various emotional disturbances and tensions come under control. Ego and undue pride evaporates.

The rhythm of breath accomplished during *Omkāra* acts favorably on all '*cakras*' (the energy spindles) and that in turn helps to activate the '*Kundalini*' and the aspirant experiences a blissful state from within. Digestion, excretion, and reproductive system become efficient. Respiration as well as stamina improves. Immunity improves and a glorious personality develops.

The 'citta' finds itself in an excited state at the end of *Omkāra* recitation, which is called 'Nādānusandhāna'. The venerable sage, Patanjali finds the divine power consolidated in the *Omkāra* and claims it to be the preceptor of the spiritual knowledge. Propitiation of *Omkāra* is very helpful in getting rid of the obstacles in the path of *yoga*.

Many disorders, according to the modern science, are psychosomatic. These disorders are cured fast, if the treatment includes *Omkāra* propitiation. If the patient, during propitiation, concentrates his faculties on the afflicted section, the cure is fast.

The extended pronunciation of *Omkāra* helps to check BP as well as heart ailments. Asthma attacks reduce because of deep inhalation and rhythmic breathing. *Omkāra* propitiation is an excellent remedy over headaches and migraine troubles. Moreover tonsillitis is cured without having to remove them.

Omkāra propitiation impacts upon the surroundings also. The atmosphere becomes sacred. This effect is multiplied through chorus recitation. Moreover, such chorus recitation is beneficial to each aspirant in the group. *Omkāra* is so effective that it leads an aspirant to 'Moksha'. Fast recitation of *Omkāra* sounds like the melodious chime of bells which sanctifies the atmosphere.

➤ **Research:**

Effects of *Omkāra* are to be taken up for research in India as well as abroad. Very favorable effects are registered in upgrading intellectual faculties of students through the recitation of *Omkāra*.

Recitation is expected to work favourably on the state of seriously hospitalized patients. This, however, is yet under research. The institute 'Kaivalyadhām' at Lonawala is working on the effects of *Omkāra* recited at high and low scales.

Grandeur of *Omkāra* is beyond description. It should be enough to promise that *Omkāra* is perfectly reliable refuge in the present inanely super fast lifestyle. It is simple, free of cost and has definite remedy over a number of problems. Its recitation guarantees everybody the desired result.

3.2.2 History of *Sūryanamaskāra*

Some *āsanas* of yoga are sequenced in a chain forming *Sūryanamaskāra*. Keeping in mind the importance of breath control in *yogāsana*, equal emphasis is given on breath control as well. Recitation of different mantras together with the practice of *Prāṅāyāma* is also included in it. Though *Sūryanamaskāra* is a chain of a few *āsanas* extracted from the myriad *yogāsanas*, still in the ancient books of yoga the importance of *Sūryanamaskāra* is mentioned distinctly. By performing the *Sūryanamaskāra* daily our body becomes flexible. Therefore before performing *yogāsana*, *Sūryanamaskāra* is practiced first. But its importance is not limited to itself. Due to some of its specialties it has gained a separate position among *yogāsanas*. *Sūryanamaskāra* is a sequence of *yogic* postures along with chants that make up a complete yoga.

The series of exercises in *Sūryanamaskāra* activates the endocrine glands and the *cakras*. It accords overall strength and flexibility to the body. It is documented to have beneficial effects on chronic skin problems. It relieves stress and tension. *Sūryanamaskāra* also improves attention and concentration. *Sūryanamaskāra* is a method of worshiping Surya, as sun is the prime source of light and energy. It has been practiced in India for thousands of years from Vedic era by *Rishi munis*. It is a combination of *āsanas* as well as *Prāṅāyāma*. Energy is circulated throughout the body by *Sūryanamaskāra* through *sūrya nādi* due to which psychological balance is achieved and development of *prāṅa śakti* can be achieved. *Sūryanamaskāra* helps a woman to fulfil her desires of maintaining her complexion, luster and feminism.

3.2.3 – Sūryanamaskāra: A Chain of Āsanas

Sūryanamaskāra is a part of ancient Indian tradition, from Vedic period. It is a complete and encompassing dynamic exercise advocated by our sages and practised till today. The energy, which gives life to everything on the earth, is the Sun. The traditional practice of *Sūryanamaskāra* is the symbol of gratitude towards the Sun. Besides, being an exercise, it also ignites and releases the energy within human body. This energy leads to the knowledge of the self. The different aspects of our personality are enhanced through the practice of *Sūryanamaskāra*.

The *Sūryanamaskāra* has the spiritual importance of gaining the knowledge of the self. It is a chain of *āsanas*, accompanied by *Bīja mantras*, the *Omkāra Mahā mantra* and *Prāṇāyāma*. *Sūryanamaskāra* regularises the flow of energy generated by the Pingāḷa Nādi (Surya nādi) in the body. It purifies the *nādis* in the body, maintains physical and mental balance. Through this, the *Prāṇa śakti* (vital energy) is properly channelised. Due to specific postures and rhythm, the body and mind also work in tune with each other bringing about completeness in life. There are many schools prevalent about the practice of *Sūryanamaskāra*. The method advocated by His Highness *Shri. Balasaheb Pantapratidinidhi* of *Aundh (Pune)* is widely accepted and is described here. It is a chain of 10 *āsanas*.

As far as possible, *Sūryanamaskāra* is to be done at sunrise or sunset. While performing *Sūryanamaskāra*, one should stand facing the sun.

❖ Practise of *Sūryanamaskāra*:

For starting *Sūryanamaskāra*, stand with feet together, join hands in *Namaskāra sthiti*, and place them right in the middle of the chest. Thumbs should be kept touching the chest bone and fingers directed forwards. Look straight ahead and if doing *Sūryanamaskāra* in open place, then look at the rising resplendence of the sun absorbing its illumination. But do not look at the bright Sun. Be calm, steady but alert. This position is also known as *Sūryanamaskārāsana*.



***Sūryanamaskārā* Positions:**

1) Utthitāsana:

Exhale and while inhaling, raise the hands above the head fully extended. Hands should be parallel in line with the shoulders. Palms must face upwards. Bend the body backwards as much as you can, maintaining the balance.

BENEFITS:

The abdominal muscles and the organs within, as well as the chest muscles and lungs are fully stretched. This increases breathing capacity and digestion. The bend at the spine makes the spinal cord and nerves competent. The shoulder muscles become strong. Abdominal fat reduces. One feels more awake and alert.



2) Jānukapalāsana: (Forward Bend):

While exhaling, bend forwards. Try and place the palms of the hands besides the feet without bending the knees. Try to touch the forehead to the knees or look towards the knees.

Benefits:

The waist and thigh muscles become flexible. Bending forward puts the pressure on the abdominal organs and improves digestion. The genito-urinary organs work more efficiently and their disorders are reduced. As the head comes at lower level, it gets more blood supply, helping in reducing the strain on the heart.

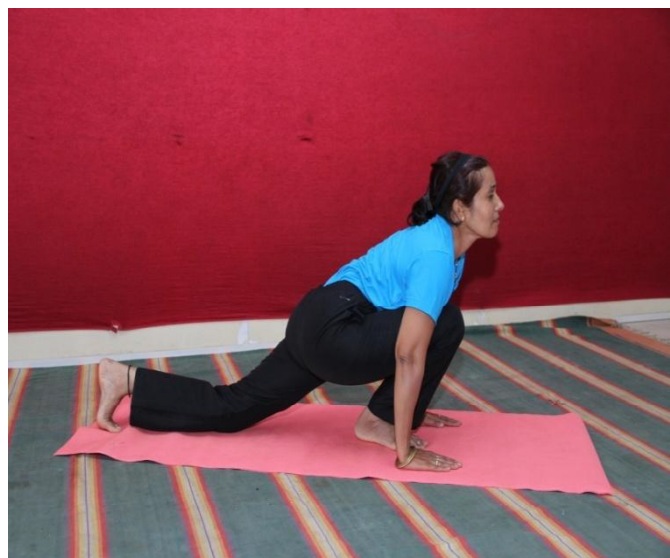
Caution:

Bend as much as you can. Those having hip joint problem should avoid this.



3) Ardhabhujangāsana:

While inhaling, place both the palms by the side of feet and extend the left leg backwards as far as possible and rest it on the toes. Keep the left knee on the floor. Keep both the hands straight. The right foot rests between the hands. Press the hip downwards so that the right thigh and calf are pressed together. Tilt the head behind and look upwards.



The backbone forms the arch. Gradually try reaching the ideal position.

Benefits:

The joints and muscles of the legs and waist become strong and healthy. The backbone becomes flexible. Nerve function improves. The lower abdomen gets good stretch and pressure.

Caution:

If the backbone is stiff, do as much as you can, avoiding unnecessary strain.

4) Hastapādāsana:

Hold the breath as you extend the right leg backwards. Keep it by the side of left leg. Lift up the left knee and put both knees together. The legs will be straight on the toes and hands are also held in straight position. Look in front. The whole body weight is borne by only hands and toes. The body is fully stretched in straight oblique line.

Benefits:

As the total body weight is borne by the hands and toes, their muscles and joints become strong and flexible. As the body is stretched, capacity of heart and lung improves. As the body is held straight against the gravity, all the muscles in the body are strained and stretched.



Caution:

Those suffering from breathlessness, heart problem should not do this.

5) **Ashtāngāsana:**

While exhaling first rest the knees on the floor, then rest the chest and forehead on the floor. Do not touch the abdomen and nose on the floor. For this lift up the hips a little and bend the head forwards. The different types of the curves are the characteristic of this āsana.

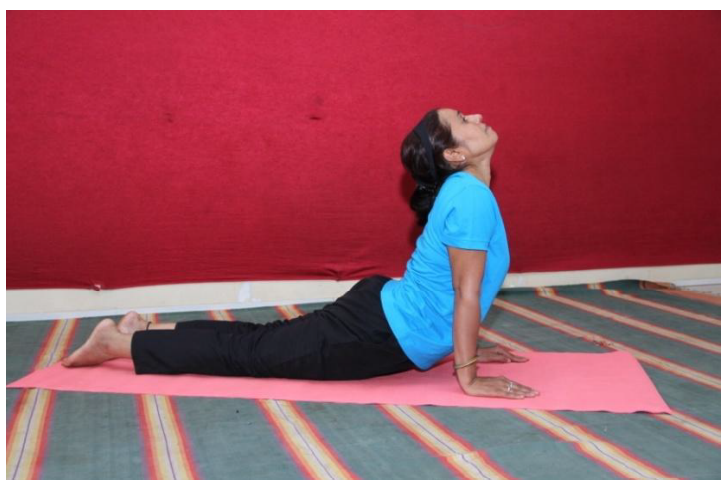


Benefits:

The peculiar curving of the spine improves the function of the spine. Abdominal muscles get pulled inwards which improves their functioning. All the joints of hands and legs also are strengthened. This position gives rest to the body.

6) **Bhujangāsana:**

While inhaling, lift the front portion of the body i.e., forehead, neck, shoulders and chest and the part of the abdomen up to belly button. The lower part of abdomen from toes to the waist will rest on the floor. Lift up the upper body till the hands are fully extended. Most of the body weight rests on the



hands. Keep the toes raised and heels touching together. Tilt the head backwards and look upwards. Keep the mouth closed and the face calm. The spine curves into arch. Pull the shoulders backwards.

Benefits:

The muscles of the chest and abdomen become competent, digestion improves. Blood supply to the backbone improves. Kidneys and adrenal glands are massaged. It also improves the strength of backbone.

7) Parvatāsana:

While holding the breath, and without changing the position of legs and hands, lift the hips up, and turn head inwards to touch the chin to the chest. Try to touch the heels on the ground. Do not strain unnecessarily. The stretch in the hands and shoulders should be in backward direction.



Benefits:

The muscles of the hands, legs and waist become strong. Arms and shoulder blades become active. Advantages of *Jālabdhara Bandha* are attained.

Caution:

Obese or overweight should carefully take this position. Those having high BP and spondylitis should not take this position.

8) Ardhabhujangāsana:

Hold the breath as you put left foot between the hands and take the position as in the position in **No 3**.



9) Jānukapālasana:

While exhaling, place the right leg next to the left and attain the position as **No 2**.

10) While inhaling, stand up straight in *Namaskara* position.

Thus one *Sūryanamaskāra* is completed through ten positions. Initially, do as many as possible without undue strain. Slowly, try to achieve ideal position. The unique characteristic of *Sūryanamaskāra* is bending the body forwards and backwards in different ways. Along with the movements, breathing is also synchronised with different positions. *Kumbhakha* (breath holding) is also achieved and benefits of *Prāñāyāma* are also gained. Obviously the breathing control is according and supporting to the movements.

3.2.4 Sūryanamaskāra as a Prāñāyāma

Breath phases with consideration to the movements are as follows:

Position 1 : Inhale (*Pūraka*)

Position 2 : Exhale (*Recaka*)

Position 3 : Inhale (*Pūraka*)

Position 4 : Hold The Breath (*Kumbhaka*)

Position 5 : Exhale (*Recaka*)

Position 6 : Inhale (*Pūraka*)

Position 7 : Hold the Breath (*Kumbhaka*)

Position 8 : Hold the Breath (*Kumbhaka*)

Position 9 : Exhale (*Recaka*)

Position 10: Inhale (*Pūraka*)

3.2.5 *Sūryanamaskāra* with Chants and its Benefits.

Each *Sūryanamaskāra* is related to a specific *mantra*. To the *bijamantra*, *OM*, also known as the *mahamantra*, is added with 'R' and 'H'. They are recited in a sequential order of *Sanskrit* alphabets (*barakhadi*) & then the 12 names of the sun god are taken.

When one chants the '*bijmantra*', a positive energy is created and effective waves are radiated.

The *surya mantras* are:

- 1) *OM Rhām Mitrāya Namaha*||
- 2) *OM Rheem Ravaye Namaha* ||
- 3) *OM RhoOM Sūryāya Namaha* ||
- 4) *OM Rhraim Bhānave Namaha*||
- 5) *OM Rhoum Khagāya Namaha*||
- 6) *OM Raha Pūshñe Namaha*||
- 7) *OM Rhām Hirañyagrabhāya Namaha*||

8) *OM Rheem Marīcaye Namaha*||

9) *OM Rheem Ādityāya Namaha*||

10) *OM Rhraim Savitrey Namaha*||

11) *OM Rhoum Arkāya Namaha* ||

12) *OM Rhaha Bhāskarāya Namaha*||

13) *OM Shree Savitre Suryanārāyaṅāya Namaha*||

Add a feeling of gratitude to your sun salutation practice with sun salutation *mantras*. That's when through *Sūryanamaskāra*, you can express your honorific feelings not only towards the Sun but also the whole Nature. (Honoring the creation brings in a sense of sacredness to your yoga practice.)

I stand on my *yoga* mat, getting ready to start my Sun Salutation practice. My hands are folded in front of my chest, in prayer position. I chant the first mantra for Sun Salutation, my hands go up and then as I recite the second sun salutation mantra, they come down and touch the floor, as if bowing to this higher power – the Sun. I have a gentle smile on my face as I carry on with each Sun Salutation (*Sūryanamaskāra*) posture and coordinate it with a mantra recital. My whole *Sūryanamaskāra* practice turns sacred. This is what mantra chants can do to the Sun Salutation practice, which can otherwise seem like a physical exercise intended to lose weight or stretch and tone the muscles.

Sure, sounds good; But what are 12 Sun Salutation *mantras*?

Mantras refer to a combination of syllables, sounds, or phrases, which can be chanted or sung. In case of Sun Salutation, they are sung in praise of the Sun. Chanting mantras extends Sun Salutation benefits; it has subtle yet penetrating effects on both mind and body. There are 12 mantras which praise different qualities of Sun and add a profound spiritual touch to the entire practice.

How to chant the Sun Salutation mantras?

The only rule to remember is to chant them with gratefulness. Each sun salutation *mantra* has a specific meaning, but it is not important to delve into what each mantra means.

For instance, *Om Bhānave Namaha* means 'Salutations to one who brings light'. When you recite this mantra, feel a sense of deep gratitude to the Sun for giving us light and making life possible on Earth. Similarly, addressing the Sun as a friend with the chant, *Om Mitrāya Namaha*, where we look at this glowing ball as our friend.

How to include mantras in *Sūryanamaskāra*?

You can either chant the sun salutation mantras verbally or in your mind.

Now let's see how you can chant the *mantras* while doing the Sun Salutation sequence. One set of Sun Salutation comprises two rounds – one with the right leg, one with the other. It is ideally recommended to practice 12 sets of Sun Salutation daily. But you can choose your own number, according to what seems comfortable. If you choose to do 6 sets or more, chant one *mantra* each at the start of every new sequence. Recite the first mantra as you start one set, finish the two rounds in that set and then start the next set with the second *mantra* and so on. This way, you would have chanted 12 mantras with 12 sets of Sun Salutation.

If you practice less than 12 rounds of Sun Salutation – 2 or 4 – you can recite one mantra each with every posture in the sequence. This would make it 12 Sun Salutation mantras corresponding to 12 poses of *Sūryanamaskāra*.

