PG YG S1-01 (DSC)

TWO YEAR MASTER'S DEGREE COURSE

(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

SEMESTER - I

FUNDAMENTALS OF YOGA

Guru Prasad Das School of Interdisciplinary and Vocational Studies

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

This is the first Discipline Specific Core (DSC) course of the MA Yoga Programme. This course introduces the learners to Fundamentals of Yoga. This course will introduce you with the various topics of Yoga Philosophy, core principles, different types of yoga, history and their importance. There are fourteen units in this course. The 1st unit introduces you to Introduction to Yoga I, which includes basic concept of yoga- meaning, definition, aims and objectives, history and development of yoga. The 2nd unit deals with Introduction to Yoga II part, which includes misconceptions, characteristics of a yogi, scopes, need and importance of yoga in modern age. The 3rd unit is about the Yoga in Various Texts-I include Vedas, Upanishads and Epics. The 4th unit is about the Yoga in Various Texts-II; include Yoga Vasishtha, Smriti and Ayurveda. The 5th unit is about the Yoga in Jainism and Buddhism, The 6th unit is about the Yoga in Samkhya and Vedanta. The 7th unit is about the Types of Yoga I; include Karma, Bhakti and Jnana Yoga. The 8th unit is about the Types of Yoga II; include Mantra, Raja and Hatha Yoga.

The 9th unit is about the Introduction to Yogic Practices I include Asana, Pranayama and Mudra Bandha. The 10th unit is Introduction to Yogic Practices II include Shatkarma and Meditation. The 11th unit is about the Yoga in Agamas and Tantra. The 12th unit is about the Concept of Nadi, Prana and Kundalini Shakti. The 13th unit is about the Yoga Scholars and their contribution I include; Swami Vivekananda, Shri Aurobindo, Maharshi Ramana and Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya. The 14th unit is about the Yoga Scholars and their contribution II include; Swami Sivananda of Umachal Ashram, Sri Shyamacharan Lahidi, Sri T.Krishnamacharya, and Srimanta Sankaradeva.

While going through a unit, you may also notice some text boxes, which have been included to help you know some of the difficult terms and concepts. You will also read about some relevant ideas and concepts in 'LET US KNOW' along with text we have kept 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS' questions in each unit. These have been designed to self-check your progress of study. The hints for the answers to these questions are given at end of the unit. We advise that you answer the questions immediately after finish reading the unit in which these questions occur. We have also included a few books in the 'FURTHER READING' list which will be helpful for further consultation.

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UNIT 1 : INTRODUCTION TO YOGA I

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives

1.2 Introduction

1.3 The concept of Yoga - Meaning and Definition of Yoga

1.4 Aims and objectives of Yoga

1.5 History and Development of Yoga

1.6 Let Us Sum Up

1.7 Further Readings

1.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

1.9 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to know –

- the definition and meaning of Yoga
- about aims and objectives of yoga
- about History and Development of Yoga Tradition

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Yoga is the only sciences which takes care of all-round development of three essential elements-body, mind and soul together. Yoga is a holistic science which includes the culture of the body, the mind as well as the spirit. Yoga not only improves physical and mental health and intellectual ability, but also improves character and behavior of men by nipping in the bud the Devil in them with the help of Yama- Niyama. This provides a strong foundation to men's life on which they build their physical, mental, intellectual and Spiritual super-structure and prove themselves be a man or woman in the real sense of the term.

The unit which is the first unit of the theory course on the Yoga Education aims to provide you a broad foundation for understanding.

Besides providing some important definition of Yoga, Aims and objectives of Yoga and History and Development of Yoga.

1.3 THE CONCEPT OF YOGA - MEANING AND DEFINITIONS OF YOGA

1.3.1 Meaning of Yoga

Yoga is an ancient traditional practice that originated in India. The origin of yoga can be traced back to the pre-Vedic period that is 5000 B.C. The word yoga was first mentioned in the Rig Veda which is an ancient Indain text and of the four Vedas. The word Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root 'yuj' which means 'to unite' or 'to yoke'. Synonym of this Yoga word is found in different European Languages too.Those are 'yoke' in English, 'youg in French, 'joch' in in German, zugos in Greek, jugum in Latin, igo in Russian and yugo in Spanish. In Rig Veda means the spiritual yoking, the synchronizing of the divine with the spiritual car of mind. In other words, the tradition of yoga aims to achieve the union of the individual self (atman) and universal consciousness (paramatman).

As Yoga means 'to unite together', to act in unison with mutual understanding, co-operation, co-ordination, love and affection, avoiding all differences, conflicts, ill-will and hatred, with one mind, one thought, to arrive at the one and the same goal. Yoga initially begins in the body-system with united functioning of the cells, tissues, organs and systems of the body, thereafter it gradually extends to the working in the unison of the body and the mind, the members of the family, neighbourhood, village, community, nation, human society, animal and plant kingdom, things and being of the universe, and al last the merging of the individual soul with the universal consciousness. This becomes possible only when one truly understands oneself - as both the East and the West have emphasised through the saying “Know Thyself” and “Atman Biddhi”. There are systems and methods which through devoted, methodical,

and regular practice enables an individual to arrive at the desired goal. The goal as well as the system or methods to arrive at the goal, is called Yoga.

1.3.2 Definition of Yoga

The description of yoga is found in some of the earliest and renowned scriptures like Upanishads, *Patanjali's Yoga Sutra* and the *Bhagavad-Gita,* etc. Though the definitions vary, all definitions indicate the same goal, i.e., to know the Self, to unfold the divinity within and to merge the Individual self with the Universal Self, experience the Existence, Knowledge and Bliss and thereby, to free oneself from the pains and sufferings that emerge from mundane life .

Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra* is considered to be the most precise and systematic representation of yoga consisting of 196 sutras. Sage Patanjali has defined yoga in sutra [1.2] as – *Yogaschitta vrtti nirodhah* which translates as 'Yoga is the process to block the fluctuations of the mind'.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* which is composed in the form of dialogue between Lord Sri Krishna and Arjuna consists of 18 chapters and 700 verses. Sri Krishna has defined yoga in verse [2.48] as- *Samatvam Yoga Uchyate,* which translates as 'evenness of mind is yoga'. That is yoga is a balanced state of emotions, thoughts and behaviour. He has again defined yoga in verse [2.50] as – *Yoga karmasu kaushalam* which translates as 'skillfulness in action is yoga'.

In the *Maha-Nirvan Tantra* Yoga is defined as "Yoga Jivatma Paramatmano Eikyam", that is union of individual soul with the universal soul .

In order to arrive at the final stage of yoga, as mentioned above, it is required to keep the mind in a state of equilibrium, free from all modifications where the self remains in its original pure state. Yoga is defined as the cessation of the mind's modifications.

To achieve this, certain structured physical and mental practices are prescribed, and these practices are known as Yoga.

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF YOGA

The aims and objectives for practicing Yoga may be varied and may vary from person to person, depending upon their basic disciplines, trades and professions, needs and requirements and problems they face in their walks of life.

The main objectives are –

i) To bring balance and harmony in the Body-Mind-Soul connection.

ii) To explore and unfold the latent talents, by controlling Nature both External and Internal, annihilating the evils within,

iii) To gain sound health,

iv) To bring peace and tranquility of mind, freeing it from all stress and strains, worries and anxieties,

v) To train the body and mind in a way to avoid rigidity and bring flexibility,

vi) To develop immunity and resistance power,

vii) To master the secrets of doing work efficiently and excel in tasks taken up,

ix) To keep the internal body clean and detoxified and thereby render it free from disease, and

x) To transform a mundane life into a joyful, divine existence.

1.5 HISTORY OF YOGA

History is very much essential for our self-realisation. It broadens the horizon of our mind by presenting before us the contents of our past traditions upon which our life is built. The present can be better understood, experienced and appreciated when viewed through the lens of history. In case of yoga also, without adequate understanding of its historical background, it is hard to genuinely appreciate its spiritual treasure and practice it meaningfully and with effectiveness. Yoga has been mentioned to be eternal (eternal) in the *Mahabharata* and archaic (puraatana) in the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

The origin of yoga can be studied from two points of view-one is psychological and the other is historical. From historical point of view, all the authors on yoga, irrespective of the west and the east, agree that India is the place of origin of yoga. Evidences claim that during the period of Indus Valley Civilisation, which dates back to 5000 B.C. or beyond, Yoga was a flourishing culture in the Indus-Saraswati Valley. From that time onward still today, Yoga has come a long way, and during its course, it has passed through different phases of its development. The evolutionary phases of yoga may broadly divided into into seven phases, they are –

1.5.1. Pre-Vedic Period: Indus Valley Civilisation

Earliest archeological evidence of the existence of yogic practices could be found from the stone seals found in the excavations done at Mohenjodaro and Harappa Mehrgarh, now in Pakisthan. The excavation done at sites unearthed the presence of the oldest civilisation on, earth that dates back to 7000 years past which, later on , came to be known as Indus- Valley Civilisation. In the excavations, more than 2000 milliion seals have been found with human figures seated like Padmasana, Vajrasana, and Bhadrasana, engraved on them. Civilisations in 5000 B. C. The statue of Lord Pasupati Nath (Nepal) regarded as the originator of yoga can also be included in this period.

1.5.2 Vedic Period

During the Vedic period there were two streams of Yoga practiced simultaneously - one was the practice of Pranayamas and Dhyana by the priest as the part of their religious rites while performing sacrifices. The other was the practice of the different limbs of yoga by the saints and sages for their spiritual upliftments, independent of rites and rituals. In Vedic Period, the practice of yoga was a part of religious rights while performing sacrifices. All the four Vedas- Rig Veda, Atharva Veda, Sam Veda and Yajur Veda included

religious rights and rituals while portraying various practices of yoga. In the *Rig -Veda* and *Atharva Veda* mention has been made of three categories of yogis Dheeras, Vratyas and Kesins. These spiritual leaders or Yogis were highly honoured and they occupied much higher place compared to the other spiritual leaders in the society.

1.5.3 Post Vedic Period or Pre-Classical Period

The post Vedic period can again be divided into four ages. They are-

- The age of Brahamanas
- The age of earlier Upanishad
- The age of Epics
- The age of Mahavir and Buddha

a)The Age of Brahmanas:

This was the age of sacrificial rights and rituals. The socio-religious atmosphere of the time was not favourable to the Sages, Vratyas and Kesins for their spiritual practice. The four Ashrama- Brahmacharya, Grihasta, Vanaprasta and Sanyasa were introduced in this period. They included ideals and ways of living as prescribed in Yoga.

b) The Age of early Upanishads:

The age of the importance of sacrificial rights and rituals of Brahmanical age was replaced by the importance of earning knowledge and wisdom through spiritual practices. As a result secular and spiritual practices associated with any sect or stream of yoga, the influence of yoga is prominently visible in the earlier Upanishads like *Brihadaranyaka, Chandogya, Kausatiki, Aiteriya, Isha, Keno, Katha* etc. *The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* mentions about the practice of pranayama (Hymn15:23). Chandogya Upanishad devotes one complete chapter on Dhyana. The main thrust of the Upanishadic sages was on Liberation and Realisation of the Transcendental Self.

c) The Age of Epics:

The great epics of *Ramayana* with seven kandas and *Mahabharata* with eighteen parbas, written at different times with a gap of hundreds of years, describe that the story of *Ramayana* was the story of Treta yoga (Silver age of the Hindus) and that of *Mahabharata* was of Dwapar Yoga (the age after Treta). The *Ramayana* reflects the spiritual practices of the time to be more ascetic (Tapah) than Yogic. In the ascetic Sadhana, the moral code of conduct the Yamas and the Niyamas were emphasised on equally. Srimad Bhagavad Gita which is included in the Bhisma Parva of the epic, consist of 700 verses and, arranged in eighteen chapters. These are the dialogue between Lord Krishna, the God-incarnate and his friend and disciple Arjuna, in the midst of the Battle field of Kurukshetra which emphasised upon four kinds of yoga - Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, and Raj Yoga, whih are various phases and dimensions of yoga.

d) The age of Jainism and Buddhism:

Jainism, one of the socio-cultural movements, was introduced by Vardhaman Mahavir in seventh century B. C. In this age the Yama like Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing) were given importance. As stated by the Jaina scholar, Haribhadra Suri, in his famous treatise, *Yoga-Vindu*, yoga is the wish-fulfilling tree (Kalpa-Vriksha) and 'the Supreme Wish-Granting Jewel'. Janism prescribes the observance of Yamas like non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, etc, and Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi to liberate oneself . Thus in Jainism, Yoga is the foundation towards realising reality.

Buddhism was propagated by Gautam Buddha in the fifth century B.C. In Buddhism, Shila (discipline), Samadhi (concentration) and Prajna (wisdom) are indispensable Sadhana (practice) for attaning Nirvana which are nothing but Yama-Niyama, Dharana-Dhyana, Dharma-Megha Samadhi in Yoga.

1.5.4 The Classical Period:

The Classical Period is the most fertile period in the history and development of Yogic tradition. In this period, it was Maharishi Patanjali who gave a systematic and scientific shape to yogic practices. Patanjali did extensive and intensive research on Yoga and compiled them in *Patanjali's Yoga Sutra* consisting of 196 sutras, meticulously arranging the entire thesis in a very methodical and scientific way. The text deals with the psychological and philosophical dimensions of yoga consists of four chapters- Samadhi Pada, Sadhana Pada, Vibhuti Pada and Kaivalya Pada. Patanjali was the first person to write such type of treatise, solely on yoga.

1.5.5 Post-Classical Period:

In this period, a number of Upanishads, Dharmasashtras and Smritis were written. Most of the post-Patanjali Upanishads have elaborately discussed the different elements of yoga. A few Upanishads related to Yoga were introduced in this period. Twenty such Upanishads have been identified by the German scholar George Feuerstein and scholars of the Theosophical Society.

1.5.6 Hatha Yoga Period:

In Hatha Yoga period, yogic practices have gradually shifted from "soul centred" to "body centred' approach. Body, being the medium of our life, from birth till death, where we come across innumerable hurdles, it is required to take utmost care of the body to make it strong, firm and durable, and hence keep it fit to endure all sorts of eventualities in the journey of life. Yogi Matsendryanath is said to be the propagator of Hatha Yoga, but he had left no written documents and his disciple Yogi Gorakshanath wrote a number of books on Hatha Yoga like *Goraksha Samhita, Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati*, etc.

1.5.7 Modern Period

The modern period in the evolution of yoga started after Swami Vivekananda had stepped on the soil of America and delivered his speech at the inaugural function of the Parliament of Religion in 1893, held in Chicago, America. Through his speech, he spread the message of Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga both in America and Europe and made Yoga popular in the west. This period includes scientific research on Yoga by Kuvalyananda (Kaivalyadham, Lonavla, Maharashtra) and the famous master Tirumalai Krishnamacharya and his disciples B.K.S Iyenger, T. Pattabhi Jois, and T.K.V. Desikachar.

Yoga became popular in modern times after its acceptance at the United Nations General Assembly and it prescribed the world to become a part of International Day of Yoga on 21st June from 2015.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1). Fill up the blanks:

i) The Word 'Yoga' has originated from the root Sanskrit word _____

ii) Yoga is the maintenance of _____ between the Individual soul and the Universal soul.

iii) The evolutionary phases of Yoga may broadly be divided into _____ phases.

iv) Yoga was a popular practice in India that dates back to _____ B.C.

v) _____ is said to be the first historical person to propagate Hatha Yoga.

2) Explain the practice of yoga in the age of Jainism and Buddhism.

3) What is the origin of the word 'Yoga' and what does it mean?

4) Explain the practice of yogo in the age Modern Period.



1.7 LET US SUM UP

- The word Yoga is a Sanskrit word, originated from the root 'Yuj'. Yoga is the maintenance of equilibrium between the Individual soul and the Universal soul.
- In order to arrive at the final stage of yoga, it is required to keep the mind in a st
- ate of equilibrium, free from all modification where the self remains in its original pure state.
- Yoga is a holistic kind od education which includes physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, Spiritual as well as social aspects due to which the practitioner of Yoga becomes healthy in the true sense of the term.
- The origin of Yoga cannot be confined to India, alone:, it became universal, since the beginning of human civilisation. Yoga has been practiced in different parts of the world.
- The Evolutionary phase of Yoga may broadly be classified into Pre-Vedic Period, Vedic Period, Post-Vedic Period, Classical or Patanjali Period, Post Classical Period, Hatha Yoga Period and Modern Period.
- The Modern period included scientific research on Yoga by Kuvalyananda (Kaivalyadham, Lonavla, Maharashtra) and the famous master Tirumalai Krishnamacharya and his disciples B.K.S Iyenger, T. Pattabhi Jois, T.K.V. Desikachar.



1.8 FURTHER READINGS

1) Phukan, B.N. (2012). *Yog Vijnan Parichay*, North Lakhimpur : Dr. Jogada Phukan.
2) Shastri, Pandit, (1983). *The Yoga Upanishads*.Madras: The Adyar Library and research Centre.
3) Taimini, I.K. (1979). *The Science of Yoga*. Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House.

1.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q. No.1:

i) Yuj , ii) Equilibrium, iii) Seven (7), iv) 7000 B.C.

v) Yogi Matsyendranath.

Answer to Q.No.2: Jainism prescribes the observance of Yamas like non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence etc. Pratyahara, Dhyana and Samadhi to liberate oneself and attain 'Kevala-Jnana'the highest stage of Jaina Sadhana. In Buddhism, Shila, Samadhi and Prana are indispensable Sadhana(practices) for attaining Nirvana which are nothing but Yama-Niyama, Dharana-Dhyana and Asamprajnata and Dharma-Megha Samadhi in Yoga.

Answer to Q.No.3: The word 'Yog' has been derived the Sanskrit root 'Yuj', which means 'to unite' or 'to yoke'. Thus, yoga signifies the union or joining together of the individual self with universal consciousness.

Answer to Q.No.4: In the modern period, the practice yoga became popular worldwide after Swami Vivekananda spread its message in America and Europe through his speech at the perliament of Religion in Chicago in 1893. Scientific research and renowned teachers like kuvalyananda and krishnamacharya further advanced yoga, making it widely accepted. Yoga's global significance was formalized when united nations declared June 21 as Internation Day of Yoga from 2015 onwards.

1.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions:

1. Define Yoga.
2. Write a short notes on 'The Age of Brahmanas'.
3. What is the root word of 'Yoga' in Sanskrit?
4. Name any two ancient texts where the definition of Yoga is found.
5. Who authored the Yoga Sutras?

6. What is the meaning of "Yoga karmasu kaushalam"?
7. Which civilization provides archaeological evidence of early Yoga practices?
8. Who is considered the father of modern Yoga?
9. Mention any one aim of Yoga.
10. When is International Yoga Day celebrated?

B. Short Questions (Answer in about 150 words):

1. What are the aims and objectives of Yoga?
2. What are the different forms of Yoga according to Srimad Bhagavad Gita?
3. Write a short note on the development of Yoga of Pre-Vedic age.
4. How did the Classical Period or the age of Patanjali provide a systematic and scientific shape to Yogic practices?
5. Define Yoga according to Patanjali.
6. Briefly explain the concept of “Yoga as union.
7. Describe the two types of Yoga practices during the Vedic period.
8. Write a short note on Hatha Yoga.
9. What are the contributions of Swami Vivekananda to modern Yoga?
10. Explain the significance of the term “Samatvam Yoga Uchyate” from the Bhagavad Gita.
11. What is the importance of understanding the history of Yoga?

C. Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words):

1. What do you understand by Yoga? Explain its meaning and concept.
2. Describe the evolution of Yoga from the Pre-historic days to the present day.
3. Discuss the development of Yoga in Modern Period.
4. Explain the meaning and different definitions of Yoga from the Vedas, Upanishads, and other classical texts.
5. Discuss the significance of Patanjali's contribution to Yoga in the Classical Period.
6. Compare the approach to Yoga in Jainism and Buddhism.
7. How does Yoga help in the integration of body, mind, and soul?
8. Examine how Yoga transforms mundane life into a divine existence.

*** *** ***

UNIT 2 : INTRODUCTION TO YOGA II

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Misconceptions About Yoga,

2.4 Personality Characteristics of a Yogi

2.5 Scope of Yoga,

2.6 Need and Importance of Yoga in Modern Age

2.7 Let us Sum up

2.8 Further Readings

2.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.10 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- clarify the misconceptions of Yoga
- discuss the personality characteristics of a Yogi,
- explain scope of Yoga
- discuss the need and importance of yoga in modern age

2.2 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding unit, we learnt about the meaning and some important definitions of Yoga, aims and objectives of Yoga as well as historical evolution of Yoga. This unit deals with the misconceptions regarding Yoga, its scope, and importnace, and the characteristics of Yoga practitioner. This unit will help you understand the importance of Yoga in Modern Age and ideas related to practice of Yoga.

2.3 MISCONCEPTIONS OF YOGA

- **Yoga is merely a physical exercise**.

The word exercise generally implies vigorous physical movements but yoga does not involve any vigorous physical movement so it cannot be regarded as a mere physical exercise.

- **Yoga is a religious practice.**

Though Yoga had originated in Hindu culture and has its mention in Hindu scriptures yet it is a universal discipline that can be practiced by all irrespective of their caste, race, religion, nationality, gender and age.

- **Yoga is a spiritual practice**

Yoga is purely a spiritual Practice and not meant for people busy in worldly life. For learning and practicing yoga, one must take the help of a Guru (Yoga Expert), otherwise, It may be a dangerous practice for the learners, With this fear in mind, many people avoid practicing Yoga.

- **Yoga is only for vegetarian people.**

According to ancient scriptures, yogic diet recommends vegetarian food but is a misconception that only vegetarian people can practice yoga.

- **Yoga is only for people with flexible body.**

Yoga is not only about physical postures that require flexibility. It involves many other components and is a way of life that can be practiced by anyone regardless of their level of flexibility. However with the practice of yogic postures a person can enhance their body flexibility.

- **Yoga is only for young people.**

It is true that it is easier to adopt new practices at a young age but in case of yoga there is no limitation to age. A person can start practicing yoga at any age and with practice and consistency they can accomplish their goals in the path of yoga.

2.4 PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF A YOGI

The characteristic features of a Yogi, as mentioned in the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* is that he has a slim body, glowing complexion, clear voice, dazzling eyes, controlled vital energy and has a very strong digestive power. A devoted practioner of Yoga practices physical, mental, moral, and emotional, intellectual and spiritual culture, regularly and methodically, in order to drive away or annihilate all the evils and unfold the humane and divine qualities lying dormant in him. As a result of regular practice of Yoga, the practitioner develops in him a strong moral character with integrity, honesty, intellectual maturity, confidence, tolerance, fellow-feeling, love and

friendship, selflessness and respect for others. He develops the feeling of Universal Brotherhood- "Vasudhaiba Kutumbakam". Gradually, he develops the mental attitude to treat friends and foes alike, without any ill- feelings, even towards his enemies.

2.5 SCOPE OF YOGA

The scope of Yoga is not limited to some physical postures called Asanas, breathing techniques called Pranayamas, Dhyana or manipulation of mental organs called Bandha and Mudra; it extends to cover all aspects of life as a way of life as well as, life-style. The various areas where yoga has gained popularity and extends its scope are discussed as follows –

- **Therapeutic:**

Therapeutic applications of yoga are used as preventive, creative and promotive measures of healthcare system.

- **Sports:**

Yoga helps to release physical tension of sportsperson and enhance their abilities.

- **Educational:**

There are various jobs in academic such as yoga teacher or instructor.

- **Physical well-being:**

Yoga helps to achieve a harmonious body and mind, helps manage stress and keeps one relaxed.

- **Mental well-being:**

Yoga lowers stress hormones in body, increases beneficial brain chemicals that help decrease anxiety and improve mood.

- **Spiritual:**

The practice of yoga helps in feeling the cosmic energy or divine potentiality within oneself. It also helps to develop mutual understanding and feelings of brotherhood, tolerance, patience.

- **Medical Science:**

Yoga has helped as a complimentary therapy for allopathic treatment.

2.6 NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF YOGA IN MODERN AGE

In Indian civilisation and culture, Yoga is regarded esteem since times immemorial. In the ancient times, the practioner of Yoga was regarded thousand times superior to the house-holder celibate, and hundred times superior to hermit. Because of its importance felt by the people in different ages, the practice of Yoga has been continuing since the pre-historic days to the present times. Day by day, its popularity and importance is increasing and now, it has become a universal phenomenon.

- The universal importance of Yoga lies in the fact that its regular practice with sincerity and devotion drives away worldly pains and sufferings for good and the practitioner enjoys permanent peace and bliss.
- In the present world, the diseases of psycho-somatic origin, such as hyper-tension, heart diseases, asthma, diabetes, insomnia, etc. are increasing very fast and after a lot of scientific experiments done on patients undergoing yogic treatment, it has been found to be the most effective treatment for all these ailments. Here lies the importance of Yogic practices. It is found to be the best means of leading a tension-free life, which keeps men free from physical, mental, as well as psycho-somatic disorders.
- Yoga Education is a holistic education that includes physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, moral, spiritual as well as environmental aspect due to which the practitioner of yoga becomes healthy in the true sense of the term. Other than Yoga , there is no such system, which prepares a man holistically and therein lies the importance of Yoga.
- Yoga practices, not only improve health, but also increase mental concentration, due to which memory power increases. Moreover, due to an achievement of tranquility of mind and increase the power of concentration, analytical power also increases.
- In the present day environment of intolerance, animosity and corruption prevailing in the human society, the need of practicing

Yoga is increasing tremendously, as it is the only means which can save the world from these state of affairs. The very first requisite for a practitioner of yoga is to practice non-violence, truthfulness, honesty, kindness for others, fellow-feeling, piousness and tolerance which are the basic tenets of yoga for the present day.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1) Yoga can be practiced by ---------.

2) Learning and practicing Yoga, one must take the help of a ----------.

3) Write two characteristic of a Yoga Practitioner as mentioned in *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*.

4) How does Yoga help in education?

5) In Indian civilisation and culture Yoga occupies a ----------.

6) Holistic education means ----------.



2.7 LET US SUM UP

- Though yoga originated in Hindu culture and has its mention in Hindu scriptures yet it is a universal discipline that can be practiced by all irrespective of their caste, race, religion, nationality, gender and age.
- It is true that it is easier to adopt new practices at a young age but in case of yoga there is no limitation to age.
- A devoted practitoner of Yoga practices physical, mental, moral, and emotional, intellectual and spiritual, Culture, regularly and methodically, in order to drive away or annihilate all the evils and unfold the humane and divine qualities lying dormant in him.
- The practice of yoga helps to feel the cosmic energy or divine potentiality within oneself. It also helps to develop mutual understanding and feelings of brotherhood, tolerance and, patience.
- The universal importance of Yoga lies in the fact that its regular practice with sincerity and devotion drives away worldly pains and sufferings for

good and the practitioner enjoys permanent peace and bliss.

- In the present day environment of intolerance, animosity and corruption prevailing in the human society, the need of practicing Yoga is increasing tremendously, as it is the only means which can save the world from these state of affairs.



2.8 FURTHER READINGS

1) Phukan, B.N. (2012). *Yog Vijnan Parichay*, North Lakhimpur : Dr. Jogada Phukan.

2) Shastri, Pandit, (1983). *The Yoga Upanishads*. Madras: The Adyar Library and research Centre

3) Taimini, I.K. (1979). *The Science of Yoga*. Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House.



2.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q1: All peoples.

Answer to Q2: Yoga Guru.

Answer to Q3: Has a slim body, glowing complexion.

Answer to Q4: There are various jobs in academic such as yoga teacher or instructor.

Answer to Q5: In Indian civilisation and culture, Yoga occupies a highly esteemed place, since times immemorial.

Answer to Q6: Holistic education which includes physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, moral, spiritual as well as environmental education.



2.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions:

1. What is the misconception of vegetarian peoples regarding yogas?

2. In order to practice yoga, what kind of food should one take?
3. Is Yoga only a physical exercise?
4. Name one common misconception about Yoga.
5. Mention one physical characteristic of a Yogi from Hatha Yoga Pradipika.
6. Name any two fields where Yoga has shown its scope.
7. What is the meaning of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”?
9. Give one reason why Yoga is important in today’s world.

B. Short Questions

1. What is the misconception of Yoga? Explain briefly.
2. What are the personality characteristics of Yoga?
3. What are the therapeutic and spiritual scope of Yoga?
4. Why is Yoga said to be a Holistic Education?
5. Explain why Yoga is not merely a physical exercise.
6. Write any three characteristics of a true Yoga practitioner (Yogi).
7. List any four areas where Yoga has expanded its scope in modern times.
8. What are the spiritual benefits of practicing Yoga regularly?
9. Why is Yoga considered suitable for people of all age groups?

C. Long Questions

1. How does a Yogi develops his personality after practicing Yoga?
2. Discuss the development of Yoga with special references to its scope.
3. Why is Yoga important in the modern age? Elaborate with examples and justification.
4. Discuss the therapeutic, mental, and spiritual benefits of Yoga in the context of modern life challenges.
6. Analyze how Yoga helps to address psychosomatic disorders and promote overall well-being.
7. Write an essay on "Yoga as a universal and holistic discipline."

*** *** ***

UNIT 3: YOGA IN VARIOUS TEXTS I

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Veda

3.4 Upanishad

3.5 Epics

3.6 Let us Sum up

3.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.8 Further Readings

3.9 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- explain the foundational concepts of Yoga as mentioned in ancient texts.
- recognize the references to Yoga in Vedas, Upanishads, and Epics.
- appreciate the development and evolution of Yoga philosophy through various literary sources.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

The ancient descriptions of yoga have taken deep roots, long aimed at the realisation of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being with the idea to evolve and become substantive over time. Over centuries, the development within the yoga traditional thought has integrated literature composed by many intelligent seers from whom, emerged a wisdom of unparalleled profundity on the philosophy of the discipline. Other than yogic traditions and that have historically nursed different schools of thought, the long-standing and vast resumption resided in the Epics. Each of these types,

regarded as foundational texts, explored various aspects of Yoga in depth, in accordance with the particular evolution of philosophy and practice they reflected.

By the available historic information about Yoga, its principles, and precepts can be substantiated, but it is strongly rooted in philosophical point-of-views that probably originated just before the 6th or rather 7th century BCE.

This unit, seeks to explain the specefic role of Yoga has played in these ancient texts, as reflected in elements that preserve its influence on spiritual, intellectual, and educational life.

3.3 VEDA

The Vedas represent the oldest and most revered scriptures of India. Divided into four collections—the *Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda*- they serve as the foundational texts for Indian religious and philosophical traditions. Although their primary content focuses on hymns, rituals, and metaphysical inquiries, references to Yoga's concepts are scattered throughout.

The Vedas transcend the boundaries of any specific cult, religion, or school of philosophy. They are neither confined to doctrines nor limited to principles rooted in a particular historical era. Instead, the Vedas have long been revered as foundational sources of the world's most profound spiritual traditions and intricate metaphysical philosophies. Their status as the supreme fountainhead of ultimate spiritual wisdom and elevated culture remains unchallenged throughout human history, with no critique succeeding in refuting this truth.

Not only have sages and seers of modern times recognised the unparalleled significance of the Vedas, but some of the greatest scientists and pioneers of contemporary civilisation have also lauded them as a monumental repository of profound knowledge, ultimate truth, sublime enlightenment, and self-evolved culture.

It is widely acknowledged that the language of the Vedas is *Shruti*—a rhythm not constructed by human intellect but perceived as a divine sound vibrating from the Infinite. This sacred revelation reached the inner

consciousness of those who had prepared themselves through rigorous discipline to receive impersonal knowledge.

The ability to attune oneself to these cosmic vibrations- referred to as *inner hearing*—was attained through *Sadhana*, a key aspect of the Yogic path. In fact, the Vedas themselves consistently emphasise the significance of Yogic practice as a means of realising their eternal truths.

Yoga in the *Rigveda*

The *Rigveda*, composed around 1500 BCE, is the oldest of the four Vedas. In its hymns, Yoga is indirectly referenced through terms associated with mental focus, self-discipline, and divine connection. Hymns dedicated to the practice of meditation and the harnessing of inner energies resonate with the early seeds of Yogic philosophy. For instance, mantras invoking cosmic forces symbolise a form of union between human aspiration and the universal order.

//Yasmadròte Na Sidhyati Yagyo Vipascòhitascòhana /
Sa Dhinam Yogaminvati//

(Ròg-Veda – 1/18/7)

Meaning: No Yagna (sacrifice) performed by a wise individual can be accomplished without Yoga. Yoga permeates every action, making it the foundation for all endeavours.

Vedic literature extensively discusses various aspects of Yoga, including steps akin to the Yamas and Niyamas outlined in later Yogic texts. It also touches on practices like Asana and Pranayama. Consider the following verse from the Ròg-Veda:

//Rit Dhîyat Âgat Satya Dharmmano Ahvaram//

(Ròg-Veda – 5/59/2)

This verse embodies values of nonviolence (*Ahimsa*) and truth (*Satya*), reflecting the teachings of the *Yoga Sutra*. Similarly, the concept of *Brahmacarya* (celibacy) is emphasised:

//Brahmacòhari Janyan Brahmayo Loke//

The Niyamas, including *Śaucòh* (cleanliness), *Santosha* (contentment), *Tapa* (penance), *Swadhyaya* (self-study), and *Iśwara Pranidhana* (faith in God), find expression in the following:

//Punantu Ma Devajanah Punantu Vasvodhiya//
(Ròg-Veda – 9/67/27)

The Ròg-Veda describes the culmination of Yogic practice:

//Sa Dya Na Yoga Ābhuvat Sa Rage Sa Puram Dhyam/
Gamad Vajebhira Sa Nah//
(Ròg-Veda – 1/5/3)

Meaning: By the grace of God, Yoga Sadhakas attain *Samadhi*, a state of perfect union with ultimate reality. In this state, divine powers, including *Animā* (the ability to become minute), are bestowed upon the practitioner. The Vedas affirm that such knowledge and power flow naturally from divine grace.

