

Yoga-Darshana (To Grow into a Complete Person)

In the modern era the human life has become very complex. It is more competitive, conflictive and confusing. This ends up person becoming highly extrovert in life. It keeps mind always busy with the external worldly affairs. Again, this is at the cost of personal happiness and health by neglecting oneself, I the centre of the life. Even today's education misses the teachings for self-management, self-improvement and self-esteem; known as value education.

Our ancient scriptures written by sages and seers gave this value education prime place in human pursuits. A lifestyle that will help a human being grown into a complete person to deal with world by first learning to deal with the self holistically. One such scriptural branch is known as Yoga-Darshana propounded by Sri Muni Patanjali. This Yoga-Darshana is in the form of aphorism. There are 4 chapters called pAda. It is designed intelligently as a complete package offering different types of the disciplines for all facets of an individual. But at the same time it is not dealing with all with one stick. Every human being is a unique person. This makes it is necessary to address each and every one as per their tendencies and the nature.

There are three types of the people who make slow, moderate and committed efforts. (मृदु मध्यम अतिमात्रत्वात् ततः अपि विशेषः ११ १२२) So Yoga-Darshana offers everyone an opportunity to develop into the complete person. The complete person is one who is mature enough to first manage oneself well with happy and cheerful mind and committed to the Dharma (the rights and wrongs). Then he or she acquires the strength to face the world with any adversity or situation in one's life. The Yoga-Darshana by Patanjali known as Yoga-sutra (योगसूत्र) there are five types of klesha-s, afflictions in the human life. They are *avidyA*, *asmitA*, *rAga*, *dveSa* and *abhinivesha*. (P.Y.S. 2.3). (अविद्या-अस्मिता-राग-द्वेष-अ-निवेशाःक्लेशाः, 2.3)

Among these five the first one is the ignorance which is the root cause for all kinds of the pains, sorrow and afflictions. So to get rid of the adversities in the life one needs to remove the cause ignorance. This ignorance is not like the ignorance of any object because not knowing something may not create any problem. The self is not totally unknown as one knows one "is" and one is "conscious being". Therefore not knowing the true nature of the self culminates into the wrong notion. These ignorance based notions mean taking non-eternal as eternal, impure as pure, unhappiness as happiness and non-self as self. In simple words it is wrong notion of the self. (अनित्य-अशुचि-दुःख-अनात्मासु नित्य-शुचि-सुख-आत्मख्यातिः अविद्या,2.5).

Due to the wrong notion of the self there is an identification, oneness between the objects such as body, senses, mind and intellect with the seer, knower. This is *asmitA*, the I-sense, identification. (दृग्दर्शनशक्तयोः एकात्मता एव अस्मिता,2.6). Due to I-sense there is *rAga*, desire or likes for the objects in which one sees the happiness (सुखानुशयी रागः १२.७) and *dveSa*, hatred or dislikes for the objects in which one sees the unhappiness. (दुःखानुशयीद्वेषः,2.8). The I-sense in this gross body creates the fear of death called *abhinivesha* even for the enlightened ones. (स्व-रस-वाही विदुषो अपि तथा आरूढः अ-निवेशः,2.9).

Yoga-Darshana says that these five afflictive thoughts are to be abandoned through meditation. (ध्यानहेयाः तद्वृत्तयः,2,11). If we enquire into the prime goal of the human life, it is two-fold pursuit: the permanent removal of the pain, sorrow and gaining the limitless happiness (*dukhasyaAtyantikanivRttiH* and *sukhasyaavAptiH*).

The Patanjali Yoga-Sutra gives a logical and beautiful road map for the journey of life adapting to the aptitude and qualification of every individual to reach the goal of peace and happiness with cheerful mind. This journey of life is called ASTAng-Yoga. It offers the solutions at three levels to suite an individual's disposition, so one can reach the ultimate end called Kaivalya, oneness. Oneness with the whole is the Yoga- Darshana. Every facet of the personality has to be developed at certain level of the maturity so that next milestone of the journey can be achieved. The maturity is to be ready to face any situation in the journey of the life with calm, cheerful mind and using the discriminative intellect. The maturity implies not to lose oneself in any situation. So it is very holistic and ultimate in lifestyle for most purposeful living.