No	Name	Name Mantra	Name Meaning
1.	मित्र Mitrā	ॐ मित्राय नमः। Om Mitrāya Namaḥ।	The friend of all
2.	रवि Ravi	ॐ रवये नमः। Om Ravaye Namaḥ।	The one who roars
3.	सूर्य Surya	ॐ सूर्याय नमः। Om Sūryāya Namaḥ।	The brilliant one
4.	भानु Bhānu	ॐ भानवे नमः। Om Bhānave Namaḥ।	The bright one
5.	खग Khaga	ॐ खगाय नमः। Om Khagāya Namaḥ।	The one who moves in the sky
6.	पूषन् Pūshañ	ॐ पूष्णे नमः। Om Pūshñe Namaḥ।	The one who nourishes all
7.	हिरण्यगर्भ Hirañyagarb ha	ॐ हिरण्यगर्भाय नमः। Om Hirañyagarbhāya Namaḥ।	The golden source (of the universe)
8.	मरीच Marīca	ॐ मरीचये नमः। Om Marīcaye Namaḥ।	The lord of the dawn

9.	आदित्य Āditya	ॐ आदित्याय नमः। Om Adityāya Namah!	The son of Aditi
10.	सवित्र Savitra	ॐ सवित्रे नमः। Om Savitre Namah!	The arouser
11.	अर्क Arka	ॐ अर्काय नमः। Om Arkāya Namah!	The one who is fit to be praised
12.	भास्कर Bhāskara	ॐ भास्कराय नमः। Om Bhāskarāya Namah!	The enlightening one

Questions for practice- 3

Answer in one sentence

1. How many Steps are there in *Sūryanamaskāra*?
2. How many Āsanās are there in *Sūryanamaskāra*?
3. Which time is good for doing *Sūryanamaskāra*?
4. What benefits can one derive from *Sūryanamaskāra* coupled with *mantra* chanting?
5. Which time is good for doing *Sūryanamaskāra*?
6. Which is the starting position of *Sūryanamaskāra*?
7. Why *Sūryanamaskāra* is a chain of *Āsanās*?

8. Why *Sūryanamaskāra* is an overall exercise?
9. How *Prāñāyāma* done in *Sūryanamaskāra*?
10. Where was 'Om' mentioned for the first time?
11. What is the starting position of *Sūryanamaskāra*?
12. How many *Svaras* in Om?

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences

1. What are the physical and psychological benefits of practicing *Sūryanamaskāra*?
2. How *Sūryanamaskāra* is beneficial for women?
3. What are the benefits of 'Omkāra'?
4. How to recite *Omkāra*?
5. What are the syllables (*Svaras*) in *Omkāra*?
6. Why *Omkāra* is called 'Anāhata Nāda'?
7. Explain the importance of *Omkāra*?

Chapter – 4

Diet and Daily Routine (*Āhāra* and *Vihāra*)

Unit Structure

- 4.0 - Objectives
- 4.1 - Introduction
- 4.2 - Significance
 - 4.2.1 - Definition, Need and Significance of Diet
 - 4.2.2 - Objectives of Diet
 - 4.2.3 - Diet and Immunity
 - 4.2.4 - Factors that improve immunity
 - 4.2.5 - *Yoga* Rules for Daily Routine

4.0 - Objectives

- 1) To understand the definition, need and importance of diet?
- 2) To understand the objectives of diet.
- 3) To understand the role of diet in enhancing the immunity
- 4) To understand the factors that influence the improvement immunity.
- 5) To understand the rules of *yoga* concerning the daily routine

4.1 - Preface

We require daily intake of food for our survival. There is no sense in living just for the sake of living. A housewife is always troubled by the

question as to identify the right proportion of dietary constituents she should provide her family to keep it healthy, fit, energetic and strong. In the past 10 - 15 years at the backdrop of rising inflation, this issue is widely debated to determine which diet is ideal for good health – the traditional staple food of this land consisting of pulses, cereals and millets eaten for millennia that also receives sanctity from Gita and Dynanesvari or the processed food based on animal meat. This creates a great confusion to choose between vegetarian and non-vegetarian diet. Because the westerners have registered great advancement in science, we have a tendency to accept even their dietary practices as better than ours.

We should try to find out the right dietary content that not only fits our budget but is a balanced diet. If we follow two important rules of diet this problem can be effectively addressed. Our staple food can be generally classified into four categories: 1. grains and cereals, 2. Pulses and millets 3. Vegetables and fruits and 4. Milks and milk products. The first rule is that one item from each of these groups is to be included in our daily diet and should have as much variety as possible. The importance of food grains is that they provide the calorie requirement for our daily activities and also provide cellulose and vitamins. Millets and pulses supplement the food grains and also provide Lysine and other enzymes not found in grains and cereals. Similarly vegetables and fruits replenish the body with necessary minerals and vitamins. Milk being rich in Calcium and iron serves the deficiencies. Children who do not receive the minimum required daily intake of balanced food have stunted growth and are debilitated. This is especially found in children of families under below poverty line.

The second dietary rule is that the stomach should be left partially empty and should not be completely filled. This kind of food can be obtained for

a meagre price as well. Whatever be our staple food, *roti-dal* or rice *khicdi*, they provide us with the necessary dose of minerals, vitamins, alkaline substances. If we follow these two simple rules, we don't have to worry about whether one particularly vegetable is better than the others or which particular seed oil we should consume or whether we include some energy drinks or tonics, or biscuits.

4.2 Significance

In fact about 100 to 150 years ago, the food habits of westerns were also not very different from the Indian style diet. But as industrialization gained momentum and people started migrating from villages to the cities, preserved food items gained prominence. For example non-polished hand pounded rice was replaced by machine polished rice. Instead of jaggery people started preferring sugar. Instead of wheat covered with bran we began using wheat flour. Thus within the past fifty years the food habits of people drastically changed and now we realize that this kind of processing of food divests it of valuable minerals, proteins, vitamins etc. This paved the way for the development of diet and nutrition as a science. Now using the food technology we estimate the nutritional content and value of various food substances. With Economical growth the diet in the western countries began to include more and more non-vegetarian substances and the growth of their children into adulthood also sped up. Even in Japan the same story was repeated. Just as the rapid increase in the physical growth of the children was noticed, even the economic growth was also proportionally registered at a faster pace. This raised a question as to whether the slow progress of our economy has any connection with the dietary habits of our country and whether our diet is of poor quality. We the Indians began to wonder

whether our staple food is scientifically nutritious or whether we need to make any changes in our dietary habits.

The food we eat chiefly contains five types of nutrients (the material that supply us with nutrition). These nutrients include carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, and minerals. Of these the first three kinds provide us with the necessary calories, vitamins and minerals. When looked from the perspective of calorific value of food, the western diet is high in calories than ours. Their protein intake is almost double that of ours and even the quality of their protein intake is of better standard. The UNO has also stated that the protein intake of Indians is very poor and this protein deficiency is estimated to be around 40-50%. As long as this is the state of our diet our economic, social and physical development cannot progress at the desired levels.

The food we eat contains different types of nutrients (the material that supply us with nutrition). These nutrients include carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, and minerals, fiber, and water. We need some of all these; our bodies are healthiest and work their best when they have a balanced diet made of different foods that contain all the nutrients. Most foods contain a mix of some or all of the different kinds of nutrients. Some nutrients are required every day (or nearly every day), while others aren't needed as often. Scientists sometimes sort nutrients into two categories: the macronutrients-the ones we need in large quantities, including carbohydrates, fat, fiber, protein, and water-and the micronutrients-the ones we don't need as much of, such as vitamins and minerals. Poor health can be caused by an imbalance of nutrients, whether in excess or a deficiency.

The macronutrients (except for fiber and water) provide our bodies with energy. They are the body's fuel, and they contain calories. Vitamins and minerals do not give us energy, but our bodies need them for other reasons.

4.2.1 Definition, Need and Importance of Diet

The Indian tradition about diet states '*Udarabharaña Nohe Jāije Yadnya Karma*'. This means food intake is not for fill our bellies but is a sacrificial act. And it is also often said that "*Annamayah Prāñah Prāñāyāmaah Parākramah*" meaning the food taken in, when digested turns into energy. When this energy is absorbed by the body it turns into *Prāña* which in turn provides the person with valour and strength. In sports and physical activity energy is very important. All our energy requirements are purveyed through the food.

❖ Diet:

The basic needs of man are air, water and food. Diet and health, diet and disease are closely related to each-other. Health is base of life and diet is base of health. If diet is not proper it results in poor state of health. If we take measured quantity of food in the right way at the right time, we can certainly avoid falling sick. Thus it is important to know scientifically validated answers to questions like what is food? Why should we take it? How, when and how much it is to be consumed? What to eat when one is sick?, etc. Today man eats when he/she is not hungry. He has no respect for the food he eats. Taste is the only criteria for selecting the food for him. He watches the television programmes while eating meals. He engages himself in discussions during his meals and fails to see what he is consuming. This style of eating does affect the health adversely. The role of tobacco in cancer development is now universally accepted.

However, even the doctors smoke! Yoga does not help those who keep on abusing their bodies through such lifestyle.

Lord *Shri Krishna* observes in *Gita*:

Yuktāhāra vihārasya, yukta ceshtasya karmasu /

Yukta svapnāvabodhasya, yogo bhavati duhkaha //

" युक्त आहार - विहारस्य, युक्त चेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्त स्वप्ना व बोधस्य योगो भवती दुःखुः ॥"

One hour's training in the system of *yoga* enables us to lead our life in a *yogic* way. In other words, we should spend 23 hours of the day in accordance with the one-hour's training. Our diet, lifestyle, cogitation, daily chores, relaxation are all well directed by the *yogic* training. Thus we become, *yoga*-bound round the clock. The rules set by *yoga* do not apply to all people in equal measure. The diet, in particular, varies from person to person as per their place, age, sex, etc.

Need of Dietary Constituents:

Staple food is a diet which fulfils all the nutritional requirements of the body. The constituents of the food are:

1. Carbohydrates

70-75% of our diet consists of carbohydrates. These are obtained from *wheat, jowar, rice, potato, sugar, pulses* etc. They provide energy to the body. The main fuel of our body for producing energy comes from carbohydrates. Carbohydrates can be refined (simple) and unrefined (complex). Refined sugars (such as those found in soft drinks, snack

foods, and white bread) are already broken down by food processing; in other words, machinery removes all the bits of fiber from the food, thus, fiber, instead of being a natural part of it (as is the case with fruit and vegetables), is no longer present in processed food. Our body has to work harder to get the energy from unrefined carbohydrates, and such complex carbohydrates are better for our health. Good diet is one that has more complex carbohydrates and fewer refined carbohydrates as possible.

2. **Proteins:**

Proteins are very important for the growth of our body, to repair wear and tear of the body and to build the immune system that protects us from various diseases. Proteins are also required for the production of various digestive enzymes and hormones. Various pulses especially *urad dal*, banana, milk and milk products, dry fruits, ground nuts are rich in proteins. It is a common misunderstanding among many that only eggs and meat provide proteins. On the contrary they provide low grade proteins. A vegetarian diet is sufficiently rich in proteins. In fact, eggs increase the cholesterol levels of the body, which is harmful. All pulses are very rich in proteins. Lack of proteins retards physical growth and development of the body. It causes swelling of body and drastically reduces resistance power of the body.

3. **Fats**

Fats are equally important, they give strength to the body are essential for lubrication of the joints. When consumed in excess it is stored under the skin and the body weight increases. Excess fat is not good for our health. Especially saturated fatty acids increase cholesterol levels leading to hypertension, heart disorders and so on. But it is advisable to consume one teaspoonful of homemade clarified butter (Ghee) everyday. It is

needed for intellectual work. Dry fruits especially, almonds, walnuts, pistachio contains ADL fats which are beneficial. Many people avoid ghee/butter to remain thin.

4. Vitamins

Your body doesn't need as large quantities of vitamins as it does in terms of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats, but if you don't get enough of the right vitamins, your health will suffer and you will not function as well either mentally or physically. Your body does not make vitamins, so you have to get them from food. Not having enough of one vitamin can affect your body's ability to absorb other vitamins. Each vitamin has a role to play to keep us healthy.

Vitamins that are fat-soluble can be stored in your body for a while-some for days, others for months. This means your body can build up a supply to keep them handy for as and when they are needed. Vitamins A, D, E, and K are fat-soluble. Meanwhile, water-soluble vitamins-vitamins C and B-travel through your bloodstream to your kidneys, where they pass into your urine, and eventually leave your body when you empty your bladder. Your body uses what it needs while the vitamins are traveling through your system. Since you don't have the ability to store them for later, these vitamins need to be replaced often (by eating foods that contain them).

5. Minerals

Minerals are the chemicals found in metals and in the soil. It may seem strange that your body needs something like iron (the same substance that's use to manufacture steel for cars and machinery) or copper (found in coins and cooking pots)- but it does! Your body needs only very tiny

bits of minerals like these, but those tiny bits are important for a good health. You don't eat coins or metal pots, of course (and too much of many minerals could be dangerous to your health as well), so how do you get minerals inside your body?

First, plants take in minerals from the soil and you get those minerals from eating plants. Animals eat plants, and the minerals enter their bodies, so you can also get some minerals from eating meat. Minerals can be present in water as well. How much and what minerals you take into your body will depend on how much of a mineral is present in the soil in the region where your food, water, or meat comes from. Many developed nations add minerals to their foods, so not getting enough of these substances is seldom a concern, as long as you're eating a balanced diet. If you live in a developing nation, you may be dependent on the food that grows on the land where you live, which may or may not have all the minerals you need for good nutrition.

6. Calcium (found in dairy products, tofu, and cabbage) is needed to help build your bones and teeth.

7. Water

Anything that's alive – from tiny one-celled creatures to human beings to trees – needs water in order to live. Water makes up more than half of a human's body weight and a person can't survive for more than a few days without it. When your body doesn't have enough water, then it is called being dehydrated. Low-level dehydration can affect your body and mind's performance, while a bad case of dehydration can make you sick. When your urine is very dark yellow, it's means your body is holding on to water, so it's probably time to drink more. You need extra water when you exercise and when it's hot out. People who live in developed nations

may take water for granted (turn on the faucet and out it comes), but people who live in other regions of the world may have to walk long distances and carry water back their home.

4.2.2 - Functions of Diet

- 1) Energy production for our daily activities.
- 2) To enable activities aimed at attaining life's goals.
- 3) Develop immunity power.
- 4) Enable excretion of unwanted substances from the system.
- 5) For the growth of the body.
- 6) Balance the PH levels in the blood.
- 7) Produce new cells.
- 8) Produce electromagnetic waves in the biological system of the body.

Diet and life are closely related. Just as man cannot live without air similarly man cannot survive without food.

4.2.3 Immunity Power and Diet

The body's basic defence against disease and illness is the immune system. A body that is undernourished will not have the tools it needs to build the blood cells to fight off disease. According to UNICEF, "More than half of all child deaths are associated with malnutrition, which weakens the body's resistance to illness. Something as simple as a common cold can drag on because someone is undernourished and

therefore does not have the physical strength to combat the invading germs.

Poor nutrition has severely hampered the treatment of individuals suffering from HIV/AIDS in Africa. Even when antiretroviral medications are available, a lack of good nutrition may prevent the person's body from using the medicine to its best advantage.

It's not just under nutrition that can affect one's immune system; however, research continues to show how too much food can impede the immune system. According to a report in *Nutrition and Immunity in Man*, obesity and high-fat diets can lead to an increased risk of infectious diseases. A reduction in the intake of fat can cause weight loss and, according to some researchers, decrease the risk of infectious disease by strengthening the immune system.

Researchers at the University of Illinois and *Strang-Cornell Cancer Prevention Center* in the United States are focusing on nutrition as a method of preventing cancer and reducing cancer deaths by strengthening the immune system. Studies are focusing on the benefits of vegetarian and low-fat diets. Though the study is ongoing, researchers believe that these dietary options would increase the body's production of disease-fighting white blood cells. Exercise also helps to build the body's immune system. Athletes have their own special nutritional needs.

Diet and Mental development

Food is not meat only to fill up the stomach. *Ramdas Swamy* has said that to eat food is '*Udarabharana nohe janije yadnyakarma.*' Eating food is a sacred ritual. It is very important to get mental satisfaction from eating. Food should also be emotionally satiating too. The pleasure of the taste on the tongue is very momentary but there should be no regret in such

carnal appeasement. A simple but tasty food gives great satisfaction to body, mind and heart.

The basic functions of food are recognized by all sciences. But only ancient Indian science believes and narrates how the nature of food affects the mind. It influences the thinking process, nature, behaviour, attitude of the person very deeply. Food has a major contribution to the mental setup of a person. Modern science has no awareness of this concept about the food. A *sātvic* diet induces virtuous thoughts (*satvic*) leading to behaviour of the person. A *tāmasic* diet will lead to *tāmasic* (mal-behaviour) temperament.

Immunity Power Securing Factors

Skin and mucous membranes are the outer and inner linings respectively that protect us from unwelcome guests. Our skin's pH is naturally acidic and hence, bacteria and other micro organisms cannot easily enter our body. But frequent use of alkaline face wash and soaps damage our skin and balance of skin's acidic pH. The sebaceous glands and the oil producing cells in our skin also have antibacterial and anti fungal properties. But overuse of soaps and shampoos inhibit their natural mechanism. Hence it is advisable to minimize the use of soaps, shampoos, deodorants and face-wash and replace them with *ayurvedic* fragrant bathing paste or other home-made herbal products. Like outer skin, the internal lining of the mucous membrane protects our respiratory and digestive systems from bacteria and fungus.

By protecting ourselves from the pollution, and by being away from unhealthy habits, taking balanced diet with vitamin A and practicing *Prāṇāyāmaa* daily we can keep our skin mucous members protected.

❖ **Hydrochloric Acid (HCL)**

In the digestion process, acts as a stimulant and destroys the microorganisms present in the food that we ate. Irregularity in eating habits, regular consumption of soda based cool drinks, taking antacid tablets, eating even without feeling hungry, eating while watching TV and being agitated by the programs being watched, etc., cause imbalance in the production of HCL. This in turn affects the digestive system as well as immune system.

❖ **Haemoglobin**

For the formation of Haemoglobin, Iron and Amino acids (protein) are necessary. These are obtained from a balanced diet. The normal Haemoglobin levels in the blood, for men are 14-16 gm%, and in women 13-24gm%. In women, the Haemoglobin levels decrease during menstruation, pregnancy and breast-feeding; therefore, supplementing with iron medicines is necessary. Anaemia is caused when Haemoglobin levels in the blood decreases. The cells become small and pale in colour.