Key verses suggest contemplative practices akin to Pranayama (breath control), emphasising the regulation of breath and mind to attain heightened states of awareness. Though not explicitly called "Yoga," these practices align with the foundational principles of concentration and harmony.

Yoga in the *Yajurveda*

The *Yajurveda* integrates Yoga more explicitly within the context of ritual and sacrifice. It uses the term "Yoga" to denote the unification of the individual soul (Atman) with the universal essence (Brahman). In this text, the discipline of controlling the breath through Pranayama is linked to the mastery of self and the transcendence of worldly desires.

The prayer to invoke divine protection and guidance in all Yogic pursuits is universal in the Vedas:

The Vedas also delve into the subtle anatomy of nadis (energy channels) and the five elements (*Mahabhutas*). The Ròg-Veda metaphorically depicts the human body as a chariot driven by these forces:

//Ka Còhitrakâ Trivròto Rathasya Kwa Trayo Bandhuro Yen Sanîlah /
Kada Yogo Vajino Rasbhyasya Yen Yagyam Nastyopathayah//
(Ròg-Veda – 1/34/9)

Meaning: The human body, made of the five elements—Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Ether—is a divine vehicle with chakras as its wheels. Yet, its profound mysteries remain hidden without divine grace. Knowledge of the supreme centre, including the Sahasrara and Kundalini Shakti, unfolds only through Laya Yoga.

Finally, the Vedic goal of Yoga is the union of the individual soul (*Atman*) with the Supreme Soul (*Parmatman*). This longing for unity is powerfully expressed in the Ròg-Veda:

//Yadagne Úyamaham Twam – Twam Vâ Dhâ Úyam Aham /
Syucete Satya Ihacœicœah//

(Ròg-Veda – 8/44/23)

Meaning: "O Lord Agni, when I become You and You become me, only then will all your blessings become my truth."

This profound yearning encapsulates the ultimate aspiration of Yogic Sadhana as envisioned in the Vedas.

Pranayama is described as the harmonious regulation of inhalation, exhalation, and retention of breath, an essential component of Yogic practice that aligns with Vedic ritual precision. The Yajurveda also emphasizes the symbolic unity of physical postures (Asanas) with sacrificial movements, demonstrating an early understanding of the integration of body, mind, and spirit.

Yoga in the *Samaveda*

The *Samaveda*, known for its melodic chants, embodies the role of sound and vibration in spiritual practices. It associates chanting with states of deep meditation and mental tranquility. The rhythmic recitation of hymns mirrors the repetitive meditative techniques found in later Yogic traditions, emphasising the connection between auditory stimulation and inner peace.

//Yoge Yoge Tavastaram Vaje Vaje Havamahe/
Úakhaye Indra Mûtaye//
(Ròg-Veda 1/30/7; Œukla Yajurveda 1/14; Sama Veda 2/2/7/8; Atharva-Veda 18/24/7)

Meaning: "We, the Yoga Sadhakas, call upon the mighty Lord Indra for strength in every endeavor and protection in every challenge." This prayer illustrates the importance of divine support to overcome obstacles in spiritual practice.

The Vedas often refer to the Supreme Power using names like *Param Pada* (Ultimate Position) and *Abhed Jyoti* (Supreme Light). They teach that liberation from the effects of Karma is possible only through Yoga.

The *Atharva-Veda* provides a vivid description of the body as a spiritual city with eight chakras and nine gates:

//Astacòhakrâ Navadwârâ Devânâm Purodhya /
Tasuâm Hiranyamayah Koúah Swargo Jyotiúâvròtah//
(Atharva Veda – 10/1/31)

Meaning: The human body, described as a divine city, is guarded by Hiranyagarbha (Brahma) and illuminated with divine light and bliss.

Yoga in the *Atharvaveda*

The *Atharvaveda*, which delves into mystical and medicinal realms, refers Yogic principles related to health and well-being. It discusses the therapeutic benefits of meditation and breath control, highlighting Yoga's potential for physical and mental rejuvenation.

The *Atharva-Veda* reiterates the importance of surrender to divine will:

//Namaste Astu Vidyute//
(Atharva-Veda – 1/13/1-4)

Yoga's various limbs are beautifully woven throughout Vedic literature. One of its most vital practices, *Pranayama*, is highlighted in the *Atharva-Veda*:

//Pròsthat Pròthivya
Ahamantaròkúamârûhmantaròkúad Divamarûham/
Divo Nâkasya Pròsthât Swajyotirgâmaham//
(Atharva Veda – 4/14/3)

This mantra symbolises the expansion of awareness through breath. The practitioner draws *pranic* energy from the depths of the Earth (Pròthvi)

to the skies (Dyauh) and ascends to the realms of divine light (Jyoti Dhama), symbolising progressive spiritual elevation through Pranayama.

By integrating spiritual and practical elements, the Atharvaveda offers a holistic view of Yoga as a tool for healing and harmony.

3.4 UPANISHAD

The Upanishads represent a significant philosophical evolution in the understanding of Yoga. Known as the end part (Vedanta) of the Vedas, they focus on metaphysical inquiry and the nature of ultimate reality. Unlike the ritualistic approach of the earlier Vedas, the Upanishads provide profound meditations on self-knowledge, renunciation, and liberation (Moksha).

The ocean of Vedantic literature encompasses 108 significant Upaniœads. Nearly all of these scriptures explore the purpose of life and the path to elevating human consciousness—central themes in Yogic Science. Among them, several Upanishads specifically delve into the principles and practices of Yoga:

(1) Advatarkopniœad (2) Amròtnadopniœad (3) Amròtbindupniœad (4) Kœurikopniœad (5) Tejobindupniœad, (6) Tròœikhibrahmnopniœad (7) Darœanopniœad (8) Dhyanbindupniœad (9) Nadbindupniœad (10) Paœupatbrahmanopniœad (11) Brahmvidyopniœad (12) Mandalbrahmnopniœad (13) Mahavakyopniœad (14) Yogakundalyopniœad (15) Yogatattwopniœad (16) Yogaœikhopniœad, (17) Yogaœikhopniœad, (18) Varahopniœad (19) Œandilyopniœad and (20) Hansopniœad.

These Upanishads contain profound teachings on topics such as Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi, Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Pranavopasana, Kundalini, Chakras, Nadis, Indriyas, and the progressive stages of consciousness.

A review of these twenty Upanishads reveals detailed discussions on the definition of Yoga, appropriate environments for practice, various paths of Yoga, and the fruits of Yogic discipline. Noteworthy examples include the definitions of Yoga provided in the *Yogashikhopnishad* and *Kathopnishad*:

//Yopân Prânyoraikyam Stharjo Retsostathâ/
Sûrya Còhandramasoruogâd Jîvâtmâ Parmâtmanaun
Evam Tu Dwandwa Jâlasya Sanyogo Yoga Uchyate//

Meaning: Yoga is the harmonious union of Prana and Apana, Rajas and Retas, the Surya and Chandra Nadis, and ultimately, the individual soul (*Jeevatma*) with the Supreme Soul (*Parmatma*).

In the *Kathopnishad*, Yoga is defined as:

//Yadâ Pancòhâvtisthante Tyânâni Mansâ Saha
Buddhiscòhan Vicòheútati Tâmâhuh Parmamgatim//

Meaning: When all five senses, along with the mind, become still, and when the intellect ceases to exert its will, this state of supreme stillness is called *Paramgati*—the ultimate state of Yoga.

The *Yogaœikhopniœad* identifies four paths of Yoga:

//Mantro Layo Hatho Râja Yoganta Bhumkah Kramât/
Eka Eva Còhaturdhâyam Mahâyogâbhidhîyate//

Meaning: Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Hatha Yoga, and Raja Yoga are the four stages of Yoga. Together, they form the complete path known as *Mahâ Yoga*.

Highlighting the significance of self-discipline, the *Kathopniœad* explains:

//To Yogamiti Manyante Sthiramindriyadharnam
Apramattastadâ Bhawati Yogo Hi Prabhavapyayau//

Meaning: Yoga is achieved through steadfast control of the senses. This mastery frees the practitioner from desire and cultivates noble tendencies, leading to spiritual awakening.

The *Katha Upanishad*, one of the most famous expositions on Yoga, uses a vivid metaphor to explain the relationship between the body, mind, and soul. It compares the body to a chariot, with the intellect as the charioteer and the senses as the horses. Yoga, in this context, is the means of controlling the senses and mind to reach the ultimate destination of self-realisation.

This Upanishad also introduces the concept of the subtle body (Sukshma Sharira) and highlights the importance of Pratyahara (sense withdrawal), Dharana (concentration), and Dhyana (meditation).

The *Mundaka Upanishad* elaborates on the path of renunciation, referring to Yoga as a means of merging individual consciousness with the divine. It emphasises contemplation and detachment from material desires as prerequisites for liberation.

The *Shvetashvatara Upanishad* presents one of the most comprehensive early treatises on Yogic practice. It discusses meditation, breath control, and the spiritual awakening necessary to experience Brahman. It also describes physical postures and the significance of focusing on the inner self to achieve transcendence.

The *Amrotnadopanishad* having a broad vision; discusses the six steps of Yoga. They are – Pratyahara, Dhyana, Pranayama, Dharana, Taraka and Samadhi. The *Amròtnadopanishad* takes Yoga as Brahmapada. It states that to attain that Brahmapada one should give up all worldly (or sensual) pleasures.

The Ksurikopnishad again discusses the six steps for Yoga, namely are Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi. Whereas the T*ejobindupnishad* discusses the fifteen steps of Yoga, which are – *Yama, Niyama, Tyaga, Mauna, Deúa, Kala, Asana, Mûlbandha, Dahúamya, Dik-sthiti, Pranasanyaman, Pratyahara, Dharana, Atmadhyana and Samadhi*.

The Trsikibrahmanopnisad explains Karma Yoga and JnânYoga separately and thereafter it describes the eight steps of Yoga having *Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana Dhyana and Samadhi*. There are ten *Yamas* and ten *Niyamas* as well as ten *Asanas* very nicely discussed in this Upanicead.

Darsanopanisad gives approximately the same explanation and steps of Yoga as described in *Trsikhopnisad*. Thereafter *Dhyan-bindupnisad* explains the Yoga as *Brahmadhyana Yoga* and the three ways to attain that state – through meditation on 'OM' *(Pranav dhyana),* through meditation on the Brahman with all his virtues *(Savises Brahm Dhyana)* and through

meditation on three form of Brahman *(Trimurti dhyan)*. Thereafter one can attain the *Atma-darsan* (Self realisation) through *Nadanusandhan*.

Nad-bindupnisad also discusses the *Pranavopasana* (OM meditation) and *Nadanusandhan* (Nada Yoga). Whereas *Pasupat-brahmopnisad* describes the JnânYoga. In this Upaniúad it is not clear whether one can attain Yoga through meditating on the Brahma in the form of Swan (Hansa Roop) or one should go through Karmakanda (Acœwamedha Yagya).

The *Brahma-vidyopanisad* is based on the OM (Pranava) and its four hidden aspects. This Upanishad also explains the 72,000 (seventy two thousands) Nadies, which merges into Murdha (Upper palate) and piercing through the Sun and reaches the *Brahma (Param).*

Mandal-brahmnopanisad again discusses the Astanga-Yoga (the eight fold path of Yoga) but there are four Yamas and nine Niyamas. Thereafter it explains Tadaka-Yoga very nicely.

Maha-vakyopnisad explains Yoga as *Hamsa Vidya* in which *So-Ham Sadhana* (the practice of meditation in which the practitioner has to go through breath awareness with the synchronisation of *So-Ham Mantra)* is the only way and the Lord Sun is only *Brahman*. Through extensive practice one can attain the *Sat-Còhit-Ananda Brahman* (the truth, consciousness and bliss form of *Brahman*)

In the *Yoga-kundalyopnisad* –the Yama – Niyamas are not very clearly focused but there are some suggestions. Thereafter, Asana Pranayama are the ways to attain Kundalini Yoga. Khecòhari and Mantra Yoga are the ways to attain the Brama which ultimately brings the practitioner to Mukti (liberation).

Yoga-chudamanyupnisad discusses the Chakras, Nadies and Prana and also mentions the six steps of Yoga (Sadang Yoga). Later on Nadi-shodhan is described for Pranayama.

Yoga-tattwopnisad says while discussing the importance of Gyana (knowledge) and Yoga, that:

//Yogahînam Katham Gyanam Mokúadam Bhawati Dhruvam/
/Yogopi Gyanhînastu Na Kúamo Mokúakarmani//

Meaning: One cannot attain knowledge without Yoga and to attain Moksa one should first gain knowledge. So one should practice both things simultaneously to achieve *Mumuksatwa* (liberation).

Later on Y*oga-tattwopnisad* reflects Mantra Yoga Laya Yoga, Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga: the Astanga Yoga is eleborately discussed.

Yoga-shikhopnisad elaborates these four Yogic Paths in detail and later on the fifth path uniting all the four paths, which becomes Maha Yoga.

Varahopnisad mentions the three paths of Yoga. These are Laya Yoga, Mantra Yoga and Hatha Yoga. The speciality of this Upanishad is that Hatha Yoga has eight steps.

Sandilyopanisad explains the seven stages Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana and Dhyana. At the place of Samadhi, it discusses Brahman (the form of Brahman).

The last one *Hansopnisad* very briefly describes the Ajapa-japa and Nadanusandhan.

The Upanishads collectively elevate Yoga from a ritualistic discipline to a philosophical journey aimed at self-discovery and universal truth.

3.5 EPICS

The Epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, enrich the understanding of Yoga by depicting its practical applications in human life. They offer profound ethical and spiritual lessons that align with Yogic principles.

Yoga in the *Mahabharata:*

The *Mahabharata*, is a seminal text on Yoga. The most important section dealing with yoga in *Mahabharata* is the famous “Bhagawad Gita”. The *Gita* in fact is an ocean of yoga. It is a store house of Yogas like Jnana, Karma and Bhakti.

While highlighting the importance of yoga, Lord Krsna says to Arjuna:

// Tapasòvibhyo’dhiko yogi Gòyânibhòyo’pi mato’dhòikah
karmibhòyascâdhiko yogi tasmâd yogi bhavârjunahò//

- Srîmadbhagvad Gîta 6/46

Meaning: The yogi is superior to the ascetics; he is regarded as superior even to those verses in sacred lore. The yogi is also superior to those who perform action with some interested motive. There fore, be thou a yogi, o Arjuna.

The *Bhagavad Gita*, a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, presents a systematic exposition of Yogic paths:

- Karma Yoga: The Yoga of selfless action. Krishna advises Arjuna to act without attachment to outcomes, emphasising duty and service.
- Bhakti Yoga: The Yoga of devotion. It teaches surrender to God and the cultivation of love and reverence.
- Jnana Yoga: The Yoga of knowledge. This path involves intellectual inquiry and the realisation of the unity of the self with Brahman.
- Dhyana Yoga: The Yoga of meditation. Krishna outlines techniques for concentration, emphasising the importance of mental focus and equanimity.

The *Bhagavad Gita* synthesises these approaches, demonstrating their interrelatedness and relevance to daily life. Its teachings on Yoga inspire a balanced, purpose-driven existence.

Yoga in the *Ramayana*

The *Ramayana* illustrates Yogic ideals through its central characters. Lord Rama exemplifies adherence to Dharma, embodying self-control, righteousness, and compassion- key attributes of a Yogic life. Hanuman, a devotee of Lord Rama, represents Bhakti Yoga through his unwavering faith, devotion, and boundless energy.

The narrative encourages ethical conduct (Yama) and personal discipline (Niyama), foundational aspects of Yogic philosophy.

We have the description of yogic kriyas at several places in Puranas. The orthodox number of Puranas is 18. Puranas like Úiva, Vayu, Brahmanda, Steanda, etc. are mostly led with the description of yogic kriyas. Even Úrîmad Bhagvad Purana is pregnant with yoga. Many of these Puranas deal with yogasanas. We have the description of Yama and Niyama in the following verses of Viśnupurana:

Brahmachryamahinsâm còha satyasteyaparigrahân
sevent yogi Niskamo yogyatam svam mano nayan/
Svâdhyâya œaucòhasantosatpansi Niyatatmavana.
Kurvita Brahmani tatha parsimanpravanam Manah//
-Viśnupurana, 6/7/36-38]

We have the description of few Asanas like Swastikasana in Úrîmad Bhagvad Purana. Puranas speak of two types of Pranayama. They are Agarbha and Sagarbha. ***Agarbha***- Pranayama is performed in accordance with ratio without japa and dhyana. ***Sagarbha***- Pranayama is performed with japa and dhyana. Sagarbha is considered to be the best pranayama.

We have the description of these Pranayamas in the following verses of the *Śivapurana:*

Agarbhaœcòha Sagarbhaœcòha Prânayâmo didha sòmòròtâha.
japa dhyânabinagarbhah sagarbhastat smanvayâta.
Agarbhada garbha sanyuktah Prânayâmaha Śatedhikaha.
Tasmât sayarbha kurvanti yoginaha Pramasan yamama
- Śiva purana, uttarkhanda, còhapt-33-34



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: Fill in the blanks-

i) Yoga in the _____ emphasises the discipline of harmonising mind and body for spiritual awareness.

ii) The _____ uses a chariot metaphor to describe the interplay between body, mind, intellect, and soul.

iii) The Bhagavad Gita expounds on _____ , _____, _____, _____ and _____ as comprehensive approaches to life.

Q2. What does the Rigveda say about the practice of Yogna in relation to Yoga?

Q3. What is the main focus of the Upanishads rgarding Yoga?



3.6 LET US SUM UP

This unit explored Yoga's presence in key ancient texts:

- The Vedas introduced fundamental concepts of breath control, mental focus, and spiritual unity.
- The Upanishads offered philosophical insights, elevating Yoga as a path to self-realisation and liberation.
- The Epics, particularly the *Bhagavad Gita*, integrated Yoga into practical life through paths of action, devotion, knowledge, and meditation.

Together, these texts illuminate the profound and multifaceted nature of Yoga, demonstrating its timeless relevance.



3.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q 1:

i) Yoga in the Rigveda emphasises the discipline of harmonising mind and body for spiritual awareness.

ii) The *Katha Upanishad* uses a chariot metaphor to describe the interplay between body, mind, intellect, and soul.

iii) *The Bhagavad Gita* expounds on Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, and Dhyana Yoga as comprehensive approaches to life.

Answer to Q 2: The Rigveda states that no Yogna (sacrifice) performed by a wise individual can be accomplished without yoke, implying that yoga permeates every action and forms the foundation for all endeavors.

Answer to Q3: The Upanishads mainly explore the metaphysical inquiry and the nature of ultimate reality, with emphasis on self-knowledge, renunciation and liberation (Moksha) thorough yoga.



3.8 FURTHER READINGS

- Swami Sivananda. *The Philosophy of Yoga*.
- Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati. *Yoga Darshan*
- Dr Kamakhya Kumar. *Yoga Mahavigyan*.
- Dr Kamakhya Kumar. *Super Science of Yoga.*
- David Frawley, *Vedic Yoga: The Path of the Rishi*
- Georg Feuerstein. *The Yoga Tradition: Its History, Literature, Philosophy and Practice*.



3.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer

1. What are the four Vedas?
2. Name any two Upanishads that discuss Yogic concepts.
3. What is the ultimate goal of Yoga according to the Vedas?
4. Which Veda is known for melodic chants?
5. What is the language of the Vedas referred to as?
6. Mention any two Yogic values found in the Rigveda.
7. Which Upanishad uses the chariot metaphor to explain the relationship between body, mind, and soul?
8. Which aspect of Yoga does the Atharva Veda emphasize for health?
9. Define “Pranayama” in one sentence.
10. What is the meaning of "Shruti" in the context of the Vedas?

B) Short Questions

1. Explain the references to Yoga found in the Vedas.
2. Describe the teachings of the *Katha Upanishad* related to Yoga.
3. Discuss the different types of Yoga as presented in the *Bhagavad Gita*.
4. How do the Epics contribute to the understanding of practical Yoga?
5. Describe the presentation of Yoga in Epics.

6. What is the significance of the Upanishads in the philosophical evolution of Yoga?
7. How is the human body described in the Atharva Veda in the context of Yoga?
8. How do the Upanishads emphasize self-discipline and renunciation in Yoga?
9. Describe the concept of Nada Yoga as discussed in Nadbindu Upanishad.

C) Long Questions

1. Explain how the Vedic literature laid the foundation for the philosophy and practice of Yoga. Cite references from the Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharva Veda.
2. Discuss the depiction and role of Yoga in the Upanishads. Mention various Yogic concepts, techniques, and goals as presented in key Upanishads.
3. How do the Vedas and Upanishads reflect the integration of spiritual, mental, and physical well-being in their presentation of Yoga?
4. Analyze the metaphysical and philosophical essence of Yoga in the Vedic scriptures. How do they contribute to the idea of union between individual soul and supreme reality?
5. Compare and contrast the presentation of Yoga in the ritualistic Vedas with that in the meditative Upanishads. Provide examples to support your answer.

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UNIT 4: YOGA IN VARIOUS TEXTS II

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 Yoga Vasistha

4.4 Smriti

4.5 Ayurveda

4.6 Let's us Sum up

4.7 Answer to Check Your Progress

4.8 Further Readings

4.9 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- explain the role of Yoga as depicted in post-Vedic texts.
- describe the significance of the Yoga Vasistha, Smriti literature, and Ayurveda in shaping Yogic philosophy.
- appreciate the interdisciplinary connections between Yoga and other domains of Indian thought.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

Yoga is an ancient holistic philosophy rooted in the traditions of Indian philosophy, which has a goal of achieving equilibrium and balance between the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of being. The origins of Yoga are lost within the pages of the sacred scriptures holding profound wisdom and providing the very base of this everlasting discipline. The earliest mention of Yoga can be traced back to the Vedas, where it was presented in its crude form, consisting largely of meditative practices and rituals. Later, these ideas were further expanded upon in the Upanishads, where they also delved into the philosophical aspect of Yoga with self-realisation and

that merging of individual consciousness (Atman) with ultimate reality (Brahman).

As the tradition evolves, the Epics and the *Mahabharata* and Ramayana are combined with practical applications of Yoga and become some guide-works that allow for Yogic principles to be learnt, assimilated, and applied in day-to-day life. Each of these ancient texts explains Yoga from its own perspective, showing its gradual evolution through the influence of the given spiritual and cultural contexts.

Post-Vedic texts elaborately describe the role of Yoga and reveal its relevance in supporting the spiritual and practical life for their sake. They have contributed to the Yoga Vasistha, Smriti texts, and Ayurveda and are thus sought to glorify their contribution to the great Yogic heritage. Once again, Yoga Vasistha gives a philosophical delineation of the nature of reality and mind, while Smriti gives codes of ethical and social behaviour, which have adopted Yogic wisdom. Ayurveda helps in establishing the very link between health and Yogic practices and thus strengthens the way Yoga looks into life. Collectively, these texts exemplify the vibrant and multilayered evolution of Yoga, captured with their timelessness and capacity for transformation.

4.3 YOGA VASISTHA

Background and Structure

The *Yoga Vasistha*, one of the most significant philosophical texts, is traditionally attributed to Sage Valmiki. It presents a dialogue between Sage Vasistha and Prince Rama, designed to guide Rama through his existential questions and lead him to self-realisation. This text is structured into six sections, each addressing different stages of spiritual progress:

Vairagya Prakarana (On Dispassion): Discusses the nature of disillusionment with worldly pleasures.

Mumukshuvaya Prakarana (On the Seeker): Outlines the qualities necessary for a sincere seeker of truth.

Utpatti Prakarana (On Creation): Explores the origin of the universe and the nature of consciousness.

Sthiti Prakarana (On Existence): Examines the maintenance of the created world through the play of the mind.

Upashama Prakarana (On Dissolution): Describes the quieting of the mind and detachment from illusion.

Nirvana Prakarana (On Liberation): Offers teachings on ultimate liberation and freedom from the cycle of birth and death.

Philosophical Themes

Central to the *Yoga Vasistha* is the concept that the mind is the root cause of bondage and liberation. The text conveys that understanding the nature of reality leads to freedom from suffering. Key philosophical insights include:

- **Jivanmukti (Living Liberation)**: Unlike some traditions that focus on posthumous liberation, the *Yoga Vasistha* emphasises attaining enlightenment while alive.
- **The Illusory Nature of Reality (Maya)**: The world is compared to a dream, and only knowledge (*jnana*) can reveal the truth.
- **Consciousness and the Self**: Self-inquiry (*Atma Vichara*) is the path to realising that individual consciousness is one with the universal self.

Shadanga Yoga

The text presents a unique six-limbed Yoga practice focused on inner purification:

1. **Shama**: Inner peace and mental calm.
2. **Vichara**: Discernment and self-inquiry.
3. **Santosha**: Contentment and acceptance.
4. **Uparati**: Withdrawal from external distractions.
5. **Titiksha**: Endurance and equanimity in the face of opposites.
6. **Samadhana**: Focused concentration and inner stability.

This system, unlike Patanjali's *Ashtanga Yoga*, emphasises direct mental and philosophical disciplines rather than physical postures.

Influence and Practical Implications

The *Yoga Vasistha* has greatly influenced Advaita Vedanta and later meditative practices. Its teachings on the impermanence of desires and

ego transcendence through reflective inquiry remain core to self-mastery and spiritual discipline.

Main Theme

The central theme of Yoga-Vasistha is the nature of **consciousness and self-realisation**. It emphasises that liberation (moksha) is achieved through knowledge (jnana) and wisdom rather than mere rituals or asceticism. The text presents a non-dualistic (Advaita) perspective, stating that the individual self (jiva) and the supreme Self (Brahman) are one.

Core Teachings

- **Mind as the Creator of Reality**:

  The world we experience is a projection of the mind. Like a dream, it appears real but is ultimately an illusion (Maya). True knowledge lies in realising the difference between the real and the unreal.

- **Dispassion (Vairagya)**:

  Liberation begins with dispassion towards worldly pleasures. Attachment to transient things leads to suffering, while detachment opens the path to freedom.

- **Self-Inquiry (Atma-vichara)**:

  The text encourages constant questioning of "Who am I?" and seeking the nature of the self. The realisation of one's true nature as pure consciousness leads to liberation.

- **Four Types of Seekers**:

  Yoga-Vasistha categorises spiritual aspirants into four types based on their level of dispassion and readiness for liberation:

  - Mumukshu (the seeker of liberation)
  - Bhakta (the devotee)
  - Yogi (the one who practices meditation)
  - Jnani (the one who possesses knowledge)

Liberation (Moksha)

- **Liberation is Here and Now**:

  The text asserts that liberation is not something to be attained after death. It is a state of freedom from the bondage of ignorance (Avidya) while living—known as **Jivanmukti**.

- **Ashtavakra and Lila**:

  Numerous stories and parables illustrate key philosophical points, emphasizing that the mind's transformation leads to liberation. Examples include the stories of King Janaka, Queen Lila, and the sage Ashtavakra.

Practice and Effort:

The Yoga-Vasistha stresses a balanced approach combining self-effort (Purushartha) and divine grace. It teaches that while destiny influences life, effort and disciplined practice can transcend karmic limitations.

Key Philosophical Concepts

1. **Non-Duality (Advaita Vedanta)**:

   The ultimate reality is *Brahman*, pure consciousness. The notion of duality between the self and the world is an illusion. Realising the unity of existence dissolves all suffering.

2. **Illusion (Maya)**:

   The world is like a reflection in a mirror—appearing real but fundamentally unreal. Understanding this leads to freedom from attachments.

Freedom from Sorrow

The *Yoga-Vasistha* proposes that the cause of sorrow is ignorance. By realizing the mind's nature and the ephemeral nature of worldly existence, one becomes free from suffering.

The *Yoga-Vasistha* provides deep insights into the nature of reality, mind, and liberation, serving as a guide for self-inquiry and spiritual realisation.

The Yoga-Vasistha is a transformative text that blends philosophy, metaphysics, and spirituality, offering practical guidance for inner awakening. Its essence lies in realising that true freedom comes through knowledge of the self as infinite, eternal consciousness, transcending the illusions of the mind and body.

4.4 SMRITI

Smriti texts, encompassing a wide range of literature, offer practical

and ethical guidelines. Unlike the eternal truths of Shruti (Vedas), Smriti texts reflect human interpretations of dharma and societal order. The period of Smriti literature starts from the times of Patanjali, some Smròties had been composed before 500 B.C. and they were written till about 1000 A. D. During this long period of Smriti literature, we find the changes in the evolving Ideas, beliefs, worships, and customs. The Smrities tried to combine yoga with the daily rituals. Thus, we find Pranayama and certain purificatory techniques occupying important place in every ritual.

The Manusmriti and Yoga

The *Manusmriti* (also known as ***Manav Dharmashastra***) is one of the earliest texts of Dharma Shastra, composed between 200 BCE and 200 CE, and is regarded as a foundational text of Hindu law and social norms. While it primarily deals with duties, ethics, and laws for individuals and society, it also reflects upon spiritual and yogic principles that align with broader Vedic and Upanishadic thought.

Key Elements of Yoga in ***Manusmriti***

Though the term "Yoga" as a systematic philosophical practice is not elaborately discussed in *Manusmriti* the way it is in texts like the *Bhagavad Gita* or *Patanjali's Yoga Sutras*, the *Manusmrit*i incorporates yogic values in its guidance on personal conduct, self-discipline, and spiritual progression.

Self-Control (Yama) and Discipline (Niyama)

- *Manusmriti* emphasises the importance of self-discipline and self-restraint, which are foundational aspects of *yoga*. These are akin to the first two limbs of the *Ashtanga Yoga* system in Patanjali's Y*oga Sutras.*
- Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truthfulness), Brahmacharya (chastity), and Aparigraha (non-possessiveness) are indirectly referred through prescriptions for righteous conduct and duties.

Dharma as a Spiritual Path

- The practice of following **Dharma** (righteousness and moral duty) is seen as a way to achieve inner balance and spiritual progress, which aligns with the *Karma Yoga* described in the *Gita*.

- *Manusmriti* enjoins that actions performed without selfish desire lead to liberation — a concept that echoes the yogic ideas of detachment and surrender.

Meditation and Mind Control

- The *Manusmriti* advises individuals, particularly those pursuing the higher spiritual stages of life (vanaprastha and sannyasa), to practice solitude, meditation, and contemplation on the self.
- For spiritual seekers, detachment from worldly desires and control of the mind are important steps towards **moksha (liberation)** — akin to Raja Yoga's focus on mastering the mind.

Stages of Life (Ashrama Dharma) and Yoga

The concept of the four **ashramas (Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sannyasa)** in *Manusmriti* parallels yogic practices suited for different stages of life:

- **Brahmacharya (student life)** is a phase of discipline, study, and celibacy, which is essential for building a strong yogic foundation.
- **Vanaprastha (forest-dwelling stage)** emphasises detachment and preparatory practices for meditation and renunciation, much like higher yogic practices of withdrawal (pratyahara) and contemplation.

We have the description of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, cleanliness in the following verses of the *Manusmriti:*

//Ahinsâsatyamâsteyam sawchmindrya nigraha etam samasikam Dharma /

Chaturvaerma bravibmanu//

- Manusmriti 10/63

Again, we have the description of pranayama in the following verse of the *Manusmriti:*

Dahante dhyâyamananâm-Dhatunâm yatha malaha.

Tathendryânâm Dahante Dosâh pranasya nigrahata.

Meaning: Just as all the dirt of the metals are removed by fire, likewise pranayama removes all the dirt of the *Yagnavalkya smròti 4/64* states that: The aspirant should practice hundred pranayama to kill all types of sins.

Concept of Moksha

- The ultimate goal of life in *Manusmriti*, as in yoga, is **moksha** — liberation from the cycle of birth and death. It is achieved through knowledge, righteousness, and renunciation.
- The yogic concept of achieving self-realisation and transcending the ego is inherent in the *Manusmriti's* encouragement of actions free from attachment to fruits (nishkama karma).

In *Manusmriti*, the yogic path is interwoven with ethical and spiritual guidelines. The emphasis on self-discipline, control of desires, meditation, renunciation, and the pursuit of knowledge all correspond to fundamental elements of yoga. Although not a yogic manual, the teachings of Manusmriti on dharma, ashramas, and moksha reflect the core principles of yoga as a holistic journey toward self-realisation and union with the divine.

The *Bhagavad Gita* as Smriti

The ***Bhagavad Gita***, a central text of Hindu philosophy and spirituality, presents a comprehensive and holistic view of **Yoga**. Comprising 18 chapters within the larger epic of the *Mahabharata*, the *Gita* addresses the nature of life, duty, and liberation. It presents different paths of Yoga, emphasising the balance of action, devotion, and knowledge for spiritual realization.