To grow into complete person by sameness of mind-body:

Every human being is a unique person and so it is necessary to address each and every one as per their tendency and the nature so that one can develop into the complete person. The complete person is one who is mature enough to manage oneself well with happy and cheerful mind and committed to the Dharma, right and wrong. He or she also has strength to face any adversity or situation in the life. As given in Prashna-upaniSad clearly that due to almost equal pApa-puNya one gains human body. (Due to more pApa one can end up into lower birth such as tree, animals or birth in lower worlds. Due to prominent puNya, one can reach higher world such as deva, yaksha, gandharva, etc.) If for human beings pApa and puNya are almost equal then in conducive situation there is bit of lose or and there is always a brighter side for any non-conducive situation.

Thus Patanjali-Yoga-Sutra gives us the life style to grow into a complete person.

1 योगव्याख्या तथा फलम् Definition of Yoga and its result

योगः चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः । 1,2

तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपे अवस्थानम् । 1,3

Yoga is the restraining of the thoughts of the mind. 1.2.

Then there is an abiding in the essential nature of the Seer, the consciousness. 1.3.

Now there is a beginning of the teaching of the Yoga. (1.1). The thoughts of the mind absorbed into the true nature of the self, nirodha is called Yoga. (1.2).

As per the philosophy of the Yoga there are 5 types of the thought process. The first three are extroverts namely kSipta, mUDha and vikSipta. They create obstacles for the meditation and smAdhi. While the last two are introvert namely ekAgra and nirodha and they are very much conducive. Due to the rajoguNa when the thoughts are constantly wondering in various objects of the world it is called kSipta, wondering thought process. Due to the overwhelming effects of the tamoguNa there are inattentiveness, sleepy, dullness and ignorance in the mind it is called mUDha. The third thought process is due to the increase in the sattvaguNa called vikSipta, intermittently focused. It does get focused on the object of meditation but could not stay for the length of the time because of the residual effect of the rajoguNa and tamoguNa. But when there is an increase in the sattvaguNa due to the discrimination between eternal and non-eternal (or self and non-self) and mind develops strong dispassion towards the external objects which results into the long time of meditation. This type of the thought process is called ekAgra, single pointed mind. After long time of the meditation mind is totally absorbed into the true nature of the self, pure consciousness. When the mind is completely absorbed the thought process is called Nirodha, absorption. That time mind is absorbed into the true nature of the Seer, pure consciousness. This is nirodha is Yoga. (1.2, 3).

2. उत्तमअधिकारी

अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्याम् तन्निरोधः । 1,12

There is restraining of that, i.e. of the five types of the thoughts by means of practice and renunciation. तत्र स्थितौ यत्नो अभ्यासः । 1 13

स तु दीर्घकालनैरन्तर्यसत्कारआसेवितः दृढ-मिः । 1,14

The practice is the effort to attain to that steadiness of the mind. 1.13

And that the practice is of the firm state of mind, when endowed with an uninterrupted and true devotional attitude for a length of the time. 1.14

दृष्टानुश्रविकविषयवितृष्णस्य वशीकारसंज्ञा वैराग्यम् । 1,15

तत्परं पुरुषख्यातेः गुणवैतृष्ण्यम् । 1,16

Vairagya or Renunciation is known as the act of subjugating the desire for objects seen or repeatedly heard from the scriptures. 1.15

Indifference to the qualities of the nature because of a knowledge of Purusha, the self is called the highest form of the renunciation. 1.16

Now Muni Patanjali shows the means to attain the samAdhi, complete absorption into the true nature of the self, pure consciousness for the Uttama Adhikari, fully qualified seeker. As a bird needs two wings to fly so too there are two means called AbhyAsa, practice for the long time and VairAgya, dispassion or renunciation. Both means are to be employed simultaneously (1. 12).

By knowing the fatality, non-entity of the object of the desire and being the source of the pain one develops the dispassion towards them. After having studied the scripture through the listening to the teacher one practices the meditation on the true nature of the self, pure consciousness. Thus Yogi, the seeker makes enough required efforts for developing the capacity to be absorbed into the true nature of the self, pure consciousness. But for such practice or absorption one needs to have faith, respect and enthusiasm. In the same manner for the dispassion one needs to lead a life of Tapa - austerity, Yama - control over one's senses and Bhakti - worshipful life as a total surrender to the Lord. Thus as a result of these means one develop Para-Vairagya, the highest of the dispassion.