❖ **White blood cells (WBC)**

The WBCs are of different types. They protect the body against intruding microorganisms, by surrounding and attacking the germs. But if the infection is sever and the germs are resistant with poor body resistance, disease are caused. Whenever there is infection in the body, the WBC count increases considerably. In the blood cancer, WBC count greatly increases or decreases. Whenever germs enter and attack the body, there is a rise in the cells called polymorphs. Similarly, during an allergic attack, there is a rise in Eosinophils in the blood. In chronic infection like TB, lymphocytes increase in number.

As the WBCs are able to change their shapes, they can easily pass out of the blood vessels (capillaries). They gather around the wound and destroy the germs and other microorganism in the wound. A high number of WBCs are found in the pus of the infected wounds. WBC form antibodies in the body, which is very important for protection against diseases. We administer antibodies in the form of vaccines against diseases like polio, tetanus, whooping cough, Diphtheria, etc.

4.2.4 Growing factors of Immunity power

➤ **Vitamin A and Beta carotene:**

Vitamin A (found in carrots, pumpkin, yellow squash, apricots and eggs) is good for your eyes. It helps you see better at night, and also helps you see colours. A severe lack of vitamin A can even cause blindness. Few people have such an extreme lack of vitamin A; they may not even notice that they aren't getting enough of this vitamin, but their ability to fight off diseases will be decreased.

Also known as beta-carotene, a yellow pigment (found in food), that may be converted into Vitamin A in the body.

➤ **The B Vitamins** (found in beans, peas and whole grain foods) help your body make energy. They support the creation of red blood cells, which carry oxygen around your body.

➤ **Vitamin C** (found in oranges and other citrus fruit, tomatoes, cabbage, and red and green peppers) helps your body's tissues (for example, skin and muscles) keep healthy. It also helps cuts and wounds to heal and helps you ward off illnesses.

➤ **Vitamin E** (found in nuts, spinach, and sardines) helps keep body tissues such as your eyes and skin healthy. It also protects your lungs from being damaged by polluted air, and it help in the making of red blood cells.

➤ **Sunshine**

1. **Sunlight builds the immune system.** The white blood cells, which increase with sun exposure, are called lymphocytes, and these play a major role in defending the body against infections.
2. **The sun's light kills bad bacteria.** The German solders after WWI knew of the discoveries that had been made in 1903 by the Nobel Prize winner, Niels Finsen. They used sunlight to disinfect and heal wounds.
3. **Sunlight penetrates deep into the skin to cleanse the blood and blood vessels.** Medical literature published in Europe showed that people with atherosclerosis (hardened arteries) improved with sun exposure.
4. **Sunlight increases oxygen content in human blood.** And, it also enhances the body's capacity to deliver oxygen to the tissues; very similar to the effects of exercise. The sun has a great effect on stamina, fitness and muscular development.
5. **The sun's rays lower blood pressure.** Even a single exposure significantly lowers blood pressure in individuals with high blood pressure. On the other hand, pharmaceutical drugs such as Statins have side effects, such as robbing the body of Coenzyme Q10. CoQ10 is essential for cellular and heart energy.
6. **Sunlight lowers cholesterol.** The sun converts high cholesterol in the blood into steroid hormones and the sex hormones we need for

reproduction. In the absence of sunlight, the opposite happens; substances convert to cholesterol.

7. Sunlight has a beneficial effect on skin disorders, such as psoriasis, acne, eczema and fungal infections of the skin.

4.2.5 - Daily Routine and Yoga rules

Ayurveda has discussed life-style in remarkable details.

Brahmamuhūrte uttishṭhena svāsthya rakshārtha māyushaha /

Tatra sarvārtha śantyārtham, smarechcha madhusūdana //

ब्राह्म मुहुर्ते उत्तिष्ठेन स्वास्थ्य रक्षार्थमायुषः ।

तत्र सर्वार्थं शान्त्यर्थं स्मरेच्च मधुसूदनम् ॥वा.सू.२॥

Ayurveda recommends getting up early in the morning, one and half-hour before sunrise. This time is called '*Brahma Muhurtam*'. At this time the Ozone (O₃) layer is at lower level. So the body and mind are in an energetic state. The atmosphere is health promoting since the pollution is the minimal. It is highly advisable to take the morning walk at these hours. Also recite your prayers at this hour. As six to seven hours sleep is recommended, accordingly we must plan our bedtime.

The first thing on getting up is, we must observe our palms.

Karāgre vasate laxmi karamadhye saraswati /

Karmūle to govindaha Prabhāte Karadarśanam //

करदर्शन, भूमिवंदनः

कराग्रे वसते लक्ष्मीः करमध्ये सरस्वती ।

करमुले तु गोविन्दः प्रभाते करदर्शनम् ॥

We create and develop our own career through our own hands. The palms are the creative terminal of our bodies. So the deities *Laxmi*, *Saraswati* and *Govinda* are regarded to dwell in the palms. So place the hands on the eyes, first thing on getting up. With a delicate massage, open the eyes rather slowly, admitting the outside light gradually. Then observe the palms with a glance of gratitude.

Next operation is standing on the ground. It is the earth that supports us, feeds us and bears all our abuses as well. The earth is mother to all mankind. We are sorry to trample on our mother. So we beg her pardon and request her kindness. It is further recommended to recite the Sanskrit verse of salutation to the Earth:

Samudra vasane devi, parvata stana mandale /

Vishñu patni namastubhyam pāda sparṣa kshamasvame}}

Vishñuṣakti samutpanne, ṣankhavarṇa mahitale /

Anekaratna sampanne, bhoomi devi namonamaha //

समुद्रवसनेदेवि पर्वतस्तन मंडले ।

विष्णुपत्नी नमोस्तुभ्यं पादस्पर्शं क्षमस्वमे ।

विष्णुशक्ति समुत्पन्ने शंखवर्णं महीतले ।

अनेकरत्न संपन्ने भूमिदेवी नमोनमः ॥

The next recommended function is the planning the schedule for the day. The body and the mind, after the night's rest, are stabilized and capable of

rational decision. So we can plan systematically at this hour. In that, decide the order of preference of your appointments. If we close eyes, focus on our proposals and set a plan for the day, at this hour, then the day generally precedes smooth for us.

- **Excretion:** Excretion is passing the urine and stools. '*Ushahpān*' is recommended for clear excretion. Fill up a copper vessel with drinking water before going to bed. Drink a couple of cups of water fast from this vessel in the morning. Such '*Ushahpān*' promotes clear excretion. Drinking warm water with a touch of lime is another helping factor for evacuating the bowels. In any case, excretion should be completed in five minutes. One should not depend on tea, tobacco or other substance for bowel movements. Such habits deteriorate the natural force of excretion. Excretion has to be a natural phenomenon. When our entire daily routine is disturbed or unnatural, excretion systems as well as the digestive system are disturbed and man seeks external help like hot tea, tobacco, chewing or smoking for clearing bowels.
- **Mouth washing** follows excretion. Mouth washing includes cleaning of the teeth and tongue. Use stalk of *Neem* tree, Banyan tree or *Arjuna* tree for brushing the teeth. They taste bitter and astringent. This astringency is a good disinfectant. Moreover, it promotes the compaction of gums. If you use toothbrush, opt for a soft brush. Brushing should be carried in the morning as well as after the each meal. Our fingers and water is another good combination for tooth cleaning. Cow-dung ash is an excellent tooth cleaning and brushing material.
- **Cleaning of tongue** is another essential feature. The tongue is not only the food taster and acceptor but it is also the transmitting antenna of our speech. It is the mirror of our health. The white layer accumulating on the

tongue is an indication of the waste products accumulated in the body. This layer should be cleaned off with the help of an appropriate tongue cleaner.

- **Anjana** is introducing antimony (*surma*) into the eyes. This is accomplished in the morning and evening, with the help of a stick or the finger, when the sky is clear. Such *Anjan* keeps the eyes relaxed and protects them from external infections. However avoid this process if you are unwell, drunk or under the influence of smoke.
- **Nasya** is introducing drops in the nostrils. One has to lie down for the process. Use dropper or cotton swab for the purpose. This process protects the nose, ears and eyes as well. However, do not try to make a choice of drops yourself. Consult a physician (*vaidya*) over the matter. Also do not apply this treatment to children below seven years of age or the old man above 80 yrs old.

Holding liquid in mouth is called '*Gandush*'. The result is bright face. The liquid may be warm or cold water, milk, oil or some medicine.

- **Dhumsevan** is absorbing smoke through the nose and mouth. Some medical herb is boiled in water and the vapour produced is drawn in through nose and mouth. This process clears cough problems as well as problems related to head.
- '**Abhyanga**' is the process of massaging the body with some appropriate oil and then taking a bath. If followed daily, this process is very helpful in retaining the skin lustre. The muscles also remain toned and active. If not daily, follow this process on the weekly level. Skin turns dry in winter. So do adopt this process more frequently in winter season.

Applying oil and massaging is called '*Snehan*'. If '*Abhyang*' is not practicable at least apply oil to the feet. Roughness of the bottom of feet disappears. If this massaging is done with ghee, it is helpful to the eyesight also. That leads to sleeping fast and effortlessly. Daily drops of oil in ears retains one's hearing ability and keep the ears free from wax.

Apply oil to the hairs daily. Such application retains the hair both quantitatively as well as qualitatively. Massaging head with oil leads to fast overnight sleep.

- **Exercise:** Every individual should do some exercise or the other in the morning. The degree of exercise varies from person to person as well as from season to season and place to place. Sweating is the indication of sufficient exercise. An individual can choose his/her exercise. Walking, running, swimming, skipping, cycling, jogging. Some games offer good exercise to the individual. Such exercises promote the overall stamina, strength vigour and lighten the body. Exercise also helps in fat reduction. The aged seniors should take exercise to a limited extent. Moreover, curtail the proportion of exercise as well as food during summer season.
- **Bath:** After the exercise, relax for a while and then take a bath. Use hot or cold water as per the choice. However, avoid very hot or very cold water. Moreover, do not pour hot water on the head. Cold water is good for hair and eyes. The bath cleans the skin of the dirt, dust, perspiration as well as reek or stink. Dullness vanishes and the person becomes active, lively and energetic. However, having a meal before the bath is strongly proscribed. Those who opt for yogic practices may indulge in *yoga* before or after the bath.
- **Morning Breakfast:** After the morning worship, indulge yourself in breakfast. In the breakfast have milk or a drink of your choice. Soups of

various vegetables or fruit juices are the best options. The breakfast dish should not be stale and should be freshly prepared. Rice flakes, corn flakes, Upma or boiled floor dishes are excellent. Avoid bread or biscuits. They are made of fine floor and "*Vanaspati-Ghee*". Both of them are harmful to health. Consume the breakfast dish in a limited quantity. Then begin the daily work.

Those who are duty bound by a 10.00 O' clock schedule in the morning are advised to take complete meal instead of the limited breakfast. Meal taken at this hour helps digestion and keeps you fresh throughout the day. Otherwise have your meal at the noon, an hour earlier. The digestive juices are most active at this hour. So digestion begins immediately after the consumption. The details of food consumption are discussed under the topic of Diet. Eat when you are genuinely hungry. Focus your mind on food and respect the food you are consuming as well as the cook. Select pleasant places for eating. Avoid discussions during the meal. Also eat what is right for you.

Never go to bed immediately after a meal. Also do not exert yourself immediately after a meal. *Sushruta* says, "Man becomes dull if he sits idle after the meal. Walking, after the meal, makes a healthy man. Obesity is the outcome of sleeping after the meal but one who runs after the meal lives short." It is recommended to lie down on the left side of the body, after the meal, and to relax for about five minutes. This procedure activated the right nostril and promotes digestion. Those working at night should sleep first and then eat their meals. This procedure checks cough trouble. Frequent changes in timing of meal spoil the digestion. If meal is taken after 01.00 P.M. the food rots in the intestine.

No solid food should be consumed for four to five hours after the meal. Hot or cold drinks, as per the season may be taken. Fruit juice or fruits may be consumed. Avoid frequent eating. Also avoid tea or coffee.

Ideal time for the evening meal is the time before sunset. Try to eat three hours before going to bed. At any rate, do not sleep immediately after the meal. Such practice hampers digestion. Eating late or eating heavy food, especially in parties, is certainly inviting problems of health. Long and short of this discussion is the fact that health is directly related to observing the timings of meals.

Sleep:

Yadātu Manasi clānte karmātmanah klamānvitā /

Vishayebhyo nivartante tadā svarpita mānavaha //

यदातु मनसि क्लान्ते कर्मात्मनः क्लमान्विताः ।

विषयेभ्या निवर्तन्ते तदा स्वर्पित मानवः ।।च.सू.।।

Body, as well as mind, tire by the end of the day the man desires rightfully to retire. Man sleeps and gets the required rest. This rest is essential for every organism. It performs the functions of nourishing the health of the organism. Since lord Vishñu is supposed to look after an organism during its life time, sleep is also called Vaishñavi. Sleep is blissful in appropriate proportion. Strength and other physical abilities are restored. Various sense organs restore their efficiency. Mind experiences fresh feeling. Grasping and understanding abilities remain intact. Man lives longer. However, inefficient sleep weakens body and mind. Ability to focus and concentrate is also affected. Physical as well as mental disorders are invited due to inadequate sleep.

Chapter – 5

Yoga and Social Usefulness

Unit Structure

- 5.0 - Objectives
- 5.1 - Introduction
- 5.2 - Significance
 - 5.2.1 - 21st century and *yoga*
 - 5.2.2 - Remedies to disease through *yoga*
 - 5.2.3 - Yoga for women and students
 - 5.2.4 - Yoga and stress management
 - i. - Yoga and mental health

5.0 Objectives:

1. To know the status and importance of *yoga* in the 21st century.
2. To know how *yoga* can be used for remedying various diseases.
3. To understand the usefulness of *yoga* for women and students.
4. To understand how the technique of stress management can be used through *yoga*.
5. To understand the relation between *yoga* and mental health.

5.1 21st century and *yoga*

The celebration of Yoga Day on 21st June world over is a kind of inspiration to live a healthy life. This credit goes to India as *yoga* is an invaluable gift of ancient Indian tradition to the world. Yoga embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfilment. It ensures harmony between man and nature and provides a holistic approach to health and well-being. Yoga is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with ourselves, the world and the Nature. By changing our lifestyle and making us more conscious towards our actions, it can help us deal with climate change more responsibly. Keeping this in mind, Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi gave a clarion call – "Let us work towards adopting an International Yoga Day," on 27th Sep 2014 at the UN meet. Accordingly, On December 11, 2014 the 193 member UNGA approved the proposal by consensus with a record 177 co-sponsoring countries supporting the resolution to celebrate 21th June as "International Day of Yoga". In its resolution, the UNGA recognised that Yoga provided a holistic approach to health and well-being and the need for wider dissemination of information about the benefits of practicing Yoga for the health to the world population. Yoga also brings harmony in all walks of life and thus, is known for disease prevention, health promotion and management of many lifestyle-related disorders.

Because of the usefulness of *Yoga*, it is necessary to inform about it to every human being on earth. So, to bring uniformity in curriculum, in India we have structured a definite syllabus for Yoga practice. It includes prayer, warm up, resolve (*sankalp*) and *Sāntipāth*, *Prāñyāma*, etc.



The Logo of International Yoga Day gives a message of peace, a perfect harmony between mind and body, man and nature, the holistic approach to health and well being. . The two joining hands reflect the union of individual consciousness with that

of universal consciousness. Two Almond coloured leaves symbolize the earth, soil and other factors. The green leaves symbolize the Mother Nature. Blue colour symbolizes water, brightness symbolises fire. The sun in the logo represents energy and inspiration.

The celebration of Yoga Day on 21st June is the beginning of new era in Yoga. Because in today's competitive and stressful world, attaining the life's goals while simultaneously maintaining good health is certainly a great challenge. Yoga is very useful in bringing harmony and balance in life. Our unlimited needs and materialistic approach are making us suffer in the modern times. This results into depression, diabetes, heart disease, blood pressure and various other ailments. From senior citizens to school children – all are victims of this mindless lifestyle. So, to recover from this menace, Yoga can prove very effective.

5.2 Remedies to disease through Yoga:

Disease means imbalance in body, *Prāṇa* life force and mind. To recover from ailments and remedy diseases, Yoga is very useful and effective. In yoga, there are specific body postures (*āsanas*), breath control (*prāṇāyāma*), purification procedures (*śuddhikriyas*) which are effective remedies for mental and physical disorders. These practices not only rid the body of diseases but also develop

enough immunity in the body and make it disease-free. For obtaining the effects of yoga, one should know the proper procedure of *yoga*. Otherwise there is a possibility of acquiring unwanted effects. Hence we are going to consider these techniques one after the other.

❖ *Āsana*:

There are different *Yogāāsanas* that produce different effects. Patanjali called '*Sthirasukhamāsanam*' it means *āsana* is one that provides longterm stability and positivity. There are some steps to understand to attain this ideal position. So, it is useful to understand these steps:

- 1) There are three divisions of *Aasans*. The first is body movements. We achieve a specific body position through certain movements. The second step is stability. It is the core aspect of *āsanas*. The third part is position. We go back to previous positions. The slow and steady movements increase capability of joints without creating stress on them.
- 2) The main part of *āsana* is the body posture. This body posture is maintained in the same position for some time. It creates stress and pressure on the muscles of the body. This increases the endurance capacity of the muscles. It is very useful in combating muscle-related diseases.
- 3) In *Yogāāsana* practice it is necessary to keep *Āsana* position stable for some time. Relaxation of muscle is very important in it. Relaxation of muscle is very useful for developing the strength of muscles.
- 4) After attaining stability in *Yogāāsana* position, while relaxing in that position, one should concentrate to dissolve the mind into the infinity. Relaxation of muscles leads us to concentrate. Different *Āsanas* affect

on different parts of the body. There are different methods of *Yogāsana* and they act differently on our bodies. So, it is very important to tell persons suffering from any disorders about āsanās that are suitable to their physical condition.