Definition of Yoga in the *Bhagavad Gita*

The *Bhagavad Gita* describes Yoga as a disciplined path to spiritual growth, self-realisation, and liberation (moksha). It conveys that Yoga harmonises body, mind, and spirit, leading to freedom from suffering and union with the divine.

Key Concepts of Yoga in *Bhagavad Gita*

Karma Yoga (Path of Selfless Action)

- **Karma Yoga** is described as performing one's duty without attachment to the results.
- Key Verse: *"Karmanye vadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana"*

(You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions.)

- The Gita advocates selfless service as a means to purify the mind and attain liberation.

Bhakti Yoga (Path of Devotion)

- **Bhakti Yoga** focuses on love, surrender, and devotion to God. It emphasises the power of devotion as a direct path to divine union.
- Key Verse: *"**Man-mana bhava mad-bhakto mad-yaji mam namaskuru**"*

(Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me, and offer obeisance to Me, and you will come to Me.)

- It teaches that a heart filled with love and surrender is the essence of spiritual practice.

Jnana Yoga (Path of Knowledge)

- **Jnana Yoga** is the path of wisdom and self-inquiry, realising the ultimate reality of the Self (Atman) and its unity with Brahman (Supreme Consciousness).
- Key Verse: *"**Brahma-bhutah prasannatma na shochati na kankshati**"*

(One who is in union with Brahman is free from lamentation and desire.)

- It emphasises discrimination between the eternal and the transient, leading to liberation through self-knowledge.

Raja Yoga (Path of Meditation)

- The *Bhagavad Gita* discusses the practice of **meditation (Dhyana Yoga)** as a method for self-discipline and control over the mind.
- Key Verse: *"**Yogasthah kuru karmani**"*

(Be steadfast in yoga while performing your duty.)

- It highlights the importance of concentration, equanimity, and mental discipline in achieving spiritual balance.

The *Bhagavad Gita's* Unique Perspectives on Yoga

Equanimity (Samattva) as Yoga

- Yoga is described as a state of equanimity, where the mind remains balanced in success and failure.

- Key Verse: ***"Samatvam yoga uchyate"***

(Equanimity of mind is called Yoga.)

Detachment from the Fruits of Actions

- Performing one's duty without selfish desire is central to the *Gita's* concept of Yoga.
- It promotes **Nishkama Karma**, or desireless action, as a form of Yoga.

Balance in Life

- The *Gita* advises moderation in all aspects — eating, sleeping, working, and recreation — as part of a disciplined Yogic lifestyle.
- Key Verse: ***"Yuktahara viharasya, yukta cheshtasya karmasu"***

*(He who is temperate in eating and recreation, balanced in work, and regulated in sleep and wakefulness, can mitigate all sorrows through Yoga.)

Synthesis of Yogic Paths

The *Bhagavad Gita* does not present these paths as mutually exclusive but encourages an integration of **Karma, Bhakti, Jnana, and Dhyana Yogas** based on one's nature and inclinations. Arjuna, representing the seeker, is advised by Krishna to combine action with devotion, knowledge, and meditation for a complete spiritual practice.

Yoga as the Path to Liberation

The ultimate teaching on Yoga exemplified in *Gita* is liberation through realisation of the self's unity with the Supreme Being (Krishna). It declares that all paths of Yoga ultimately lead to the same goal- spiritual freedom and eternal bliss.

The ***Bhagavad Gita*** presents a dynamic and inclusive view of Yoga, integrating various philosophical traditions into a coherent spiritual vision. Its teachings on Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, and Dhyana Yoga provide a universal framework for individuals to navigate life's challenges while pursuing spiritual awakening and liberation.

Yoga and Dharma

Yoga in the Smriti literature is intertwined with dharma, which represents cosmic law and moral order. The practice of Yoga supports the fulfillment of dharma by cultivating clarity, balance, and ethical integrity.

4.5. AYURVEDA

Ayurveda and **Yoga** are two interrelated sciences originating from the Vedic tradition of India. Ayurveda is the ancient Indian system of holistic health and medicine, while Yoga is a spiritual and practical discipline aimed at achieving self-realization and holistic well-being. Both share a common philosophical foundation and complement each other in promoting a balanced and healthy life.

Common Philosophical Foundations

1. **Vedic Philosophy**: Both Yoga and Ayurveda derive their principles from Vedic texts and emphasise harmony between body, mind, and spirit.
2. **Sankhya Philosophy**: They are influenced by the Sankhya system, which categorises existence into **Purusha (consciousness)** and **Prakriti (matter)** and aims to restore balance between them.

Key Concepts of Yoga in Ayurveda

Ayurveda incorporates Yogic principles for physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, focusing on disease prevention and life extension through balanced living.

Doshas and Yoga

Ayurveda identifies three doshas- **Vata, Pitta**, and **Kapha**- which govern the body's constitution and health. Yoga is used as a tool to balance these doshas:

- **Vata**: Characterised by air and space elements, it benefits from calming and grounding Yoga poses, like forward bends and seated postures.
- **Pitta**: Dominated by fire and water, it requires cooling and calming poses, such as twists and slow, mindful practices.

- **Kapha**: Associated with earth and water, it is balanced by energising and stimulating poses, like Sun Salutations and backbends.

Yoga asanas are personalised to maintain the balance of these doshas, helping to optimisee physical health and mental clarity.

Pranayama (Breath Control)

In Ayurveda, the breath is closely connected to **Prana (life force)**, and its proper regulation is crucial for maintaining health.

- Specific breathing techniques are used to balance doshas:
    - **Bhastrika and Kapalabhati** for stimulating Kapha.
    - **Sheetali and Sheetkari** for cooling Pitta.
    - **Nadi Shodhana** for balancing Vata.

Mind-Body Connection

Ayurveda recognises that **mental states** significantly influence physical health. Yoga provides practices for calming the mind, reducing stress, and promoting mental clarity through:

- **Dhyana (Meditation)** for emotional balance.
- **Mantra chanting** to focus the mind and align with spiritual vibrations.
- **Relaxation techniques** like Shavasana for rejuvenation.

Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas (Gunas)

Ayurveda and Yoga both classify mental qualities into three gunas:

- **Sattva (purity and balance)** is the goal of both disciplines, leading to harmony.
- **Rajas (activity and restlessness)** and **Tamas (inertia and ignorance)** are managed through diet, meditation, and asanas to cultivate a balanced mind.

Dinacharya and Ritucharya (Daily and Seasonal Routines)

Ayurveda prescribes a balanced lifestyle that incorporates Yogic practices into daily routines for maintaining health:

- **Morning yoga** to energise the body.
- **Meditation and pranayama** for mental clarity.
- **Seasonal modifications** in Yoga practices to align with nature's rhythms.

Yoga for Disease Management in Ayurveda

Ayurveda integrates Yoga as a therapeutic practice to treat various ailments:

- **Vata disorders** (e.g., anxiety, arthritis): Gentle asanas, calming pranayama, and meditation.
- **Pitta disorders** (e.g., inflammation, hyperacidity): Cooling poses and mindfulness practices.
- **Kapha disorders** (e.g., obesity, lethargy): Vigorous asanas and energising breathwork.

Yoga's Role in Ayurvedic Detoxification (Panchakarma)

Yoga enhances the detoxification process in **Panchakarma**, Ayurveda's cleansing therapy:

- **Asanas** support lymphatic drainage and improve circulation.
- **Pranayama** aids in toxin elimination through breath regulation.
- **Meditation** helps manage the emotional detox that accompanies physical cleansing.

The concept of Yoga in Ayurveda is holistic and integrative, aiming to balance the body, mind, and spirit through personalised practices. Ayurveda uses Yoga as a therapeutic tool to prevent and treat diseases, enhance vitality, and promote spiritual growth, making the two sciences inseparable for achieving overall health and well-being.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: Fill in the blanks :

i) The _____ emphasises self-inquiry, mental control, and liberation while living.

ii) The _____ incorporate Yogic concepts through ethical principles and practices like meditation.

iii) _____ integrates Yoga for balancing the doshas and maintaining holistic health.

Q2: What is discussed in the vaivagya prakarana of Yoga vaisistha?

Q3: Explain how Yoga and Ayurveda are interrelated mentioning their common philosophical foundation.



4.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we explored post-Vedic contributions to Yoga:

- The *Yoga Vasistha* presents a detailed psychological and philosophical framework for liberation.
- Smriti literature incorporates ethical teachings and practical Yoga guidelines.
- Ayurveda emphasises the role of Yoga in maintaining health and harmony.

These texts collectively enhance the understanding and application of Yoga as a spiritual, ethical, and therapeutic system.



4.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q1:

i) The *Yoga Vasistha* emphasises self-inquiry, mental control, and liberation while living.

ii) The Smritis incorporate Yogic concepts through ethical principles and practices like meditation.

iii) Ayurveda integrates Yoga for balancing the doshas and maintaining holistic health.



4.8 FURTHER READING

- Swami Sivananda. *The Philosophy of Yoga*.
- Dr Kamakhya Kumar. *Yoga Mahavigyan*.
- Dr Kamakhya Kumar. *Super Science of Yoga.*
- Frawley, David. *Yoga and Ayurveda*.
- Feuerstein, Georg. *The Essence of Yoga*.



4.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

1. Which Veda is considered the earliest source of Yogic practices?
2. What is the central theme of Yoga Vasistha?
3. What is "Vairagya" according to Yoga Vasistha?
4. Name the Smriti text that discusses Yoga and Dharma.
5. Which yoga in the Bhagavad Gita emphasizes love and devotion to God?
6. Which ancient Indian system links Yoga to health and healing?
7. What does Ayurveda say about the connection between body and mind?

B) Short Questions

1. Describe the basic concept of Yoga Vasistha
2. Explain the six-limbed Yoga practices mentioned in the *Yoga Vasistha*.
3. Discuss the ethical foundations of Yoga as highlighted in Smriti literature.
4. What is the key-concept of Yoga in Bhagavad-Gita?
5. Describe how Ayurveda utilises Yoga for therapeutic purposes.
6. What is the relationship between dosha balance and Yogic practices in Ayurveda?

C) Long Questions

1. Discuss the evolution of Yoga from the Vedas to the Upanishads.
2. What are the main teachings of the Yoga Vasistha regarding liberation and mind control?
3. Analyze the spiritual significance of Yoga as presented in the Bhagavad Gita.
4. How does Ayurveda complement the goals and practices of Yoga?
5. Explain the role of Vairagya, Abhyasa, and Jnana in Yoga Vasistha.
6. How do the principles of Ayurveda enhance the practice and outcome of Yoga?

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UNIT 5 : YOGA IN JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Concept of Buddhism and Jainism

5.3.1 Buddhism

5.3.2 Jainism

5.4 Yoga in Buddhism

5.5 Yoga in Jainism

5.6 Let's us Sum up

5.7 Further Reading

5.8 Check Your Progress

5.9 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to –

- categorise the branches of Buddhism and Jainism as Heterodox school of Philosophy,
- discuss Yoga in Buddhist philosophy,
- discuss Yoga in Jain philosophy.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

The emergence of Buddhism and Jainism in ancient India during the 6th century B.C.E. was a gentle yet transformative shift in the spiritual and philosophical landscape of the Indian subcontinent. These two distinct, yet interconnected, traditions introduced new ways of thinking, offering profound insights into the nature of existence, suffering, and the path to liberation. Their teachings gently challenged the established norms, inviting individuals to explore deeper truths and cultivate inner peace. The influence

of these traditions continues to resonate through the culture, art, and thought of the region, leaving a lasting imprint of wisdom and compassion.

5.3 CONCEPT OF BUDDHISM AND JAINISM

The historical context in which these religions emerged is essential to understanding their significance. India of the 6th century BCE was characterised by diverse philosophical schools, from the materialist Charvaka to the metaphysical Upanishads. The emergence of Buddhism and Jainism added new dimensions to this vibrant intellectual tapestry. These religions were not isolated phenomena but were influenced by and contributed to the ongoing philosophical discourse. The interactions between followers of these traditions and proponents of other schools of thought led toa rich exchange of ideas, fostering a climate of intellectual curiosity and openness.

5.3.1 Buddhism

Buddhist philosophy and doctrines, based on the teachings of Gautama Buddha, give meaningful insights about reality and human existence. Buddha was primarily an ethical teacher rather than a philosopher. His central concern was to show man the way out of suffering and not one of constructing a philosophical theory. Therefore, Buddha's teaching lays great emphasis on the practical matters of conduct that lead to liberation. For Buddha, the root cause of suffering is ignorance and in order to eliminate suffering we need to know the nature of existence. Also, Buddha insisted that all those who accept his doctrines must accept it only after rigorous reflections and only after all doubts and perplexities are overcome. Here, the philosophical implications of Buddha's teaching must be taken into serious consideration. Thus, Buddhism is a philosophy that originated in ancient India around the 5th century B.C.E. It was founded by Siddhartha Gautama,who later became known as the Buddha, which means "the enlightened one." Buddhism is based on the Four Noble

Truths, which teach that suffering is an inherent part of life, but that it is possible to end suffering by following the Eightfold Path. The Eightfold Path consists of right understanding, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

5.3.2 Jainism

Jainism is a religion and philosophy that originated in ancient India around the same time as Buddhism, that is around the 6th century B.C.E. It was founded by a man named Mahavira, who is considered to be the last and most important of the 24 Tirthankaras, or spiritual teachers, in Jainism. Jainism is based on the belief that every living being has a soul, or jiva, and that the ultimate goal of life is to achieve liberation, or moksha, from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. Jains believe that this can be achieved by following a path of non-violence, or ahimsa, and by living a life of compassion, honesty, and self-discipline. The main teachings are that there is a sharp distinction between souls and matter; that souls are normally implicated through karma, in the painful round of reincarnation; and that through the practice of virtue, meditation, and great austerity the ultimate release of the soul is possible. Jainism is atheistic but does not deny the existence of gods as beings inside the cosmos. The word Jainism or jaina is derived from jina. The etymological meaning of the word jina is conqueror. It is the common name given to the 24 teachers (tirthankaras), because they conquered all passions (raga and dvesa) and attained liberation. Jainism is often classified as a philosophy, a way of life, rather than a religion. In Jainism, religion is not different from thepractice of the realization of our own essential nature. It puts great emphasis on the practice of good life. According to Jainism, the guiding principle of one's life should be: *mitti me sarvabhuesu* (May I have a friendly relation with all beings.)

5.4 YOGA IN BUDDHISM

The basic teachings of Buddhism are contained in:

a) Four Noble Truths, and

b) Eight Fold Path

The following are the **Four Noble Truths**:

i) The world is full of sufferings. - दुख

According to the first noble truth all forms of existence are subject to suffering. For Buddhism it is a universal truth. All known and unknown facts and forms of life are associated with suffering. Birth, sickness, old age, death, anxiety, desire, and despair, all such happenings and feelings are based on suffering. Buddhism recognises suffering at three levels, such as the suffering we experience in our daily life, like, birth, sickness, old age, death, despair, pain, desire, etc. (duhkah- duhkhatta), suffering caused by the internal mental conditions and the activities of the sense organs (samkara-duhkhatta), and the suffering caused by the impermanence of objects and our relation to them (viparinama-duhkhatta).

ii) All sufferings have a cause: desire, ignorance and attachment are the causes of sufferings- समुदय

Everything in this cosmos has a cause, and nothing exists and happens without a cause. If this is the case, suffering should also have a cause. Buddhism explains suffering through a chain of twelve causes and effects, commonly known as the Doctrine of Dependent Origination (pratityasamutpada). In the final analysis, the root of all miseries is desire (Tanha). Desire is all pervasive. Desire for possession, enjoyment, and a separate individual existence are some of the virulent forms of desire.

iii) The suffering could be removed by destroying its cause- निरोध

If suffering has a cause, the seeker has to destroy this cause to stop suffering. Therefore, desire has to be extinguished to stop suffering. Nirvana is the state of being without suffering. It is a state of supreme happiness and bliss.

iv) **In order to end sufferings, one must know the right path- मार्ग**

The ways to destroy suffering consists of the practice of the eightfold virtue, such as, Right View, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Awareness, and Right Concentration. In the practice of all these virtues one has to avoid extremes and follow the middle path.

This path is the Eight Fold Path (*Ashtangika Marga*). Hence, the **Eight Fold Path** consists of the following eight principles:

i) **Finding the right view (सम्यक दृष्टि)**. It is to understand that the world is filled with sorrow generated by desire.The ending of desire will lead to the liberation of the soul. It consists of the grasp and acceptance of the four noble truths, rejection of the fault doctrines, and avoidance of immorality resulting from covetousness, lying, violence, etc.

ii) **Right aim (सम्यक संकल्प)**. It seeks to avoid the enjoyment of the senses and luxury and aims to love humanity and increase the happiness of others. It implies thought on renunciation, thought on friendship and good will, and thoughts on non-harming.

iii) **Right speech (सम्यक वाणी)** which seeks to emphasise the speaking of truth always. It inspires one to speak truth primarily, and to speak gentle and soothing words for the benefit and wellbeing of others. It also promulgates one to avoid falsehood, slander, harsh words and gossip.

iv) **Right action (सम्यक कर्म)** which is understood to be unselfish action. By the right conduct, Buddha intends the practice of five moral vows namely, non-violence (ahimsa), truthfulness (satya), non-stealing (asteya).

v) **Right livelihood (सम्यक साजीविका)**. It instructs that a man should live by honest means. It consists of the avoidance of a luxurious life and the acceptance of occupations which do not involve cruelty and injury to other living beings.

vi) **Right effort (सम्यक व्यायाम)**. It is the proper way of controlling one's senses so as to prevent bad thoughts. It is through correct mental exercises that one can destroy desire and attachment. It includes the effort to avoid the rise of evil and false ideas in the mind, the effort to overcome evil and evil tendencies, the effort to acquire positive values like attention, energy,

tranquility, equanimity, and concentration, and the effort to maintain the right conditions for a meritorious life.

vii) **Right mindfulness** (सम्यक स्मृति). It is the understanding of the idea that the body is impermanent and meditation is the means for the removal of worldly evils. It represents the awareness of the body (breathing positions, movements, impurities of the body, etc.),awareness of sensations (attentive to the feelings of one self and of the other), awareness of thought and the awareness of the internal functions of the mind.

viii) **Right concentration** (सम्यक समाधि). The observation of right concentration will lead to peace. Meditation will unravel the real truth: The practice of one pointed contemplation leads the seeker to go beyond all sensations of pain and pleasure, and finally to full enlightenment. It happens in four levels.In the first level, through intense meditation the seeker concentrates the mind on truth and thereby enjoys great bliss. In the second level the seeker enters into supreme internal peace and tranquility. In the third level, the seeker becomes detached even from the inner bliss and tranquility. In the fourth level, the seeker is liberated even from this sensation of bliss and tranquility.

The first two of the eight-fold path, namely, right view and right resolve, are together called Prajna, because they are related to consciousness and knowledge. The third, fourth, and fifth, namely, right speech, right conduct, and right livelihood, are collectively known as Sila, because they deal with the correct and morally right way of living. The last three, namely, right effort, right awareness, and right concentration are collectively known as Samadhi, because they deal with meditation and contemplation.

Buddhism laid great emphasis on the law of 'karma'. According to this law, the present is determined by the past actions. The condition of a man in this life and the next depends upon his own actions.

5.5 YOGA IN JAINISM

Jainism makes a distinction between *Jivas* and *Ajivas*. Therefore, it is dualism. It is also pluralism in that it recognises an infinite number of animate and inanimate substances. It is also metaphysical realism. They

also hold that every atom has a soul but it is not *Jiva*, because they do not have sense organs. The soul is both permanent and changing. Based on extension, Jainism divides substance into two classes, those that are extended in space and those that are not. Although Jainism recognises souls, it rejects the notion of an ultimate, universal soul. In Jainism, Mahavira accepted most of the religious doctrines laid down by *Parsvanatha*. However, he made some alterations and additions to them. *Parsvanatha* advocated the following four principles:

a) truth

b) non-violence,

c) non-possession, and

d) not to receive anything which was not voluntarily given. To this Mahavira added celibacy (brahmacharya).

According to Jainism, man is the creator of his own destiny and he could attain 'moksha' by pursuing a life of purity, virtue and renunciation. Moksha (nirvana) can be attained by observing the following three principles (**Ratnatraya**):

i) Right belief (सम्यक दर्शन)

ii) Righyt knowledge, (सम्यक ज्ञान)

iii) Right action (सम्यक चरित्र)

He advocated a life of severe asceticism and extreme penance for the attainment of 'nirvana' or the highest spiritual state. He believed that the world was not created by any supreme creator. Theworld functions according to an eternal law of decay and development.

For the purpose of avoiding evil karmas, a householder had to observe the following five vows **(Panchavrata):**

i) non-injury (अहिंसा)

ii) speaking the truth (सत्य)

iii) non-stealing (अस्तेय)

iv) non-adultery (ब्रह्मचर्य)

v) non-possession (अपरिग्रह)

Ultimately, Jainism offers a transformative approach to fostering peace and harmony not just at the individual level but across the entire fabric of society, creating a world that is more compassionate, sustainable, and just for all.



5.6 LET US SUM UP

- Jainism and Buddhism are two of the most ancient and influential religions that originated in India.
- As humanity continues to grapple with the relentless demands of the contemporary era, the Buddha's insights serve as a beacon of hope, reminding us of the inherent capacity within each individual to cultivate peace, compassion, and a profound connection with the present moment.
- According to Jain thought, the basic constituents of reality are souls (*jiva*), matter (*pudgala*), motion (*dharma*), rest (*adharma*), space (*akasa*), and time (*kala*).
- Buddhism, founded by Gautama Buddha, emphasises the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path as a means to achieve enlightenment and liberation from the cycle of birth and rebirth.
- Jainism, established by Lord Mahavira, advocates for a life of strict non-violence, asceticism, and adherence to the Five Vows as the path to liberation.
- Jainism emphasises extreme asceticism and the belief in an eternal soul (jiva).At the same time, Buddhism advocates a Middle Path, rejecting extreme asceticism and not focusing on the concept of an eternal soul, emphasising instead the doctrine of anātman(अनात्मन्)(no-self).



5.7 FURTHER READING

- Indian Philosophy by various authors.
- MEA Official Guidebook.

- Sarvarthasiddhi: The oldest commentary on the Tattvartha Sutra (Jain Philosophy).
- Buddha Yoga: Cultivating the Yoga Path of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Guardian Spirits.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Fill in theblanks:

A. The founder of Jainism is _____

B. The founder of Buddhism is _____

C. Buddhism and Jainism are _____ school of philosophy.

D. The Eight Fold Pathis apart of _____ school of philosophy.

E. Mahavira accepted most of the religious doctrines laid down by _____

5.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

A. Mahavira
B. Gautama Buddha
C. Nastika/Heterodox
D. Buddhist
E. *Parsvanatha*

5.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A). Very short Questions

1. Who was the founder of Buddhism?
2. What is the ultimate goal of life according to Jainism?
3. Mention any one of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism.

4. What is the doctrine of pratityasamutpada in Buddhism?
5. Who is considered the last Tirthankara in Jainism?
6. What are the three components of the Eightfold Path classified under “Sila”?
7. State the three Ratnatraya (jewels) in Jainism.
8. Define Nirvana in Buddhist philosophy.

B) Short Questions

1. Who are the founders of Buddhism and Jainism?
2. Discuss the four Noble truths in Buddhism.
3. Explain what do you mean by *Ashtangika Marga*.
4. Discuss Yoga in Buddhist Philosophy.
5. What isTriratnain Jainism? Explain
6. What do you mean by Pancha Mahavrata in Jainism? Explain
7. Discuss Yoga in Jain Philosophy.
8. Compare the Heterodox Philosophy of Buddhism and Jainism.

C) Long Questions

1. Discuss how the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism transformed the philosophical landscape of ancient India.
2. Explain in detail the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path of Buddhism.
3. Elaborate on the role and importance of ethical conduct in Buddhist teachings.
4. Analyze the concept of yoga in both Buddhism and Jainism, highlighting similarities and differences.
5. What is the doctrine of dependent origination (pratityasamutpada) in Buddhism? Explain with reference to suffering.
6. Explain the metaphysical and ethical aspects of Jain philosophy.
7. How does the Buddhist notion of Nirvana differ from the Jain concept of Moksha?
8. Describe the Panchavratas of Jainism and their relevance in leading a virtuous life.

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UNIT 6 : YOGA IN SAMKHYA PHILOSOPHY AND VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives

6.2 Introduction

6.3 Concept of Sâṁkhya Philosophy

6.3.1 Yoga in Sâṁkhya Philosophy

6.4 Concept of Vedanta Philosophy

6.4.1 Yoga In Vedanta Philosophy

6.5 Let's us Sum up

6.6 Further Readings

6.7 Check Your Progress

6.8 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the Saṁkhya theory
- elucidate the distinction between Purusha and Prakrti by knowing Yoga in Saṁkhya Philosophy.
- discuss Vedanta and various schools within Vedanta system by knowing Yoga in Vedanta Philosophy.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

Sâṁkhya Darshana is one of the oldest and most influential *Astika* (Orthodox) schools of Indian philosophy. Traditionally attributed to the sage Kapila, it is renowned for its systematic and analytical approach to understanding the universe and the principles governing it. The term “Sâakhya,” meaning “enumeration” or “counting,” aptly reflects its methodical dissection of the elements of existence. Through this approach, Sâakhya

seeks to explore and categorise the fundamental components of reality in a structured and rigorous manner.

On the other hand, the term Vedanta translates to “the end of the Vedas,” signifying both the concluding sections of the Vedic texts and the culmination of their philosophical wisdom. Originally referring to the Upanishads, which represent the final literary phase of the Vedic period, Vedanta embodies the essence of the Vedic teachings. Over time, however, Vedanta has come to encompass the various interpretations, commentaries, and elaborations on the Upanishadic ideas. Thus, Vedanta not only points to the culmination of the Vedic tradition but also represents the ultimate spiritual and philosophical goal of that wisdom.

Together, these two systems of thought— Sâṁkhya and Vedanta— serve as cornerstones of classical Indian philosophy, each offering a unique and profound insight into the nature of existence and the ultimate truth.

6.3 CONCEPT OF SÂṀKHYA PHILOSOPHY

The **Sâṁkhya Philosophy** stands as one of the most ancient and profound systems of thought in Indian philosophy. Its foundational principles align with several other schools of thought, including Nyâya, Vaisesika, Yoga, Jainism, and Vedânta, marking its deep influence on the intellectual landscape of ancient India. The founder of Sâṁkhya Philosophy is ‘Kapila’ who has written the script ‘*Sâṁkhya Sûtra*’. This script is widely known as Sâṁkhya Philosophy. There are two views on the origin of this school. Some believed that the word Sâṁkhya is derived from the word ‘Saṁkhyâ’ which means number as well as right knowledge. Right knowledge is about understanding the reality by specifying the number of ultimate constituents of the universe. Others viewed that Sâṁkhya means ‘perfect knowledge’ and that is about the reality.

6.3.1 YOGA IN SÂṀKHYA PHILOSOPHY

Sāṁkhya, presents a timeless dualism between two fundamental principles: *Purusha* (the eternal, unchanging spirit) and *Prakriti* (the

dynamic, material nature). At the heart of Sāṁkhya lies the realisation that these two realities - Purusha and Prakriti—are originally distinct, yet through the course of cosmic evolution, Purusha becomes entangled with Prakriti, mistakenly identifying with its fleeting aspects. This confusion between the eternal observer (Purusha) and the transient world (Prakrti) is the root of human suffering. The path to liberation, according to Sāṁkhya, is through right knowledge (*Jnana*), where the distinction between Purusha and Prakriti is clearly perceived. When the spirit awakens to its true nature, independent of the material world, the illusion of their union dissolves. In this profound clarity, freedom (*moksha*) is attained—an absolute release from the cycle of birth and death, a return to the pure state of *Purusha*.

Prakrti

Prakrti is the ultimate cause of the universe. It is regarded as the first cause. All effects of the universe are based upon it. Being the first element of the universe, Prakrti itself is uncaused, eternal, and all pervading. Hence, it is called “pradhāna”. It can not be perceived but can be inferred from its effect. Thus, it is known as ‘anumā’. In the form of conscious elements, it is called jada, and in the form of the un manifested objects, it is called ‘avayakta’. The Sāṁkhya Philosophy advocates three gunas of Prakrti. These are; Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Prakrti is a state of equilibrium of these three gunas. The word ‘guna’ is understood here as quality or attribute.

Sattva (“goodness”) is enlightenment, enlightened knowledge, and lightness;

Rajas (“passion”) is energy, emotion, and expansiveness;

Tamas (“darkness”) is obscurity, ignorance, and inertia.

Purusha

In the profound framework of Sāṁkhya philosophy, the concept of **Purusha** stands as the ultimate, eternal reality - pure consciousness itself, beyond the grasp of time, space, or change. Purusha is the self, the subject, the knower - an unchanging, formless essence

that remains untouched by the transient world. It is never an object, for an object requires the possibility of proof through some means of perception, while the absence of Purusha cannot be proven, for its very presence is what makes knowledge, including doubt, possible. Purusha is not the body, nor the mind; neither ego (ahamkāra) nor intellect (buddhi). It is not a substance that possesses the quality of consciousness, but rather, it is consciousness itself in its purest form - an undivided, unaltered state. It is the supreme knower, the witness to all experiences, yet not involved in the play of experience. It is the eternal observer, forever free, impartial, and at peace. Unlike the material world of Prakṭi, which is in constant flux, subject to the three gunas—sattva, rajas, and tamas, - Purusha is beyond all these, untouched by change, and devoid of attachment, aversion, or arrogance. It is the solitary witness, unaffected by the movement of objects or events. It stands as the illuminating source of all knowledge, yet it itself is beyond the reach of knowledge; it is the self-illuminated, the self-proven, causasui- the cause of itself. Purusha is all-pervading, eternal, and free from distortion. Its existence is undeniable because in its absence, there would be no possibility for any form of awareness, no perception, no cognition, no understanding, not even doubt. It is the very foundation of reality, the consciousness that allows for everything to be known, yet remains untouched by the changes that define the phenomenal world. Purusha is pure, unchanging, and untouched by the fluctuations of the mind, the senses, or the material world. It is not confined by the limitations of the space-time continuum, nor bound by the constraints of activity. It exists beyond the realms of self- arrogance, attachment, and aversion, and thus remains in its eternal, tranquil state of illumination— free, unperturbed, and beyond all duality. In this timeless and, boundless essence, we find the ultimate truth: the self that is neither of the body nor the mind, but pure awareness itself, eternally free and at peace. Sage Kapila has described the

order of creation which is accepted by the Sāṁkhya Philosophy.

i) Mahat

Mahat is the primordial product of evolution, embodying the cosmic essence at its core. It manifests not only as a cosmic principle but also as intellect or *buddhi*, a crucial psychological aspect. However, it is vital to recognise that *buddhi* should not be confused with consciousness, for while consciousness is eternal, *buddhi* is material in nature. One of *buddhi*'s essential functions is decision-making, a process rooted in memory, allowing one to discern between the known and the knower. It is through this act that the distinction between the soul (ātman) and the material world is revealed. Dominated by the attribute of *sattva*, *buddhi* becomes the instrument that helps us recognise the true self, which transcends all physical objects and their fleeting qualities.

ii) Ahaṁkāra

Ahaṁkāra, often translated as 'ego,' is the second product of evolution and reflects the individual's sense of 'I' or 'mine.' It arises from buddhi, the intellect, and is present in all beings. Through ego, the Purusha (the self) perceives itself as an active agent, driven by desires and striving for goals, with a sense of identity and characteristics. The process begins when the senses perceive an object, the mind processes these perceptions, and the ego attaches the attitude of 'mine' or 'for me' to them. In this process, the three gunas of prakrti (nature) – sattva, rajas, and tamas – play a key role, shaping the ego's expression.

iii) Mānas

According to the Sāṁkhya Philosophy, mānas or mind is neither eternal nor atomic. It is constituted with parts and thus can come into contact with the different sense organs simultaneously. Mind helps to analyse and synthesise the sense-data into determinate perceptions. Being an internal sense organ, it is aware of objects belonging to the past, present, and the future.

iv) Jñānendriya

In Sāmkhya philosophy, the Jñānendriyas (five sense organs)— nose, ears, eyes, skin, and tongue— are not just physical entities, but are seen as imperceptible forces or energies that reside within these organs. These senses, such as the power of hearing in the ears or the ability to taste with the tongue, do not themselves perceive; rather, they enable the perception of the external world. Through the functions they perform, these senses create knowledge of touch, colour, smell, sound, and taste. Rooted in Purusha and shaped by ego (ahaṁkāra), these faculties emerge as instruments of conscious awareness.

v) Karmendriya

The Karmendriyas, or the five organs of action, are the mouth, ears, feet, anus, and sex organ. Each serves a unique function: speech, hearing, movement, excretion, and reproduction, respectively. These organs emerge from the desire of Purusha for experience, allowing him to engage with the world.