This in turn results into Vivek-vijNanam, the self-knowledge that is Purusha, the self is totally unattached from PrakRti, the inert world. This knowledge or Kaivalyam, oneness releases the Yogi from the painful cycle of birth and death called Mukti, liberation, here while living and here after.

3. मध्यमअधिकारी

श्रद्धावीर्यस्मृतिसमाधिप्रज्ञापूर्वकः इतरेषाम्, 1,20

However for those who tread the path of the conscious effort Nirbija-samadhi, real Asamprajñatasamadhi is preceded by faith, vigor, recollection, full Absorption and true knowledge. 1.20

तपःस्वाध्याय ईश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः । 2,1

Austerity, Study of scriptures and Chanting of mantra and devotion to Lord are Kriyayoga (is the means for the SamAdhi.) 2.1

समाधि-विवनार्थः क्लेशतनूकरणार्थः च, 2,2

Kriyayoga should be practiced for attaining Samadhi or Perfect single pointedness and attenuating the Klesa-s. 2.2

Those who are Madhayam Adhikari, average seeker, Yogi, are not able to absorb into the true nature of the self, pure consciousness through these two means. Muni Patanjali shows few more special means besides these two. With the help of these means Yogi is able to practice the DhArANA, concentration, DhyAna meditation, and SamAdhi, complete absorption. 1. ShraddhA, the status of the mind accepting the words of the Scriptures and the teachers for the Kaivalyam, oneness of the self. 2. Along with the SraddhA Yogi needs the second means Vlrya, enthusiasm, and vigorous efforts called DhArANA. Due to these the mind of the Yogi is relaxed and cheerful. Such mind does not wonder and get back to oneself very smoothly. 3. SmRti means meditation. Whatever scriptures is being learned from the teacher is meditated upon. The mind is totally free from the wondering anxiety, restlessness and cheerful so it is freely dwell upon the nature of the self that is oneness. 4. samAdhi. Finally mind attains the samprajNA Samadhi due to the long time of practices of meditation. This is called kriyAyoga. (1.20)

There are few more steps to follow namely tapa – austerity. Tapa is to bereaved body, senses and mind willingly from the object of desire. Through this one gets the total control over body, etc so that they are conducive for the Samadhi. Then there is a swAdhyAya in two forms, one to chant the veda-mantra, Gita, Vishnu-sahasrnAmaand also chanting the mantra of the given diety. The second is to study the scripture to understand the true nature of the self. The last one is to have an attitude of the total surrender to the all-knowing and almighty Lord. (because with the grace of the grace of the Lord one is able to perform action and receive the result of the action. In short offering the action to the Lord and cheerfully accepting the result of the action.) (2.1) with the help of these upAya, steps Yogi, seeker is able to attain the Samadhi, oneness.

4. कनिष्ठअधिकारी

योगानुष्ठानाद् अशुद्धिक्षये ज्ञानदीप्तिः आविवेकख्यातेः । 2,28

On the destruction of impurity through the practice of Yoga, the light of Knowledge is culminating into the discriminative knowledge. 2.28

यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयः अष्टौ अङ्गानि । 2,29

Yama- Restraints, Niyama- observances, Asana- posture of the body, Pra_ayama, Pratyahara- Withdrawal of Senses, Dhara_a,- practice for concentration Dhyana- meditation and Samadhi absorption are the eight limbs of Yoga. (After this statement, Patañjali will describe each of them in detail) 2.29

Now patanjali Muni is presenting very detailed upAya known as AStAng-yoga for the kaniStha seeker for whom the above steps are not enough to meditate and to attain the samAdhi. Through practice of these 8 limbs the yogi, seeker can get the ability by removing the impurities and restlessness of the mind. Thus one develop the mind the tendency to dwell upon the PuruSa, self. The previous all upAyas are also included into these 8 steps. The first five are external means to make the body, mind etc and personality favorable for nirvikalpa, nirbij SamAdhi. The last three are the internal means to achieve vivek-vijNanam, discriminative knowledge of the self. As the yogi gets established in to one means, it leads to the next step. And as one is comfortable for the step the previous means becomes very natural for him. Yama brings harmony in the personality and Niyama helps to have harmony in day to day life conducts with others and the world. When one gets victory over Asana, it is easy to get stability of the PraNa, vital forces through PrANAyAma. This leads one to have say over senses called DhArNA. DhArNA makes free from the external disturbances so one eligible to meditate upon. And having long time practice of meditaion one attains the samAdhi.

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To be Continued...