Processes

❖ Purification:

Purification is very important in *Haṭha yoga*. It has good effects on the body. Because body continuously produces waste substance in the process of metabolism, elimination of such wastes is very important. Purification processes help the body in the process eliminating these unwanted substance from the body. If there is any defect in this process of elimination, it results in disease. So, the body needs optimal purification process. If acidity increases in the digestive system, the stomach becomes filled with excessive acid. By the purification process called vomiting (*vaman*) the stomach is relieved of the excess acid. Similarly through *basti* or *Śankha prakshālan* (enema) the patient suffering from constipation can get rid of the unwanted excretory substances stored in the large intestine.

There is continuous circulation of various currents in our body that include the flow of food essence, , blood, air, urine, etc. Similarly there is continuous flow of information between bodily organs and the brain and vice versa. The medium of this flow is called "*Nādi*" in *Yoga*. There are thousands of "*Nādis*" described in *yoga*. . But if there are obstacles in the '*Nādis*' it creates problems in the body. The removal of obstacles in the body is achieved through the purification processes. The purification processes include use of air, and water as agents of purification. The use of air for clearing the obstacles is included in "*Kapalabhati*", it includes stressing of muscles of the stomach. Water is used in *Jala neti*, *shankha prakshālana*, *vaman*, etc. In other purification processes such

as *danda neti* and *danda dhauti* a rubber tube is inserted; in *sūtra neti* or *vastra dhauti*, a band of cloth is swallowed to cleanse the digestive tract. Thus various purification processes are practiced in *yoga* to address the blockades and ensure smooth flow of *elan vital* throughout the body. *Yoga* describes various techniques to cleanse the 72 thousand nadis or channels of currents in the body. By restoring smooth flow in these channels the health can be restored.

❖ *Prāṅyāma*:

Prāṅyāma is a practice concerning the breath. It includes controlling the breath. Its practice starts from extending the span of breath and culminates into a practice that includes retention of breath with the help of blockades at three places (*tribandha yukta kumbhaka*). It includes filling and emptying the lungs by breath. This ensures full movement of breathing organs. If there is half movement of breathing organs, it creates disease. So, with the practice of *Prāṅyāma* the oxygen take in from breathing is supplied to every cell of the body and is very useful the production of energy through optimal metabolic activity. In normal breathing we take about 500-600 c.c. air and in the extended breathing we take at least 5000-5500 c.c. air. This develops breathing capacity and provides oxygen to various organs of the body. Because the roots of every disease can be traced to inadequate supply of oxygen. So, long breathing is very useful for improving the overall health of a person. The hemoglobin present in the red blood corpuscles carries Oxygen to various regions of the body through the blood flow. The haemoglobin in the red blood cells absorbs oxygen in lungs and carries it to various parts of the body. The more effective this process is greater will be the absorption of the oxygen and delivery to various organs of the body. Due to the internal pressure developed in the lungs during the practice of internal retention of breath (*abhyantar kumbhaka*) and elongated exhalation (*recaka*) this process of oxygen absorption becomes dynamic and effective. This results in effective performance of various body organs. During first few

seconds in the practice of elongated inhalation (*pūraka*) in *Prāṅyāma* the air pressure inside the lungs is lower as compared to the outside atmospheric pressure. That is why the air enters into the lungs. However during breath retention (*kumbhaka*) and exhalation (*recaka*) the air pressure in the lungs is higher. With the continuous practice of elongated inhalation and exhalation couple with breath retention the lungs and the adjoining organs become energized. Similarly as one practices the three blockades (*tribandha* – *Jālandhara*, *Uddiyāna* and *Mūla bandha*), the organs in and around the stomach and chest are energized. The practice of *Prāṅyāma* together with *Uddiyāna bandha* is very useful for diabetes patients as it has positive effect on the pancreas. Thus *Prāṅyāma* is very useful in curing many diseases. *Sūrya bhedana* and *Bhastrika* are heat producing techniques in the body whereas the *Prāṅyāma* techniques known as *Śitali* and *Śītkāri* are cooling techniques in *Prāṅyāma*. So, we should choose proper *Prāṅyāma* for a particular disease. It is also useful in regaining control on various parts of brain which proves very helpful in curing some diseases.

➤ ***Dhyāna/Concentration***

Like *Prāṅyāma*, purification techniques (*Śuddhi kriyas*) and āsanās, *dhyāna* is also useful in curing various diseases. *Dhyāna* means meditation. Though manifestation of diseases is generally physical, sometimes the reason may be rooted in the mind. Hence, meditation is very useful to cure diseases. It is useful for gaining mental stability. It increases endurance and perseverance of the mind and helps in bringing the stress under control. By focusing the mind on the part of the disease afflicted region of the body and administering positive instructions, the disorder can be reduced. With the practice of meditation, one can gain mental peace. Stabilized and focused mind automatically leads into a tranquil mind which is not perturbed under any external factors. Man no longer will be under the control of emotions. Regular practice of meditation develops

immunity of mind and body. It brings under control various bodily and mental functions that are normally not under one's control. Thus meditation is useful in remedying diseases.

5.3 Yoga for Students and Women:

➤ Students:

- **High blood pressure and over weight:** High blood pressure and obesity are quite interrelated. In an investigation carried out in many schools five years ago, it was noted that in every 60 students studying in 8th to 10th class three students suffer from diabetes, three from high blood pressure and three students are obese. Stress of study may result in gaining over weight, high blood-pressure and also increase in sugar levels of blood. These students are highly likely to suffer from various diseases after the age of 30 years which include diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. If these student lose their weight, for every one kilogram of weight loss 1.5 to 2 millimetre blood pressure would be brought down.

The suitable weight means our Body Mass Index (BMI) should be between 18-24. Body Mass index (BMI) is a simple ratio between weight and height. The weight measured in kilograms divided by the square of the height in meters (kg/m²) is called BMI. BMI is commonly used to classify under weight, normal weight, overweight and obesity in adults. Proper diet and regular practice of *Sūrya namaskāra* can be used to keep BMI under 24. Waist to Hip Ratio is also important. The circumference measured around the waist region near the navel, divided by the measurement around the hip region must be between 0.8 and 0.9. If the quotient is more than this it should ring alarm bells in terms of unhealthy condition of arteries and heart. Over taxing the body by exercise or exertion is also unhealthy for us. Adult person should have 7 hours

of sound sleep. We should plan our daily routine properly. Feeling sleepy in day time, lack of freshness, fatigue, high blood pressure, acidity, etc., are indicative of lack of proper sleep.

There is no better exercise than *Sūrya namaskāra* for losing weight, containing high blood pressure and reducing high blood sugar. Hence it is very important that children are instructed to practice *Sūrya namaskāras* from their school days after attaining an age of eight years.

➤ **Diabetes in School Students:**

The adverse effects of modern lifestyle of the 21st century is the marked increase in the diabetes in school students. The chief reason for this is lack of exercise. This problem occurs because of less walking or cycling by the school students as these days they travel by bus. Lack of outdoor games, addiction to television sets and computers coupled with the examination pressure results in stress. Eating junk food and drinking cola drinks and eating food while working on computer or while watching T.V. results in gain in weight. The girth of the waist increases resulting in the onset of diabetes.

The stress of examination and studies and the constant pressure of the family members to score high marks in the examinations – all contribute to the stress of modern day students. Increase in stress results in increase in blood sugar levels and gaining excess weight. If the tummy begins to bulge, it is indicative of excess fat deposit around the waist and results in reduced production of insulin by the pancreas. Thus the person may acquire diabetes from a very early age which may continue for the rest of his/her life. This is a serious matter requiring urgent attention of parents. Sedentary lifestyle in the school classrooms coupled with stress is a chief cause of modern day diseases. Diabetes causes many other complications, affecting the functioning of various body organs.

Regular practice of *Sūrya namaskāra* is also useful to burn excess fat, expend calories and reduce weight. In 20 minutes one can do 20 *Sūrya namaskāra* which means around 175 *yogāsanas*. This produces energy through the burning of stored fats. The fats deposits around the stomach which cause heart attack and diabetes can be burnt away by it. But it should be accompanied by proper diet.

➤ **Concentration of Mind:**

Sūrya namaskāra is very useful to develop the capacity of mind, intellect and sense organs. In today's competitive world concentration is very important. *Sūrya namaskāra* coupled with *mantras* and *prāṅāyāma* considerably brings the unstable mind under control. Just as the sun rays focused by a magnifying glass can burn and produce fire, similarly the mind and intellect when focused can tremendously increase their powers.

In the health management, mental health is very important. Even the modern medical science attests to the fact that mental unhealthiness can disturb the physical health.

Another powerful aspect of human mind is its faith, devotion and focus. Faith and devotion can alleviate any suffering – both bodily and mental. Even if one is endowed with knowledge, power, authority, material wealth one does not experience the feeling of wellbeing unless he has faith and devotion. Cultivating right thoughts and doing right acts are as important for a cultured person as is cultivation of positive emotions such as devotion, love, sanctity, respect for other beings etc. Hence practice of *Sūrya namaskāra* with a sense of devotion, love and sanctity increases the mental and intellectual capacity of the practitioner. Faith and devotion are the characteristic features of the *antahkaraṇa* and human relations are controlled by the volitions of

antahkaraña. In the present world it is important to find solutions to the maladies that are produced due to mental restlessness and stress. For this it is important to observe the working of our minds objectively. This objective observation of our emotions, feelings and thoughts with a sense of devotion and faith can bring drastic results.

From the school days itself the children are to be impressed about the importance of daily practice of *Sūrya namaskāra*. They can combat the stress owing to examinations, studies and competitions effectively. Hence every home, school and college must necessarily pay attention to the propagation of *Sūrya namaskāra*.

➤ **Yoga for Women:**

Men and women were created by the God to share the happiness and sorrows of life. If we call family as chariot, men and women are its two wheels t so, they both together share the responsibilities of worldly as well as spiritual living. So, good health, mental peace and body mind balance is important to both.

Yoga is helpful to both Men and women, but women need it more, because they have double the responsibility than men. Art of yoga is as ancient as the Veda. In the ancient period women were quite forward in many fields. Pārvati was the first woman to get knowledge about *yoga*. She gained it from Lord Śiva - her husband.

Maitreyi got knowledge of *yoga* from her husband Yādnya Valkya and attained *Moksha* through her meditation. Kausalya, Rama's mother also had the knowledge of . In the saga of Rāmāyaña, the mental agony of Kausalya, as Rāma was leaving for the jungle, was depicted. Kausalya was overwhelmed by the grief of separation from her beloved son and tears started rolling down her

cheeks. Since it was considered a bad omen to bless a person with tearful eyes she refused to come out to bless her son. It was narrated that she controlled her mind through *āsana* and *prāṅāyāma* and only when she regained her composure, she came out and blessed her son.

In Mahā Bhārata there is a mention of a Yogini Sulbha and her Yoga practice. She was the daughter of a king who defeated the Mithila king Janaka in a debate about yoga.

In the Mārkaṇḍeya purāṇa, there is story about Yogini called Madālasa. She was the wife of a king named Rutadhwaṇa, She was quit devoted to her husband. She mistook her husband as dead and immolated herself through an ancient practice called 'Sati' but since her husband was very much alive, her life was reinstated by a serpent king named Aswatara Nāgaraja. But she completely forgot her past owing to which she could not recognize her own husband but the practice of *yoga* made it possible to recognise her husband. The practice of *yoga* not only enabled her to regain her lost memory and remember her past life, later she became one of the great masters of *yoga*.

In the Vedic days, women were honoured. Both men and women were given equal place, respect, opportunities and rights. In *Manu smṛiti* women were considered fit for honour and respect.

Yatra nāryastu pūjyante ramante tatra dévatāh /

Yatretāstu Na pūjyante sarvāstatrāphalāh kriyah //(manusmṛiti 3,55)

यत्र नार्यस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः ।

यत्रेतास्तु न पूज्यन्ते सर्वास्तत्राफलाः क्रियाः ॥ (मनुस्मृती-३,५५)

(Where women are respected, there is the abode of gods; where they are dishonoured all acts are doomed and become fruitless)

In India there were many great women yogini. In 14th century, Lalla, Kashmiri woman spread yoga all over India. In Maharashtra Bahinabai, a saint poetess gave prominence to *dhyāna* and devotion. Shri Rāmakrushna Paramhansa's wife Śāradā Devi had great command on Āsana & Prāñyāma. So, these examples show in ample measure that *yoga* never considers any religion, cast, sex, and region and bestows liberation to its practitioners.

In *Sāmkhya yoga* women were identified with the nature. Just like the Mother Nature women also constantly strive to keep the family moving and peaceful. Hence the great poet Kālidāsa called the women, the dynamic aspect of a family. This approach is conducive for the development of the family as well as the society. So, yoga is quit useful to get mental health and peace to women. But now-a-days, women who play the multiple roles of mother, wife, sister, friend and who manages many more relations are treated badly. However a woman who practices *āsana* and *prāñyāma* can substantially improve her bodily and mental strength and face any challenges. These two limbs of *yoga* are the grand path for her emancipation.

➤ **Adult Hood:**

Age of onset of menstruation, menopause and child delivery – these three are the natural stages of a women's life. There are innumerable instances world over, even in this 21st century, where women got many benefits out of *Sūrya namaskara*. Even though great strides have been achieved in the fields of gynaecology and obstetrics, there is no substitute for the regular practice of *Sūrya namaskāra*, Āsana and *Prāñyāma*, balanced diet.

Many of the disorders and physical ailments which women suffer have nothing to do with their sex or reproductive organs.

With the practice of *yogāsanas* and *sūrya namaskāras*, the muscles around the stomach, are exercised leading to proper blood circulation, solving many

problems relating to menstruation. In case of women, flexibility of body is more important than physical strength for facilitating birth process. Strengthening of muscles of stomach, abdomen and peritoneum is also important. *Yogāsanas* help to improve the functioning of endocrine glands of women which influences the emotional balance of the mind. Only peaceful mind can make a disease free life.

➤ **Development of physical capacity for motherhood:**

Before pregnancy, one should undergo proper medical check up and get an idea about any existing problems. Only after ensuring that the body has no disorders that a woman should begin her practice of physical exercise or *yogāsanas*. For this she should also take the advice about right diet and daily routine. Certain Genetically acquired problems can also be solved by proper diet, exercise and medicine. Proper body exercise should be done with right planning of timing and regularity. *Yoga* is a very effective physical exercise for the body. A woman can bear delivery pains by the regular practice of proper *yogic* exercises. With the practice of *Sūrya namaskāras*, the muscles in the back, legs are strengthened and back pains can be controlled.

➤ **After Delivery-**

Even after the child birth, the *yoga* practice can be continued without hesitation – it does not require any special training or equipment; strong determination is the only thing required. The *yoga* practice can be continued one day followed by extensive walking on the other. This way *yogasanas* may be practiced one day after the other and the remaining days may be filled with a lot of walking and strolling. These days most of the health specialists and doctors recommend this kind of a regimen after child birth.

Benefits of practicing *yogāsanas* after child birth

- ❖ Develop and maintain physical and mental health.
- ❖ Keep weight under control.
- ❖ Restore physical loss.
- ❖ Total improvement in overall physical fitness.

Since *yogāsanas* and *Sūrya Namaskāras* require very simple bodily movements, the risk of falling and getting injured are very minimal in their practice.

Precautions

- ❖ Should avoid fast and hard exercise.
- ❖ Should drink lots of water and balance the water level in the body.
- ❖ Take balanced and proper diet .

We should take care as to not to overstretch the stomach and abdominal muscles and joint.

Practicing *Śavāsana* after *Sūryanamaskāras* and *āsanas* proves helpful in controlling the irritability, depression, Fatigue and builds confidence and develops digestive system as well. Regular practice of *yogāsanas* is a naturally available rejuvenating tonic that enhances cheerfulness, physical and mental energy levels and is a time tested remedy for health and wellbeing. Most importantly the *āsanas* are stepping stone for inner *yoga* practice which guarantees a well contended disease free life.

5.2.4 Yoga and Stress Management

Stress is an enemy of today's youth. Modern day youth also fall victim to other enemies as well that are detrimental to their physical and mental wellbeing.

They include:

- ❖ Uncontrolled anger.
- ❖ Attraction to luxuries .
- ❖ Misuse of technology.
- ❖ Addiction.
- ❖ Defective approach toward life.
- ❖ Lack of discipline.

In today's competitive world, stress is unavoidable. Children should develop the capacity to face stressful situations in life from their very childhood. Their approach and attitude towards their life should be positive. The personality of children should be so moulded as to enable them face any challenges in life with composure, confidence, strong resolve and with an ample measure of positivity. Positive programming of minds in the childhood is very much possible. Hence parents and mentors should focus on the personality development of children and young adults. It is to be impressed upon the minds of the children that personality development does not merely mean earning lots of money and fame; though they are important but they should not be the only guiding principles in life. They should be made to realize that a truly well developed personality is one which includes responsible citizenry, good samaritanship, sensitivity towards the society, ability to maintain calmness and composure under any circumstances, conscious towards one's health and a strong and impressive personality. What is very important is to maintain the equilibrium in success and failure and all ups and downs of life. Such a personality can certainly be developed by anyone with the regular and proper practice of *yogāsanas* and *prāṇāyāma*. The objectives of such *yogic* practice should be two fold: one is to develop adequate skills necessary for succeeding in the external world and the other is to develop internal harmony, wellness and peace. If one succeeds in

this endeavour, one can be called as successful in shaping his/her personality in the proper way.