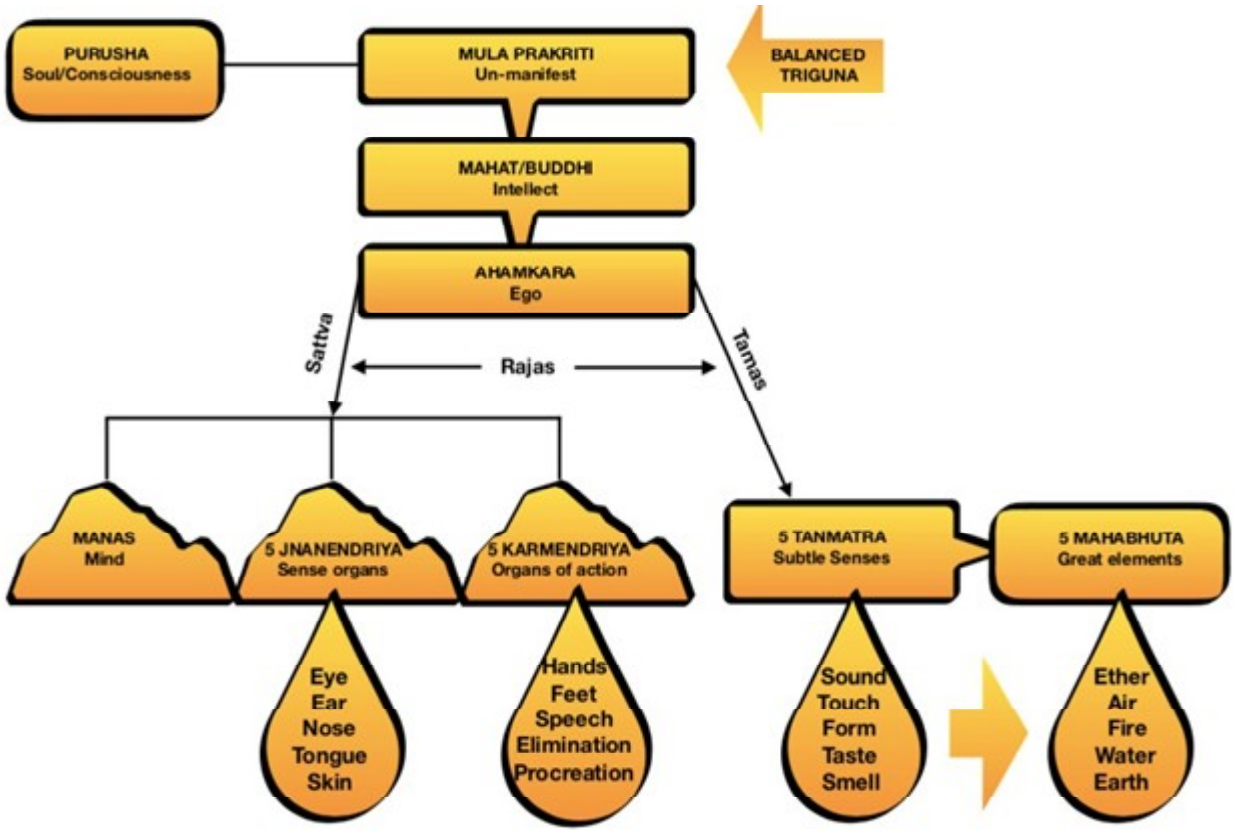
vi) Tanmātrā

The five **tanmātrās**- sound (sabda), touch (sparsa), form (rupa), taste (rasa), and smell (gandha)— are subtle, ethereal qualities that serve as the seeds of perception. Though imperceptible in themselves, they give rise to the five elements- earth, water, fire, air, and ether - according to the Sāṁkhya School. These elements, born from the tanmātrās, are the foundation of all sensory experience, revealing the invisible interconnectedness of the universe.

vi) Mahābhuta

There are five mahābhutas found in the cosmos namely: Air or Vāyu, Fire or Agni, Akāsa or Ether, Water or Jala, Prithvi or Earth. Their respective qualities are: touch, colour, sound, taste, and smell.

The Sāṁkhya theory of evolution is illustrated in the following diagram for your clarity and better understanding.



The Sāṁkhya philosophy believes there are three independent sources of valid knowledge. These are: perception, inference, and verbal testimony. According to the Sāṁkhya school of thought, bondage is due to the attachment towards worldly objects and liberation is the dissociation from worldly suffering and pain. Sāṁkhya views, liberation is of two types.

i) Jivanmukti

ii) Videhemukti

One can attain jivanmukti while living on the earth and possessing physical body whereas, videhamukti is attained only after death. Thus, videhamukti is known as kaivalya or the summum bonum of life.

6.4 CONCEPT OF VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

The literal meaning of the term Vedanta is "the end of the Vedas, the concluding parts of the Vedas, the culmination of the Vedic teaching and

wisdom". Thus, the term is originally referred to the Upanishads, the last literary products of the Vedic period. The views of the Upanishads also constitute the final aim of the Veda, or the essence of the Vedas. However, Vedanta has subsequently come to include the various elaborations and interpretations of the Upanishads. They are the concluding parts of the Vedas and are the culmination of the Vedic knowledge and wisdom. Vedanta, one of the six classical philosophical systems of India, is a profound and timeless tradition that illuminates the ultimate truths of existence. The word "Vedanta" itself is derived from two Sanskrit roots: "Veda," meaning knowledge or wisdom, and "Anta," meaning end or conclusion. Thus, Vedanta signifies the "conclusion of the Vedas," or the culmination of the ancient Vedic wisdom. At its heart, Vedanta is rooted in the Upanishads, the philosophical and mystical texts that represent the final portion of the Vedas. These texts, rich in spiritual inquiry and profound insight, explore the nature of reality, the self, and the divine. Over time, a school of thought emerged from their study, sometimes referred to as Vedanta Mimamsa, reflecting a deep commitment to interpreting and embodying these sacred teachings. In course of time, there emerged different schools of Vedanta, the prominent ones being Advaita (non-dualism) of Sankara, Visistadvaita (Qualified Non-dualism) of Ramanuja and Dvaita (Dualism) of Madhva.

6.4.1 YOGA IN VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of Vedanta, like all other systems of thought, is an attempt to clearly understand and offer an explanation of the world as it appears to us in our knowledge. It is an attempt to determine the nature of the Ultimate Reality and to understand how it presents before us a world of manifoldness, in order to make out clearly the place and destiny of man in the world system**.** Vedanta philosophy is based both on revelation or *Sruti* as well as thinking, argument and logical justification. There is a full form of philosophy developed upon a dialectic and logical basis in the system. The first problem which the Vedantin seeks to solve is the ontological problem of Reality, the second, the problem of Cosmology, the third, the problem

of Psychology and fourth is the problem of striving after the ideal and its attainment – the final liberation.

Sankara (788–820 A.D.) is one of greatest philosophers of India, renowned for his system of **Advaita** Vedanta (Absolute Idealism). Through his commentaries on the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and *Bhagavad Gita*, he expounded the monistic view of reality, emphasising the oneness of the unconditioned, unqualified Brahman. According to Sankara, the world, individual souls, and even God (Isvara) are mere appearances arising from *maya* - a principle that is neither real nor unreal but an inexplicable, illusory power. *Maya* is not independent but dependent on Brahman, shaping the universe through names and forms. Thus, the world is an imagined construct, veiled by *maya*, with its ultimate reality being the singular, formless Brahman.

Ramanuja (born in 1017) at Sriperumbudur, is regarded as the greatest acharya in the lineage of Tamil saints, particularly for his contributions to the Vedantic tradition. In his renowned commentary on the Vedanta-Sutras, the *Sribhashya*, he expounded the philosophy of **Visistadvaita**, or qualified non-dualism. His aim was to integrate personal theism with the teachings of the Vedas and Upanishads, offering a rational basis for Vaishnava tenets. Ramanuja emphasised a faith- centred approach to God-realisation through bhakti, distinguishing his philosophy from Sankara's absolute non-dualism. He posited that God, individual souls, and the world are distinct but inseparable—God is the ultimate reality, and both souls and the world are His attributes.

Madhva's (1199 – 1278 A.D) Dvaita philosophy centres on the idea of inherent difference. It asserts a fundamental plurality of existence, where there is a distinction between God, soul, and matter—each distinct from the other. These five types of difference permit for external relationships but rule out any intrinsic unity among beings. Consequently, God is not the creator of souls or the world; souls are eternal, and the world emerges from Prakṭi.

Vallabha (1473-1531) critiques Sankara's Advaita for viewing the world as illusory, instead asserting that the world is real and ultimately one with God. For him, the same divine reality manifests as both the world and individual souls. He explains **Shuddhadvaita** through the *avikrta parinama-vada*, or the theory of change without modification, distinguishing between essence and causal power. While God's essence remains unchanged, His power to create evolves. Vallabha emphasises three paths to liberation - karma, jnana, and bhakti - adapted to suit the individual's nature and spiritual disposition.

Nimbarka's Dvaitadvaita holds that there exists both a natural difference and a natural non- difference between God, souls, and the material universe. The difference is seen in the hierarchy: God is the cause and ruler, while souls are effects, limited in power, and dependent on God. The distinction is clearer between God and the material universe - God is spiritual, while the universe is material. Yet, there is also a natural non-difference: Brahman permeates the universe like clay in a jar, and souls and the universe emanate from God, as a snake from its coils. These differences and non-differences are intrinsic (svabhavika) and not externally imposed, making both comprehensible.

In essence, Vedanta is not merely a philosophy, but a transformative path - a journey that guides seekers toward self-realisation and union with the divine. Through the study of the Upanishads, the practice of meditation, and the cultivation of wisdom, Vedanta invites one to explore the nature of existence, the relationship between the individual soul (Atman) and the supreme reality (Brahman), and the ultimate liberation (Moksha) from the cycle of birth and rebirth.



6.5 LET US SUM UP

- Sāṁkhya and Vedānta are two diametrically opposite systems. One is dualistic, the other non dualistic; one calls the self Purucha, the other Ātman; the ground of one is Prakrti i.e. the material principle, that of the other is Brahman, the spiritual principle; one believes in evolution, the other in creation; one is a rationalist philosophy, the other is an intuitive philosophy; for one the world is real, for the other it is unreal. So, there is a vast difference between these two systems.

- Sāṁkhya depicts that Purusha cannot be modified or changed while Prakṭi brings change in all objects.

- Vedanta philosophy considers two very important questions: the theoretical determination of the nature of substance or reality underlying experience and of the origin of knowledge, and the ethical problem of duty and the ultimate ideal of human life. Both these questions are thoroughly discussed and solutions are offered in the system.

- The philosophy of Vedanta, like all other systems of thought, is an attempt to clearly understand and offer an explanation of the world as it appears to us in our knowledge. It is an attempt to determine the nature of the Ultimate Reality and to understand how it presents before us a world of manifoldness, in order to make out clearly the place and destiny of man in the world system. Vedanta philosophy considers two very important questions: the theoretical determination of the

- nature of substance or reality underlying experience and of the origin of knowledge, and the ethical problem of duty and the ultimate ideal of human life. Both these questions are thoroughly discussed and solutions are offered in the system.



6.6 FURTHER READINGS

- Indian Philosophy by various authors.
- The History of Sāṁkhya Philosophy- The Samkhya by Berrierdale Keith.
- Vedanta Philosophy by Swami Vivekananda



6.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Fill up the blanks:

A. The founder of Sâṁkhya philosophy is _____.

B. The founder of Advaita Vedanta philosophy is _____.

C. Sâṁkhya and Vedanta are _____ school of philosophy.

D. Madhva's _____ philosophy centres on the idea of inherent difference.

E. _____ expounded the philosophy of Visistadvaita

Answers: A. Kapila, B. Shankaracharya, C. Astika/ Orthodox, D. Dvaita, E. Ramanuja



6.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

1. Who is traditionally regarded as the founder of Saṁkhya philosophy?
2. What are the two fundamental realities in Sakhya philosophy?
3. Define Prakrti in one sentence.
4. Name the three gunas of Prakrti.
5. What is the literal meaning of the word "Vedanta"?
6. Who propounded Advaita Vedanta?
7. What is the Saṁkhya view of liberation?
8. Who is the founder of Sâṁkhya?

B) Short Qestions

1. Discuss Purusha and Prakrti and other tattvas in Sâṁkhya philosophy.
2. Discuss Yoga in Sâṁkhya Philosophy.
3. Discuss the Advaita (non-dualism), Visistadvaita (Qualified Non-dualism) and Dvaita (Dualism) doctrine of Vedanta philosophy.
4. Discuss Yoga in Vedanta Philosophy.
5. Describe the role of Mahat in Saṁkhya cosmology.
6. What is the function of Ahamkara according to Saṁkhya?
7. Briefly explain the concept of Tanmatra and its significance.
8. What are the three valid means of knowledge according to Saṁkhya?
9. Describe the difference between Jivanmukti and Videhamukti.
10. Discuss the Vedantic concept of Brahman as explained by Samkara.

C) Long Questions

1. Discuss the fundamental concepts of Saṁkhya philosophy with reference to its metaphysical dualism of Purusha and Prakrati.
2. Elaborate the Saṁkhya theory of evolution, explaining the sequence from Prakrti to Mahabhutas.
3. Describe in detail the components of the Samkhya framework such as Mahat, Ahamkara, Manas, Jñanendriyas, Karmendriyas, Tanmatras, and Mahabhutas.
4. What is the concept of Maya in Advaita Vedanta? How does it explain the appearance of the world?
5. Explain how Vedanta philosophy addresses the problems of Reality, Cosmology, Psychology, and Liberation.
6. Analyze the contributions of Vedanta philosophers toward the understanding of the self (Atman) and the ultimate reality (Brahman).

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UNIT 7 : TYPES OF YOGA I

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 Karma Yoga

7.4 Bhakti Yoga

7.5 Jnana Yoga

7.6 Let us Sum up

7.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.8 Further Readings

7.9 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning and, concept of Karma Yoga and describe its types
- discuss the concept of Bhakti Yoga and explain its types.
- explain the meaning, concept of Jnana Yoga and discuss its types
- acquire an overall understanding about the types of Yoga

7.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit deals with the different types of Yoga. We shall start with the basics, beginning with the meaning and definition of different types of Yoga. We shall also explore the elements of Yoga and, discuss the different types of Yoga detail.

7.3 KARMA YOGA

The word Karma means action. Any physical or mental action or activity can be said as karma. It comes from the root world 'Kri' which means "to do" or "to cultivate". It is the path of selfless action. It is based on principles

like detachment, sense of duty, selflessness and oneness with the action or any form of activity. It is the action that every individual of the universe performs consciously or unconsciously.

Karma according to *Bhagavad Gita* [3/5-B.G]

na hi Kascit Ksanam api jatu tisthatya karma-Krt

Karyate hyavasah Karma Sarvah prakriti - Jair gunaih ||

Meaning:- Everyone is forced to act helplessly according to the quality he has required upon the modes of material nature, therefore no one can avoid from doing something, not even for a moment.

This prakruti, or nature, contains the three gunas that urge us to take action all the time. There is no period in our lives when we do not take action. For example, we bat an eyelid, breathe, and chant. There is always something going on, and our bodies or minds cannot stop until we fall asleep. When you dream, your mind is operating because it is projecting an image of something in which you are the actor, the stage, and the experience itself. Sometimes when we have a pleasant dream, we want to stay there. If we have a nasty dream, we wake up and maybe drink some water or do anything.

In *Bhagavad Gita* Lord Krishna mentions about Nishkam Karma or the Selfless action as the best form of action. He also prescribes the devotees to perform action and not to wish for the results. Results will be showered according to the types of karmas that the devotees have performed.

Krisha contends that we have rights only to the work or action, not to its outcome, whether good or negative. Our efforts, our ambitions, should be “desireless,” with no want for any satisfying (or unpleasing) outcome.

The three types of Karma according to Vedanta are-

Sanchita Karma - stored karma or impressions of previous life, past life and has not yet got the results.

Sanchita karma is unresolved karma from previous lifetimes that has not yet taken effect. The accumulated impact of our prior lives’ deeds are “packed” into a concentrated remnant of potentiality in our subtlest and

deepest layer (the causal level). It's like if we have a bank account with a large deposit that represents our entire karmic potential. According to the yogic worldview, not all karmic tendencies develop in this incarnation. Of fact, this term does not exist in Western psychology.

Sanchita karma is analogous to a generic subconscious that governs all of our potential future incarnations. Exactly as a state of rage is not manifested in this moment and will remain latent as long as specific conditions do not cause it to become active, some dispositions may not be awakened by the circumstances that we face in this lifetime.

Sanchita karma cannot be dissipated via ordinary life activities. As a result, the cycle of rebirths will not terminate until the jiva (individual soul) stops adding new karma to the existing sanchita deposit.

Prarabdha Karma – it refers to the karma that shapes our present life. Its effects have already begun to manifest in our daily experiences.

Prarabdha karma is the portion of our karma that bears fruit in this incarnation. It is the source of our current fate, the allotted share of sanchita karma to be worked out in a specific type of environment throughout a lifetime. It is the karma acquired from previous lives, but it is destined to be dealt with in this lifetime and has begun to manifest.

Prarabdha karma cannot be prevented. Yogis can impact karmic transformation in terms of lifespan, albeit prolonging a certain physical manifestation is not one of the goals of great jnana yogis, for example. According to yogic tradition, realized beings abandon their physical bodies shortly after their prarabdha karma (and sanchita karma) is fully dissipated. This does not imply that realized humans continue to have limitations till their death. In this context, prarabdha karma merely refers to the physical body.

Kriyaman/Agami Karma- it is the present day karma, continuous karma, whose results will be experienced in the future.

Types of Karma according to *Bhagavad Gita* are:-

Karma- According to Vedas (General activities following the Vedas).

Karm refers to auspicious deeds suggested by the scriptures to regulate the senses and purify the mind.

Karma refers to any necessary activity that he is expected to execute as part of his householder duties to himself, his family, others, ancestors, gods, poor people seeking alms, and other living beings. Such tasks are intended to protect Dharma and maintain global order and regularity in service to God, the world, or society.

Akarma - No Karma (karma is going on but we cannot feel it)

They have no karmic repercussions and do not tie the soul.

Akarma, or inaction, refers to failing to do those obligations, disregarding them, avoiding them, or escaping from them. It entails failing to complete the assigned task or failing to fulfill one's obligations to God and others. Inaction of this nature has sinful repercussions because it affects both others and the individual who acts in it. The Bhagavadgita describes this position as action in inaction.

Vikarma - Wrong Karma, prohibited karma (those Karma which are not allowed to do in life)

It is vikarma when a householder engages in improper behaviors that are not required of him, are contrary to Dharma and God, and result in negative repercussions or injury to others. They interrupt the world's order and regularity, causing anguish and suffering for both the individual and others. Such actions may be carried out personally or through others. In the latter situation, both the instigator and the instigatee commit sin.

Vikarma refers to inauspicious behaviors that are condemned by the scriptures because they are harmful and degrade the soul.

According to *Patanjali's Yoga Sutra* (4/7- P.Y.S).

karmasuklak???a? yoginastrividhamitare?am || 4.7 ||

Meaning- The activities of the yogi are neither white (good) or black (bad); but, the actions of others are threefold: white (good), black (bad), and mixed.

There are four types of karma yoga in Patanjali Yoga Sutra:-

1.Shukla karma- good deeds, good motives, white karma

Shukla Karma: All auspicious activities that benefit oneself and the world, thereby achieving the doer's positive qualities. There are karmic virtues from the perspective of society as well.

When the doer is mostly in the Sattva mode, he conducts white action. Accepting positive association in life, self-study, and yoga practice allows a person to engage in good deeds and execute white deeds.

2. Krishna karma - bad deeds, bad karma, black karma

Krishna karma refers to evil activities that hurt both the individual and the world. When the doer's Sattva mode is inhibited and the impact of Rajas and Tamas is strong, he or she is more likely to perform Krishna karma. He engages in K[cGa karma due to poor relationships, insufficient self-study, lack of austerities, and lack of yoga practice.

3. Shukla Krishna karma - mixture of good deeds and bad deeds or bad karma

White-Black Karma: The activities of someone who is absolutely new to yoga are never one-sided. This suggests that there is not only white, sinful, or black activity. He has engaged in a variety of activities throughout his life. He does both good and bad things on occasion. As a result, Maharshi Patanjali refers to his behavior as Shukla Krishna karma when he accomplishes both good and bad things.

4. Asukla akrishna karma- Karma performed by the yogis, they are neither good nor bad.

However, the yogi transcends these three modes and works beyond them, where neither sin nor virtue can touch him.

As a result, we should all practice performing activities of the highest quality possible.

7.4 BHAKTI YOGA

It is a path of yoga done through devotion and love. It is the surrender to the almighty and gaining love and blessings in return. Bhakti Yoga according to *Bhagavad Gita* are of nine types, known as Navadha Bhakti.

They are as follows-

1. Sravana
2. Kritana
3. Smarana
4. Archana
5. Bandana
6. Dasyam
7. Sakhyam
8. Pada Sevan
9. Atma Nivedan

1.Sravana-

Listening to the divine names of saints or dieties, as this practice helps direct the mind toward spirituality.

2. Kirtana

The purpose of Kirtana is to glorify God by chanting or singing holy verses with the help of musical instruments.

3. Archana -

Archana is worshipping to gain divine blessings, with water, flower, lighted lamp, food, etc. so that the deity is evoked.

4. Vandana-

Vandana is prayer or humble prostration touching the earth with the eight limbs of the body with faith, getting absorbed in the Divine love of the lord.

5. Smarana-

Remembrance of the Lord at all times. The mind does not think about other any object of the world.

6. Pada Sevana -

Serving the lord's feet. This can be total surrender to the lord.

7. Dasya-

Devotion to God expressed through the sentiment of servitude, Sweeping the temple, meditating on God and mentally serving Him like a servant, and serving the saints, sages, and devotees of God and the, sick is included in Dasya Bhakti.

8. Sakhyam-

Treat the Lord as a friend, not someone who is to be feared.

9. Atman Nivedana -

Self surrender to the God.

In *Bhagavad Gita* Lord Krishna mentioned the following types of Bhakta-

1. Aarta - the bhakta who comes with sincere plea or in distress.
2. Atharthi - who comes with financial and personal gains, monitory needs and some wishes.
3. Jnani - who comes to know the truth or the reality of Lord Krishna.
4. Jigyasu - who comes in search of knowledge.

(*Bhagavad Gita*-7/16)

7.5 JNANA YOGA

It is the path of knowledge and wisdom to attain liberation.

Jnana Yoga, as described in the Bhagavad Gita, is the route to knowledge and self-realization. It emphasizes the quest of wisdom by introspection and comprehending the true essence of the self, which is separate from the body and mind. This route leads to liberation by comprehending the oneness between the individual soul and the universal consciousness.

It is the path which involves contemplation, self study and study of the scriptures, and mediditation. It is the understanding of the true reality of the universe and getting aligned with the supreme reality. The tool of attaining knowledge in an individual life(Antaranga Sadhana) are as follows-

1. Sravan (to listen) means “listening” or “hearing” in Sanskrit. It is the first step towards attaining spiritual understanding. The goal of Shravan is to listen to scripture teachings (such as the Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita) as well as wisdom taught by a certified guru (spiritual instructor). This listening should be done with complete focus and open mind.

During Shravan, one receives teachings and concepts concerning the nature of reality, the Self, and the universe. It entails attending talks, reading scriptures, and comprehending the teachings taught by the sages and instructors.

2. Manan (to think)- means “reflection” or “contemplation.”

Manan’s goal is to deeply ponder on the teachings heard during Shravan. This reflection assists in resolving uncertainties and developing a clear and logical understanding of the topics.

3. Nidhidhyasana (Comtemplation, Meditation) The goal of Nidhidhyasana is to intensely focus on the knowledge received from Shravan and clarified by Manan until it becomes ingrained in one’s consciousness and lived experience. It is the step of internalizing and assimilating the truth.

Nidhidhyasana involves persistent and focused meditation on the important truths gained. This stage entails introspective reflection and constant meditation on the non-duality of reality and the Self’s union with Brahman. It is a process of overcoming the sensation of separation and gaining direct experiential knowledge.

The ways to progress in the spiritual journey (Bahiranga Sadhana) or Sadhana Chatusthaya in the Jnana Yoga are as follows -

1. Vivek (Discrimination)- Viveka denotes the ability to distinguish between the genuine and the unreal, the eternal and the non-eternal.

2. Vairagya (Renunciation)- Vairagya refers to dispassion or detachment from worldly cravings and attachments.

3.Mumukshatva (clinging for liberation)- Mumukshutva is the strong longing for emancipation, or independence from the cycle of birth and death.

4. Shat Sampat (six types of attainment, wealth’s, six wealth to achieve Jnana Yoga-

a. Sama- tranquility of mind which is free from al forms of Vasanas

Sama represents inner silence and calmness. We accomplish this by withdrawing our minds and senses from the distractions of the outside world and focusing on the inner Self.

b. Dama- control of senses

Dama represents self-control. When we use our intellect (Buddhi) to control our senses, thoughts, and emotions so that they don’t run away like wild horses, we may prevent rash actions and save ourselves from the troubles and suffering that come with them.

c. Uparati- withdrawal from the material world, journey inwards

Uparati implies to be self-sufficient and fearless. When you approach everything with a good attitude, you cannot be seriously injured since you can learn valuable lessons from anything, including mishaps. Fear and troubles develop whenever we are terrified of losing something. A wealthy individual who is encircled by guards, bolts, and padlocks is essentially a prisoner of his belongings.

d. Titiksha- tolerance or forbearance

It symbolizes the ability to bear or suffer any ailment or bad event that happens in life.

The aspirant should be patient with pairings of opposites like heat and cold, pleasure and pain, and so on.

e Sraddha- faith, belief, intense certainty about a path

Shraddha is strong faith in the guru's words, the teachings of the Vedantic scriptures, and, most importantly, in oneself. This isn't blind faith. It is built on sound reasoning, evidence, and experience. Only then can there be lasting faith. Only then can faith be perfect and unshakeable.

f. Samadhana- focus of mind, full concentration of mind towards a goal

Samadhana is the practice of achieving mental balance through attention. This is the outcome of shama, dama, uparati, titiksha, and shraddha. There is perfect concentration now. It is focusing the mind on the atman rather than allowing it to turn to objects and go its own way.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What is Karma Yoga?

Q2. What is Bhakti Yoga?

Q3. What is Jnana Yoga? Explain the tools to achive Jnana Yoga.



7.6 LET US SUM UP

- The word Karma means action. Any physical or mental action or activity can be said as karma. It comes from the root world 'Kri' which means "to do" or "to cultivate". It is the path of selfless action. It is based on principles like detachment, sense of duty, selflessness and oneness with the action.
- It is a path of yoga done through devotion and love. It is the surrender to the almighty and gaining love and blessings in return. Bhakti Yoga according to Bhagavad Gita is of nine types wchich are known as Navadha Bhakti.
- Jnana Yoga is the path of knowledge and wisdom to attain liberation mentioned by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita*. It is the path which involves contemplation, self-study and study of the scriptures, and meditation. It is the understanding of the true reality of the universe and be aligned with the supreme reality.



7.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q 1: The word Karma means action. Any physical or mental action or activity can be said as karma. It comes from the root world 'Kri' which means "to do" or "to cultivate". It is the path of selfless action. It is based on principles like detachment, sense of duty, selflessness and oneness with the action or any form of activity.

Answer to Q 2: It is a path of yoga done through devotion and love. It is the surrender to the almighty and gaining love and blessings in return. Bhakti Yoga according to *Bhagavad Gita* is of nine types which are known as Navadha Bhakti.

Answer to Q 3: It is the path of knowledge and wisdom to attain liberation mentioned by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita*. It is the path which involves contemplation, self-study and study of the scriptures, and

meditation. It is the understanding of the true reality of the universe and be aligned with the supreme reality.



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7.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

1. What is the root word of "Karma" and what does it mean?
2. Name the three types of Karma according to Vedanta.
3. What is Vikarma?
4. What is the meaning of Bhakti Yoga?
5. How many types of Bhakti are mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita?
6. Mention any one Antaranga Sadhana in Jnana Yoga.
7. What is Jnana Yoga?
8. What is Vairagya in Jnana Yoga?

B) Short Questions

1. Define Karma Yoga according to Bhagavad Gita. Explain the types of Karma mentioned in the *Bhagavad Gita*
2. Define Bhakti Yoga. Explain its types.

3. Define Jnana Yoga. Describe the tools to attain Jnana Yoga.
4. Explain the difference between Karma, Akarma, and Vikarma.
5. Describe the four types of Karma Yoga according to Patanjali's Yoga Sutra.
6. What is Shat Sampat? Name its six components.
7. Define Jnana Yoga and its goal in spiritual practice.

C) Long Questions

1. Write a detailed note on Karma Yoga, including its definition, principles, types of Karma according to Vedanta, Gita, and Patanjali.
2. Describe the types of Karma according to both Vedanta and the Bhagavad Gita, highlighting the differences between them.
3. What is Bhakti Yoga? Explain the nine types of Bhakti (Navadha Bhakti) with examples.
4. Discuss the classification of Bhaktas as per the Bhagavad Gita. What do these classifications tell us about the human approach to devotion?
5. Write a comprehensive essay on Jnana Yoga. Discuss Antaranga Sadhana and Bahiranga Sadhana (Sadhana Chatushtaya) in detail.
6. Compare and contrast Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Jnana Yoga in terms of goals, methods, and philosophical foundations.
7. What is the importance of detachment and selflessness in Karma Yoga? Support your answer with references from the Bhagavad Gita.

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UNIT 8: TYPES OF YOGA II

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objectives

8.2 Introduction

8.3 Mantra Yoga

8.4 Raja Yoga

8.5 Hatha Yoga

8.6 Let us Sum up

8.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

8.8 Further Readings

8.9 Model Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning, concept and types of Mantra Yoga
- describe the meaning, concept and stages of Raja Yoga
- explain the meaning, concept and elements of Hatha Yoga
- acquire overall understanding of the different types of Yoga

8.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit deals with some other types of Yoga. It will start with the basics, beginning with the meaning and definition of the different types of Yoga. We shall also explore the elements of these Yoga and, discuss them in detatils.

8.3 MANTRA YOGA

Mantras are the lyrical hymns which preserved great sources of energy. It is full of mystical consciousness Mantras have special Kind of vibrations while chanting It touches ground of self consciousness within a person. According to the scriptures mantras helps to proceed in any kinds

of sadhana. At present almost 90% of the mantras in the world are in accordance to the yoga sadhana.

The energy that liberated from any kinds of bending. It is the vibrations of sounds (Om). Mantra yoga produces electrifying sounds and its techniques are unique.

A mantra is a word, phrase, or sound repeated quietly or aloud to focus the mind and achieve a specific energy or quality.

Mantras are said to have a strong affect on the mind, body, and spirit, altering emotions, thoughts, and overall well-being. The term "mantra" comes from the Sanskrit words "man" meaning mind and "tra" meaning tool or instrument.

Yogic scriptures define Mantra Yoga as -

"Mantra Japa mano layo mantra yogah"-Mantra yoga is rhythm of hymns.

Mantras are very special configurations of sounds or syllables. Accordingly, each mantra has specific patterns of enunciation or chanting. Mantras work on the yantra of our physical body and also on our energy-body, mind and the inner-self.

There are several ways to practice Mantra Yoga. Repeat the Mantra verbally for some time, in a whisper for some time and mentally for some time. The mind wants variety. It gets disgusted with any monotonous practice. The mental repetition is very powerful.

There are various types of Mantra Yoga sadhana. They are following-

1.Nitya Mantra-Chanting of Mantras during daily activities.

This Sanskrit term denotes eternal, permanent, fixed, or unchanging. It can also refer to something that is done every day or at a specific time.

2. Naimittya Mantra - Chanting of Mantras for some special spiritual occasions.

3.Kamya Mantra - Chanting of Mantras to fulfill our wishes or desires.

A Kamya Mantra is a desire-driven chant or ritual that aims to achieve a certain wish or goal, such as riches, progeny, or success. The word "Kamya" is a Sanskrit phrase that means "desire" or "wish-based," and its

use in mantras indicates that their purpose is to seek celestial favors for personal desires.

4. Nisiddha Mantra - Chanting of Mantras or presenting of mantras in a wrong manner. Any mantra learnt from a guru or scripture and to pronounce it in a wrong way or a mix way knowingly or unknowingly.

5. Prayaschita Mantra - Chanting of Mantras to gain penance from Something (self realization).

Prayaschitta is a Sanskrit word signifying penance, atonement, or expiation for sins, mistakes, or transgressions. Mantras chanted for these purposes comes under Praschit Mantra

6. Achala Mantra- Chanting of Mantras Sitting in a Stable way and chanting mantra.

7. Chala Mantra- Chanting of mantra in walking or slanding position having certain activities

8. Vachika Mantra- Repetition of mantras on louder sounds.

Vachika Mantra is a mantra or religious chant sung loudly and audible to others. It is a type of japa (mantra repetition) that communicates with the outside world and expresses devotion via the use of the bodily voice and words.

9. Upansu Mantra –Chanting of Mantra in low Sound (whispering Sound)

The term “Upanshu Mantra” refers to murmured chanting or mumbling in which the mantra is repeated softly enough that only the chanter can hear it, usually with minor movement of the lips or tongue.

It is a Japa yoga practice that helps to purify the mind and lead to a higher level of consciousness. It is beneficial for personal prayer or meditation, particularly in public areas where loud chanting is not permitted.

10. Pradakshina Mantra - circling on a certain spiritual place chanting mantra.

The “Pradakshina Mantra” is not a single set mantra, but rather a prayer said as part of the Pradakshina ritual, which involves clockwise circumambulation of a sacred item or person.