5.2.5 Yoga and Mental Health: The aim of *yoga* is the attainment of the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. Yoga relieves so many diseases, ailments and pains, both physically and mentally. Whatever be the scope and range of wellbeing one is seeking, *yoga* offers just the right solution suiting everyone's needs and expectations. No other exercise system offers this range of coverage. A good *yoga* practice stretches and strengthens all of the major muscle groups in the body making one both stronger and more flexible. It massages the internal organs, increasing blood flow, thereby, bringing more oxygen and nutrients and taking away more toxins. It makes blood arteries more elastic, allowing them to stretch and carry more blood without raising the blood pressure.

Are you concerned about stress and other aspects of the mind? Yogic breathing is the perfect answer. We breathe more deeply and slowly in *yoga* in a more relaxed manner. With the deep breathing, the breathing slows down. The relaxation response kicks in. Carry the slow breathing outside your practice into your daily life and feel the powerful effect that something as simple as breathing can have on your perspective of the world around you and the problems you deal with, each day.

Yoga has the tools to assist you in achieving that peace that goes beyond the body, beyond the mind and the intellect. Yoga gives you what you really need. Regular practice of *yoga* frees us from depression. Our relationship with the persons around us brings to us both joy and pain. Being intolerant towards others and getting irritable unnecessarily spoils our mind. If we are aware of our reactions towards others and develop a positive situation out of negative environment, that is an emotional development. Bhagavat Gita says that the art

of doing ones work in the excellent way, without expecting fruits is *yoga*. Everybody feels that he or she should become a happy and successful person. Yoga assures us that our dreams can be fulfilled if we acquire certain attitudes and habits of thinking and living.

Mental Health: A Yogic Perspective

Mental hygiene and mental health are the two sides of the same coin. The prerequisite situation for maintaining sound and good health is referred to as Hygiene.

Concepts of mental health include subjective well being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, interdependence, and recognition of the ability to realize one's intellectual and emotional potential. It has also been defined as a state of well-being whereby individuals recognize their abilities, are able to cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and make a contribution to communities. Mental health is about enhancing competencies of individuals and communities and enabling them to achieve their self-determined goals.

Questions for practice- 5

Answer in One Sentence

1. What is India's gift to the world?
2. How did the importance of *yoga* increase in the modern era?
3. Which day is celebrated as the International Yoga Day?
4. What is a disease condition?
5. What do you mean by disease free state?

6. What are the therapeutic effects of Prāṇāyāma?
7. What is *Dhyāna*?
8. Who was Maitreyi?
9. Who was the first lady to have achieved yoga knowledge?
10. Enumerate the names of renowned female *yoginis* of Indian.
11. How will you define mental health?

Answer the Following Questions in 3-4 Sentences

1. Give the importance of purification processes (*śuddhi kriyas*)?
2. Describe the benefits of *yoga* for students & women?
3. What are the benefits of practicing *Yogāsanas* after the child birth?
4. Which are the enemies of mental health?

Chapter – 6

Practical work *Āsana* Procedure and *Yoga* practice

Unit Structure:

- 6.0 – Objectives
- 6.1 – Introduction
- 6.2 – Discussion
 - 6.2.1 - *Āsanas*: Procedure and Benefits
 - 6.2.2 – *Prāṅṅāyāma* and its Procedure
 - 6.2.3 – *Sūryanamaskāra*: Procedure and Benefits.
 - 6.2.4 – *Mudra*: Procedure and Benefits.
 - 6.2.5 - Purification: Procedure (*ṢṢuddhi kriya*) & Benefits

6.0 Objectives:

- 1) To know the proper procedure of *Āsanas* and their benefits.
- 2) To know the proper procedure of *Prāṅṅāyāma* and its benefits.
- 3) To know the procedure of *Sūryanamaskāra* and its benefits.
- 4) To know the procedure of *Mudras* and their benefits.
- 5) To know the procedure of purification processes (*ṢṢuddhi kriya*) and their benefits.

6.1 Introduction:

It is important not just to learn the theoretical aspects of *yoga* but also to perform *Yoga* practically. *Āsanas*, *Prāṇāyāma*, and the purification procedures are not a thing that suffice theoretical understanding; they are not learnt just by studying about their procedures. They should be practised under proper guidance and practicing them regularly is also very important just as experiencing their benefits is. To experience the benefits of *Yoga* one should follow the rules strictly. While performing *Haṭha yoga āsanas*, before and after, certain rules are to be followed. It is also important to know the place, time and diet suitable for a particular individual type before commencing the practice of *Haṭha yoga*. Similarly one should also know the purification (*Śuddhi kriya*) processes mentioned in the *yoga* texts. One should start practicing *yoga* in the season of spring and autumn as is mentioned in the texts on *yoga*. One should not practice *yoga* in cold winter or hot summer. Taking balanced diet is also beneficial in the proper practice of *yoga*.

To practice *Yoga* one should follow the rules mentioned below:

1) Time:

As far as possible, *yoga* should be practiced early in the morning. Wake up before sunrise. After regular daily bodily rituals, *yoga* practice should be started. Depending on one's habit, water may or may not be drunk before the practice.

2) Bath:

Bath can be taken. It removes physical inertia and stiffness. So *yoga* practice is done better, after taking the bath. The movements are easy.

Mind is also alert. Whenever possible oil massage (*Abhyanga*) followed by bath should be performed, at least once in a week.

3) Dress:

The costume should be loose. Banian, T-shirts, half pant or slacks should be used. Ladies can have same dress or Punjabi suits. The hair style should be proper, so that it will not interfere in the *yoga* practice.

4) Place:

It should neither be packed nor very airy; it should be properly ventilated. In summer it can be practiced on terrace or in lawns. In winter, it should be practiced in a closed place. If needed, fan may be switched on at slow speed. The floor should be uniform. The place should be cleaned daily. For mosquitoes, some repellent should be used.

5) Āsana or Mat:

The 4x6 feet size thick cotton mat (*satranji*) or woollen blanket is ideal. In texts, deer skin or specific grass mats are recommended but at present times, this is not feasible. The mat should be clean. Thin bed-sheet should be avoided, as it does not remain spread straight throughout the practice.

6) Prayer:

Before starting the *yoga* practice, 3 to 5 *Omkāras* should be chanted along with *Guru vandana* or similar prayer. This calms and focuses the mind. It also creates good sense of faith and devotion in mind. Emotions are stabilized by such prayer.

7) Preparatory movements and *Sūryanamaskāra*:

Before practicing *Āsanas*, preparatory movements or *Sūryanamaskāra* should be practiced. This makes the body supple and flexible. Stiffness in joints and muscles are eliminated and *Āsanas* can be done effectively.

8) Guidance:

Yoga practice should be started under the guidance of a *yoga* teacher. Get the proper guidance regarding the *āsanas* to be practiced. *Yoga* practice should be planned in accordance with the age, temperament, health condition, work pattern, capacity, etc. Overstraining should be avoided.

9) Ladies:

They should not practice *yoga* during menstruation and pregnancy. For pregnancy special programs are designed.

10) The Time:

It should not be changed frequently. Those who practice in the evening should have light lunch 4-5 hrs before.

6.2 Significance

This chapter covers the *practical* work which is to be performed in the form of *Āsanas*, *Prāñāyāma*, *Mudra*, *Ṣuddhi kriyas* (Purification process). All these process are taught in various *yoga* centers. Different *yoga* institutions teach the same processes slightly differently owing to individual differences in the approaches and there are different names given to the same *āsanas* of *yoga*. Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University made efforts to standardize the *yogic* practices. Thus, procedures of performing *āsanas*, *Prāñāyāma*, *Mudra*, *Ṣuddhi kriyas* and the precautions to be taken and the benefits that can be accrued are detailed here.

6.1 Āsanas: Procedures & Benefits

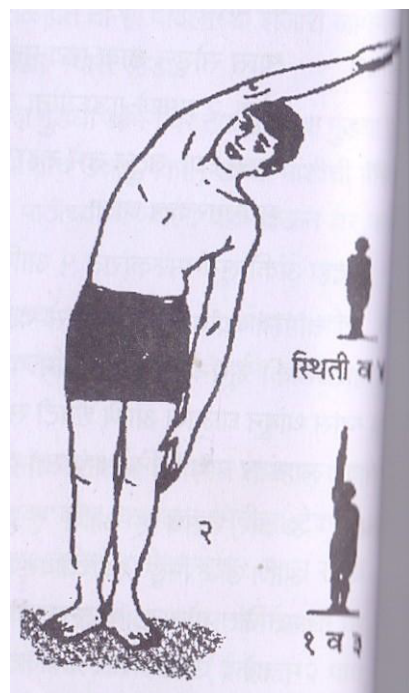
Āsanas of Standing Position

❖ *Ardhakati Cakrāsana:*

Ardha means half. *Kati* means waist. *Cakra* means wheel. In this posture, we form a half wheel with our waist hence this name.

Technique:

1. Stand straight in Tādāsana.
2. Slowly raise your right hand vertically above your head while breathing in. Stretch the hand further with full inhalation.
3. Now slowly bend your body towards left side while exhaling.
4. Maintain normal breathing in the final posture. Maintain the posture for about 30 seconds. While *inhaling* come up and with exhalation, slowly bring down the right hand.
5. Repeat the same on the other side.



Benefits:

1. Elasticity of lateral sides increases.

2. Lateral thoracic muscles are stretched and blood supply to these muscles increases.
3. Hip joints become flexible and excess fat around the waist reduces.
4. Relieves from back pain, constipation and good for flat foot.

Precautions:

1. While breathing take your right hand slowly in upward direction. Let your hand muscles touch your ears.
2. Bend slowly downward on your left. Let your hand move downward below the knee.
3. While moving downward exhale. Keep this position for at least 1 min.
4. Slowly count and touch the hand muscle to ear. While coming in straight position exhale.
5. Move your hand slowly downward and come back to original position. Exhale breath while bringing the hand back to its original downward position. Repeat this procedure by left hand.

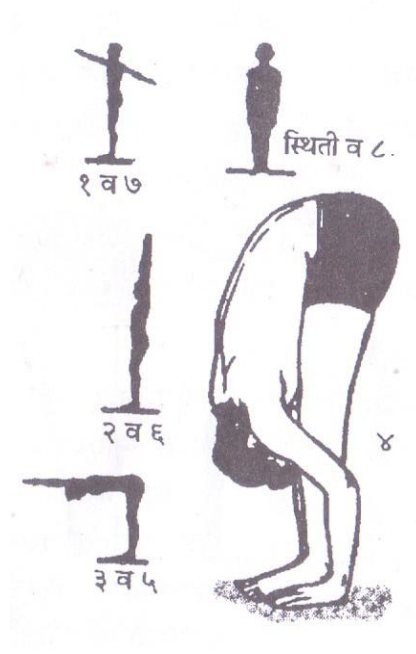
❖ Pādahastāsana (Standing Forward Bend)

In Sanskrit, *Pṣda* means “feet” and *Hasta* means “hands”. Since this āsana is demonstrated by touching the feet with the hands, it is known as *Pādahastāsana*. It is similar to *Pascimottāsana*. The only difference between the two āsanas is that this *Pādahastāsana* is performed while standing.

How to Perform:

1. Stand straight with your hands down close to the body.

2. Keep the heels close and toes apart.
3. Now inhale and raise the hands above the head.
4. Slowly, exhale and bend the body downwards bringing the hands to catch hold of the toes.
5. Make sure you draw the belly in as you exhale while bending.
6. Keep the knees stiff and straight.
7. Keep the forehead between the knees.
8. Try using the strength of your trunk to get closer to the knees.
9. Hold the pose for 2 to 10 seconds.
10. Come back slowly to position one.



Variation:

People with inflexible bodies or fat people may find it difficult to touch the toes with their hands due to abdominal fat and stiffness of muscles. In such cases, bend the knees slightly and then catch hold of the toes. However, straighten the knees after catching your toes.

Benefits:

1. Dissipates *Tamas* or laziness.
2. Eliminates excess fat around the abdomen and thighs.
3. Purifies and strengthens *Sushumna Nādi*.

4. *Lengthens* the legs after three months of practice.

Contraindications:

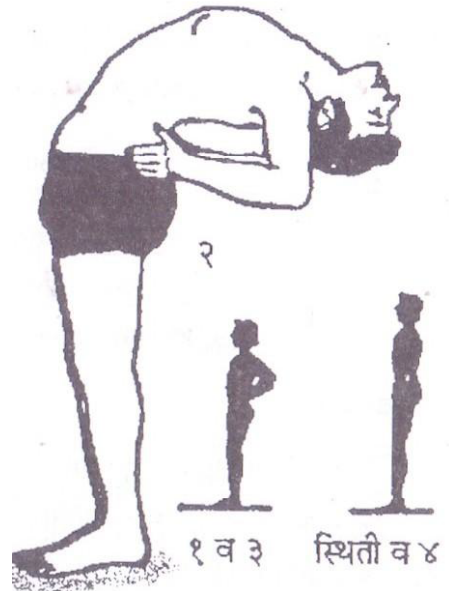
Forward-bending is strictly prohibited for peoples with lower back problems.

❖ Ardha Cakrāsana (The Half Wheel Posture)

Ardha means half. *Cakra* means wheel. In this posture, as the body takes the shape of a half wheel, hence it is called *Ardha Cakrāsana*.

Technique

- 1) Support the back at the waist with all the fingers together pointing forward or downward.
- 2) Drop the head backwards and stretching the neck muscles. As you inhale, bend backwards from the lumbar region; exhale and relax.
- 3) Stay here for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- 4) Inhale and slowly come up.



Benefits

- 1) *Ardha Cakrāsana* makes the spine flexible and strengthens the spinal nerves.
- 2) Strengthens the neck muscles, and improves breathing

capacity.

3) Helps in cervical *spondylitis*.

A word of caution:

- 1) Avoid this posture in case of vertigo or a tendency to giddiness.
- 2) Hypertensive patients shall bend with care.

❖ **Trikonāsana** (the Triangle Pose):

The Sanskrit meaning of the term *Trikona* is triangle. When *Trikonāsana* is demonstrated, the body appears like a triangle. It is a very easy āsana and can be done by novice practitioners as well.

How to Perform:

1. Stand straight keeping your legs wide apart as seen in the picture.
2. Now stretch your arms wide horizontally in line with the shoulders and parallel to the ground.
3. Slowly, bend toward your right keeping the left knee straight.
4. Touch the right toe with the fingers of the right hand.
5. Bend the neck slightly to the right. It is alright if it touches the right shoulder.



6. Now raise the left arm toward the sky.
7. Fix your gaze upward.
8. Remain in this pose for a minute. Breathe slowly.
9. Come back to the original position and repeat with the other side.
10. Do this āsana for 3 to 6 times on each side.

Benefits

1. Renders the *Meru Danda* or the spine flexible.
2. Reduces anxiety, stress, back pain and sciatica.
3. Increases peristalsis of the bowels and improves appetite.
4. Stretches and opens the hips, groins, hamstrings, and calves; shoulders, chest, and spine.

Contraindications:

This pose should not be practiced by those suffering from migraine, diarrhoea, low or high blood pressure, or neck and back injuries. Persons with high BP can practice this pose without raising the head toward the sky.

Āsanas of Sitting Position

Vajrāsana: (THUNDERBOLT POSE)

Vajra means strong and steady like a diamond. Vajra is a weapon of God Indra.

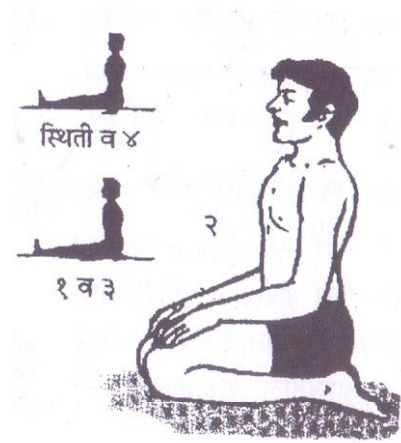
The weapon of God *Indra* is firm and steady. Alike, this āsana position caters one to be firm and steady. The starting position of many āsanās is Vajrasana. This āsana is useful for practicing *Prāṇāyāma* and Meditation. Therefore this āsana is one of the most important meditative āsanās.

How to do:

1) Bend both the knees and come on the toes.

2) Placing the knees on the floor. Separate the heels and keep the big toes held together, forming a 'V' and place the buttocks on the feet.

3) Place the hands on the knees with palms touching the knees. The knees and thighs are held together. The backbone is held erect but relaxed, not tense. Close the eyes and concentrate on the breathing. Initially sit in this āsana for 1-3 minutes. If the bones of the feet get poked due to hard floor, place a folded napkin under the feet.



To Release:

1) Gently open the eyes and place the hands to the sides.

2) Lift the buttocks and come onto the toes.

3) Straighten the legs.

Advantages:

The spine remains erect very easily in this position. The whole body stays steady. This is the only āsana, which can be performed after the meals. Sitting in *Vajrāsana* for 5-10 minutes after meal aids the digestion.

This is also useful for high blood pressure. In this āsana the thigh muscles, knee joints and its muscle-tendons and ligaments get stretched and strengthened. Therefore, with the practice of *Vajrasana*, knee pain is cured. Vajrasana has good effect on the *genito*-urinary organs, in the lower abdomen. The mind becomes calm and steady in this āsana.

Caution :

Do not *practise* this āsana in case of severe knee pain or arthritis. Do not sit in this āsana for a long time if the feet are hurt or painful.

❖ Śaṣānkāsana (The Hare Posture)

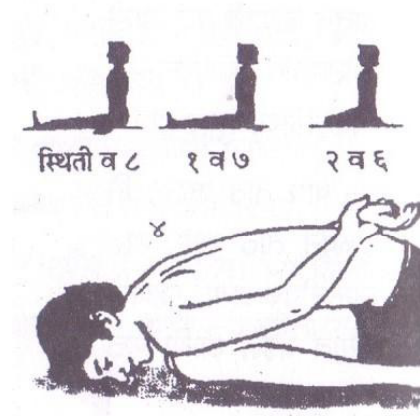
Śaṣānka means hare.

Sthiti: *Vajrāsana*

Technique

1. Sit in *Vajrāsana*.
2. Spread both the knees wide apart, keep the big toes touching.
3. Keep the palms between the knees.
4. Exhale and slowly stretch them full length.

5. Bend forward and place the chin on the ground.
6. Keep the arms parallel.
7. Look in front and maintain the posture.
8. Inhale and come up.
9. Exhale and come back to *Vajrāsana*.
10. Stretch your legs back to *Viṣrāmāsana*.



Benefits:

- 1 . It helps to reduce stress, anger, etc.
- 2 . It tones up reproductive organs, relieves constipation, improves digestion and relieves back pain.

A word of caution:

1. Please avoid this posture in case of acute backache.
2. Patients with osteoarthritis of the knees should exercise with caution or avoid *Vajrāsana*.

❖ Supta Vajrāsana

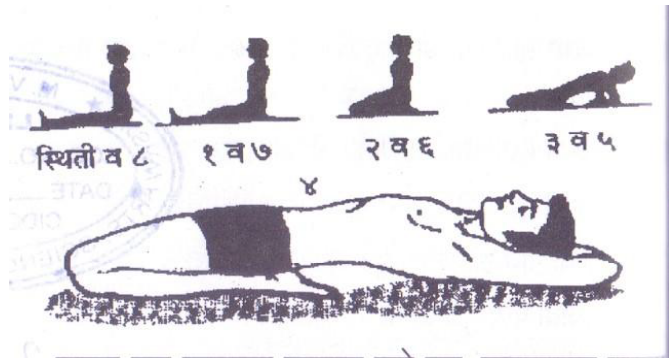
Supta Vajrāsana means 'lying backward' in *Vajrāsana*. This *āsana* is the extension of *Vajrāsana*.

Let us perform *Supta Vajrāsana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Sit in *Vajrāsana*.

1. Slowly bend backwards taking the support of the elbows.

2. Lie on the back in Vajrāsana. Keep the hands on thighs or take the arms behind and hold the elbow/arm with the hand of another arm.



Releasing position:

3. Place your hands by the side of your body. Come to the Vajrāsana with the support of elbows and arms.

Important:

- Take support of elbows and arms while bending backwards and coming back to the sitting position.
- Keep the knees together and shoulders on the ground.

Don'ts:

- Do not strain the ligaments and muscles of the thighs by forcing the knees to touch the ground.
- Do not come back by straightening the legs.

Benefits:

- It stretches abdominal muscles.
- It makes the back flexible.

- It reduces backache.
- It is useful for high blood pressure.
- It gives relief in constipation.

Limitation:

- Person suffering from knee complaints, slipped disc, sciatica and pain in the hip should not practise this *āsana*.

❖ Pascimottānasana

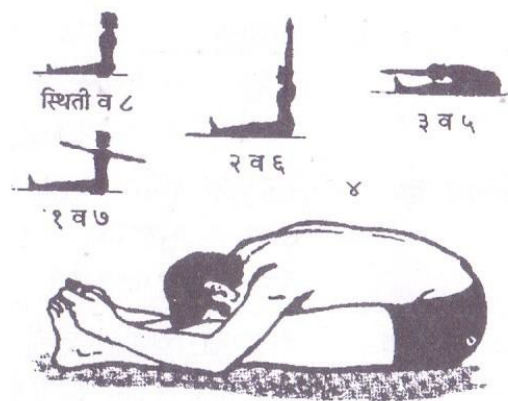
Pascima= Back side (posterior) of body.

In this *āsana* the whole backside of the body is stretched. This *āsana* should be done after practicing *Ardhapascimottanāsana* for some days.

How to do?

Sit steady in *Baithak sthiti*. Keep toes and heels joined together.

- 1) Exhale completely and while inhaling lift the hands up fully extended, over the head.
- 2) While exhaling, bend at the waist to hold the toes with both hands.
- 3) Exhale still more and try to rest the forehead on the knees. Relaxing the shoulders and waist will help in bending more towards the floor. Do not bend in the back. Relax the shoulders, neck and head. As you exhale, try to take head towards the knees. Do not lift the knees towards the head to touch the forehead. Concentrate on the back of body to feel the stretch.



Breathe slowly. Initially keep the position for 10-15 seconds and repeat 2-3 times. Increase the time up to one minute.

To Release:

- 1) While inhaling, sit up straight.
- 2) Place the hands along the body.

After practising this āsana *Utthita Vajrāsana* or *Matsyāsana* or *Bhujangāsana* should be practised to balance the stretch.

Advantages:

The back muscles of calves and thighs are stretched fully. The hip joints become more flexible. As the abdomen is folded, the digestive organs, organs in the pelvic cavity, glands like pancreas, liver, adrenals, etc., come under pressure and their efficiency improves. The abdominal fat gets reduced. This āsana is one of the yogic treatments for diabetes, menstrual disorders, colitis, kidney disorders, etc.

Caution:

Those suffering from slipped disc, sciatica, lumbar spondylitis, abdominal problems should not do this āsana.

Āsana of Prone Position

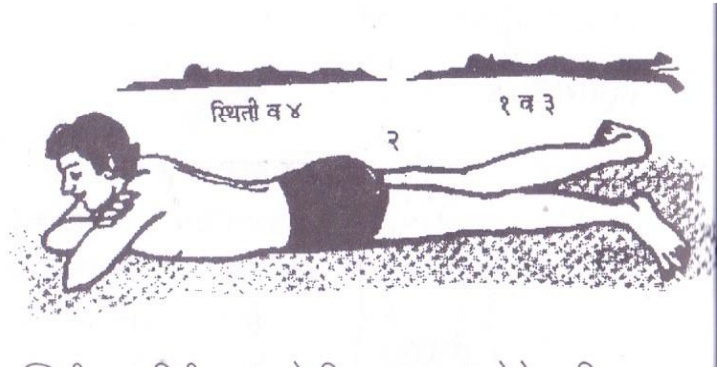
❖ MAKARĀSANA:

Makar = A crocodile.

This is a relaxing āsana in prone position. It is done after *practising āsanās* in prone position like *Bhujangāsana*, *Dhanurāsana*, etc. *Makar* means crocodile. As a crocodile resting outside water, similar is the position of *Makarāsana*. Like *Śavāsana*, one gets complete mental and physical rest in this āsana.

How to do?

Lie down in prone position. Keep the legs 1-2 ft apart, heels facing inward and toes outward. Inner side of



the feet should touch the ground. When the legs are kept sufficiently apart, the thigh muscles relax fully. If not, the muscles stay in contracted state to some extent. Place the hands folded towards the head. Turn the head to the left or right, ear touching the floor. Close the eyes and relax the body as in *Śavāsana*. Concentrate on the breathing during relaxation. After 2-3 minutes, release the position.

To Release:

Straighten the head to put the chin on the floor. Place both the hands along the body with palms on the floor. Bring both legs together with toenails touching the floor, to come in prone position.

Effects and advantages:

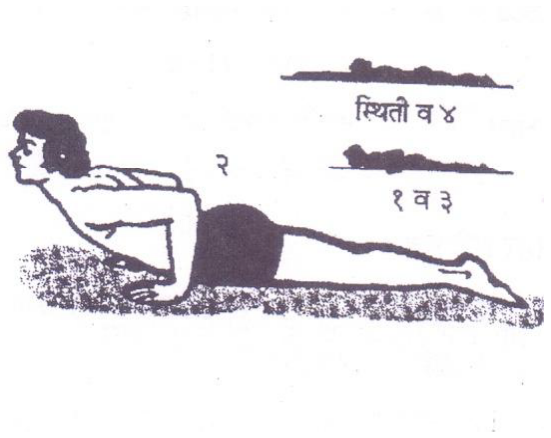
This āsana gives same effects as of *Śavāsana*. This also helps to increase the heat in the body (ref- Gherand Samhita.) The digestion improves. This āsana is very helpful for backache and cervical.

❖ **Bhujangāsana** (The Cobra Pose) :

The Sanskrit meaning of *Bhujanga* is “cobra”. When this posture is demonstrated, the raised trunk and head of the practitioner resembles the raised hood of a cobra. Hence, this posture is known by the name of *Bhujangāsana*.

How to Perform

1. On a mat, lie flat on your stomach.
2. Relax your muscles.
3. Place the palms firmly on the ground just below the shoulders.
4. Raise your elbows pointing them towards the sky.
5. Now inhale and using the strength of your arms and the back, raise the head and the upper body just like a cobra.
6. Let the body from the navel downwards to the toes touch the ground.
7. Stretch the spine backward vertebra by vertebra. Tilt your head backward and look toward the sky.
8. Hold this pose for 5-10 seconds.
9. Now exhale and slowly return to the original position. Relax.
10. Repeat this process 3-4 times, if you are a beginner. Advanced practitioners can repeat it for 6-7 times.



Points to Remember

- ❖ It is important to keep the shoulders relaxed while holding the pose. Beginners may keep the elbows bent slightly. Advanced practitioners can keep the arms straight to deepen the effect.
- ❖ Keep your feet close to each other. Breathe and smile to reap the full benefits of the *āsana*.

Benefits

1. Relieves hunchback, back pain, lumbago, myalgia of the back and constipation. Makes the back spinal column flexible like the snake.
2. Awakens the *kundalini śakti* that is sleeping dormant in the *Mūlādhāra Cakra* or the Root *Cakra*.
3. Improves the appetite by rousing the digestive fire.
4. Helps women in toning the ovaries and the uterus.
5. Cures *amenorrhoea*, *dysmenorrhoea*, leucorrhoea and various other utero-ovarian diseases.
6. Makes delivery easy and normal in women.

Contraindications:

1. *Bhujangāsana* should not be practiced by pregnant women or those with fractured ribs or wrists.
2. People recovering from abdominal surgeries must avoid practicing this posture till full recovery.

❖ **Śalabhāsana-** Śalabha = locust

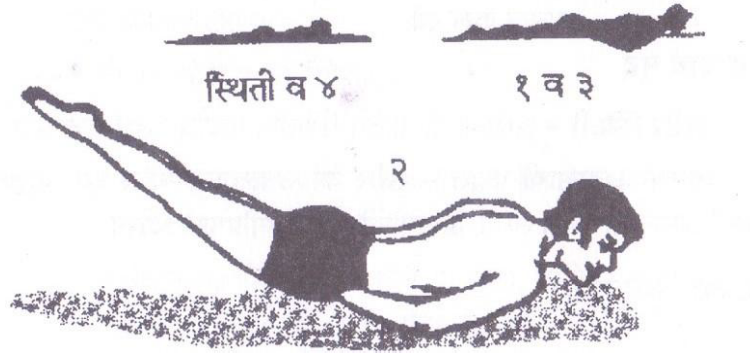
This *āsana* should be done after practising *Ekapāda-ṣalabhāsana* for few days.

How to do:

Lie down in prone position. While inhaling, lift both legs together off the floor from the waist without bending the knees. It is important to keep the knees straight and unbent. Stretch the toes. Take care not to lift the chin. Breathe slow and easy. Do not hold the breath. Initially maintain the position for 5-10 seconds, gradually increasing the time to 10-20 seconds. If the legs shake and shiver, release the position as you breathe out. Do 2-3 rounds of this *āsana*.

Advantages:

Blood supply to lower abdomen and pelvic region improves due to the strain and pressure which in turn



improves its functioning. The thighs and legs are toned up and shaped properly. Stamina and agility improves. Mental alertness is also achieved.

Caution:

Those having stiff spine or stiff hip joint, hernia, abdominal pain and high BP should not do this *āsana*. Avoid jerky movements.

❖ **Dhanurāsana-** *Dhanu*= bow.

In this *āsana* the body position looks like to that of a bow, so the name.

How to do:

Lie down in prone position.

- 1) Bend the legs at the knees, keeping the distance of 6-8 inches between the knees.
- 2) Hold firmly the left ankle with left hand and right ankle with right hand.
- 3) While inhaling, pull the legs up to lift the thighs and pull the hands with the legs to lift the head, neck, shoulders chest and upper abdomen. This completes the pose of *āsana*. Keep straining and pulling the hands with the legs and legs with the hands, so that the whole body stays in a stressed condition. Only the abdomen remains on the floor and bears the weight of the body. Try to lift the thighs up as much as possible. *Dhanurāsana* is a combination of *Ṣalabhāsana* and *Bhujangāsana*. A nice arch of backbone is formed. Do not hold the breath. Breathe slow and easy. The face muscles should be relaxed.

To Release:

- 1) While breathing out, relax and put down thighs, abdomen, chest shoulders and forehead on the floor.
- 2) Place the hands along the body.
- 3) Extend the legs and relax the body.



Do this *āsana* 2-3 times for 10-15 seconds each initially. With practice, gradually try and stay in position for one minute. By practice, the knees can be drawn closer and closer.

Advantages:

All the benefits of *Bhujangāsana* and *Ṣalabhāsana* are obtained with this *āsana*. As the whole body is stressed, the consciousness and awakening is experienced in each and every part of the body. The muscles of the abdomen, waist, hips, thighs, calves and chest become toned and attain grace. Stamina increases. Digestion and appetite improves. Depression is reduced.

Caution:

Those suffering from heart disease, high BP, hernia, abdominal pain, breathlessness should not do this *āsana* or do it under supervision. Those having *spondylitis* and back stiffness should seek guidance.

Supine Position Āsanas

❖ SARVĀNGĀSANA:

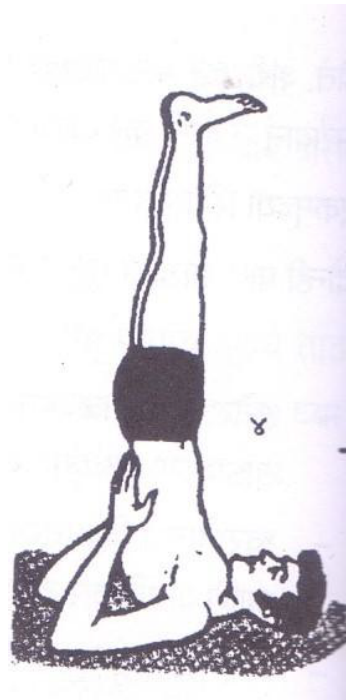
Sarvanga = whole body, all body parts.

As far as the effects are concerned this is one of the most important *āsanas*. It has favourable effects on the metabolism of the body, and revitalises the entire body. Therefore it is called *Sarvāngāsana*.

How to do:

1) While inhaling, lift both legs up to *Dwipāduttānapādāsana*.

- 2) While exhaling, move the legs towards the head and support the back with the hands keeping them at the back of the ribs.
- 3) While inhaling, take the body weight on the hands and straighten the legs upwards. The body is at 90° angle to the shoulders. Stretch the feet upwards and look at the feet. Now, relax the body with normal breathing. In this *āsana*, the body weight is borne by the elbows, shoulders, neck and head. The chin rests on the chest and toes of the feet are pointed upwards. The elbows should be close to the body. When the chin rests upon the chest, the condition is called '*Jālandhara Bandha*'. One can also close the eyes if the balance is achieved. Initially hold the position for 15-20 seconds and time period can be increased to 3 minutes then. If the legs start shivering or shaking and hands tired, slowly release the position.



To Release:

- 1) While exhaling, bring the legs towards the head.
- 2) While inhaling, slowly place the hands down on the floor, and then loosening the vertebrae one by one at a time, rest the back and waist on the floor and come in *Dwipādauttānapādāsana*.
- 3) While exhaling, slowly put the legs on the floor and relax. It is imperative to do *Matsyāsana* after doing this *āsana*. *Matsyāsana* gives exactly opposite stretch to that of *Sarvāṅgāsana*.

Advantages:

The main advantages are attained through the *Jālandhara Bandha*. When the chin rests on the chest, the thyroid gland is pressed and improves its function. This *āsana* improves blood circulation to the gland and the hormone secretions of thyroid gland are normalized. The metabolism of the body is controlled by thyroid hormone. So metabolism is brought to normal. Any disorder of the gland is cured with this *āsana*. Also functioning of parathyroid gland improves and the bones become strong and healthy.

Digestion improves. The blood supply to the brain is increased due to which intellectual efficiency improves. One does not feel tired. The mind gets refreshed.

The muscles of the legs, lower abdomen and waist strengthen up. This *āsana* is useful for genitourinary problems and in cases of inability to conceive (infertility), prolapse uterus in initial stage, irregular menses, abnormal vaginal discharges etc. It is also useful in constipation and varicose veins.

The persons having brain diseases, mental disorder and suffering from cervical spondylitis, high BP, heart problems should not do this *āsana*. Also during the attacks of asthma, cough and cold it should be avoided. It is contraindicated for slipped disc, enlarged thyroid gland.

❖ MATSYĀSANA:

Matsya= Fish.

This *āsana* is so called because the body position looks like a fish and also because, in this *āsana* it is possible to float on the water. As a

supplementary *āsana* it is practised after doing *Sarvāṅgāsana*, *Halāsana* and *Viparita Karaṇi*.