8.4 RAJA YOGA

Raja yoga is the royal path of yoga mention by Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Gita. Through contemplation or dhyana one can moves towards the spiritual journey to attain liberation, moksha or nirvana. These are the steps of forwarding oneself towards the supreme reality and any which of these steps cannot be skipped. The supreme reality or the knowledge of the self can be introspected through the practice of raja yoga or the yoga of contemplation or meditation. It is the royal path of yoga which can achieve by the practiced of understanding the higher consciousness through meditation (dhyana).

According to Bhagavad Gita dhyana stills a person inside out and helps to control the senses according to his/her own wish. Raja yoga is a ultimate form of yoga which helps to unite or sublime with the supreme reality following certain practices of yoga systematically.

Raja yoga is defined as the ultimate goal of experiencing nothing but the ecstasy of the undisturbed, the natural condition of quiet, serenity, peace, inner communion, and happiness.

Raja Yoga, often known as the “royal path” or “king of yogas,” is a mental discipline that focuses on calming the mind through a systematic, eight-limbed path (Ashtanga Yoga) to reach self-realization and inner serenity. It focuses on meditation and mental discipline rather than physical postures, with the purpose of discovering one’s real spiritual nature by conquering the mind’s dispersed state.

Maharishi Patanjali gives the formula of Ashtanga Yoga which is considered to be the Royal Path of yoga in the yoga community. The stages of Raja yoga mentioned by Maharshi Patanjali through which we proceed towards the journey of Spiritual upliftment are following-

Yama- Self restraints, they are the self controls to live in harmony with the society.Yama, the first limb of yoga detailed in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras, consists of five ethical principles that serve as the foundation for living a virtuous and peaceful life. These principles are universal moral injunctions

that create a person's moral character and lay the framework for inner discipline and advancement on the yogic path.

They are of Five types-

Ahimsa- Non-violence. Ahimsa encourages people to avoid causing injury to any living being, including themselves, by their thoughts, words, or acts.

Satya- Truthfulness. Satya urges people to be honest and true in their interactions with others, avoiding deception and lying.

Asteya- Non-stealing. Asteya promotes respect for the property rights of others and encourages individuals to refrain from taking what does not belong to them.

Brahmacharya- Continence. Brahmacharya refers to more than just sexual conduct. It emphasizes self-control and sensual mastery, whether through celibacy when single or faithfulness when married.

Aparigraha- Non-greed. Aparigraha emphasizes the avoidance of greed and over-attachment to material wealth. It encourages being content with what one has.

These ethical principles not only lay the framework for living a virtuous and peaceful life, but they also help to build a person's moral character and inner discipline, which are required for continuing down the yogic path. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras emphasize mastering these concepts before moving on to the other seven limbs of yoga. Individuals practice the yamas to purify their minds and souls, building virtues like courage, compassion, and self-control. This practice allows people to transcend ego-driven urges that cause pain and develops a condition of harmony within themselves, with others, and with nature.

Individuals who incorporate yama concepts into their daily life can traverse the world with integrity, compassion, and self-awareness. The yamas serve as a compass, instilling moral responsibility and supporting personal development on the path to self-realization. Finally, adopting these ethical rules allows for a more balanced, harmonious, and rewarding life.

Niyama- Moral disciplines, they are mainly practiced to purify body and the mind. Niyama, the second limb of yoga in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, consists of five personal practices that lay the groundwork for inner purification and self-discipline. These observances serve as personal recommendations for persons seeking to create a healthy and harmonious relationship with themselves and the world around them.

The five Niyamas are following-

Saucha means cleanliness. Saucha emphasizes the necessity of staying clean, both physically and emotionally. It entails fostering a sense of purity in one's environment, ideas, and actions.

Santosha: Contentment. Santosha urges people to cultivate serenity and seek satisfaction in the present moment. It entails adopting a cheerful attitude, appreciating what one has, and resisting urges for what one does not have.

Tapas: Austerity. Tapas fosters self-discipline and self-control by purifying the body, mind, and senses. Fasting, meditation, and self-study are some of the practices that might help you develop your inner strength and resilience.

Svadhyaya means self-study. Svadhyaya requires studying spiritual materials, reflecting on oneself, and introspection. It entails developing self-awareness, comprehending one's thoughts and feelings, and investigating one's inner world in order to promote personal growth and transformation.

Ishvara-Pranidhana means devotion to a higher power. Ishvara-pranidhana encourages people to practice devotion and surrender to a higher power or ultimate reality. It entails recognizing the presence of a divine force and acting in accordance with divine will.

Asana- Sage Patanjali mentions asana as steady and comfortable posture in which we can gain relaxation for longer duration and perform meditations for self realization. They can be practiced for longer durations and by practicing them one in unharmed with any form of dualities- success or failure, good or bad.

Asana, the third limb of yoga according to Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, is the practice of physical postures that prepare the body for meditation while

also cultivating a sense of physical and mental serenity and stability. The basic goal of asana is not to create a specific physical shape, but to establish a stable and pleasant posture that can be held for a lengthy amount of time. Asana practice helps to align the body, improve circulation and respiration, and increase physical strength, flexibility, and endurance. Asanas also have therapeutic effects and can help treat a variety of physical and emotional problems.

According to Maharishi Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, an asana should be both stable and comfortable. This means that once the posture is established, it should be maintained for a lengthy period of time without discomfort. The posture should be maintained in a relaxed, effortless, and comfortable manner, free of strain, stress, pain, or discomfort. The body should be in a state of equilibrium, with the spine straight and breathing slow and deep. This ideal asana condition promotes stillness in the body, peace in the breath, and quietness in the mind, preparing the practitioner for meditation.

Asana, the third limb of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, refers to the practice of physical postures that prepare the body for meditation. The purpose of asana is not to achieve a specific physical shape, but rather to establish a stable and comfortable posture that can be easily maintained. Regular asana practice enhances body alignment, circulation, respiration, and physical traits including strength, flexibility, and endurance. It is critical to practice under the supervision of a skilled teacher who can ensure that asanas are performed safely and effectively while taking into account individual variances and talents.

Pranayama- Pranayama is the methods to purify our Nadis and to gain the optimum energy from the nature to sustain our life. It is the regulation of our breath. The covering of illusion is removed through the practice of pranayama.

The fourth limb of Yoga, as explained in Patanjali's Yoga Darshan, is Pranayama. "Pranayama" is derived from the Sanskrit words "prana," meaning 'life force' or 'vital energy,' and "ayama," meaning 'to control' or 'to stretch.' Pranayama is thus defined as the conscious control of the breath to regulate and extend one's life energy. Pranayama is a set of breathing

methods that aim to harness and manipulate the breath, resulting in a variety of physical, mental, and spiritual advantages. This practice serves as an important link between yoga's exterior parts, such as physical postures (asanas), and its internal dimensions, which include meditation and self-realization.

Pranayama is essential in preparing the mind and body for deeper levels of meditation and self-realization. It clears blockages in the flow of energy and allows for a profound spiritual connection.

Pranayama balances the flow of prana, or vital energy, through the body's energy pathways known as nadis. Practitioners can channel energy to different parts of the body by modulating their breathing, which promotes vitality and aids in healing.

Pratyahara- it is the withdrawal of the senses. As the tortoise withdraws itself from the dangers outside, it is prescribed for the yoga sadhakas to alienate oneself from the senses and get unattached to the senses through adopting pratyahar.

Pratyahara, the fifth limb of Yoga according to Patanjali's Yoga Darshan or Yoga Sutra, is a profound practice involving sensory deprivation. It is essential to the yogic path because it connects the outward features of yoga, such as physical postures (asanas) and breath control (pranayama), to the internal dimensions of meditation and self-realization. Pratyahara is the conscious and intentional shift of one's focus from the exterior sensory world to the inner self. It is an interior journey in which the practitioner learns to detach from the constant assault of external stimuli and sensory experiences, so acquiring control of their senses and mind.

Pratyahara is the practice of removing oneself from the external sensory distractions that overwhelm us every day, such as sights, sounds, scents, tastes, and tactile sensations. By diverting attention from these external stimuli, individuals create a place for inner peace and silence.

Pratyahara is commonly compared to a tortoise retreating its limbs into its shell. Similarly, practitioners withdraw their senses from the outside world and seek sanctuary within themselves.

Dharana - it is concentration. It is the focusing of the mind in a particular object. The object may be a part of our body or outside our body. It is performd for the spiritual realization.

Dharana, the sixth limb of Yoga in Patanjali's Yoga Darshan or Yoga Sutra, is an important practice that focuses on concentration. It serves as an important link between early levels of Yoga, such as Pratyahara (sensory withdrawal), and the later stages of meditation and self-realization.

Dharana is the deliberate and systematic training of the mind to focus on a single point or selected object of concentration. The object of focus varies from person to person, and might include visual symbols, mantras (holy sounds), or simply the natural rhythm of one's own breathing. The fundamental goal is to develop mental stability, clarity, and the ability to maintain undistracted focus, hence eliminating mental fluctuations and disruptions.

Dhyana –It is the process of meditation through which and individual finds oneness with the object of meditation. It is the continuous and uninterrupted concentration on a certain object, deity, or any point of meditation. This evokes the spiritual fire in a yoga sadhaka helful for the Raja Yoga.

Dhyana, often known as meditation, is the seventh limb of Yoga, according to Patanjali's Yoga Darshan or Yoga Sutra. It is a profound practice that is important to the yogic path, acting as a link between the previous limbs and the ultimate state of Samadhi (absorption). Dhyana is the practice of intense, uninterrupted meditation. This technique necessitates persistent focus and focused awareness, allowing practitioners to achieve expanded consciousness, inner serenity, and increased self-awareness. Unlike Dharana (concentration), which focuses on a single point or object, Dhyana is a continuous flow of consciousness that does not have a specific focal point.

Samadhi- it is the process of uniting of individual consciousness with the supreme consciousness. In Samadhi the mind is deeply sublimed in the object of contemplation and it loses itself in the object and has no awareness of itself. In this stage the senses of time and space are totally absent and a

spiritual practitioner of yoga can achieve the royal form of yoga or Raja Yoga in this stage.

Samadhi, widely regarded as the pinnacle of yogic practice, is the eighth and final limb of Yoga according to Patanjali's Yoga Darshan or Yoga Sutra. It marks the pinnacle of the yogic path, in which practitioners achieve profound absorption, unification, and oneness with their chosen object of meditation.

Samadhi is defined as a heightened level of awareness and consciousness marked by the blurring of boundaries between the observer, the observed, and the act of observing. It represents a condition of pure existence, free of the mind's normal fluctuations and distractions. Individuals in Samadhi become entirely absorbed in their meditation object, which could be a mantra, a visual sign, or deep interior contemplation.

Raja Yoga ends in the realization of the true self and enlightenment (Samadhi), which is attained by the systematic regulation of the mind's fluctuations through its eight limbs. This royal route, which begins with ethical behavior and progresses to breath control, sensory withdrawal, focus, and meditation, eventually leads to inner peace, stability, and freedom from suffering by quieting the mental flux. It is a practical, intellectual journey that cultivates inner consciousness and spiritual understanding while connecting with the Supreme Soul inside.

8.5 HATHA YOGA

Hatha Yoga is a preparatory process of Yoga. The word "ha" means sun, "tha" means moon. "Hatha" means the Yoga to bring balance between the sun and the moon in you, or the Pingala and Ida in you. One can explore Hatha Yoga in ways that take one beyond certain limitations, but fundamentally, it is a physical preparation – preparing the body for a higher possibility. It is the inner process of the union of the two energy channels Ida and Pingala Nadis in our body.

Hatha Yoga is a traditional form of yoga that focuses on balancing the body and mind through physical postures (asanas), breath control (pranayama),

and meditation. It is a preparatory stage for higher yogic practices like Raja Yoga and is designed to purify the body, enhance flexibility, and develop mental focus.Hatha Yoga stresses the interconnectedness of the mind, body, and breath, combining physical activity with controlled breathing.

It tries to balance the active (solar) and passive (lunar) forces within the body in order to promote stability and well-being. The practice is based on a sustained, focused effort to gain mastery over the body and mind. Purification of the body and mind results in a greater sense of inner peace and harmony. Hatha Yoga is the core of many current yoga techniques, providing a road to balance, strength, and inner peace for people of all ages and fitness levels.

Elements of Hatha Yoga - Hatha Yoga is based on six main elements, also known as the Shatkarma (six purification techniques), along with asanas, pranayama, and meditation.

1. Shatkarma (Six Cleansing Techniques)

These are purification methods to detoxify the body and prepare it for higher yogic practices:

Dhauti – Cleansing of the digestive tract

Basti – Colon cleansing

Neti – Nasal cleansing

Trataka – Eye cleansing and concentration technique

Nauli – Abdominal massage and purification

Kapalabhati – Skull-shining breath (a form of rapid breathing)

2. Asanas (Physical Postures)

These are body postures designed to improve strength, flexibility, and balance.

Examples: Tadasana (Mountain Pose), Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose), Sarvangasana (Shoulder Stand).

3. Pranayama (Breath Control)

Techniques to regulate and control the breath, enhancing energy flow.

Examples: Nadi Shodhana (Alternate Nostril Breathing), Bhastrika (Bellows Breath), Ujjayi (Ocean Breath).

4. Mudras (Gestures and Seals)

Hand and body gestures that direct energy within the body.

Examples: Gyan Mudra (Knowledge Gesture), Prana Mudra (Vital Energy Gesture).

5. Bandhas (Energy Locks)

Muscle contractions that help control the flow of energy.

Examples: Mula Bandha (Root Lock), Uddiyana Bandha (Abdominal Lock).

6. Dhyana (Meditation and Concentration) - Focuses on mental stillness, awareness, and deep concentration.

Example: Vipassana, Mantra Meditation.

Hatha Yoga is a comprehensive practice that includes physical postures (asanas), breathing methods (pranayama), and meditation. Its goal is to balance the body's energies and achieve mental, bodily, and spiritual health. It promotes greater physical health, reduced stress, more mental clarity, and a stronger connection to one's inner self, providing a comprehensive path to inner peace and harmony. This ancient practice offers a strong approach for reducing stress, anxiety and depression, and fostering a sense of serenity, making it a valuable and accessible tool for people of all ages and backgrounds seeking to live a more balanced and engaged life.

Benefits of Hatha Yoga

Hatha yoga provides numerous physical and mental advantages through the combination of postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), and meditation. Physical benefits include increased flexibility, strength, and balance, as well as greater respiratory and cardiovascular health. Mentally, Hatha yoga efficiently reduces stress and anxiety while increasing attention, mindfulness, and self-awareness. The practice's holistic approach promotes detoxification, increased circulation, and a balanced neurological system, all of which contribute to a better sense of inner peace and well-being.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1) What is Mantra Yoga?

Q 2) What do you understand by the term Raja Yoga? Name its stages according to Maharashi Patanjali.

Q 3) What is Hatha Yoga? Name its elements.



8.6 LET US SUM UP

- Mantras are the lyrical hymns which preserved great sources of energy. It is full of mystical consciousness Mantras have special Kind of vibrations while chanting It touches ground of self consciousness within a person. According to the scriptures mantras helps to proceed in any kinds of sadhana. At present almost 90% of the mantras in the world are in accordance to the yoga sadhana

  There are various types of Mantra Yoga sadhana. They are following-

  1. Nitya Mantra-Chanting of Mantras during daily activities.
  2. Nimittya Mantra - Chanting of Mantras for some special spiritual occasions.
  3. Kamya Mantra - Chanting of Mantras to fulfill our wishes or desires.
  4. Nisiddha Mantra - Chanting of Mantras or presenting of mantras in a wrong manner. Any mantra learnt from a guru or scripture and to pronounce it in a wrong way or a mix way knowingly or unknowingly.
  5. Prayaschita Mantra - Chanting of Mantras to gain penance from Something (self realization).
  6. Achala Mantra- Chanting of Mantras Sitting in a Stable way and chanting mantra
  7. Chala Mantra- Chanting of mantra in walking or slanding position having certain activities
  8. Vachika Mantra- Repetition of mantras on louder sounds.

9. Upansu Mantra –Chanting of Mantra in low Sound (whispering Sound)
10. Pradakshina Mantra - circling on a certain spiritual place chanting mantra.

- Raja yoga is the royal path of yoga mention by lord krishna in Bhagavad Gita. Through contemplation or dhyana one can moves towards the spiritual journey to attain liberation, moksha or nirvana. These are the steps of forwarding oneself towards the supreme reality and any which of these steps cannot be skipped. The supreme reality or the knowledge of the self can be introspected through the practice of raja yoga or the yoga of contemplation or meditation. It is the royal path of yoga which can achieve by the practiced of understanding the higher consciousness through meditation (dhyana).
- The stages of Raja yoga mentioned by Maharshi Patanjali through which we proceed towards the journey of Spiritual upliftment are following- Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dharana, Dhyan, Samadhi
- Hatha Yoga is a preparatory process of Yoga. The word “ha” means sun, “ta” means moon. “Hatha” means the Yoga to bring balance between the sun and the moon in you, or the Pingala and Ida in you. One can explore Hatha Yoga in ways that take one beyond certain limitations, but fundamentally, it is a physical preparation – preparing the body for a higher possibility. It is the inner process of the union of the two energy channels Ida and Pingala Nadis in our body.
- Hatha Yoga is a traditional form of yoga that focuses on balancing the body and mind through physical postures (asanas), breath control (pranayama), and meditation. It is a preparatory stage for higher yogic practices like Raja Yoga and is designed to purify the body, enhance flexibility, and develop mental focus.
- It has various elements for the purification and strengthening of the body.
- They are- Shatkarma, Asana, Mudra Bandha, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dharana, Dhyan.

8.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q1: Mantras are the lyrical hymns which preserved great sources of energy. It is full of mystical consciousness Mantras have special Kind of vibrations while chanting It touches ground of self consciousness within a person. According to the scriptures mantras helps to proceed in any kinds of sadhana. At present almost 90% of the mantras in the world are in accordance to the yoga sadhana.

There are 10 types of Mantra yoga. They are-

1. Nitya Mantra-Chanting of Mantras during daily activities.
2. Nimittya Mantra - Chanting of Mantras for some special spiritual occasions.
3. Kamya Mantra - Chanting of Mantras to fulfill our wishes or desires.
4. Nisiddha Mantra - Chanting of Mantras or presenting of mantras in a wrong manner. Any mantra learnt from a guru or scripture and to pronounce it in a wrong way or a mix way knowingly or unknowingly.
5. Prayaschita Mantra - Chanting of Mantras to gain penance from Something (self realization).
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9. Upansu Mantra –Chanting of Mantra in low Sound (whispering Sound)
10. Pradakshina Mantra - circling on a certain spiritual place chanting mantra.

Answer to Q 2) Raja yoga is the royal path of yoga mention by lord krishna in Bhagavad Gita. Through contemplation or dhyana one can moves towards the spiritual journey to attain liberation, moksha or nirvana. These are the steps of forwarding oneself towards the supreme reality and any which of these steps cannot be skipped. The supreme reality or the knowledge of the self can be introspected through the practice of raja yoga or the yoga of contemplation or meditation. It is the royal path of yoga which can achieve by the practiced of understanding the higher consciousness through meditation (dhyana).

The stages of raja yoga or Ashtanga Yoga by Maharshi Patanali are-

Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dharana, Dhyan, Samadhi

Answer to Q 3) Hatha Yoga is a preparatory process of Yoga. The word "ha" means sun, "ta" means moon. "Hatha" means the Yoga to bring balance between the sun and the moon in you, or the Pingala and Ida in you. One can explore Hatha Yoga in ways that take one beyond certain limitations, but fundamentally, it is a physical preparation – preparing the body for a higher possibility. It is the inner process of the union of the two energy channels Ida and Pingala Nadis in our body.

The elements of Hatha Yoga are- Shatkarma, Asana, Mudra Bandha, Pranayama, Pratyahar, Dharana, Dhyana etc.



8.8 FURTHER READING

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8.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

1. What does the word "Hatha" in Hatha Yoga mean?
2. Name any two types of Mantra Yoga sadhana.
3. What is the meaning of Raja Yoga?
4. Who described the eight limbs of Raja Yoga?
5. What is “Dhyana” in the context of Raja Yoga?
6. Define Pranayama in one line.
7. What are Shatkarma techniques in Hatha Yoga?
8. Give one example of a physical posture (asana) in Hatha Yoga.
9. What is the significance of “Om” in Mantra Yoga?
10. Name any one Bandha used in Hatha Yoga.

B) Short Questions

1. What is Mantra Yoga? Explain its types.
2. What is Raja Yoga? Write down its stages and importance.
3. What is Hatha Yoga? Describe its Elements.
4. What is meant by ‘Ashtanga Yoga’? Name its eight limbs.
5. Write a short note on the importance of Dhyana and Samadhi in Raja Yoga.
6. How does Raja Yoga lead to spiritual liberation according to the Bhagavad Gita?
7. Mention and describe any three Shatkarma techniques used in Hatha Yoga.
8. What are Mudras and Bandhas? Provide one example of each.
9. How is Hatha Yoga a preparatory practice for higher yogic disciplines?
10. What role does meditation play in Hatha Yoga?
11. How does Mantra Yoga affect the mind and body?

C) Long Questions

1. Describe the concept, techniques, and different types of Mantra Yoga. How does it work on the physical and subtle body?
2. Discuss the eight limbs of Raja Yoga as described by Maharishi Patanjali. Explain how each stage contributes to spiritual development.
3. Explain the philosophy and practice of Raja Yoga as discussed in the Bhagavad Gita. How does it help in attaining self-realization?
4. Describe the main elements of Hatha Yoga. Explain how each element prepares the practitioner for advanced yogic practices.
5. What are the Shatkarma techniques in Hatha Yoga? Discuss their significance in the purification of body and mind.
6. Compare and contrast Mantra Yoga and Hatha Yoga in terms of purpose, methods, and outcomes.
7. Evaluate the role of physical practices (asana, pranayama, mudra, and bandha) in Hatha Yoga for achieving mental and spiritual well-being.

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UNIT 9 : INTRODUCTION TO YOGIC PRACTICES I

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives
9.2 Introduction
9.3 Concept of Asana
9.4 Concept of Pranayama
9.5 Concept of Mudra-Bandha
9.6 Let us Sum up
9.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
9.8 Further Reading
9.9 Model Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, learners will be able to:

- explain the concept of Asana
- describe the concept of Pranayama.
- discuss the concept of Mudra- Bandha.
- enhance their knowlefge of flexibility, body coordination and balance.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

Asana, Pranayama, and Mudra-Bandhas are essential physical practices in yoga. Scientists and doctors from all around the world are now researching the impact of yoga practices before and after performance. Their findings demonstrate that asanas, pranayamas, mudras and bandhas are effective ways to repair and sustain physical and mental wellness. The asanas are then steady and comfortable physical posture. Asana promotes stability, health and lightness of limb. A steady and comfortable posture promotes mental balance and prevents mental instability. Asanas are more than just gymnastic exercises. Pranayama can be defined as ways for

extending and expanding vital life force energy through purposeful regulation of respiration. Pranayama is a set of techniques for harnessing and manipulating universal energy, known as prana. It is an essential component of yoga, frequently included into asana practice or used as a prerequisite for meditation. Pranayama appears in several of the early Indian writings, where a wide range of objectives are described. Mudras and bandhas are more important in yoga than asana and pranayama because they influence the pranamaya and manomaya koshas respectively. Many feelings in the body start in the neurological system and other changes occur on the mental level. In the pranic field, the body's energy production swings. For these reasons, both activity and dissipation occur in the inner mental and pranic states. Mudra, in its broadest sense, refers to a gesture, a specific mood or a conscious state. The mudras mentioned in the yogic scriptures represent special moods or sensations of consciousness, chitta and states of energy, prana. A small number of practitioners are familiar with mudras and their practices.

9.3 CONCEPT OF ASANA

The third limb of Ashtanga yoga of Maharshi Patanjali is asana or posture. Sage Patanjali defined asana as- **"Sthiram Sukham Asanam"**. That means asanas are then steady and comfortable physical posture. Asana promotes stability, health and lightness of limb. A steady and comfortable posture promotes mental balance and prevents mental instability. Asanas are more than just gymnastic exercises; they are postures. To do asana needs a clean, open space, a blanket and determination: whereas other forms of physical exercise require big playing fields and expensive equipments. Asanas can be performed alone because the limbs of the body provide the necessary weight and counterweights. These are practiced to improve agility, balance, endurance and energy. Asanas have evolved over ages to work every muscle, nerve and gland in the body. They maintain a healthy physique that is strong and supple without being muscle-bound and they protect the body from sickness. They alleviate weariness and calm the nerves. However, their true value resides in the way they

teach and discipline the mind. Many actors, acrobats, athletes, dancers, musicians and sportsmen have fantastic physique and excellent physical control, but they lack control over their minds, intellect and selves. As a result, they are disconnected fromtheir true selves, and well-balanced presonalities are rare among them. They generally prioritise the body over everything else. Though the yogi values his body, he considers not only its perfection but also his senses, mind, intellect and soul. The yogi conquers the body via the practice of asanas, transforming it into a proper vehicle for the spirit. He understands that it is an essential vehicle for the Spirit. A soul without a body is analogous to a bird stripped of its ability to fly. The yogi has no fear of death because all flesh must eventually die. He understands that the body is always evolving, influenced by childhood, youth and old age. Although birth and death are natural processes, the soul is not affected by them. As a man discard worn out garments and replaces them with new ones, so does the inhabitant within the body discard worn out bodies and enter into new ones. The yogi thinks that the Lord gave him his body not just for his own enjoyment, but also for the service of others at all times. He does not consider it his property. He understands that the Lord, who gave him his body, will one day take it away. By executing asanas, the practitioner gains health, which is more than just existence. It is not a product that can be acquired with money. It is an asset that can be earned via simple hard labour. It is a state of total harmony between body, mind and spirit. Health is defined as the forgetfulness of bodily and mental consciousness. By performing asanas, the yogi is able to overcome physical limitations and mental distractions. He surrenders his activities and their fruits to the Lord in order to serve the world. The yogi realises that his life and all of its actions are part of the divine action in nature, manifested and acting through the form of man. He recognises the movement of the seasons and the throbbing of global life in the rhythm of his breathing and the beating of his pulse. His body is a temple that contains the Divine Spark. He believes that neglecting or denying the body's needs and viewing it as something other than divine, is to neglect and deny the universal life of which it is a part. The body's demands are those of the divine spirit, which lives within it. The yogi does

not turn to heaven to discover God because he knows He dwells inside, known as the Inner Self. He senses God's reign both within and out and he discovers that heaven is within himself. Where does the body stop and the mind start? Where does the mind stop and the spirit start? They cannot be separated because they are interconnected and represent diverse parts of the same all-encompassing divine awareness.

The Shiva Samhita explains how Lord Shiva constructed an asana for each of the 84 lakhs. However, different yoga manuals may recognise different numbers of asanas. Mainly the asanas are the classified into two types i.e.

i. **Dhyanasana** (Meditative posture): Padmasana, Siddhasana, Swastikasana, Sukhasana etc. are the example of Dhyanasana.
ii. **Swasthasana** (Cultural posture): Cultural postures are the divided into five categories i.e.
    a. **Standing Posture**: Tadasana, Padahastasana, Trikonasana, Vrikshasana etc. are the example of standing posture.
    b. **Sitting Posture**: Vakrasana, Paschimottanasana, Simhasana, Sasankasana etc. are the example of sitting posture.
    c. **Supine Posture**: Halasana, Setubandhasana, Uttanapadasana, Pawanamuktasana etc. are the example of supine postures.
    d. **Prone Posture**: Dhanurasana, Salabhasana, Bhujangasana, etc. are the example of prone postures.
iii. **Vishranti Posture**: Makarasana, Savasana etc. are the example of relaxing postures.

9.4 CONCEPT OF PRANAYAMA

Pranayama is the practice of regulating one's breath. In Sanskrit, "prana" denotes life essence, while "yama" means control. The breath represents prana and pranayama can be defined as ways for extending and expanding vital life force energy through purposeful regulation of

respiration. Pranayama is a set of techniques for harnessing and manipulating universal energy, known as prana. It is an essential component of yoga, frequently included into asana practice or used as a prerequisite for meditation. Pranayama appears in several of the early Indian writings, where a wide range of objectives are described. The practice can be utilised for cleansing, liberation, mental focus, body stabilisation, or as an addition to other yoga techniques. Hatha Yoga practitioners deserve credit for popularising pranayama as a discipline in and of itself, as well as a means or sustaining physical and mental wellness. They gave it a prominent place among Hatha Yoga practices and it was these practitioners who detailed several pranayama procedures, highlighting their efficacy. There are guidelines for practicing them independently and comfortably. Pranayama must be learned from a teacher. Initially, the relative duration should be 6:8:6. Finally, you can do 20:80:40. Here it becomes 1:4:2, which means one unit of time for puraka, four units for kumbhaka and two units for rechaka. A matra is the time required for two claps and one snap. If an aspirant can do pranayama for 20:80:40 matras, he is considered the best sadhaka. This is the finest pranayama. The quality varies with the number of rounds; eventually it becomes lengthy and subtle.

Pranayama is also the fourth limb of Patanjali's ashtanga system, a well-known eight-limbed practice of yoga. According to Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, pranayama is a preparatory practice that must be completed before moving on to more sophisticated techniques in the other limbs. The definition of pranayama given by the sage Patanjali in *Yoga Sutra* -

तस्मिन्सति श्वासप्रश्वासया र्गतिविच्छ दः प्राणायामः

Tasminsati svasaprasvasayorgativichchheda? pranayamah - 2/49- P.Y.S.

Tasmin: on that; Sati: having been: Svasaprasvasayah: means inhalation and exhalation; gati: means movement and vichchhedah: means break or cessation; Pranayama: Pranayama.

After doing the asana, pranayama is the cessation of inhaling and exhalation. After mastering the yamas, niyamas and asanas, the aspirant should begin pranayama. It is the end of inhalation and expiration. There is no rechaka or puraka; there is only kumbhaka.

It should be mentioned that pranayama does not involve deep breathing. Similarly, pranayama is not practiced by holding the breath for as long as possible. Pranayama is the controlled breathing that allows the breath to be retained. It is noteworthy to notice that serpents, elephants, tortoises and other animals have longer lives than humans because they breathe less frequently. A human being's life can also be extended by holding his or her breath, but this requires expertise and practice. Prana is believed to resemble a wild elephant. If you wish to tame the prana, you must exercise the same caution you would when taming a wild elephant. There must be consistency and patience; there should be no rush or haste. Retention must be done slowly and carefully. If there are any negative effects, either physically or mentally, the practice must be discontinued for a few days or months. Before commencing the practice, consider the following factors: atmospheric conditions, food habits, age, physical condition and so on.

There should be enough prudence. In Hatha yoga, it is expressly emphasised that breath control should not be used in physical asanas. Controlling one's breath in some physical postures is improper. Pranayama can also be done in different positions, but the student must be aware of which exercises to use and which to avoid. This requires a thorough knowledge of the definition of prana. It has nothing to do with the lungs, but everything to do with the life current. The ability to hold the breath is the ultimate goal of pranayama. Puraka, rechaka and kumbhaka are the three categories of pranayama. Kevala kumbhaka, the fourth type, comes in two varieties: antaranga and bahiranga. The physical body the brain and the spinal cord all experience changes as a result of holding their breath. Pranayama affects the brain via influencing the neurological system. The lungs have little to do with it. Puraka, kumbhaka and rechaka have distinct physiological consequences.

Therefore, pranayama means to stop the breath, either inside or outside. While the number of respirations per minute is reduced the ayama or length of prana, is enhanced. As a result, during pranayama, we only breathe once or twice each minute, compared to fourteen times per minute during normal breathing.

9.5 CONCEPT OF MUDRA- BANDHA

Mudras and bandhas are more important in yoga than asana and pranayama because they influence the pranamaya and manomaya koshas respectively. Many feelings in the body start in the neurological system and other changes occur on the mental level. In the pranic field, the body's energy production swings. For these reasons, both activity and dissipation occur in the inner mental and pranic states. Mudra, in its broadest sense, refers to a gesture, a specific mood or a conscious state. The mudras mentioned in the yogic scriptures represent special moods or sensations of consciousness, chitta and states of energy, prana. A small number of practitioners are familiar with mudras and their practices. Various mudras or gestures are utilised in Indian dance to represent a specific mood or emotion. Anger is expressed through the eyes, hand positions and body posture. This is only one example. It has also been noticed that when a specific mudra is done for an extended period of time, an emotion associated with that mudra is experienced. The experience described in the mudra is created. This also occurs in everyday life. For example, a furious individual elevates their brows, tenses their hands and clenches their fists. Even if one is not furious, adopting certain bodily movements will gradually cause one to become angry. Whatever bodily state is adopted produces a specific type of feeling in the neurological system and causes a change in brainwaves. This alteration in brainwaves affects the state of awareness and for a short period of time, that particular feeling is felt inside the mind. The mudras and bandhas mentioned in yogic texts aid to relax and manage nervous system sensations and stimulations. The mudras known in yoga are frequently shown in portraits, statues or idols of saints, sages, or gods and goddesses, such as jnana mudra, chin mudra, shankhmudra and abhaya mudra. Mudras like ashwini mudra, vajroli mudra and tadagi mudra are used in kundalini and kriya yoga. These mudras affect the pranamaya kosha and are used to alter the flow of prana. Their influence extends to the brain, where they aid in the emergence of a specific feeling within the chitta, causing one to

become introverted and internalised. These techniques can also help one focus and concentrate more effectively.