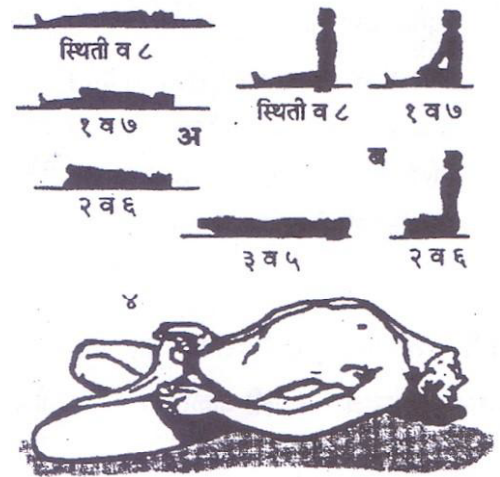
How to do:

- 1) Move both legs apart for 1.5 feet.
- 2) Bend the right leg and place right foot on the left thigh.
- 3) Similarly, bend the left leg and put left foot on the right thigh and attain the *Padmāsana*.
- 4) Place the palms of the hands near the head and with their support, lift the head up and place the crown (top of the head) on the floor.

- 5) Now, grip the big toes with the both hands and complete the position. Relax and breathe normally. Sometimes it may not be possible to maintain the *Padmāsana* for long, so one can do this *āsana* with simple folding of the legs. If the fingers do

not reach to toes, the palms can be placed on the thighs only. This *āsana* forms good arch of spine from neck to last vertebra of coccyx. Front of the neck, the chest wall and abdomen are well stretched. The stretching of the neck in this *āsana* is called *Matsya Bandha*, which is opposite to *Jālandhara Bandha*. Legs in *Padmāsana* can also be changed as per convenience.

Initially keep the position for 10-15 seconds and slowly increase the duration. As a supplementary *āsana* it should be kept 1/3 of the time of *Sarvāṅgāsana* and others.



To Release:

- 1) Place the hands near the head and slowly place the head on the floor.
- 2) Place the hands along the body.
- 3) Extend upper leg in *Padmāsana*.
- 4) Extend another leg.
- 5) Join both legs together to come in *Śayana sthiti* and relax.

Advantages:

Opposite stretches to that in *Sarvāṅgāsana* and *Halāsana* are attained in the neck, shoulders and lower back. The cervical vertebrae come under good pressure, therefore this *āsana* is good for cervical *spondylitis* but should not be done in severe pain or problem. As the abdomen is stretched, digestion improves.

Caution:

If *Padmāsana* is not possible, try with *Swastikāsana* or *Sukhāsana*. If backbone is stiff, do carefully under supervision.

❖ HALĀSANA:

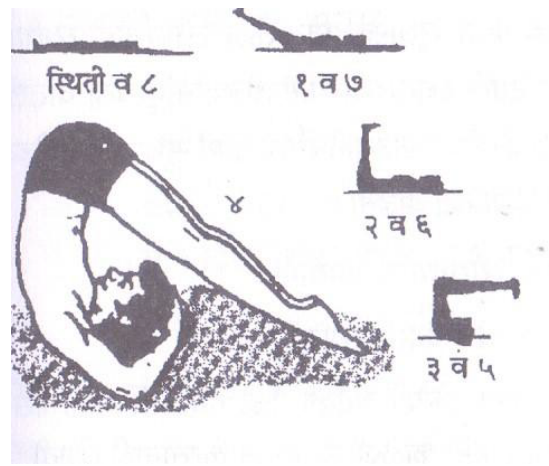
Hala= a plough.

This *āsana* is so called because the body position looks like that of a plough. And just as a plough loosens the soil, the all *nādis* in the body also become free and loose with this *āsana*.

How to do:

- 1) Lie down in *Shayansthiti* comfortably.
- 2) While inhaling, lift the legs up to come in *Dwipādauttānapādāsana*.
- 3) While exhaling, lift the hips from the floor and bring the legs towards the head. Stretch the legs as much as possible towards the head.

4) Exhaling still more, stretch the legs over the head and try to touch the toes to the floor behind the head. Rest the toenails on the floor. The hands should rest straight on the floor in the line of shoulder. Try to bend at the hips and not in the back. Keep the knees extended. The chin touches the chest to get the *Jālandhara Bandha*. Try to balance the position. Breathe normally. If the floor cannot be touched relax the legs and hip joints slowly. With regular



practice toes can be brought to the floor slowly. Initially hold the position for 10-15 seconds. Gradually, increase the time period to 30 seconds or a minute. When the legs start shivering, release the posture.

To Release:

- 1) While inhaling, take the feet off the floor and bring the legs parallel to the floor.
- 2) While inhaling more, slowly rest the back and hips on the floor releasing vertebrae one by one to come in *Dwipādauttānapādāsana*. Do not hurry or bang the body.
- 3) While exhaling, slowly bring the legs down on the floor and relax. If this *āsana* is practiced for a longer time, *Matsyāsana* should be done.

Advantages:

The main characteristic of this *āsana* is tremendous stretching at the waist and hip joints so they become strong. The backbone and its muscles are stretched. Blood circulation of this area is increased. This *āsana* helps to increase height. As the abdomen is folded, the digestion improves. The abdominal muscles get toned and fat is reduced. Waist fat is also reduced. All benefits of *Jālandhara Bandha* are achieved.

Caution:

Those suffering from cervical and lumbar *spondylitis* should not do this *āsana*. Those having stiff back should do this *āsana* carefully as much as possible. No overstraining at all. Those having high BP, heart problems, and obesity should not practise. If the toes do not touch the floor, do not overstretch. Just do as much as you can. Keep the legs relaxed.

❖ ***Cakrāsana***

Cakra means 'wheel'. In this *āsana*, the body assumes the shape of a wheel, hence, it is called *Cakrāsana*. This *āsana* improves flexibility of whole body especially the back.

Let us perform *Cakrāsana* by following the steps given below:

Starting position: Lie on your back.



Bend the legs at knees, heels touching the buttocks. Keep the feet 12 inches apart.

1. Raise the arms up, bend them at the elbows, take them behind over the head. Place the palms on the floor beside the head, fingers pointing towards the shoulders.
2. Slowly, raise the body and arch the back.
3. Straighten the arms and legs. Move the hands further towards the feet as far as you feel comfortable. Maintain the position comfortably for 5-10 seconds.

Releasing position:

3. Slowly lower the body in the manner so that the head rests on the floor. Lower down rest of the body and lie flat on your back. Relax.

Remember the following points:

Do's:

- Raise your body carefully.
- Keep the arms and legs straight as much as possible in final position.

Don'ts:

- Do not stretch too much while bringing the hands towards feet.
- Do not give jerk to the spine.
- Try not to bend the arms and legs in final position.

Benefits

- It makes spine flexible.
- It removes rigidity of the bones and joints in the middle part of the back.
- It is good for digestion.
- It improves the functioning of heart.

Limitation

- Person suffering from weak wrist, high blood pressure, vertigo, hernia, abdominal problems, etc., should not practice this *āsana*.

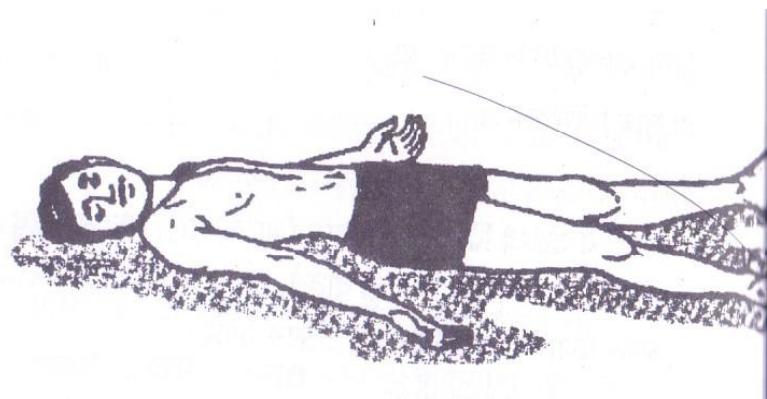
❖ **Śavāsana (The Dead Body Posture)**

Śava means dead body. The final position in this *āsana* resembles a dead body.

Sthiti: Supine Relaxation Posture

Technique

1. Lie down on your back with arms and legs comfortably apart.
2. Palms facing upward; eyes closed.
3. Relax the whole body consciously
4. Become aware of natural breath and allow it to become rhythmic and slow.
5. Remain in the position till you feel refresh and relax.



Benefits

1. Helps to relieve all kinds of tensions and gives rest to both body and mind.
2. Relaxes the whole psycho-physiological system.
3. The mind, which is constantly attracted to the outer world, takes a U-turn and moves inwards, thus gradually getting absorbed; as the mind turns quiet and absorbed, the practitioner remains undisturbed by the external environment.
4. It is found very beneficial in the management of stress and its consequences.

6.2.2 *Prāṅṅāyāma* – Procedure & Benefits.

❖ Bhāgasha: Śvasan

Before Doing *Prāṅṅāyāma* Now we are going to learn and understand some basic things about *Prāṅṅāyāma*, including the proper way to take breathing and fully use lung capacity. Breathing is important in *Prāṅṅāyāma*. There are three parts of breathing

1) Athama (abdominal) breathing:

Practice of abdominal breathing is essential in *Prāṅṅāyāma*.

Procedure:

- Close your eyes and relax your whole body.

- Focus the mind on your breath.
- Observe the natural breath.
- Do not control the breath in any way. Just observe.
- Place one hand over the navel and other on the chest.



चिन्मय मुद्रा

- Observe the movement of the hand placed on the abdomen, moving up and down. The hand on the chest hardly moves.
- Observe the abdomen expanding on inhalation. The navel part rises the highest. On exhalation, the abdomen depresses and the diaphragm rises.

If very tired, this process of abdominal breathing relaxes the body and mind in just a few minutes, refreshing them.

2) Madhyama (chest) Breathing:

In this type of breathing, mainly, the ribs are in action.

Procedure:

- Acquire any meditative posture.
- Breathe naturally for some time.
- Ignore the diaphragm and expand the chest as you breathe in. observe the ribs moving outwards and upwards. Observe the chest expanding. Breathe as deeply as possible.



चिन् मुद्रा

- After completing *Pūraka*, slowly discharge (*Recaka*). Observe the ribs moving downwards and inwards. In this type of breathing, the middle portions of the lungs are affected.

3) Ādhya (shoulder) Breathing

This is the final stage of total rib cage expansion.

Procedure:

- Acquire any meditative posture.
- Expand the chest and take a few breaths (in and out).
- Now, slowly inhale, expanding the chest, inhale some more, until the upper portion of the chest, the collar bone and shoulders are lifted. This requires some effort.
- When expansion is at maximum, slowly start exhaling. First relax the shoulders, collar bone and then upper chest. Gradually, the lower portion of the chest is emptied of air.



4) Yogic breathing = Deep breathing:

Abdominal breathing, chest breathing and clavicular breathing, when done together, are known as Yogic Breathing.

Conscious and intentional prolonged inhalation and exhalation of every breath is but a yogic breathing. Each inhalation and exhalation is to be done with

voluntary control. Though the respiratory system functions involuntarily some voluntary control on it can be brought about. Normally, respiration



is as per the need of the body. But, in *Prāṅṅāyāma*, changes in respiration are to be brought about with awareness and conscious efforts. This control is brought about by the mind only. In yogic breathing the *Pūraka* and *Recaka* are done by controlling the breath.

Procedure:

- Acquire any meditative posture.
- Exhale and slowly begin *Pūraka*. As you inhale, the abdomen expands. When the abdomen is fully expanded, the lungs are filled with air and the chest expands and finally the collar bone and the shoulder also rise. Hold breath for a few seconds after completing *Pūraka*.
- Then, slowly start discharging (*Recaka*). Relax the neck muscles and the shoulders. Relax the chest and let it settle back. As you exhale, relax the rib-cage. After the full relaxation of chest, turn attention to the abdomen. Slowly as you exhale some more, observe the abdomen receding inwards. Discharge (*Recaka*) till the abdomen fully dips in (contracts). This completes one cycle.
- Again, slowly start the second cycle of breathing.
- *Pūraka* should be slow, continuous and rhythmic. The abdomen, chest, neck and shoulders should expand slowly and easily. The inhalation should be soundless. For this, relax the throat and nostrils. Unnecessary effort is to be avoided. The *Recaka* also should be slow. *Recaka* needs more concentration. Both *Pūraka* and *Recaka* should be effortless and comfortable.

Bhastrika Breathing:

Bhastra= Bellows of blacksmith. Breathing like a bellows. *Bhastrika Prāñāyāma* is described in *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* and *Gheranda Samhita*. The meaning of word *Bhastra* is a bellows. *Bhastrika* means the air is forcefully drawn in and out of the lungs, like the bellows of a village blacksmith.

Sit in a meditative āsana, close the eyes, back erect and relaxed and hands in *dnyan Mudra*. Relax the body. First *practise* the natural breathing. Now inhale deeply, filling the chest with air and exhale by pulling in the abdomen. Keeping the chest expanded, forcefully inhale and exhale by moving the abdomen in and out. Do this rapidly. After sometime hold the right hand in *Pranava Mudra* and forcefully draw the air in and out rapidly through each nostril at a time. Maintain steady speed.

Benefits:

Practice of *Bhastrika* balances the *Vāta*, *Pitta* and *Kapha doshas*. The gastric juices are stimulated. Appetite improves. Digestion also improves. Disorders of *Kapha* are cured. The respiratory system is cleared to some extent. Concentration improves.

Caution:

If giddiness is experienced, stop immediately and do natural breathing. Those who suffer from high BP, breathlessness and mental illness should not *practise Bhastrika*.

Anuloma-Viloma Breathing technique:

Sit in a meditative āsana, back erect, eyes closed, hands in *dnyāna Mudra* and relax the body. Have natural breathing for 2 minutes followed

by few cycles of deep breathing. *Anuloma-viloma* is to be done in 1:0:2 ratios. Fold the right hand in *Pranava Mudra* and close the right nostril with the thumb. Do *Pūraka* with left nostril in 4 counts in uniform speed and rhythm. There should be no jerks or holding breathe or increase or decrease in the speed. The inhalation should be smooth and continuous. Concentrate fully on the breath.

After inhaling through the left nostril in 4 counts, close the left nostril with the tip of the ring finger of *Pranav Mudra* and start recheck through the right nostril in 8 counts. The exhalation should be controlled, slow and rhythmic. For this, total concentration is necessary. Exhale completely. Now *Pūraka* is to be done through right nostril in 4 counts. Close the right nostril with thumb and do the *Recaka* through left nostril in 8 counts. This completes one cycle and breathing in through the left nostril starts the second cycle. *Practise* 5-7-11-21 such cycles as per capacity. At least *practise* it for 10 minutes every day.

After this the body and the respiratory system become ready for the practice of *Prāñāyāma*.

❖ ***Chandrā Nuloma- Viloma:***

In this procedure (*Prāñāyāma*) inhale and exhale through left nostril. Right nostril is closed at that time. *Nāsika Mudra* (*pranava Mudra*) may be demonstrated. All other things are similar to the practice of *Anuloma-Viloma*.

❖ ***Sūryā Nuloma- Viloma:***

In this procedure (*Prāñāyāma*) inhale & exhale through right nostril. Left nostril is closed at that time. *Nāsika Mudra* (*pranav Mudra*) is to be

maintained. All other things are similar to the practice of *Anuloma-Viloma*.

➤ ***Sūryabhedana***

Procedure:

Sit comfortably in a meditative posture with closed eyes and erect back. Relax and concentrate on breathing. Place the *pranava-Mudra* on the mouth and close the left nostril with ring finger and inhale through the right nostril. After completing *Pūraka*, close the right nostril with the thumb and secure *Tribandha*. The *Kumbhaka* should be in the ratio of 1;1;2, 1;2;2, 1:4:2 as per the regular practice and capacity. The text advises to hold *Kumbhaka* till the hair root and nails sweat. After completing the *Kumbhaka*, release the *Bandhas* and slowly discharge the *Recaka* through the left nostril. This completes one round. Practise such 5-7-11 rounds as per capacity. By now, from the above description, the student must have realized that *sūryabhedana Prāñāyāma* is half part of *Anuloma-Viloma Prāñāyāma*.

➤ ***Chandrabhedana:***

Procedure:

Sit comfortably in a meditative posture with closed eyes and erect back. Relax and concentrate on breathing. Place the *pranav-Mudra* on the mouth and close the right nostril with ring finger and inhale through the left nostril. After completing *Pūraka*, close the left nostril with the thumb and secure *Tribandha*. The *Kumbhaka* should be in the ratio of 1;1;2, 1;2;2, 1:4:2 as per the regular practice and capacity. The text advises to hold *Kumbhaka* till the hair root and nails sweat. After completing the *Kumbhaka*, release the *Bandhas* and slowly discharge the *Recaka* through

the right nostril. This completes one round. *Practise* such 5-7-11 rounds as per capacity. By now, from the description the student must have realized that *chandrabhedana Prāñāyāma* is half part of *Anuloma-Viloma Prāñāyāma*.

Benefits:

This *Prāñāyāma* counteracts the imbalances of *Vāta Dosha* and *Krumidosha*. It clears the ‘*Bhalapradesh*’ (skull, brain and sense organs). As the body heat is increased, digestion improves. It stimulates and awakens the *pranic* energy, enabling the physical activities to be more enthusiastic and thereby reducing the dullness, lethargy and depression. This *Prāñāyāma* is very beneficial for people suffering from depression. The mind becomes alert and perceptive. This *Prāñāyāma* is also good for those suffering from low BP, infertility and worms.

6.2.3 Sūryanamaskāra – Procedure & Benefits

Sūryanamaskāra is a part of ancient Indian tradition, from Vedic period. It is a complete and encompassing dynamic exercise advocated by our sages and practised till today. The energy, which gives life to everything on the earth, is the Sun. The traditional practice of *Sūryanamaskāra* is the symbol of gratitude towards the Sun. Besides, being an exercise, it also ignites and releases the energy within human body. This energy leads to the knowledge of the self. The different aspects of our personality are enhanced through the practice of *Sūryanamaskāra*.

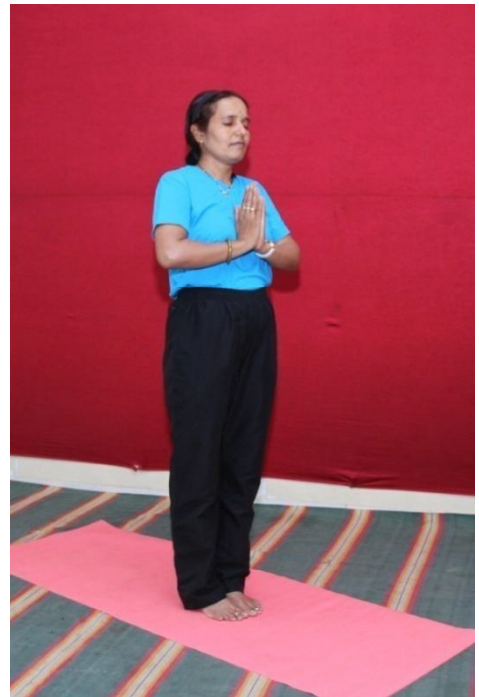
The *Sūryanamaskāra* has spiritual importance and is an abode to gain the knowledge of self. It is a chain of *āsanas*, accompanied by *Bīja mantras*, the *Omkāra*- the *Mahāmantra* and *Prāñāyāma*. *Sūryanamaskāra*

regularises the flow of energy generated by the *Piṅgalā Nādi* (Sūrya nadi) in the body. It purifies the *nādis* in the body, maintains physical and mental balance. Through this the *Prāṇa śakti* (vital energy) is properly channelised. Due to specific postures and rhythm, the body and mind also work in tune with each other and this brings about completeness in life. There are many schools prevalent about the practice of *Sūryanamaskāra*. The method advocated by His Highness *Shri. Pantapratidinidhi of Aundh* (Pune) is widely accepted and is described here. It is a chain of 10 *āsanas*.

As far as possible, *Sūryanamaskāra* is to be done at sunrise or sunset. While performing *Sūryanamaskāra*, one should stand facing the sun.

Practise of Sūryanamaskāra:

For starting *Sūryanamaskāra*, stand with feet together, join hands in *namaskāra shtiti*, and place them right in middle of the chest. Thumbs should be kept touching the chest bone and fingers directed forwards. Look straight ahead and if doing *Sūryanamaskāra* in open place, then look at the rising shine of the sun absorbing its brightness. But do not look at the bright Sun. Be calm, steady but alert. This position is also known as *Sūryanamaskārasana*.



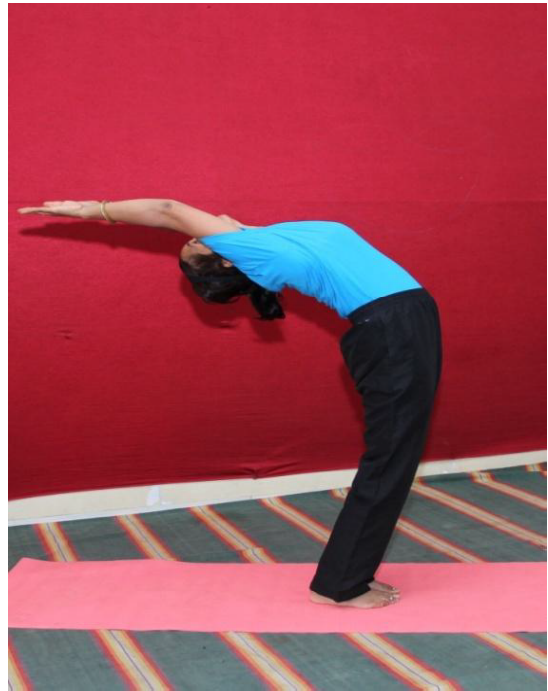
POSITIONS:

1) UTTHITĀSANA:

Exhale and while inhaling, raise the hands above the head fully extended. Hands should be parallel in line with the shoulders, palms upwards. Bend the body backwards as much as you can, maintaining the balance.

BENEFITS:

The abdominal muscles and the organs within, as well as the chest muscles and lungs are fully stretched. This increases breathing capacity and digestion. The bend at the spine makes the spinal cord and nerves competent. The shoulder muscles become strong. Abdominal fat reduces. One feels more awake and alert.



2) JĀNUKAPĀLASANA: (FORWARD BEND):

While exhaling, bend forwards. Try and place the palms of the hands besides the feet without bending the knees. Try to touch the forehead to the knees or look towards the knees.

BENEFITS:

The waist and thigh muscles become flexible. Bending forward puts the pressure on the abdominal organs and improves digestion. The genito-urinary organs work more efficiently and



their disorders are reduced. As the head comes at lower level, it gets more blood supply, helping in reducing the strain on the heart.

CAUTION:

Bend as much as you can. Those having hip joint problem should avoid this.

3) ARDHABHUVANGĀSANA:

While inhaling, place both the palms by the side of feet and extend the left leg backwards as far as possible and rest it on the toes. Keep the left knee on the floor. Keep both the hands straight. The right foot rests between the hands. Press the hip downwards so that the right thigh and calf are pressed together. Tilt the head behind and look upwards. The backbone forms the arch. Gradually try reaching the ideal position.



BENEFITS:

The joints and muscles of the legs and waist become strong and healthy. The backbone becomes flexible. Nerves function improves. The lower abdomen gets good stretch and pressure.

CAUTION:

If the backbone is stiff, do as much as you can, avoiding unnecessary strain.

4) HASTAPĀDASANA:

Hold the breath as you extend the right leg backwards. Keep it by the side of left leg. Lift up the left knee and put both knees together. The legs will be straight on the toes and hands are also held in straight position. Look in front.



The whole body weight is borne by only hands and toes. The body is fully stretched in straight oblique line.

BENEFITS:

As the total body weight is borne by the hands and toes, their muscles and joints become strong and flexible. As the body is stretched, capacity of heart and lung improves. As the body is held straight against the gravity, all the muscles in the body are strained and stretched.

CAUTION:

Those suffering from breathlessness, heart problem should not do this.

5) ASHTĀNGĀSANA:

While exhaling first rest the knees on the floor, then rest the chest and forehead on the floor. Do not touch the abdomen and nose on the floor.

For this lift up the hips a little and bend the head forwards. The different types of the curves are the characteristic of this āsana.



BENEFITS:

The peculiar curving of the spine improve the function of the spine. Abdominal muscles get pulled inwards which improve their functioning. All the joints of hands and legs also are strengthened. This position gives rest to the body.

6) BHUJANGĀSANA:

While inhaling, lift the front portion of the body i.e, forehead, neck, shoulders and chest and the part of the abdomen up to belly button. The lower part of abdomen from toes to the waist will rest on the floor. Lift up the upper body till the hands are fully extended. Most of the body weight rests on the hands. Keep the toes raised and heels



touching together. Tilt the head backwards and look upwards. Keep the mouth closed and the face calm. The spine curves into arch. Pull the shoulders backwards.

BENEFITS:

The muscles of the chest and abdomen become competent, digestion improves. Blood supply to the backbone improves. Kidneys and adrenal glands are massaged. It also improves the strength of backbone.

7) PARVATĀSANA:

While holding the breath, and without changing the position of legs and hands, lift the hips up, and turn head inwards to touch the chin to the chest. Try to touch the heels on the ground. Do not strain unnecessary. The stretch in the hands and shoulders should be in backward direction.



BENEFITS:

The muscles of the hands, legs and waist become strong. Arms and shoulder blades become active. Advantages of Jalabdhara Bandha are attained.

CAUTION:

Obese or overweight should carefully take this position. Those having high BP and spondylitis should not take this position.

8) ARDHABHUVANGĀSANA:

Hold the breath as you put left foot between the hands and take the position of as the position in **No 3**.



9) JĀNUKAPĀLASANA:

While exhaling, place the right leg next to the left and attain the position as **No 2**.

10) While inhaling, stand up straight in *Namaskāra* position

Thus one *Sūryanamaskāra* is completed through ten positions. Initially, do as many as possible without undue strain. Slowly, try to achieve ideal position. The unique characteristic of *Sūryanamaskāra* is bending the body forwards and backwards in different ways. Along with the movements, breathing is also synchronised with different positions. *Kumbhaka* (breath holding) is also achieved and benefits of *Prāṅāyāma* are gained. Obviously the breathing control is according and supporting to the movements of the body.

6.2.4 *Mudras* - Procedure & Benefits:

In the last chapter, we learnt about pre Yoga movements, *Āsana* & *Prāṅāyāma*. In this topic we will learn about *Bandhas* & *Mudras*. *Bandha* means contracting one part of the body for a specific duration. *Mudra* means Body & hands position. Some *Mudras* are like *Āsanas*. *Bandha* &

Mudra are the progressive technique in Hatha yoga. These are beneficial for mental peace and emotional balance.

❖ **Types of *Mudras***

Mostly *mudras* are used in three areas:

- 1) *Dance* (expression of face & emotional expression)
- 2) *Karmakānda* and
- 3) *Hath yoga*: For gaining stability of mind.

We have studied about Hatha yoga *mudras* that include *Āsana*, *Prāñāyāma*, Purification Procedures, *Bandha* & *mudra*. In *Ghērañda Saṃhita* there are mainly 25 *mudras* described and in *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* there are 10 *mudras*. In that the following twelve *mudras* are described:

- 1) *Mahāmudra* 2) *Mahā bandha* 3) *Mahā védha* 4) *Yoga mudra* 5) *Viparīta karaṇi* 6) *Vajroli* 7) *Ṣakti cālīni* 8) *Khécari* 9) *Yoni mudra* 10) *Uddiyana bandha* 11) *Jālandhara Bandha* and 12) *Mūla bandha*.

In *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika* there are ten *mudras*. Out of the above *mudras* in *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpka*, *Yoga mudra* & *Yonimudra* are not described.

6.2.4 Mudras - Process & Benefits

❖ **Aṣwini mudra: Aṣwa=Horse**

Aṣwa means a horse. Just as a horse, after excretion, contracts and relaxes its anal muscles, similar movements are done in this *Mudra*, hence the name.

Starting Position: *Saravāngāsana*

Procedure:

1. Get into *Saravāngasana* and hold the position.
2. Now bend the legs at the knee.
3. As you exhale, bend at the waist level.
4. Now slowly, contract and relax the anus 8-10 times. Do this slowly and in a steady manner.
5. Then raise the thighs, straighten the waist and then legs to come back into *Sarvāngāsana*.

Effects:

This feature tones anal muscles and strengthens them. As the anus is pulled inwards, it becomes easier for the gas to escape. Similarly, the pressure applied by the thighs on the abdomen, helps the gases and stools to proceed forward along the intestines. Therefore this feature is good to relieve constipation. It also helps to overcome menstrual problems and prolapsed of the uterus. Philosophically, the scriptures say that, as the *Prāṇa* energy is obstructed from escaping, it is retained and this helps in spiritual progress. This feature also makes it easier to practice *Mūlabandha*.

❖ *Shaṅmukhi Mudra:*

To close the six gates. The Sanskrit word-'*Shaṅmukhi*' is derived from two words: *Shaṅ*=six, *Mukhi*=gates or openings. The *Shaṅmukhi Mudra*

redirects the awareness inside by closing the six openings of the outer perception- two eyes, two ears, two and nostrils .

Procedure:

Sit relaxed in any meditative posture with back erect. Hands on the knees in *Dhyāna / Chin Mudra*. Close the eyes and relax the body. Fold the hands at elbow and bring the hands near the face-close the ears with thumbs, the eyes with the index fingers, the nostrils with fingers and the mouth by placing the ring fingers and little fingers on the upper lip and below the lower lip respectively.

Release the pressure at the middle fingers on the nostrils and inhale deeply and again close them with middle fingers to retain the breath i.e. - *Kumbhaka*. After *Kumbhaka* exhale slowly by releasing the pressure of the middle fingers on the nostrils. Immediately start with next round with inhalation. Perform this activity for 4-5 minutes or as per capacity. To end the practices bring the hands down. Place them on the knees and then externalize the awareness slowly. Try to get awareness of subtle sounds.

Benefits:

The heart and energy from the fingers revitalizes the muscle and nerves of the face. Eye, nose, ear infections are controlled. All sense organs are controlled. External and internal awareness are balanced. *Shañmukhi Mudra* induces a state of *Pratyāhara*.

❖ Yoga Mudra

- 1) Sit comfortably in *padmāsana*.
- 2) Then take your right & left hands behind your back.

- 3) Catch hold the right wrist with left hand.
- 4) *Slowly*, exhale and bend the upper body forward.
- 5) Hold the pose for 5-10 *seconds* to begin with and gradually increase the time duration.
- 6) While inhaling, come back up to the sitting position.
- 7) In *Baddha padmāsana* position we can also do Yoga Nidra.

Benefits

- 1) Helpful in weight loss and in reducing abdominal fat.
- 2) Cures enlargement of the spleen and liver.
- 3) Stimulates endocrine glands, kidney liver & pancreas.
- 4) Back muscles are rendered flexible.
- 5) Diabetes and piles are cured.

6.2.5 Śudhi kriyas - Procedure & Benefits

❖ *Kapālabhāti*:

Kapālabhāti may be technically known as frontal brain cleansing. It involves forceful rapid exhalation. In *Kapālabhāti*, we reverse the natural breathing pattern in which inhalation is active and exhalation is passive. However, many take *Kapālabhāti* as a kind of *Prāṇāyāma*. In the Haṭha Yoga texts, *Kapālabhāti* is regarded as one of the most powerful processes of cleaning where the air is expelled forcefully from the lungs

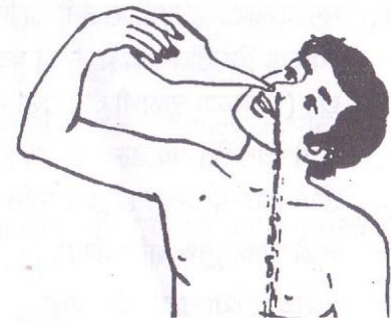
by taking out stagnant CO₂ (carbon dioxide) which is accumulated in the body. Thus, this procedure is repeated for a few times. *Kapālabhāti* is a healing practice for several diseases. *Kapālabhāti* is said to be an effective technique for reducing weight because it results in raising the Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR) in the body.

Though *Kapālabhāti* is considered as a *Kriya* in Hatha Yoga texts, it involves breathing and therefore may be considered as a *Prāṇāyāma* practice. Incidentally, *Prāṇāyāma* is considered as *parama tapa*, i.e., the highest form of purification practice.

The *Shat Kriyas* must be practiced with the help of an experienced and knowledgeable *yoga* teacher / instruction. Daily practices can aid in maintaining good health. It can also purify the whole body.

❖ **Neti :**

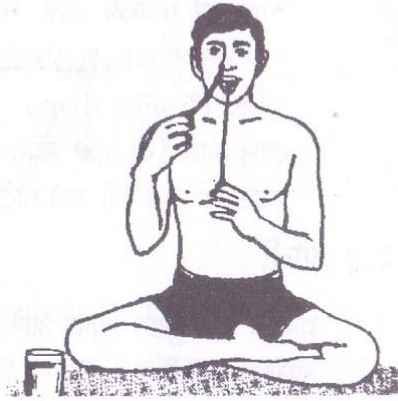
Jala Neti and *Sutra Neti* are the two common forms of *Neti* practices. *Jala Neti* is the procedure of cleaning the nasal cavities by taking a small pot called *Neti* pot which has a long spout on one side and is filled with warm saline water. Then spout is put in the left nostril. The person



Jal Neti

who is practicing it bends his head towards right side and allows the water from the left nostril into the nasal cavity, which then is released out from the right nostril. Again the pot is filled with the saline water. This procedure is again repeated by putting the spout in the right nostril and then tilting head towards the left side. This procedure cleanses the sinus cavities and the nose. Therefore, this helps in relieving sinusitis, allergies, migraine and mild headaches. With the help of a rubber catheter (*Sūtra*),

Neti can also be performed which is known as *Sutra Neti*. In this, the catheter is put into one nostril and then it is pulled out from the throat cavity as well as out of the mouth. The nostril passage is cleaned by using gentle motion of to and fro of the catheter tube. Same is repeated with the other nostril. Thus, both methods of *Neti* have the effect of de-sensitizing on the membranes in the nose, hence relieving rhinitis, allergies, and so on. Also, *Neti* stimulates few nerve centers in the upper passage of nasal. *Neti kriya* is performed as a *Prāñāyāma* practice preparation. *Jala Neti kriya* must also be followed by the *Kapālabhāti*. It is done so that there is no remnant of saline water in the nasal cavities.



Sutra Neti

❖ **Dhauti / Kunjal :**

Vaman dhauti, *danda dhauti* and *vastra dhauti* are the three popular *dhauti / kunjal kriyas*. It is practiced in the morning with an empty stomach so as to make stomach clean. It is technique of making the stomach clean. It is a technique of eliminating undigested food particles from the former day's meals that had resulted in sticking of food to the stomach lining. These cause digestive problems. The person practicing *Kunjal* must drink warm saline water about 1-1^{1/2} litres (in 1 litre of water adds one table spoon of salt approximately). Then the person vomits the whole water out. The best position to vomit is to bend over and put his/her 3 fingers at the tongue root. The vomit reflux is made by stimulating the tongue root which throws the salt water with the

impurities out of the stomach. This is continued until whole water is removed. In *danda dhauti*, a hollow rubber tube of about 14 inches is used. After consuming about 1-1^{1/2} litres of saline water, this rubber tube is slowly inserted into the stomach through the mouth. Then when the practitioner bends slightly forward, the entire water comes out from the rubber tube as if from a tap, thereby cleansing the stomach completely.

In *vastra dhauti*, a cotton cloth around 22 feet long is dipped first in saline water. This is then carefully swallowed. After that, it is slowly pulled out. In this manner, it cleans the inner linings of both food pipe and stomach. All this must be done under the supervision of an expert.



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