Bandhas are physical and psychic locks that block sensations formed in the nerves of the body and brain while awakening other specialised types of feelings. Any constriction or expansion of the internal organs, whether in the neck, throat, perineum or anal region, alters the reactions, emotions and quantity of energy within the organs. It stimulates or calms the body, providing a sense of inner steadiness. Many ideologies, religions and systems of thinking around the world believe that in order to achieve spiritual or inner realisation, one must entirely detach from the exterior world. The primary goal of mudras and bandhas is to aid in achieving an inner condition in which external emotions and events do not disrupt the mental state. In prayer or meditation, one should be able to keep the mind focused and prevent any bad feelings or reactions from manifesting inwardly. Vedanta teaches that everything is transient; it is all maya, illusion and delusion; forsake it and live in the truth. However, in yoga and tantra, the current condition is believed to be used as a stepping-stone to higher states. Yoga teaches that if one chooses to acquire one-pointedness and spiritual experience, one can do it through the means of the senses as well. The senses can be extended and stimulated to the point that the mind becomes completely focused. Mudras can be used in this context; for example, khechari mudra is associated with the senses. Using a certain approach, one can stimulate, expand and immerse oneself in the sensations that develop inside. Using physical and psychic movements stimulates the sensations of annamaya, pranamaya and manomaya koshas, allowing to practitoner enter them. Mudras and bandhas play an important role in the second step.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: What is the definition of Asana?

Q2: What is the definition of Pranayama?

Q3: Mention any two names of Mudra.

Q4: What are the benefits of Mudras and Bandhas?



9.6 LET US SUM UP

- Asanas, pranayamas, mudras and bandhas are effective ways to repair and sustain physical and mental wellness. Asana, Pranayama, Mudra and Bandha are all essential components of yoga that promote mental and physical health.
- The asanas are steady and comfortable physical posture. Asana promotes stability, health and lightness of limb. A steady and comfortable posture promotes mental balance and prevents mental instability. Asanas are more than just gymnastic exercises. Pranayama can be defined as ways for extending and expanding vital life force energy through purposeful regulation of respiration.
- The breath represents prana and pranayama can be defined as ways for extending and expanding vital life force energy through purposeful regulation of respiration. Pranayama is a set of techniques for harnessing and manipulating universal energy, known as prana. It is an essential component of yoga, frequently included into asana practice or used as a prerequisite for meditation. Pranayama appears in several of the early Indian writings, where a wide range of objectives are described.
- Mudras and bandhas are more important in yoga than asana and pranayama because they influence the pranamaya and manomaya koshas respectively. Many feelings in the body start in the neurological system and other changes occur at the mental level. In the pranic field, the body's energy production swings. For these reasons, both activity and dissipation occur in the inner mental and pranic states. Mudra, in its broadest sense, refers to a gesture, a specific mood or a conscious state.

9.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q1: Sage Patanjali defined asana as- "Sthiram Sukham Asanam". That means asanas are steady and comfortable physical posture. Asana promotes stability, health and lightness of limb.

Answer to Q2: Tasminsati svasaprasvasayorgativichchhedah pranayamah. The breath represents prana and pranayama can be defined as ways for extending and expanding vital life force energy through purposeful regulation of respiration. Pranayama is a set of techniques for harnessing and manipulating universal energy, known as prana.

Answer to Q3: Mudras are hand gestures or postures used to direct prana, or life force, for healing, spiritual enlightenment and mental and physical well-being. Mudras include Chin mudra, Yoni mudra, Bhairava mudra and Varun mudra, among others.

Answer to Q4: Mudras and bandhas are yoga exercises that can help with concentration, balance and awareness. They can also improve digestion, reduce stress and increase overall health.

9.8 FURTHER READING

- Saraswati,S.S. *Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha*, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger.
- Phukan B.N., *Yoga Vigyan Parichaya*, Dr. Jogoda Phukan, N. Lakhimpur.
- Muktibodhananda, Swami. *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger.

9.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

1. What is the meaning of "Sthiram Sukham Asanam"?
2. Name any two meditative postures (Dhyanasana).
3. What is the purpose of Pranayama in Yoga?

4. What are the three phases of Pranayama?
5. Name one mudra used in Kundalini Yoga.
6. Which kosha is influenced by mudras?
7. What does the term 'bandha' mean in the context of Yoga?
8. Mention one example of a prone posture.
9. According to Yoga, what does the body serve as for the yogi?
10. What is the ratio of Puraka:Kumbhaka:Rechaka in ideal pranayama?

B) Short Questions:

1. How many types of Asanas are there?
2. Write any three benefits of Yoga Asanas.
3. How many types of Pranayama are there, according to sage Patanjali?
4. Write any five benefits of Yoga Mudras and Bandhas.
5. How do asanas contribute to physical and mental wellness?
6. What precautions should be taken before starting the practice of Pranayama?
7. Differentiate between Dhyanasana and Swasthasana.
8. What are Mudras and how do they affect the pranic and mental state?
9. Describe the role of bandhas in yogic practice.
10. What is the relationship between breath retention and longevity in Pranayama?
11. How do mudras help in altering the state of consciousness?

C) Long Questions:

1. Define Asana and discuss their types.
2. Elaborate on the definition, classification, and physiological benefits of Pranayama.
3. Write a note on Mudras and Bandhas.
4. Explain the various benefits of Mudras and Bandhas.
5. Discuss the philosophical and practical importance of asana as the third limb of Ashtanga Yoga.
6. Compare and contrast the roles of Asana, Pranayama, Mudra, and Bandha in achieving harmony between body, mind, and spirit.

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UNIT 10 : INTRODUCTION TO YOGIC PRACTICES II

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives

10.2 Introduction

10.3 About Shatkarma

10.4 The Six Categories of Shatkarmas

10.5 About Meditation

10.6 Let us Sum up

10.7 Further Reading

10.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

10.9 Model Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, students will be able to –

- acquire an understanding about Yogic Shatkarmas
- explain the techniques of Shatkarmas
- discuss the process of Meditation

10.2 INTRODUCTION

Physical health is closely linked to diet and the kinds of food we consume- hence the saying, “We are what we eat.” In yogic anatomy, the physical body, sustained by food, is referred to as the Anamaya Kosha. In the present time, food contains various impure materials, such as chemical fertilisers and pesticides which are used to improve agricultural yield. Food should be consumed after sunrise and before dusk in Hindu tradition, but in our modern lives, many people eat dinner late, sleep at midnight, wake up late and eat breakfast late, disrupting the natural cycle and perhaps causing illness and disease. Because we cannot regulate the entire food chain and typically purchase food from a market or supermarket, certain pollutants remain. But we can make some changes to limit the amount of toxin we

take in through our food. We have the option of eating non-processed whole fruits and vegetables, choosing where we buy our food, preparing and cooking our meals and deciding when we eat. Our physical body is immediately affected by mental stress and problems such as anxiety, depression, mood swings, tension, worry and bad thoughts. We can feel it in the form of pain, fatigue, or loss of appetite. Mental stress stays in the physical body and Shatkarmas helps to relieve it. Shatkarma is a collection of six yogic cleansing practices that can be especially beneficial in combating the negative effects of modern lifetyle, such as poor diet, sedentary habits and environmental toxins, by promoting detoxification and overall physical and mental well-being through practices such as Shatkarmas and Meditation.

10.3 ABOUT SHATKARMA

Shatkarma is a series of yogic purifications for the body. The Sanskrit term shat signifies six, whereas karma implies action. The six-cleansing action is known as Shatkarma. It is part of the yoga practice. Their objective is to remove impurities and toxins from the body and they are clinical in nature. It treats ailments and prepares the body for asanas and pranayama. The shatkarmas also balance vata, pitta and kapha, the three illnesses that the body produces. According to Ayurveda and Hatha Yoga any imbalance in these three illnesses causes sickness. The shatkarmas are also used before pranayama and other advanced yoga techniques to ensure that the body is clear of sickness and does not interfere with the spiritual path. Shatkarmas purify the body. However, their goal is not only physical, but also inner cleaning. When the body is cleaned, internal abnormalities are eliminated and good health is restored. Without such purification, the body will be unprepared for more advanced yoga practices. The shatkarmas bring the two primary flows of prana, ida and pingala, into harmony, resulting in physical and mental purity and balance. These strong methods should never be used solely by reading about them in a book or learning from inexperienced individuals. According to the tradition, a person has the right to teach others only after receiving

instruction from the guru. These instructions must be offered directly, including information of when and how to perform the procedures based on the individual's needs. Purification extends a person's life on Earth. The Upanishads and Vedas declare several times that humans can live for a hundred years. This is not simply the thinking of the Vedas, Upanishads or old philosophers; it is the truth. Living for a hundred years or more is natural for a healthy, disease-free human being. Accurate genetic replication of cells can last for that long if the programming is not interrupted by contaminants or imbalances.

Impurities in the body induce problems, which is the core cause of illness. Impurity encompasses not just waste stuff but also physical, mental, emotional and spiritual impurities. Physical impurity is mostly related to nutrition, including its characteristics and flaws. For example, meal times are rarely based on what is optimal for the body. Many individuals get up late; eat breakfast at ten, lunch at two and dinner between eight and nine at night. In addition, food contains several impurities, such as residues from agricultural fertilizers and pesticides. Such pollutants cannot be totally eliminated from the diet because most people rely on food purchases but certain mealtime adjustments can be made to align with the body's normal schedule. The outcome will be an improvement in health. The Vedic tradition emphasises the need of eating after sunrise and before dusk, however most people nowadays do not believe in or follow this counsel, despite the fact that Jains continue to follow stringent dietary rules. Why not eat before dawn or after dusk? This theory has a scientific basis and it is related to the body's biorhythm. The solar plexus is connected to the digestive system and triggered by sunlight. This is a crucial fact to remember. It explains why following this basic guideline is the first step toward staying disease free. Ayurveda emphasised that half of the stomach should be filled with nourishing food, 25% with water, and the remaining 25% should be left empty. In general, people's eating habits differ significantly from this paradigm. When there is delicious food available, they tend to consume more than they need out of avarice and a sense of taste. Diseases, such as elevated blood cholesterol are frequently

the result. An unregulated diet frequently causes blood or gastrointestinal disorders because the vata, pitta and kapha levels are uneven. Yoga advocates eating no more than two or three times per day. The stomach must be managed in this manner because when food enters the stomach, digestive juices are created in the same amount. The stomach does not distinguish between a biscuit and a complete plate of food; it only creates digestive juices. So, if you eat a biscuit every ten minutes, your stomach will create the same quantity of digestive juices ten times, which could lead to stomach ulcers or hernias, as well as liver or kidney failure. If everyone ate a healthy diet at regular intervals, eighty percent of diseases and problems would be eliminated.

Another problem in the body is related to the way you think. If the mind is dissatisfied or tense, anxious or agitated, the appetite may diminish and one may not want to eat. When one is deeply involved in an external circumstance or a mental condition, it affects the body. Negative thoughts, concerns, disturbances and mental tensions have a negative impact on the body and can lead to the development of ailments or diseases. Medical science describes it wonderfully that when a person is happy or sad, the adrenal glands generate a hormone called adrenalin. This discharge over stimulates the body. It is also closely linked to the senses. When someone fights, adrenaline is released, which increases the rate of respiration. The heart rate also increases and the senses become immediately alert. The 'fight or flight' response is present in both happiness and grief. Manifest as an unstable mind, mental or inner unrest or the expression of samskaras and karmas, all of which can have a negative impact on the body. Modern culture is strongly entrenched in materialism, yet the shatkarmas are part of a holistic yoga practice that focuses on the entire individual not just the physical body.

10.4 THE SIX CATEGORIES OF SHATKARMAS

i. **Dhauti Kriya:** The first practice is dhauti, which involves cleansing the stomach and alimentary canal, or digestive tract. Dhauti is classified into four types: antar, danta, hrid and moola shodhana.

Three methods are used: with water, cloth and air. These approaches can assist to alleviate a variety of stomach problems. Dhauti can treat indigestion, constipation, irritable bowel syndrome and hyperacidity.

ii. **Basti Kriya:** The second exercise is basti, or yogic enema. In basti, water is sucked up through the anus and stored in the large intestine. The water does not enter the small intestine and instead remains in the large intestine. After some time, the water is ejected, just like in a conventional enema. The only difference is that an enema is administered through a tube. Basti is more natural and suitable. When administering an enema, excessive force may be used, resulting in scrapes inside the body and the risk of internal harm and haemorrhage. Because the waste stuff is poisonous, it might infect a wound. As a result, yogis prescribe basti rather than an enema. However, the skill must first be perfected and a rubber tube or catheter is required during the learning process.

iii. **Neti Kriya:** The third practice is neti, or nasal washing. Neti acts as an ENT expert, cleansing the nose, ears and throat. It is a basic practice. Alternatively, water is poured into one nostril and exits the other. The benefits begin as soon as the practice is completed, as it clears the nasal passages and sinuses. Neti is beneficial for people suffering from sinusitis, rhinitis, headache, migraine or constant frontal headache, weak eyesight, eye fatigue, watering of the eyes after reading, eye congestion, eye pain and minor ear ailments such as excessive and hardened wax, which can injure the eardrums when removed. Neti can also help reduce throat irritation.

iv. **Nauli Kriya:** The fourth practice is Nauli, also known as Lauliki. It is an effective technique for massaging and strengthening all abdominal organs. It should be used by people who suffer from indigestion, loss of appetite, or intestinal worms. It is also effective at removing excess vata or wind.

v. **Trataka Kriya:** The sixth practice is trataka or steady gaze. This is beneficial for correcting eye abnormalities and harmonising the

neurological system. For example, it can help to eliminate nervous tics or uncontrollable anxious activity, such as one eye blinking rapidly. Trataka can help with eyestrain, short-sightedness, far-sightedness, myopia and other eye problems in a healthy body. Experience has also proven that many people no longer require spectacles simply by practicing trataka.

vi. **Kapalbhati Kriya:** The sixth practice is kapalbhati. This is a breathing method that clears the mind and may aid in the removal of lung abnormalities. The trachea or windpipe becomes disease-free and the blood is purified as more oxygen is taken in and carbon dioxide is expelled. Kapalbhati is effective in treating autonomic nerve system abnormalities and mental illnesses. It is also beneficial for a weakened memory.

10.5 ABOUT MEDITATION

Meditation (Dhyana) is not a practice; it is a condition of continuous active consciousness with no interruptions. That is why it is claimed that meditation is never practised; instead, the condition of meditation is acquired and experienced. It is comparable to the difference between pouring oil and water. When oil is poured from one pot to another, it flows smoothly and continuously. When it falls into the other pot, it does not splash or spill like water. The only movement occurs where the oil stream is actually descending. That is also how meditation works. When there are drips and spills, one is in pratyahara or dharana. The last stage of meditation occurs when the mind does not waver, when there is no dissipation or blockage as it moves from the externalised to the internalised condition. During the practice of meditation, the mind becomes so powerful due to one-pointedness that it takes on the shape of the kalpa vriksha, a tree that yields whatever wanted. Whatever one wishes is granted. In meditation, the flow of consciousness is similar to a flow of oil, with no impediment. In pratyahara, there is internal awareness. When the mind externalises, it is pulled back and engaged. For two or three minutes the mind remains there as long as one is alert. As soon as the attention is diverted, the mind wanders. Thus,

in pratyahara, awareness and consciousness keep on coming and going. Dharana, or focus, slows down this process, allowing one to become one-pointed or externalised at will. However, effort is ineffective in meditation. The human structure or constitution consists of three major components: body, intellect and spirit. These three components provide diverse states of meditation and different methods or strategies are used to make those experiences deep and vivid. Sthoola dhyana or gross meditation is the process of adopting a physical form in order to progress through the experience while meditating. Jyoti dhyana is the process of experiencing light, the atma or the soul. Sukshma dhyana, or subtle meditation, is the process of connecting with one's soul. Sage Gheranda describes these three states in the poems that follow.

In contrast, Sage Patanjali described meditation as—

तत्रप्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम ॥

Tatra pratyayaikatanata dhyanam – 3/2 P.Y.S.

atra: there (in the desha); pratyaya: basis or content of con sciousness; ekatanata: continuity; dhyanam: Meditation.

Dhyana is the uninterrupted flow of conscious content. Pratyaya refers to the basis of consciousness, which can be a concept, a sound, or anything, subtle or gross. If the consciousness in dharana becomes continuous, with no breaks or interruptions caused by other thoughts, dharana is replaced or transformed into dhyana. Dhyana can occur while doing dharana. Dhyana involves an uninterrupted flow of consciousness. Dhyana is defined as 'pratyaya-ekatanata', which means 'an unbroken continually stretched awareness of a very exactly uniform experience of the subject' and was chosen for these meditational processes. The subject's consciousness should be so consistent throughout the dhyana process that there should be no variation in its awareness or cognition. Clearly, there will be a pure consciousness of the subject's pleasant existing or 'blissful beingness', which is thus incompatible with the concept of pratyayaikatanata, or the state of dhyana. That is, there will be no thinking about the subject during dhyana, because any thinking or ideation will immediately result in the possibility of an alteration, however in a minor way, of this thought. If the

modification occurs, the pratyayaikatanata will be broken, resulting in an interruption of dhyana and a regression back to the dharana state. As a result, we might conclude that dhyana occurs when nirvicara samapatti approaches perfection. This condition of thoughtless, or idealess, consciousness of pure pleasure-giving existence (in the citta) of the meditation subject, on the other hand, lasts for quite some time. Finally, it transforms into a samadhi.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: Which cleaning technique is good for abdominal massage?

Q2: Write any two benefits of Jala-Neti.

Q3: Which cleaning technique is best for cranial portion?

Q4: Uninterrupted flow of conscious is known as ————————?



10.6 LET US SUM UP

- Now a day's as people are unable to control the entire food chain and usually buy food from markets or supermarkets, certain pollutants persist. But we can make some changes to limit the number of poisons we absorb through our food. We have the option of eating non-processed whole fruits and vegetables, choosing where we buy our food, preparing and cooking our meals and deciding when we eat. Our physical body is immediately affected by mental stress and problems such as anxiety, depression, mood swings, tension, worry and bad thoughts. We can feel it as pain, fatigue, or loss of appetite. Mental stress stays in the physical body and Shatkarmas helps to relieve it.
- Shatkarma is a collection of six yogic cleansing practices that can be especially beneficial in combating the negative effects of modern life, such as poor diet, sedentary habits and environmental toxins, by promoting detoxification and overall physical and mental well-being through practices such as Shatkarmas and Meditation.

- Neti (nose cleansing), Dhauti (intestinal cleansing), Nauli (abdominal massage), Basti (yogic enema), Kapalbhati (cranial sparkling breath) and Trataka (focused gazing) are the six cleansing techniques of Hatha Yoga practice known as Shatkarma.
- Meditation (Dhyana) is the uninterrupted flow of conscious content. Pratyaya refers to the basis of consciousness, which can be a concept, a sound or anything, subtle or gross. If the consciousness in dharana becomes continuous, with no breaks or interruptions caused by other thoughts, dharana is replaced or transformed into dhyana.



10.7 FURTHER READINGS

- Saraswati,S.S. *Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha*, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger.
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- Muktibodhananda, Swami. *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger.



10.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q1: Nauli is, also known as Lauliki. It is an effective technique for massaging and strengthening all abdominal organs. It should be used by people who suffer from indigestion, loss of appetite, or intestinal worms. It is also effective at removing excess vata or wind.

Answer to Q2: Neti is beneficial for people suffering from sinusitis, rhinitis, headache, migraine or constant frontal headache, weak eyesight, eye fatigue, watering of the eyes after reading, eye congestion, eye pain and minor ear ailments such as excessive and hardened wax, which can injure the eardrums when removed. Neti can also help reduce throat irritation.

Answer to Q3: Kapalbhati is effective in treating autonomic nerve system abnormalities and mental illnesses. It is also beneficial for a weakened memory.

Answer to Q4: The consciousness in dharana becomes continuous, with no breaks or interruptions caused by other thoughts; dharana is replaced or transformed into dhyana.



10.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

1. What is Annamaya Kosha?
2. What is the meaning of the term 'Shatkarma'?
3. How many cleansing practices are included in Shatkarma?
4. What is the yogic name for nasal cleansing?
5. Which kriya involves cleansing the alimentary canal?
6. What is the ideal time for food consumption according to Hindu tradition?
7. Which yogic technique helps purify the blood and trachea?
8. What is the role of the solar plexus in digestion?
9. Define Dhyana in Patanjali's Yoga Sutra.
10. Name one kriya that helps with eye problems.

B) Short Questions:

1. Name the six-types of cleansing techniques.
2. Which technique is best for focused gazing?
3. How many types of cleansing techniques are there in Dhauti Kriya?
4. Mention any five benefits of Basti Kriya.

C) Long Questions:

1. Write a note on Shatkarma, and describe their benefits.
2. Define meditation. What is the main purpose of meditation?
3. Explain the procedure of Nauli Kriya.
4. What do you mean by Trataka Kriya? Discuss.

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UNIT 11: YOGA IN AGAMAS AND TANTRA

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives

11.2 Introduction

11.3 Overview of Agamas and Tantra

11.4 The Philosophy of Agamas and its Connection with Yoga

11.5 Importance of Agamas in Modern Life

11.6 Tantric Practices and Their Yogic Implications

11.7 Major Texts on Agamas and Tantra Related to yoga

11.8 The Importance of Tantra in Modern Perspectives

11.9 The Role of Mantra, Yantraand Mandala in Tantric yoga

11.10 Kundalini Yoga and Its Tantric Foundations

11.11 Ethical and Spiritual Goals in Agamic and Tantric Traditions

11.12 Let us Sum up

11.13 Further Readings

11.14 Answers to Check Your Progress

11.15 Model Questions

11.1LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the foundational principles of Agamas and Tantra in Yoga.
- explore the connection between Agamas, Tantra, and the practice. of Yoga.
- describe the key Tantric practices and their impact on spiritual growth.
- discuss the major texts and tools used in Tantric Yoga.
- discover the ethical and spiritual goals emphasised in Agamic and Tantric traditions.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

Agamas and Tantra are ancient Indian spiritual traditions that emphasise direct experience and personal transformation. They focus on the integration of body, mind and spirit through rituals, meditative practices and the activation of inner energies. While often misunderstood, Tantra transcends its limited perception of being solely associated with physical aspects. Instead, it aims to awaken the higher consciousness and bring individuals closer to self-realisation.

11.3 OVERVIEW OF AGAMAS AND TANTRA

Agamas are sacred texts that guide the worship of deities, temple rituals, and spiritual practices. "Agama" means "that which has come to us" or "tradition," referring to a body of revealed knowledge passed down through generations. Agamas are a collection of scriptures that form the backbone of many Indian spiritual traditions, including Shaivism (Shaiva), Shaktism (Shakta) and Vaishnavism (Vaishnava). In Hinduism, the "Shaiva Agamas" are scriptures focused on the worship of Shiva; the "Vaishnava Agamas" are texts dedicated to Vishnu, and the "Shakta Agamas" are scriptures centred around the worship of the Goddess Shakti (Devi). These texts express the details of rituals, temple architecture and meditative practices, emphasising the union of the individual with the divine.

Tantra, derived from the Sanskrit roots tan (to expand) and tra (instrument), focuses on expanding consciousness through transformative practices. "Tantra" signifies "technique" or "method," often used to describe the practices and rituals associated with the Agama teachings, with both terms often being used interchangeably, particularly when discussing Shakta traditions where the Goddess is central to worship. Tantra incorporates unique elements such as Kundalini awakening, ritualistic practices, and the use of symbolic tools like Mantras and Yantras. Tantra emphasises the interplay of Shiva (pure consciousness) and Shakti (dynamic energy), symbolising the unity of opposites. It encompasses practices such as mantra (sacred sounds), yantra (geometric patterns), and mandala (symbolic diagrams) to achieve higher states of awareness.

11.4 THE PHILOSOPHY OF AGAMAS AND ITS CONNECTION WITH YOGA

The philosophy of Agamas revolves around the concept of divine presence in all aspects of life. This inclusivity aligns closely with the goals of Yoga, which seeks unity and harmony within oneself and with the universe. The Agamas provide guidance on:

- Meditation and concentration techniques.
- Rituals to purify the body and mind.
- The worship of deities as a means to connect with higher consciousness.

The Agamas are rooted in non-dualistic philosophy, emphasising the unity of Shiva (consciousness) and Shakti (energy). This synergy mirrors the goal of Yoga: union between the individual self and the universal consciousness. Agamic texts outline systematic approaches to spiritual growth through rituals, meditation and ethical practices, aligning with yogic disciplines like Ashtanga Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. The philosophy stresses that divine realisation can be achieved by harmonising the external practices of rituals with internal meditative states, making it deeply interconnected with Yoga's principles of self-discipline, concentration, and surrender. Agamas bridge the gap between traditional Yoga and spiritual devotion, emphasizing the importance of experiential knowledge over theoretical understanding. Their connection with Yoga lies in the shared goal of self-realisation and liberation (moksha).

11.5 IMPORTANCE OF AGAMAS IN MODERN LIFE

The Agamas, a set of ancient scriptures in Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism, offer profound insights into spirituality, rituals, architecture, and lifestyle. Their teachings are still relevant in modern life, as they address various aspects of human well-being and harmony. Here is how the Agamas are important today:

a. **Spiritual Guidance**: The Agamas provide systematic methods for spiritual growth, including meditation, rituals, and yoga. Agamas

emphasis on mindfulness and inner discipline corresponds with modern stress management practices.

b. **Architectural and Artistic Relevance**: The Agamas outline principles of temple architecture (VastuShastra), which influence modern urban planning and sustainable design. The aesthetic guidelines promote balance and harmony, applicable to contemporary art and design.
c. **Holistic Living:** The Agamas stress the integration of body, mind, and soul, aligning with current trends in wellness and holistic health. Their teachings on diet, daily routines, and ethical living promote a balanced and meaningful life.
d. **Preservation of Culture and Traditions:** The rituals and festivals prescribed in the Agamas help preserve cultural heritage and foster community bonding. In a fast-paced world, these practices provide a sense of identity and continuity.
e. **Environmental Consciousness:** The Agamas emphasise living in harmony with nature, an idea that aligns with modern sustainability movements. Their principles advocate respect for natural resources and ecological balance.
f. **Moral and Ethical Framework:** The ethical teachings of the Agamas, such as truthfulness and non-violence, are universal values crucial for modern society. These principles guide individuals and communities toward peaceful coexistence.
g. **Yoga and Wellness:**Many yogic practices detailed in the Agamas form the foundation of modern yoga, now a global phenomenon for physical and mental well-being.
h. **Interfaith and Philosophical Insights:** The Agamas emphasise inclusivity and acceptance, offering a platform for interfaith dialogue and universal harmony.

The Agamas, though ancient, provide timeless wisdom that complements modern life. By integrating their teachings, individuals can achieve spiritual growth, cultural enrichment, and a harmonious relationship with nature and society.

11.6 TANTRIC PRACTICES AND THEIR YOGIC IMPLICATIONS

Tantric practices are designed to transform the practitioner's physical and subtle energies into spiritual awakening. Some key practices include:

- **Kundalini Yoga:** Awakening dormant energy at the base of the spine through specific breathing techniques (Pranayama), postures (Asanas), and energy locks (Bandhas).
- **Mantra Yoga:** Chanting sacred syllables to align the mind and body with universal energies. Popular mantras like "Om" and the bija mantras are integral.
- **Nyasa:** Placing mantras on specific body parts to infuse energy and sanctify the physical form.
- **Yantra Meditation:** Focusing on geometric diagrams to enhance concentration and attune to cosmic forces.

These practices aim to harmonise the physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions, reflecting Yoga's holistic approach. Through these methods, Tantra enables practitioners to experience transcendence, aligning with Yoga's ultimate goal of self-realisation.

11.7 THE IMPORTANCE OF TANTRA IN MODERN PERSPECTIVES

The importance of Tantra in modern perspectives lies in its ability to offer profound insights and practices for holistic well-being, self-discovery, and spiritual growth. While Tantra is often misunderstood or narrowly interpreted, its ancient principles can be highly relevant in contemporary life across various domains:

a. **Holistic Well-being:** Tantra emphasises the integration of mind, body, and spirit. Modern wellness practices borrow heavily from Tantric principles, particularly in yoga, meditation, and breathwork (pranayama), which enhance mental clarity, reduce stress, and improve physical health. Practices like Kundalini awakening and

chakra balancing are rooted in Tantra and are widely used in alternative healing therapies.

b. **Mindfulness and Presence:** Tantra teaches living in the present moment and embracing life fully, which aligns with modern mindfulness practices. It helps people cope with the fast-paced nature of modern life by cultivating awareness, self-acceptance, and inner peace.

c. **Empowerment and Self-Realization:** Tantra is about breaking taboos and societal conditioning to achieve personal empowerment and freedom. Its teachings on inner power, self-realisation, and non-duality inspire modern seekers to embrace authenticity and inner strength.

d. **Relationships and Intimacy:** Tantra offers a unique approach to relationships by focusing on deeper emotional and spiritual connections. Its principles of sacred sexuality and mutual respect can help modern couples navigate intimacy with mindfulness and deeper bonding.

e. **Gender Balance and Equality:** Tantric traditions honour both the divine feminine (Shakti) and masculine (Shiva) energies, promoting gender balance. In modern times, this serves as a reminder of the need for equality, inclusivity, and respect for all genders.

f. **Psychological and Emotional Healing:** Tantra's meditative and ritualistic practices provide tools for addressing psychological trauma, emotional blockages, and anxiety.Techniques like visualisation, mantra chanting, and energy works are used in psychotherapy and stress management today.

g. **Ecological Awareness**: Tantra views the world as interconnected and sacred, emphasising harmony with nature. This philosophy aligns with modern environmental consciousness and the need for sustainable living practices.

h. **Spiritual Growth and Non-Duality:**The Tantric path encourages transcending duality (good and bad, material and spiritual) to see the oneness of existence. This perspective resonates with modern

spiritual seekers and aligns with contemporary interpretations of quantum physics and universal interconnectedness.

i. **Cultural Revival and Academic Study:** Tantra has gained attention in academia for its philosophical richness and influence on Indian spirituality.Scholars and practitioners are revisiting Tantric texts to decode their relevance in modern spiritual and psychological frameworks.

j. **Breaking Stigmas:** Modern Tantra helps dispel myths and stigmas associated with it, such as its misconstrued association solely with sexuality.It reclaims Tantra as a sophisticated, multi-faceted spiritual science that enriches life.

Tantra transcends its ancient roots to offer practical solutions for physical health, emotional healing, spiritual awakening, and societal harmony. Its holistic and integrative approach makes it a powerful tool for navigating the complexities of contemporary life.

11.8 MAJOR TEXTS ON AGAMAS AND TANTRA RELATED TO YOGA

Several significant texts provide insights into Agamas and Tantra:

- **Hatha Yoga Pradipika:** A manual for physical and energetic transformation incorporates tantric elements like Kundalini awakening and chakra balancing.
- **Kaulajnananirnaya:** Explores the esoteric aspects of Tantra, emphasising the unity of Shiva and Shakti.
- **KularnavaTantra:** Explores the role of chakras and siddhis (supernatural powers) in spiritual practice.
- **MahanirvanaTantra:** Focuses on both traditional and unconventional worship methods.
- **Shiva Samhita:** Integrating tantric and yogic concepts, it outlines practices for physical and spiritual development, including advanced pranayama techniques.
- **Vijnana Bhairava Tantra:** Offers techniques for meditation and realisation of non-dual consciousness.

These texts guide practitioners in merging their physical existence with higher spiritual dimensions, making them essential resources for understanding Tantric Yoga.

11.9 THE ROLE OF MANTRA, YANTRA AND MANDALA IN TANTRIC YOGA

- Mantras: These sacred sounds are used to focus the mind and awaken spiritual energy. For instance, the mantra “Om” represents the ultimate reality and unity of existence.
- Yantras: Geometric patterns that symbolise the universe and serve as tools for meditation. They help concentrate the practitioner’s energy and connect with divine forces.
- Mandalas: Circular designs used in rituals and meditations to represent the cosmos and the self’s journey toward enlightenment.

These tools are essential in Tantric Yoga as they provide a framework for transforming mundane experiences into spiritual growth.

11.10 KUNDALINI YOGA AND ITS TANTRIC FOUNDATIONS

Kundalini Yoga is deeply rooted in Tantric philosophy. It focuses on awakening the dormant energy (Kundalini) at the base of the spine and guiding it through the chakras. This process involves:

- **Pranayama:** Techniques like Nadi Shodhana (alternate nostril breathing) to purify energy channels.
- **Asanas:** Postures that prepare the body for the safe awakening of Kundalini energy.
- **Bandhas:** Energy locks like Mula Bandha (root lock) to control and direct pranic flow.
- **Meditation:** Visualizing the energy’s journey through the chakras.

The goal of Kundalini Yoga is to achieve spiritual awakening and self-realisation by harmonising the body, mind, and spirit.

11.11 ETHICAL AND SPIRITUAL GOALS IN AGAMIC AND TANTRIC TRADITIONS

Agamic and Tantric traditions emphasise ethical and spiritual goals that guide practitioners toward liberation. These include:

- **Ahimsa (Non-violence):** Practicing compassion and kindness toward all beings.
- **Satya (Truthfulness):** Living in alignment with universal truth.
- **Self-discipline:** Maintaining a balance between physical, mental, and spiritual pursuits.
- **Devotion:** Developing a deep connection with the divine through rituals and practices.

These goals are not just theoretical ideals but practical guidelines for living a life of integrity, purpose and spiritual fulfilment.



11.12 LET US SUM UP

Agamas and Tantra offer profound insights into the practice of Yoga, emphasising the transformation of the individual through rituals, meditations, and energy work. The tools and practices described in these traditions aim to harmonize the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of life, ultimately leading to self-realisation and liberation. By integrating these teachings into one's life, practitioners can achieve a deeper understanding of their true nature and their connection to the universe.



11.13 FURTHER READINGS

- Stiles, Mukunda. *Tantra Yoga Secrets*.
- Barvalia, Gunvant. *ĀGAMA*.



11.14 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: Define Agamas and their connection to Yoga.

Answer to Q1: Agamas are sacred texts outlining rituals, temple worship, and spiritual practices, emphasising the union of Shiva and Shakti, which aligns with Yoga's goal of self-realisation.

Q2: What are the key tools in Tantric Yoga?

Answer to Q2: Mantras, Yantras and Mandalas.

Q3: Explain the significance of Kundalini Yoga in Tantra.

Answer to Q3: Kundalini Yoga involves awakening dormant energy and guiding it through the chakras, achieving spiritual enlightenment by balancing Shiva and Shakti energies.



11.15 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Quetions

1. What does the word "Agama" mean?
2. Which deity is the focus of Shaiva Agamas?
3. What is the root meaning of the word "Tantra"?
4. Name any one Tantric practice aimed at awakening spiritual energy.
5. What is the role of a Yantra in Tantric Yoga?
6. Which energy is awakened in Kundalini Yoga?
7. What is the central goal of both Agamic and Tantric traditions?
8. Which Tantric text explores non-dual consciousness through meditation techniques?
9. Name one ethical principle emphasized in Tantric and Agamic teachings.
10. What is the function of a Mandala in meditation?

B) Short Questions

1. Define Agamas and their significance in Yoga.
2. Explain the philosophy of Tantra and its connection to Yoga.
3. What are the key practices in Tantric Yoga? Discuss.
4. Describe the role of mantra, yantra, and mandala in Tantric traditions.
5. Discuss the goals of Kundalini Yoga and its foundations in Tantra.
6. Differentiate between Shaiva, Shakta, and Vaishnava Agamas.

7. Explain the symbolic meaning of the union of Shiva and Shakti in Tantra.
8. What are the key features of Tantra that are relevant in modern spiritual practices?
9. Describe the practice of Nyasa and its purpose in Tantra.
10. How does Kundalini Yoga incorporate Tantric foundations?

C) Longs Questions

1. Discuss the significance of Agamas in shaping spiritual practices and temple rituals in Indian traditions.
2. Explain the core philosophy of Tantra and how it transcends the common misconceptions associated with it.
3. Describe the various elements of Tantric Yoga and how they align with the goals of traditional Yoga systems.
4. How do Agamic and Tantric teachings remain relevant in the context of modern life and wellness?
5. Analyze the ethical and spiritual goals outlined in Agamic and Tantric traditions and their application in contemporary living.
6. Explain the role of sacred tools—Mantra, Yantra, and Mandala—in Tantric practices and their spiritual significance.
7. Describe the process and purpose of Kundalini awakening in Tantric Yoga. How does it aim to harmonize body, mind, and spirit?
8. Evaluate the philosophical relationship between Agamas and Yoga, especially in terms of experiential knowledge and spiritual integration.
9. Tantra emphasizes empowerment and breaking of taboos. Discuss how this empowers individuals spiritually and socially in today's world.
10. Explore how the teachings of major Agamic and Tantric texts contribute to the evolution of modern Yoga.

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UNIT 12 : CONCEPT OF NADI, PRANA AND KUNDALINI SHAKTI

UNIT STRUCTURE

12.1 Learning objectives

12.2 Introduction

12.3 The Concept of Nadi

12.3.1 Meaning and Definition of Nadi

12.3.2 Types of Nadis (Ida, Pingala and Sushumna)

12.3.3 Importance of Nadis in Yogic Practices

12.4 The Concept of Prana

12.4.1 Meaning and Definition of Prana

12.4.2 Types of Prana (PanchaPranas and Upapranas)

12.4.3 Role of Prana in vvtality and Well-being

12.5 The concept of Kundalini Shakti

12.5.1 Meaning and Definition of Kundalini

12.5.2 Kundalini and Chakras

12.5.3 Awakening Kundalini: Techniques and Practices

12.6 Practical Applications of Nadi, Prana and Kundalini Shakti in Yoga

12.7 Let us Sum up

12.8 Further reading

12.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

12.10 Model Questions

12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- describe the meaning and significance of Nadis, Prana, and Kundalini Shakti.

- identify the types of Nadis and their role in yogic practices.
- explain the concept of Prana and its types.
- relate Kundalini Shakti and Chakras.
- apply the knowledge of these concepts to enhance spiritual and physical well-being.

12.2 INTRODUCTION

In the ancient traditions of yoga and Ayurveda, the concepts of Nadi, Prana and Kundalini Shakti form the foundational framework for understanding the subtle energy dynamics of the human body. These elements are considered vital for spiritual growth, mental clarity and physical health. Nadis are channels for energy flow, Prana is the life force, and Kundalini Shakti represents the dormant spiritual energy coiled at the base of the spine.

12.3 THE CONCEPT OF NADI

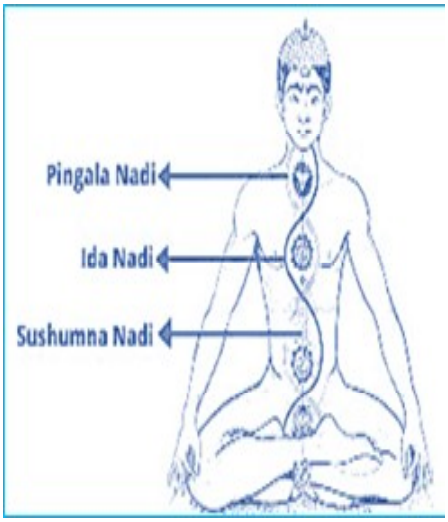
12.3.1 Meaning and Definition of Nadi

The word "Nadi" in Sanskrit translates to "channel" or "tube." In yogic and Ayurvedic philosophy, Nadis are pathways through which Prana (life energy) flows. They are not physical structures but rather subtle channels within the astral body. There are said to be 72,000 Nadis in the human body, which connect different energy centres (Chakras) and distribute Prana throughout.

12.3.2 Types of Nadis

Among the numerous Nadis, three are of primary importance:

- **Ida Nadi**: Known as the left channel, Ida represents the feminine aspect and is associated with the moon. It governs mental energy, emotions, and introspection. Ida originates from the Muladhara Chakra (root) and terminates at the left nostril.



- **Pingala Nadi**: Known as the right channel, Pingala represents the masculine aspect and associated with the sun. It governs physical energy, logic and extroversion. Pingala also originates from the Muladhara Chakra but terminates at the right nostril.
- **Sushumna Nadi**: This is the central channel that runs along the spine from the Muladhara Chakra to the Sahasrara Chakra (crown). Sushumna is the pathway for spiritual awakening and is activated during advanced meditative practices.

12.3.3 Importance of Nadis in Yogic Practices

The balance between Ida and Pingala Nadis is essential for mental and physical harmony. When both Nadis are balanced, energy flows through the Sushumna Nadi, enabling spiritual awakening. Practices such as Nadi-Shodhana Pranayama (alternate nostril breathing) are used to purify and balance these channels, facilitating the unobstructed flow of Prana.

12.4 THE CONCEPT OF PRANA

12.4.1 Meaning and Definition of Prana

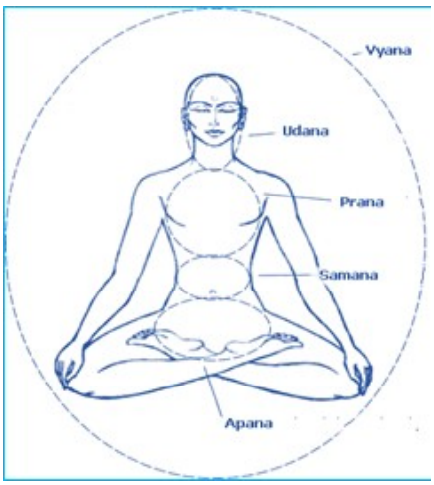
Prana is the vital life force that sustains all living beings. It is the energy that animates the physical body and connects it to the mind and spirit. Prana is both a tangible and subtle force, manifesting as breath, energy, and vitality.

12.4.2 Types of Prana

Prana is categorised into five primary types (PanchaPranas) and five secondary types (Upapranas):

Pancha Pranas:

1. **Prana**: Located in the chest, it governs respiration and heart functions.
2. **Apana**: Resides in the lower abdomen and controls elimination and reproduction.
3. **Samana**: Found in the digestive region, it regulates digestion and assimilation.
4. **Udana**: Situated in the throat, it governs speech and upward movement of energy.
5. **Vyana**: Pervades the entire body, coordinating movement and circulation.



Upa-pranas:

- **Naga**: Controls belching and hiccups.
- **Koorma**: Governs blinking and eye health.
- **Krikara**: Manages hunger and thirst.
- **Devadatta**: Facilitates yawning and relaxation.
- **Dhananjaya**: Remains active after death and causes body decomposition.

12.4.3 Role of Prana in Vitality and Well-Being

Prana is the essence of life and well-being. Balanced Prana ensures physical health, emotional stability, and mental clarity. Yogic practices such as Pranayama (breath control) and meditation enhance the flow of Prana, promoting vitality and spiritual growth.

12.5 THE CONCEPT OF KUNDALINI SHAKTI

12.5.1 Meaning and Definition of Kundalini

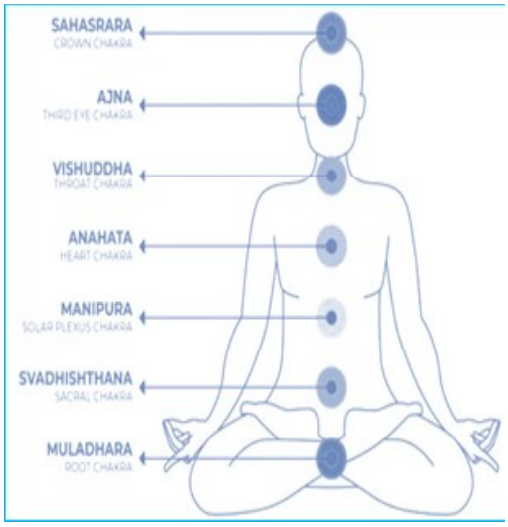
Kundalini Shakti is the dormant spiritual energy located at the base of the spine in the Muladhara Chakra. It is often depicted as a coiled

serpent and symbolises the potential for spiritual enlightenment and higher consciousness.

12.5.2 Kundalini and Chakras

The awakening of Kundalini involves its ascent through the Sushumna Nadi, piercing the seven Chakras:

1. **Muladhara (Root)**: Located at the base of the spine, this chakra symbolises stability and survival. Associated with the element Earth and the colour red, it governs our basic survival needs like safety, security, and physical health. When balanced, it creates a sense of grounding and stability in life. Imbalances can lead to fear, anxiety, or physical discomfort in the legs, feet, or lower back. Maintaining harmony in this chakra is essential for building a strong foundation in all aspects of life.



2. **Swadhisthana (Sacral)**: Positioned in the lower abdomen, it governs creativity, emotions, and passion. Associated with the element water and the colour orange, it fosters emotional balance, creativity, and sexual energy. When balanced, it allows for emotional harmony and a fulfilling life. An imbalance may lead to feelings of guilt, lack of creativity, or difficulty forming emotional bonds. Balancing this chakra nurtures joy and personal expression.
3. **Manipura (Solar Plexus)**: Found in the upper abdomen, this chakra is the centre of personal power, confidence, and self-esteem. Associated with the element fire and the colour yellow,

it governs will power, determination, and action. A balanced Manipura chakra promotes confidence, motivation, and clarity. Imbalances can manifest as low self-esteem, digestive issues, or a need for control. Achieving balance in this chakra enhances self-assurance and a sense of purpose.

4. **Anahata (Heart)**: Located at the centre of the chest, this chakra bridges the physical and spiritual realms. Associated with the element air and the colour green, it governs love, compassion, and relationships. When balanced, it fosters love, peace, and empathy. Imbalances may result in grief, emotional disconnection, or physical heart and lung issues. Balancing this chakra strengthens emotional well-being and the capacity for love and compassion.
5. **Vishuddha (Throat)**: Situated in the throat, this chakra governs communication and self-expression. Associated with the element ether/space and the colour blue, it enables clear expression of thoughts and emotions. When balanced, it supports honest communication and creative expression. Imbalances can cause difficulty in self-expression, fear of speaking, or physical throat issues. Achieving balance in this chakra enhances clarity in communication and fosters authentic self-expression.
6. **Ajna (Third Eye)**: Located between the eyebrows, this chakra governs intuition, insight, and spiritual awareness. Associated with the element light and the color indigo, it enhances clarity of thought, intuition, and spiritual insight. When balanced, it strengthens decision-making and provides a sense of direction. Imbalances may lead to confusion, overthinking, or physical discomfort like headaches. Balancing this chakra enhances spiritual awareness and inner guidance.
7. **Sahasrara (Crown)**: Positioned at the top of the head, this chakra represents spiritual enlightenment and higher consciousness. Associated with cosmic energy and the colours

violet or white, it governs spiritual awakening and connection to universal wisdom. When balanced, it fosters peace, clarity, and a deep sense of oneness with the universe. Imbalances may lead to spiritual disconnection or a lack of purpose. Balancing this chakra promotes spiritual fulfillment and a deeper understanding of one's true purpose.

12.5.3 Awakening Kundalini: Techniques and Practices

The awakening of Kundalini is achieved through disciplined practices such as:

- **Asanas**: Physical postures to prepare the body.
- **Pranayama**: Breath control to balance energy.
- **Mudras**: Gestures to channel energy.
- **Bandhas**: Energy locks to direct Prana.
- **Meditation**: Focused awareness to elevate consciousness.
- **Mantras**: Sacred sounds to activate energy centres.

12.6 PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF NADI, PRANA, AND KUNDALINI SHAKTI IN YOGA

Understanding and utilising the concepts of Nadi, Prana, and Kundalini can significantly enhance one's yoga practice. For instance:

- Nadi Shodhana Pranayama can cleanse energy channels.
- Kundalini Yoga focuses on awakening spiritual energy.
- Regular practice of Pranayama and meditation improves overall health and spiritual awareness.



12.7 LET US SUM UP

This unit explored the concepts of Nadi, Prana, and Kundalini Shakti, emphasising their significance in yogic practices. Nadis are the channels for Prana, which is the life force energising the body and mind. Kundalini Shakti, the dormant energy at the base of the spine, can be awakened to achieve spiritual enlightenment. Through disciplined practice, these concepts can be integrated into daily life for holistic well-being.



12.8 FURTHER READING

1. Swami Satyanandav Saraswati. *KundaliniTantra.*
2. Muktibodhananda. *Hatha Yoga Pradipika.*



12.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. **What are Nadis?**

   Ans - Subtle energy channels in the astral body.

2. **Name the three primary Nadis.**

   Ans- Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna.

3. **List the five types of Pancha Pranas.**

   Ans- Prana, Apana, Samana, Udana, and Vyana.

4. **What is Kundalini Shakti?**

Ans - Dormant spiritual energy at the base of the spine.



12.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A). Very Short Questions

1. What is the literal meaning of the Sanskrit word “Nadi”?
2. Name the three most important Nadis in the human body according to Yoga.
3. Which Nadi is associated with the moon and mental energy?
4. What is Prana in yogic philosophy?
6. How many types of primary Pranas (Pancha Pranas) are there?
7. Where is Kundalini Shakti located in the body?8. Which Chakra is situated at the crown of the head?
9. What yogic technique is used to purify the Nadis?
10. Which Upaprana is responsible for yawning?
11. Name the Chakra associated with communication and self-expression.

B) Short Questions

1. Define Nadis and explain their significance in yogic practices.
2. Discuss the types and functions of Prana.
3. Describe the process of Kundalini awakening and its impact on the Chakras.
4. How do Pranayama and meditation contribute to the flow of Prana?
5. Explain the relationship between Sushumna Nadi and spiritual enlightenment.
6. Briefly describe the functions of Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna Nadis.
7. What are the roles of Mudra and Bandha in awakening Kundalini?
8. How does Pranayama support the flow of Prana in the body?
9. Write a note on the Swadhisthana Chakra and its characteristics.
10. How can Nadi Shodhana Pranayama aid in overall well-being?
11. What are the practical benefits of understanding Nadis, Prana, and Kundalini in Yoga?

C) Long Questions

1. Explain the concept of Nadis in Yoga. Discuss their types and importance in spiritual and physical health.
2. Describe the Pancha Pranas and Upapranas in detail and explain their role in sustaining life and well-being.
3. Define Kundalini Shakti. Discuss its relationship with the Chakras and the process of spiritual awakening.
4. Analyze the role of Nadi, Prana, and Kundalini Shakti in enhancing Yoga practices with practical examples.
5. Describe the characteristics and significance of the seven Chakras in the context of Kundalini awakening.
6. Elaborate on the various yogic techniques used for awakening Kundalini Shakti and their interrelationship.

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UNIT 13 : YOGA SCHOLARS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS I

UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1 Learning Objectives

13.2 Introduction

13.3 Swami Vivekananda and his Propagation of Yoga

13.4 Shri Aurobindo

13.5 Maharshi Raman

13.6 Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya

13.6 Let us Sum up

13.7 Further Reading

13.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

13.9 Model Questions

13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss Swami Vivekananda's Propagation of Yoga
- describe Shri Aurobindo's and his Integral Yoga,
- discuss the propagation of yoga by Maharshi Raman
- explain the significance of Pt.Shriram Sharma Acharya as a yogi

13.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit deals with the contributions of severa yoga scholars like Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobinda, Maharshi Raman and Pt. Shriram Sharma. This unit will help you to understand their important contributions to Yoga and relate with their Yoga practices.

13.3 SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND HIS PROPAGATION OF YOGA

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) was a pivotal figure in the introduction of Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western

world. His teachings emphasised the importance of self-realisation and the inherent divinity of every individual. Vivekananda's mission was to harmonise the spiritual and material aspects of life, advocating for a practical approach to spirituality that could be applied in everyday life. This assignment explores his contributions to the propagation of Yoga and Vedanta, highlighting his philosophy, major works, and lasting impact.

Swami Vivekananda, originally named Narendranath Dutta, was born on January 12, 1863 in Kolkata. His father was Vishwanath Dutta and mother was Bhuvaneswari Devi. His father was a successful Attorney General. Swami Vivekananda started the practice of meditation from his childhood. At a young age, Swami Vivekananda passed through a period of spiritual crisis, where he had the doubts about the "existance of God". In November1881, Swamiji went to meet Shri Ramkrishna Paramhansha, who stayed at the Kali Mandir of Dakshineswar. Swamiji became the frequent visitor at the Dakshineswar Kali Mandir. The questions which arised in Swamiji's mind were answered by his Guru Ramkrishna Paramhamsha. But after a few years, two incidences took place, one was his father's death in 1884 and another was his Guru's death in 1886.

Early Life and Influences

Vivekananda was deeply influenced by his Guru, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, who taught him about the unity of all religions and the importance of direct experience in spirituality. Vivekananda's early exposure to various religious texts, including the Vedas, Upanishads, and the *Bhagavad Gita*, laid down the foundation for his later teachings.

Contributions - Vivekananda's emphasis on the four types of yoga namely.

Bhakti Yoga - This path leads one to spirituality that connects mankind to God.

Karma Yoga - Right selfless attitude of action without expectation.

Jnana Yoga - It is the path of knowledge or wisdom that we receive through the Pancha Indriya.

Raja Yoga- Swamiji said, it is the path of meditation and control of the mind, which gives a scientific treatment.

Each of these types of yoga has a specific way to attain the ultimate goal of life (Moksha).

Swami Vivekananda was the world spokesperson for Vedanta. He propagated the essence of Hinduism and, Sanatana Sabhyata. It was best expressed as in Adi Shankaracharya's Advaita Vedanta Philosophy.
Swami Vivekananda propagated the philosophy of Universal Brotherhood, and also, Universal Oneness. According to Swamiji, through ignorance comes dukkha, through the practice of yoga and its practical implication, it will lead to self realisation in a person's life. Through self realisation an individual can get align towards or submerge with the paramatma, which is the true absolutes.

Swami Vivekananda in his Vedanta philosophy express the deep-rooted knowledge of "maya", "Jiva", "Atman", Brahman, "Samsara", "punar-janam", "Brahma-vidya", etc. He was one of the first persons to establish the vedantic deals in the west. Swami Vivekananda gave his famous speech at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago on September 11, 1893. His speech is considered to be one of the most important speeches in modern Indian history. It was an attempt to promote understanding and harmony between different religions and cultures, and to bridge the gap between the east and the west. He passed away in 1902.

Major Contributions

- Parliament of Religions (1893): Vivekananda gained international recognition when he represented Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago. His opening speech, which began with "Sisters and Brothers of America," received a standing ovation and marked a significant moment in the introduction of Indian spirituality to the West.
- Establishment of Ramakrishna Mission: In 1897, he founded the Ramakrishna Mission, which aimed to promote social welfare and education while embodying the principles of Vedanta. The organisation continues to serve society through various educational, healthcare, and cultural initiatives.

- Literary works: Vivekananda authored numerous books and articles that elucidated his teachings on Yoga and Vedanta. Key works include *"Jnana Yoga," "Karma Yoga," "Bhakti Yoga," and "Raja Yoga,"* which serve as foundational texts for students and practitioners worldwide.

Impact on Modern Spirituality:

Swami Vivekananda's teachings have had a profound impact on modern spirituality both in India and abroad. He inspired countless individuals to explore their spiritual potential and engage in selfless service. His ideas have influenced various movements, including the New Age movement, which often draws from Eastern philosophies.

Vivekananda's emphasis on education and empowerment has also inspired social reformers in India, advocating for women's rights, caste equality, and national pride. His vision of a spiritually awakened society continues to echo contemporary issues, encouraging individuals to seek inner strength while contributing positively to society.

Conclusion:

Swami Vivekananda's propagation of Yoga and Vedanta has left an indelible mark on spiritual thought worldwide. His teachings encourage individuals to realise their true nature, engage in selfless service, and foster unity among diverse cultures and religions. As a bridge between Eastern spirituality and Western thought, Vivekananda remains a significant figure in the quest for holistic understanding and personal transformation in today's world. He is a great monk of India. His life is very inspring, specially for the youth who can learn about the significance of Karma (action) in holistic way.

13.4 SHRI AUROBINDO

Philosophy has a set of beliefs and ideas that explain the meaning of life and provide insight. It means "love of wisdom." Sri Aurobindo Ghosh was one of the great thinkers in the history of Indian philosophy. He was a multifaceted kind of person. Moreover, he was a freedom fighter, great yogi, seer, thinker, philosopher, poet, and Indian nationalist. He also provided

insights into the spiritual world and life on the earth. He worked and put effort in the freedom fight for India.

Early Life

Sri Aurobindo was born on August 15, 1872, in Calcutta (Kolkata), India. His original name was Aurobindo Ghose, and he also spelt Aravinda. He died on December 5, 1950, in Pondicherry (Puducherry). He was a great yogi, seer, thinker, philosopher, poet, and Indian nationalist. He also provided insights into the spiritual world and life on the earth.

He did his schooling at Christian Convent School in Darjeeling (Darjiling). He also went to England for further education. After that, he joined the University of Cambridge, where he learned and became proficient in many European languages. He returned to India in 1892 and joined various administrative and professional positions in Baroda (Vadodara) and Calcutta (Kolkata). After some years, he grew interest in yoga and Indian dialects, including Sanskrit.

From 1902 to 1910, he also participated in the movements to make India free from the British Raj (rule). He was also imprisoned in 1908 because of some political issues. After two years, he ran away to British India and found refugee in the French colony of Pondicherry (Puducherry) in southeastern India. There, he developed an in-depth understanding of yoga and meditation. He devoted his whole life to Integral Yoga that leads to holistic development.

He established a community of spiritual seekers in Pondicherry, which was named Sri Aurobindo Ashram, in 1926. Then, he became the consultant for many spiritual thinkers and also collaborated with Mirra Alfassa (1878-1973), also known as the 'mother' in the ashram. Many philosophers and thinkers from different countries worldwide came to the ashram throughout the years.

Metaphysics and Philosophy

In philosophy, Aurobindo Ghosh acknowledged and embraced the cultural diversity between the Indian subcontinent and Western traditions. According to him, Indian, seekers discovered the true meaning of existence through intellectual and political pursuits. They referred to the teachings

and Vedic patterns imparted by renowned philosophers such as Buddha. He proclaimed that the Indian and the European philosophical perspectives lie at opposite extremes. He held an optimistic view of afuture synthesis between Indian spiritualism and Western secularism. He envisioned a philosophy that balanced both spirituality and materialism equally. Through his writings and speeches, he worked towards this ideal. He saw diversity not as division, but as a form of unity.

As per his thought process, philosophical concepts by Aristotle, Leibniz, and Hegel were intellectual, and they also represented the spiritual world of human beings. He held metaphysics as a subject that combines both Indian and western ideals. The concept of spirituality was borrowed from the Upanishads, and that of conscience from the *Rigveda*.

On the contrary, the inter-relationship between matter, life, and thought process was traced by Aurobindo and Ramakrishna, which were developed in western philosophy also.

He also has belief in spiritual determinism. According to him, history is a way of manifestation and progressive self-revelation of brahman. He stated that Goddess Kali has divine energy, which acts as a driving force, specifically during Bengal nationalism and the French revolution. He believed that the freedom of India was associated with the will of God.

He had written many books and articles related to divine nature and spirituality. Some of them were *Gita* (1922), *Collected Poems and Plays* (1942), *The Synthesis of Yoga* (1948), *The Human Cycle* (1949), *The Ideal of Human Unity* (1949), *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol* (1950), and On the *Veda* (1956).

Integral Yoga:

Literally, Yoga is unification of Jivantma with Paramatma. It integrates our body, mind and thought process. This in return controls our life style, reduces stress and makes one free from diseases. Sri Aurobindo described Yoga in different ways. In 'The Synthesis of Yoga" he described Yoga as "union". Yoga is both –a path and the destination to a superior consciousness. Yoga is the journey of the human, a thinking being, back towards God-consciousness from which he has originated. In his own writings it is found

that 'yoga is the union of the soul with the immortal being'. The essence of Yoga is the contact between the human being with the divinity. Integral Yoga aims at the full realisation of the Divine, involving a total transformation of our nature, and seeks the complete perfection of life on earth- not merely a return to eternal perfection beyond this worl. It implies realisation of God. It helps to become a part of the divine work. The object of this Yoga is not to liberate the soul from Nature.

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh was one of the great thinkers in the history of Indian philosophy. He was a great yogi, seer, thinker, philosopher, poet, and Indian nationalist. He also provided insights into the spiritual world and life on the earth.

13.5 RAMANA MAHARSHI: HIS PHILOSOPHY AND WORKS

Ramana Maharshi was born on December 30, 1879 in a small village called Tiruchuzhi in TamilNadu, India. He began his life as an ordinary boy named Venkataraman Iyer. His family was deeply rooted in traditional Hindu values, and he grew up under the care of his mother Alagammal, and his father Sundaram Iyer, who worked as a pleader. Little did anyone know that this ordinary child would one day become Sri Ramana, a spiritual master whose presence would be sought by people from around the world. As a boy, Venkataraman showed no extraordinary signs of spiritual inclination. In fact, he was like any other child—playing, attending school, and occasionally getting into mischief. What stands out about his early life is its simplicity. There were no miraculous signs or grand prophecies about his future. A regular boy with a spark of intensity from what we know, young Venkataraman was not particularly devoted to religious practices. Unlike other saints whose childhoods are filled with tales of spiritual precocity, he seemed more interested in playing games than chanting mantras. Yet, beneath this outward ordinariness, there was a quiet intensity about him. This intensity revealed itself in his ability to absorb things deeply and intuitively. For instance, he didn't excel academically, but he had a sharp mind that grasped things without much effort. The seed of self-realisation was sown

when Maharishi Raman experienced at true transformation at the age of 16. One day, seemingly out of nowhere, he was struck by a deep fear of death. Lying down in his uncle's house in Madurai, he felt an overwhelming sense that his body was about to die. But instead of panicking, Venkataraman decided to face this fear head-on. He began to ask himself what happens when the body dies? And then, more profoundly: Who is it that dies? What followed was a spontaneous and transformative realisation. He recognised that the body is just a shell, and the true self—the "I"—is eternal, beyond birth and death. Ramana Maharshi's teachings focus on self-inquiry. Maharshi believed that if we keep questioning where our sense of 'I' comes from, we will eventually see that it is just an illusion. This understanding can lead us to recognise that our true self is actually part of a bigger, unchanging consciousness that connects us all. This idea comes from Advaita Vedanta, which teaches that there is no separation between us and the ultimate reality, called Brahman. Maharshi said that if we consistently practice self-inquiry, we can break free from the endless cycle of being born over and over again. This freedom is known as moksha, which is a state of true understanding and happiness substratum of reality, wherein true knowledge and peace are found, unmediated by the constructs of language or thought.

Ramana Maharshi's endorsement of silence as a spiritual practice stems from the belief that it facilitates a deeper immersion into the true self, beyond the distractions of the ego. His teachings suggest that verbal communication often perpetuates the illusion of individual identity, thus obstructing the realisation of the self's oneness with the absolute. Silence, in contrast, is not merely an absence of speech but an active presence, a potent medium through which profound inner experiences and insights can manifest. Through silence, the practitioner can transcend the superficial layers of being and encounter the silence within, which is equated with the self or Brahman. This profound stillness is posited as the substratum of reality, wherein true knowledge and peace are found, unmediated by the constructs of language or thought. Raman Maharshi believe that the path self-realisation was finding out who we really are; it is a journey that takes

place deep within ourselves. This journey is about getting rid of our individual ego to directly experience our true self, which is a part of a greater whole that does not have any divisions. He said that asking ourselves the question 'Who am I?' is the best way to start this journey. This is not just thinking about the question; it's a way to dig deep and remove all the wrong ideas we have about being our bodies or our thoughts. It is by constantly looking within that we can understand our true nature, which is connected to everything. In simple terms, Maharshi encourages us to be mindful and to question the very core of our identity. By doing so, we can reach a state of understanding and connection that goes beyond our everyday selves. This is not just an idea but a practical approach to living a more fulfilling life. For example, someone might practice this by taking time each day to meditate and reflect on their thoughts and actions, constantly reminding themselves to focus on the present and the reality of their experiences. This practice can lead to a sense of peace and a deeper connection with the world around us.

Conclusion:

Ramana Maharshi was a great thinker whose ideas are still important today. He taught us about the importance of understanding who we really are and questioning our deepest thoughts and feelings. Maharshi believed that by doing this, we could get past our superficial identities and find peace in silence. His way of thinking has helped many people on their own spiritual journeys. He argued that everyone has the ability to find their true selves. He encouraged people to look inside themselves for answers rather than seeking them in the outside world. This approach to spirituality has made a lasting impact. For example, someone struggling with stress might use Maharshi's method of asking, 'Who am I?' to get to the root of their anxieties. By focusing inward and being silent, they might find relief and clarity. In summary, Maharshi's philosophy is about the inner search for truth and the belief that everyone can achieve spiritual clarity. His teachings continue to guide those looking for deeper meaning.

13.6 PANDIT SHRIRAM SHARMA

The divine soul of Shriram Sharma Acharya ji descended on earth on September 20th, 1911 as the son of Pt. Roopkishor Sharma and Mata Dankunvari Devi in Anvalkheda (District Agra, India). The depth in which his saintly heart was concerned for the welfare of the common masses was clearly expressed since his childhood when, as a small boy, he took a brave step of nursing an old, untouchable woman suffering from leprosy against the strong displeasure of his family. A noted patriot, scholar and founder of the Banaras Hindu University, Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya initiated him in the worship of Gayatri mantra when he was nine years old. On the auspicious day of Vasant Panchami festival, January 18, 1926, his guru – a great Himalayan yogi – appeared before him in the subtle form arising from the flame of the deepak (lamp) during his Gayatri worship. This sparked the revelation of the divine origin and purpose of life and enlightened him with the grace and guidance of his guru. The next 24 years of his life were devoted to 24 Mahapurar caranas –– each consisting of the rhythmic recitation (japa) of 2.4 million Gayatri Mantra with most strict discipline. There is no parallel to this kind of sadhana ever performed by anyone on earth to date. At the same time, he also sincerely participated in the freedom movement of India under the noble guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, while continuing with his altruistic services to the society and also attending the family duties. In 1943, he married Ma Bhagwati Devi and ever since, the saintly couple dedicatedly pursued the noble mission for the arousal of the human glory and the revival of the divine culture 'Pragya Yoga'. The practitioners of Pragya Yoga undergo through various Sadhanas according to the given instructions from the teachings of Acharyashree. The aspirants coming for Sadhana, follow a unique schedule of lifestyle and get all the benefits of this holistic approach of yoga. Pragya Yoga includes almost all systems of Yoga as: Bhakti, Gyan, Karma, Raja, Hatha, Tantra and Mantra Yoga. Practice of Bhakti Yoga begins with the aspirant's devotion to the feet of Iśta (higher consciousness). In the practice of Pragya yoga, aspirants devotion to the feet of Universal Mother Gayatri and offer the five things: Dhūp, Deep

Naivedya, Aksat and chandan (incence, lamp, sweet-offering, rice and sandal wood paste) and pray for the holiness and her blessings. JñānYoga means knowing the higher consciousness through knowledge either through self practice or through the teachings of Guru. Aspirants of Pragya Yoga get benefited through both the ways. The way of self-practice is Atma Bodha and Tattwa Bodha Sadhana. The teachings of Guru are through the books (authored by Śrīram Sharma Acharya) and the sayings of Acharyashrī. Karma Yoga is action withought expectation, or whatever you do offer it to God. Here, it is introduced at the very begining of this Sadhana. All the devotees and workers of this Parivar (organisation) devote their whole life for the social welfare without any expectation or without expecting anything in return. Raja Yoga some how means Dhyan Yoga. All the aspirants practice Savita Dhyan (meditation on the rising Sun) in the morning as per the instruction of Acharyashri. For the practice of Hatha Yoga, Acharyashri introduced Pragya Yoga Vyayama which includes few Asanas with breath awareness for physical health and it also includes Mantra chanting for mental and spiritual health. The practice includes sixteen postures. It can be co-related with Gayatri Mantra with its variety which provides plentiful exercises to intensity concentration, purity of emotions with the body movements.

First Position (Tadasana) – Mantra 'Om bhūh', Stand with the feet together. Inhale and raise the both hands above the head as well as lift the heels and gaze at the sky. Slowly go into the position of Tadasana. Weakness of the heart, impurities of the blood and constipation can be eliminated through this practice.

Second position (Pad hastasana) – Mantra 'Om bhuvah'. Exhale and bend yourself forward with the hips. Bring your both hands beside the feet on the floor. Try to touch the head with knees. (Keep the knees straight). Practice removes the gas, strengthen the Ida, Pingla, and Śuśumna and reduce the extra fat of waist. It also removes constipation and makes the spine supple.

Third Position (Vajrasana) – Mantra 'Om swah'. Sit in vajrasana; fold the knee and make a seat with the feet. It is relaxing posture. The practice is helpful in digestion. Gas, constipation and the heaviness of the stomach can be removed.

Fourth Position (Ustrasana) – Mantra 'Tat'. Lift the buttocks and try to bring the both hands on the soul. Come into the position of Ustrasana with inhalation. Open the chest and gaze at the sky. Through this practice heart becomes strong; Ida, Pingla and Susumna with spine gets energy. Practice is helpful to get relief from hernia, backache and asthma.

Fifth Position (Yoga mudrasana) – Mantra 'Savituh'. Exhale while sitting into vajrasana and then bend forward with raising the hands behind the back like Yogamudra. Try to touch the forehead on the floor. The practice activates the Manipur Chakra.

Sixth Position (Ardhatadasana) – Mantra 'Varenyam' Inhale and raise the upper part of the body while sitting back into vajrasana. Raise both the hands above the head like Tadasana. This position is called Ardhatadasana.

Seventh Position (Śaśankasana) – Mantra 'Bhargo' Exhale and bend with hips again. Go into Śaśankasana touching the forehead and elbows on the floor. Practice is helpful to get rid of digestive disorders.

Eighth Position (Bhujangasana) – Mantra 'Devasya' Keep the hands and knees at the same position, inhale and bring the upper part of the body forward with chest opened in Bhujangasana gaze at the sky and hold on this position. The practice gives strength to the heart and the spinal cord.

Ninth Position (Tiryak Bhujangasana Left) – Mantra 'Dhimahi'. Be in the position like that for Bhujangasana; exhale and just tilt to left and try to see the heel with lateral bending.

Tenth Position (Tiryak Bhujangasana Right) – Mantra 'Dhiyo'. Tilt to the right and try to see the heels with right side lateral bending.

Eleventh Position (Śaśankasana) – Mantra 'Yonah'. Keep the hands and knees at the same position. Bring the body back again and go into Sasankasana with exhalation.

Twelfth Position (Ardhatadasana) – Mantra 'Prachodayat'. Raise both hands with upper part of the body while be into Vajrasana and come into Ardhatadasana with inhalation.

Thirteenth Position (Utkatasana) – Mantra 'Bhuh'. Bring the hands in praying position in front of the chest. Raise the heels into scotting position and come into the position of Utkatasana.

Fourteenth Position (Padhastasana) – Mantra 'Bhuvah'. Bring the wholesole on the floor. Lift the buttocks and come into the position of Padhastasana while keeping the hands beside the feet.

Fifteenth Position (Tadasana) – Mantra 'Swah'. Inhale and raise the head, hand, chest and trunk like Tadasana; gaze at the sky.

Sixteenth Position (Chanting of Om) – Exhale while chanting Om, bringing the hands together into fists,evoking a sense of strength and energy.

Mantra Yoga is one of the important and most powerful aspects of this system. All the aspirants of Pragya Yoga are initiated into Gayatri Mantra at the very beginning of the Sadhana and they perform Mantra Yoga through Gayatri Mantra Japa. The Mantra is: "Ohm bhūrbhuvah swah tatsaviturvarenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prahodayāt" (Meaning: May Almightly illuminates our intellect and inspire us towards the righteous path). It is nesessary for all the aspirants to repeat this universal mantra at least three Mālā (spiritual string of 108 beads) regularly in the morning. System of Pragya Yoga influences every aspects of life and gives a lot of benefits. It can be said that Pragya Yoga is one of the ways of life. People from every corner of the world come for Sadhana and they are being initiated with this system and get proper guidelines of yogic practices for their healthy life.

Acharya Shriram Sharma, the great devotee of Goddess Gayatri was a sage visionary and reformer who intitiated a 100 paints Jug Nirman Yojana and lived a disciplined life of devout austerity. He is the founder of Global Gayatri Parivar Fraternity. Shantikunj Ashram which has 150 million people, operate through 5,000 cetres across the globe and includes an academy dedicated to moral and spiritual awakening. The great devotee of Goddess Gayatri, Acharyaji volultarily left his physical body on Gayatri Jayanti on 2nd June, 1990 but even after his physical departure from the scene, the mission spread to the global dimension.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

a) When was Swami Vivekananda born?

b) Write briefly on Swami Vivekananda's influence on the philosophy of Yoga?

c) Who was Sri Aurobinda?

d) What are the names of the Yoga composed by Swami Aurobinda?

e) When did Raman Maharshi's life transform?

f) What are the main aim sof the Raman Maharshi's philosophy?

g) What are a contribution of Yoga of Pandit Shriram Sharma?

h) Which Yoga is a powerful tool of Pragya Yoga?



13.7 LET US SUM UP

- Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) was a pivotal figure in the introduction of Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world. His teachings emphasised the importance of self-realisation and the inherent divinity of every individual. Vivekananda's mission was to harmonise the spiritual and material aspects of life, advocating for a practical approach to spirituality that could be applied in everyday life.
- The Integral Yoga is the way of a complete realisation of God, a complete transformation of our nature and this implies a complete perfection of life here on earth and not merely a return to an eternal perfection elsewhere.It implies realisation of God. It helps to become the part of adivine work. The object of this Yoga is not to liberate the soul from Nature.
- Maharshi's philosophy is about the inner search for truth and the belief that everyone can achieve spiritual clarity. His teachings continue to guide those looking for deeper meaning.
- Pragya Yoga is one of the ways of life. People from every corner of the world come for Sadhana and they are being initiated with this system and get proper guidelines of yogic practices for their healthy life.



13.8 FURTHER READINGS

1) Ranganathananda. *Swami Vivekananda,his life and mission*, Ramakrishana Mission Institute of Culture Gol Park, Kolkata.

2) Aurobindo,*The IntegralYoga,* Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Department and SABDA.

3) Pandey. Pranav, (2014).*The Pragya Yoga for Happy and Healthy Life-EP81*. Yug Nirman Yogna Vistar Trust,Mathura.



13.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

a) Swami Vivekananda, originally named Narendranath Dutta, was born on 12th January, 1863 in Kolkata.

b) Swami Vivekananda was influenced by Shri Ramkrishna Paramhansha, who staying at the Kali Mandir of Dakshineswar.

c) "Sri Aurobindo Ghosh was one of the greates thinkers in the history of Indian philosophy. He was a multifaceted person, he was a freedom fighter, great yogi, seer, thinker, philosopher, poet, and Indian nationalist. He also provided insights into the spiritual world and life on the earth. He worked and put effort into the freedom fight of India.

d) Integral Yoga.

e) The real transformation in Maharshi Raman's life came at the age of 16.

f) Maharshi's philosophy is about the inner search for truth and the belief that everyone can achieve spiritual clarity. His teachings continue to guide those looking for deeper meaning.

g) Pragya Yoga.

h) Mantra Yoga is one of the most important and powerful aspects of this system.



13.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions:

1. What is Integral Yoga?
2. How many steps are to be followed in order to practice Pragya Yoga?
3. Name the four types of Yoga emphasized by Swami Vivekananda.
4. In which year did Swami Vivekananda address the Parliament of Religions in Chicago?
5. Who was the spiritual master of Swami Vivekananda?
6. What is the name of the spiritual community established by Sri Aurobindo in 1926?
7. At what age did Ramana Maharshi experience the fear of death that led to self-realization?
8. What philosophical tradition did Sri Aurobindo aim to synthesize with Western thought?
9. What is the core spiritual practice advocated by Ramana Maharshi?“Ans: Self-inquiry (Who am I?).
10. Which concept did Ramana Maharshi associate with ultimate reality?

B. Short Questions (Answer in about 150 words)

1. What is the main contribution of Swami Vivekananda?
2. Briefly state the imortance of metaphysics and philosophy of Rishi Aurobindo.
3. What mantra is chanted before practicing Pragya? Explain its meaning.
4. What are the paths of journey, according to Raman Maharshi?
5. Mention two major contributions of Sri Aurobindo to Indian philosophy.

C. Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

1. Describe briefly about Swami Vivekananda and his Propagation of Yoga.
2. Discuss the contributions of Maharshi Raman to Yoga?

   Sharma.

3. Discuss the steps of Pragya Yoga with special reference to Pandit Shriram.
4. Relate 'Integral Yoga' to Yogi Aurobindo.
5. What is Integral Yoga according to Sri Aurobindo?
6. Describe the spiritual awakening of Ramana Maharshi.

C) Long Questions

1. Discuss the contributions of Swami Vivekananda to the global understanding of Yoga and Vedanta.
2. Explain the philosophy of Integral Yoga as proposed by Sri Aurobindo and its significance.
3. Elaborate on Ramana Maharshi's concept of self-inquiry and its role in achieving self-realization.
4. Compare and contrast the approaches of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, and Ramana Maharshi to Yoga.

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UNIT 14 : YOGA SCHOLARS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS II

UNIT STRUCTURE

14.1 Learning Objectives

14.2 Introduction

14.3 Yogic Contribution of Swami Sivananda of Umachal Ashram

14.4 Yogic Contribution of Sri Shyamacharan Lahiri

14.5 Yogic Contribution of Sri Sri T. Krishnamacharya

14.6 Yogic Contribution of Sri Srimanta Sankaradeva

14.7 Let's us Sum up

14.8 Further Reading

14.9 Answer to Check Your Progress

14.10 Model Questions

14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to –

- describe the yogic contribution of Swami Sivananda of Umachal Ashram
- discuss the yogic contribution of Sri Shyamacharan Lahiri
- explain the yogic contribution of Sri Sri T. Krishnamacharya
- discuss the yogic contribution of Sri Srimanta Sankaradeva

14.2 INTRODUCTION

Yoga scholars have played an indispensable role in preserving, interpreting, and enriching the timeless wisdom of yoga. Their work has been instrumental in deepening our understanding of yoga, not merely as a physical discipline, but as a profound spiritual and philosophical journey. From the earliest rishis-those ancient sages who etched the sacred teachings of yoga into the venerable Vedas and Upanishads-to contemporary scholars who have made this ancient practice accessible to the world, their contributions have shaped yoga's evolution. These intellectual

initiators have not only safeguarded the integrity of yoga's ancient roots, but also helped it blossom in modern times, ensuring its relevance and vitality across diverse cultures and generations. Through their efforts, the bridge between the profound insights of the past and the evolving needs of the present has been beautifully woven, allowing yoga to transcend time, space, and boundaries, and flourish in the hearts of all who seek its wisdom.

14.3 YOGIC CONTRIBUTION OF SWAMI SIVANANDA OF UMACHAL ASHRAM (4 JULY 1900 - 7 OCTOBER 1979)

Swami Sivananda Saraswati's life story is a beautiful testament to spiritual awakening and selfless compassion. Born on July 4, 1900, in the serene village of Badalpur in the district of Ravisal, now in present-day Bangladesh, he came into this world as Sasibhusan Mukhopadhyay (Mukherjee).



From the very beginning, Sasibhusan’s life seemed guided by a divine hand. His parents, Ramchandra Mukherjee and Tarangini Devi, created an environment steeped in spirituality, where devotion and moral values were the foundation of daily life.

Even as a child, Sasibhusan's intelligence and sensitivity were remarkable. His heart was deeply attuned to the suffering of others—whether human, animal, or bird. Often lost in thought, he would reflect on the nature of pain and the ways in which it could be alleviated. It was as though his young mind carried the seeds of the compassionate sage he would one day become.

When Sasibhusan fell ill with asthma in his early years, his parents sought divine intervention, fervently praying to Goddess Kali for his recovery. In their desperation, they vowed to offer an animal sacrifice as an act of gratitude. However, Sasibhusan, even in his fragile state, firmly opposed the idea. He saw no virtue in taking a life to express gratitude to the divine. Instead, he urged his family to honour the Goddess in a manner that brought joy, not harm. Moved by his conviction, his parents abandoned their vow and distributed sweets to celebrate his recovery—a moment that reflected Sasibhusan's innate sense of justice and non-violence.

As Sasibhusan grew older, his disillusionment with the material world deepened. Despite being surrounded by family and the comforts of home, he yearned for something far greater—a life devoted to spiritual exploration and service. At the age of 19, he made the life-altering decision to leave home in pursuit of higher truths. His journey led him to Kakilamukh Ashram in Jorhat, Assam, where he found a spiritual sanctuary under the guidance of Swami Nigamananda Saraswati. At the ashram, Sasibhusan immersed himself in the study of yoga and meditation, disciplines that harmonised his body, mind, and soul. He showed unwavering dedication, not only to spiritual practices but also to acquiring knowledge. Under the mentorship of Amritananda Maharaj, he mastered Sanskrit and English, broadening his ability to understand and share wisdom. It was here that he took a pivotal step in his spiritual journey—receiving formal initiation, or *Diksha*, from Swami Umananda Saraswati. With this initiation, Sasibhusan adopted the name Swami Sivananda Saraswati, embracing a new identity that reflected his spiritual rebirth.

Swami Sivananda Saraswati's early life and spiritual awakening is a profound reminder of the power of compassion, determination, and faith.

His journey from a sensitive child in a small village to a revered spiritual figure inspires us to look beyond the transient nature of worldly life and seek the eternal truths that reside within.

His Teachings

Swami Sivananda, the revered spiritual master and yogi, embarked on a transformative journey across India, sharing his wisdom and touching countless lives. His travels eventually led him to the serene Nilachal Hills of Guwahati, Assam, where, on December 19, 1929, he founded the sacred "Umachal Ashram." Nestled amidst the tranquil beauty of the hills, the ashram became a sanctuary of peace and spiritual growth.

Just days later, on December 24, 1929, Swamiji began his noble mission of bringing the profound teachings of yoga to the common people. With his characteristic simplicity and compassion, he made the ancient practices of yoga accessible to all, bridging the gap between philosophy and practical living. His vision was to empower individuals, regardless of their background, with the tools to lead healthier, more harmonious lives.
As the ashram flourished under Swamiji's guidance, it evolved into a vibrant centre for yogic education and spirituality. Recognising the need for structured learning, he established the "Umachal Yoga Mahavidyalaya," one of India's earliest yoga colleges. This pioneering institution offered systematic courses on yoga, blending traditional wisdom with modern pedagogical methods. Over time, it gained national and international acclaim, drawing seekers and students from all corners of the world.

The legacy of Swami Sivananda and the Umachal Ashram endures, reflecting his timeless message of self-realisation, service, and universal love. Through his tireless dedication, he transformed the Nilachal Hills into a beacon of yogic knowledge, leaving an indelible mark on the spiritual landscape of India and beyond.

Swami Sivananda's contributions extended beyond education. He founded a 50-bed yogic hospital at the ashram to treat various diseases through yoga. This hospital was recognised by the All India Yoga and Nature Cure Council, under the Government of India. His innovative approaches to healing made yoga practices accessible and effective for treating ailments

like asthma and other diseases.

Swami Sivananda, a luminary in the world of yoga and spirituality, left an indelible mark through his teachings and literary contributions. Among his remarkable works, *Yoga Bole Rog Arogya*— translated as *Yogic Therapy*—emerged as a cornerstone in promoting yoga as a powerful means to heal and rejuvenate. The book's profound impact was amplified as it reached global audiences, translated into multiple languages such as Hindi, English, Assamese, Bengali, Malayalam, French, and Spanish. Through his writings, Swamiji kindled a universal interest in yoga, not just as a practice but as a holistic remedy for the body, mind, and soul.

Swami Sivananda's vision extended beyond physical well-being; he championed vegetarianism and the principles of *sattvic* living, advocating for a life rooted in ethics, compassion, and self- discipline. His call for harmonious, disease-free living resonated deeply with those who sought inner peace and societal harmony.

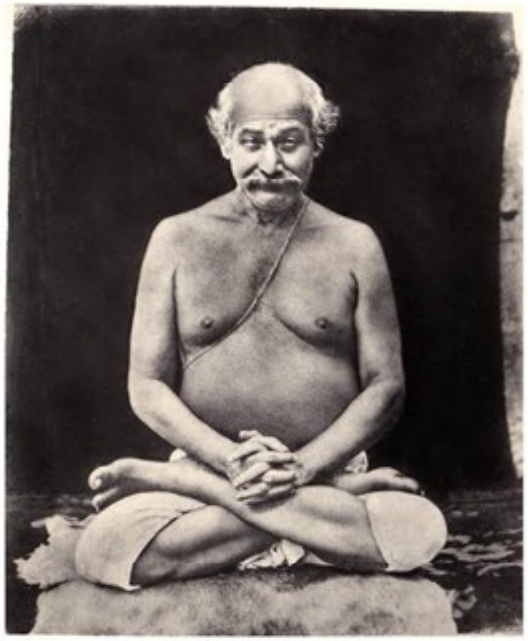
His influence was not confined to India alone; he was invited to Russia, Europe, and America, to share the wisdom of yoga with the world, weaving a global thread of well-being and spiritual awakening. In addition to *Yoga Bole Rog Arogya,* his works like *Khadyaniti* and *Satyajivan* reflected his dream of a new and enlightened India- one built on the foundations of ethical living and collective harmony.

On October 7, 1979, Swami Sivananda Saraswati passed away. His life's work and teachings left a profound impact on the people of Assam and the world. He is fondly remembered for his relentless service and contributions to society, which continue to inspire generations.

14.4 YOGIC CONTRIBUTION OF SRI SHYAMACHARAN LAHIRI (30 SEPTEMBER 1828 - 26 SEPTEMBER 1895)

Sri Shyamacharan Lahiri, more commonly known as Lahiri Mahasaya, is one of the most revered figures in the modern yogic tradition. Lahiri Mahasaya was born on September 30, 1828, in the village of Ghurni in Bengal, India. At the age of 33, while walking one day in the Himalayan

foothills near Ranikhet, he met his guru, Mahavatar Babaji. It was a divine reunion of two who had been together in many lives past; at an awakening touch of blessing, Lahiri Mahasaya became engulfed in a spiritual aura of divine realisation that was never to leave him.



Mahavatar Babaji initiated him in the science of Kriya Yoga and instructed him to bestow the sacred technique on all sincere seekers. Lahiri Mahasaya returned to his home in Banaras to fulfil this mission. As the first to teach the lost ancient Kriya science in contemporary times, he is renowned as a seminal figure in the renaissance of yoga that began in modern India in the latter part of the nineteenth century and continues to this day.

Paramahansa Yogananda wrote in *Autobiography of a Yogi:* "As the fragrance of flowers cannot be suppressed, so Lahiri Mahasaya, quietly living as an ideal householder, could not hide his innate glory. Devotee-bees from every part of India began to seek the divine nectar of the liberated master.

His Teachings

"The harmoniously balanced life of the great householder-guru became the inspiration of thousands of men and women." As Lahiri Mahasaya exemplified the highest ideals of Yoga, union of the little self with

God, he is admired as a Yogavatar, or incarnation of Yoga.

Paramahansa Yogananda's parents were disciples of Lahiri Mahasaya, and when he was a baby his mother carried him to the home of her guru. Blessing the infant, Lahiri Mahasaya said, "Little mother, thy son will be a yogi. As a spiritual engine, he will carry many souls to God's kingdom."

Lahiri Mahasaya established no organisation during his lifetime, but made this prediction: "About fifty years after my passing, an account of my life will be written because of a deep interest in Yoga that will arise in the West. The message of Yoga will encircle the globe. It will aid in establishing the brotherhood of man: a unity based on humanity's direct perception of the one Father." Lahiri Mahasaya entered mahasamadhi in Banaras, September 26, 1895. Fifty years later, in America, his prediction was fulfilled when an increasing interest in yoga in the West inspired Paramahansa Yogananda to write *Autobiography of a Yogi*, which contains a beautiful account of Lahiri Mahasaya's life.

Kriya Yoga

The central spiritual practice which he taught to his disciples was Kriya Yoga, a series of inner pranayama practices that quickly hasten the spiritual growth of the practitioner. He taught this technique to all sincere seekers, regardless of their religious background. In response to many types of problems that disciples would bring him, his advice would be the same — to practice more Kriya Yoga. Regarding Kriya Yoga, he said: "Always remember that you belong to no one, and no one belongs to you. Reflect that some day you will suddenly have to leave everything in this world– so make the acquaintanceship of God now. Prepare yourself for the coming astral journey of death by daily riding in the balloon of God-perception. Through delusion you are perceiving yourself as a bundle of flesh and bones, which at best is a nest of troubles. Meditate unceasingly, that you may quickly behold yourself as the Infinite Essence, free from every form of misery. Cease being a prisoner of the body; using the secret key of Kriya, learn to escape into Spirit."

He taught that Kriya practice would give the yogi direct experience of truth, unlike mere theoretical discussion of the scriptures, and to: "Solve all your problems through meditation. Exchange unprofitable religious speculations for actual God-contact. Clear your mind of dogmatic theological debris; let in the fresh, healing waters of direct perception. Attune yourself to the active inner Guidance; the Divine Voice has the answer to every dilemma of life. Though man's ingenuity for getting himself into trouble appears to be endless, the Infinite Succoris no less resourceful."

Guru-disciple relationship

Lahiri Mahasaya often spoke of the Guru-disciple relationship in the context of Kriya Yoga. He always gave the Kriya technique as an initiation, and taught that the technique was only properly learned as part of the Guru-disciple relationship. Frequently he referred to the realisation that comes through practicing Kriya as taught by the Guru, and the grace that comes through the 'transmission' of the Guru. He also taught that the grace of the Guru comes automatically if his instructions are followed. He suggested contacting the Guru during meditation, counselling that it was not always necessary to see his physical form. Regarding the necessity of the help of a Guru to deep yoga practice, he said: "It is absolutely necessary for all devotees to totally surrender to their Guru. The more one can surrender to the Guru, the more he can ascertain the subtlest of the subtle techniques of yoga from his Guru. Without surrender, nothing can be derived from the Guru." The relationship Lahiri Mahasaya had with his own disciples was very individual. He even varied the way he taught the Kriya Yoga practice to each disciple, depending on their individual spiritual needs.

Lahiri Mahasaya taught that if one is earning an honest living and practicing honesty, then there was no need to alter one's external life in any significant way in order to become aware of God's presence. If a student neglected his worldly duties, he would correct him. It was extremely rare for him to advise sannyasa, or complete worldly renunciation by becoming a swami. Instead, he advised marriage for most of his disciples along with Kriya Yoga practice.

He generally eschewed organised religion, but he allowed at least

one advanced disciple, Panchanan Bhattacharya, to open the "Arya Mission Institution" in Kolkata to spread Kriya teachings. Other disciples of Lahiri also started organisations to spread the Kriya Yoga message, including Yukteswar Giri with his Satsanga Sabha. Generally, he preferred Kriya to spread naturally.

Lahiri Mahasaya frequently taught the *Bhagavad Gita*. His regular Gita assemblies, called Gita Sabha, attracted many disciples. He asked several of his close disciples to write interpretations of the *Gita* by tuning in to his own realisation. Lahiri taught that the Battle of Kurukshetra was really an inner psychological battle, and that the different characters in the battle were actually psychological traits within the struggling yogi. This understanding would later become the foundation of Paramahansa Yogananda's commentaries on the *Bhagavad Gita*. He also taught that the epic story of the *Mahabharata* showed the soul's descent into matter, and its challenges in retracing its way back to spirit.

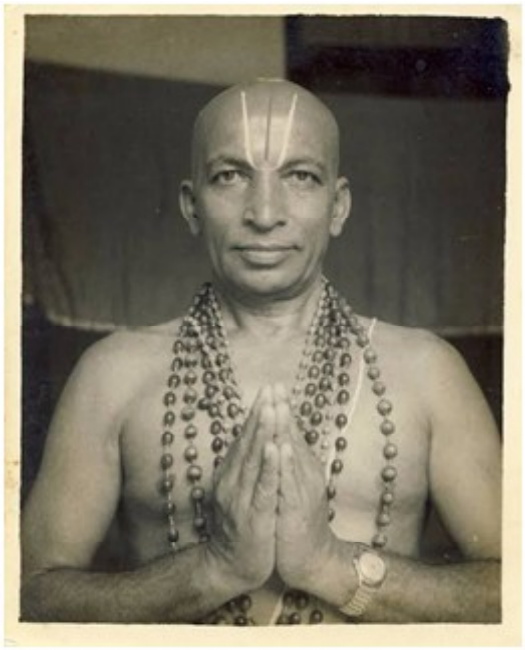
Siddhi yogi, Lahiri Mahashaya's divine play of miracles was without end. Though he had a physical body, he was also formless. Materialising in more than one place at the same time, he accomplished his work. Kind-hearted and generous, he miraculously saved the lives of many disciples and drew true seekers to him like a sweet and fragrant flower bewitches bees. His state of wisdom and his perfect balance were displayed when he continued a discourse on the *Bhagavad Gita*, unperturbed, while his family members mourned his daughter's death.

Lahiri Mahashaya's *mahasamadhi* took place on September 26, 1895, the day of *mahastami* worship of Mother Durga. As he entered into the eternal abode of God, he said: 'Those who practice this immortal Kriya Yoga shall never perish and become orphans. Obtaining this great and immortal Kriya Yoga from Babaji Maharaj, I resuscitated it in this world. In the future, it will spread to every house, and man will gradually move ahead on this path to the ultimate liberation. The path of salvation shall always remain open to mankind. The time has come for my departure. Even this gross body is destroyed and the ever-existent guru is always with you.' Lahiri Mahashaya's diaries, interpretations, discourses, and exemplary life

remain as testimony to his fathomless state of wisdom and spiritual attainment.

14.5 YOGIC CONTRIBUTION OF SRI T. KRISHNAMACHARYA (18 NOVEMBER 1888 - 28 FEBRUARY 1989)

The credit for bringing yoga into the 20th century belongs to Tirumalai Krishnamacharya known as “the father of modern yoga” or India’s first modern guru. He was born on the November 18 1888 in the village of Muchukunda Puram, situated in the Chitradurga district, and died on February 28, 1989. His family was well-versed in traditional Vedic practices, and his early life was steeped in spirituality. He was raised in a Brahmin family, where he received a strong foundation in Sanskrit, Vedic studies, and classical music.



His Teachings

Tirumalai Krishnamacharya was an Indian yoga teacher, ayurvedic healer and scholar and most influential yoga teacher of the 20th century, he contributed to the revival of Hatha Yoga and held degrees in all six Vedic Darshans. While under the patronage of the King of Mysore, Krishna Raja Wadiyar, Krishnamacharya traveled around India giving lectures and

demonstrations to promote yoga, including such feats as apparently stopping his heartbeat. He is widely considered as the architect of *vinyâsa*, in the sense of combining breathing with movement; the style of yoga he created has come to be called Viniyoga or Vinyasa Krama Yoga. Underlying all of Krishnamacharya's teachings was the principle "Teach what is appropriate for an individual." While he is revered in other parts of the world as a yogi, in India. Krishnamacharya is mainly known as a healer who drew from both ayurvedic and yogic traditions to restore health and well-being to those he treated. He wrote four books on yoga—*Yoga Makaranda* (1934), *Yogaasanagalu* (c. 1941), *Yoga Rahasya*, and *Yogavalli* (Chapter 1 – 1988)- as well as several essays and poetic compositions.

Vini Yoga- The Individualised Approach

Krishnamacharya was unique in many ways- as a master of yoga, as a teacher as an Ayurvedic physician and as a scholar. He is mostly known for his contribution to the revival of the more physically oriented disciplines and practices of Hathayoga. Therefore, he is often referred to as the father of modern yoga. The notion that he practiced and taught yoga that was somehow new or modern is primarily due to the many distortions or misunderstandings about the link between the physical practices of Hatha Yoga and the meditational practices of Raja Yoga. He was the conservator of the ancient teachings of Raja Yoga. There is only one yoga, the Raja Yoga of Pathanjali. All other forms of yoga are involving the practice of some of the eight limbs of the Yogasutras. Krishnamacharya with his depth knowledge and practice was clear about these connections. He believed Yoga to be India's greatest gift to the world. His yoga instructions reflected his conviction that Yoga could both be a spiritual practice and a mode of physical healing. Vini Yoga is an authentic approach to yoga reflecting the comprehensive teachings of Krishnamacharya. Vini Yoga is a Sanskrit word with a multitude of meaning. It literally means separation, detachment, and leaving, but commonly means employment use and application and it often refers to therapeutic style of Hatha Yoga taught by Krishnamacharya. The idea of Vini Yoga is that all the tools of Yoga are to be adapted to the

individual's capabilities. This individual approach to practicing and teaching yoga is essential if the student is to realise the full potential of yoga practice for healing self discovery and personal transformation. It is meant to meet the needs and interests of each individual, which gives the practitioner the tools to individualise and actualise the process of self-discovery and personal transformation. This practice believes in the individual's personal potential and gives them appropriate goals and means to get there. It truly emphasises the uniqueness of each person. This practice is unique because it transcends through a lineage of teachers, dating back to the origin of yoga. In addition, it is a practice that focuses the most on the individual practitioner and his needs. Krishnamacharya promoted Vini Yoga- teaching what is appropriate for an individual. Underlying all of Krishnamacharya;s teachings was the principle "teach what is appropriate for an individual." Yoga can be practiced to maintain health or enhance wellness; as a treatment or therapy; and as a discipline for spiritual practice and personal transformation. Each body is different anatomically and hence, when teaching or learning yoga, two primary factors should be considered.

- The purpose: Why is yoga being studied? What is the goal what the student needs?
- The person: Who is studying? What is their capability, age, level of fitness, state of health, profession, time they have for practice, level of acceptance, motivation, beliefs? Are they willing to listen and understand?

To teach yoga effectively, Krishnamacharya said teachers must know:

- How to teach asanas with correct breathing, with or without vinyasa (moving from one position to another in accordance with the inhalation and the exhalation of the breath).
- How to use asana in their own practice.
- How to teach a group of people.
- How to teach individuals. (including helping students understand what kind of practice is appropriate for them).

One of the Krishnamacharya's few worldly goals was to propagate the practice of sound and sensible yoga. Krishnamacharya knew that yoga practice must be undertaken with discipline in order to have a lasting effect, especially as a treatment. He noted that re-search, to search once more, is needed, to once again explore ancient practices and re-establish their values and relevance in modern society. Knowing the student is important for teaching the most beneficial yoga practices. Knowing how to use symmetric and asymmetric postures to work the two sides of the body independently or together to create balance, is vital. However, the primary goal of classical yoga is to bring concentration and stillness to the mind. Krishnamacharya states, a focused mind and a peaceful and positive feeling are vital requirements as well as by-products of an effective asana practice. Mental focus during asana practices an serves as a getway to the meditation that follows. Without mental focus asanas are just an exercise of the body and the breath; the mind is disengaged and vagrant. "No accomplishment or achievement is possible without effort." Such an asana practice will not effectively lead to meditation. Breathing links the body and mind, leading the body toward wellness and the mind toward calmness. Pranayama involves regulating the breath keeping the body still, and focusing the mind. Krishnamachaya cited pranayama practice as the reason for his longevity. True to his discipline, his instruction about pranayama practice depends on a person's age and how much time is spent on asana; as people grow older, both practices change. Krishnamacharya is widely considered as the "architect of vinyasa."

Vinyasa is an essential part of Krishnamacharya's teaching. Vinyasa is an ancient practice of physical and spiritual development. It is a systematic method to study, practice, teach and adapt yoga. This movements and sequence methodology approach to yogasana practice is unique in all forms of yoga. By integrating the functions of mind, body and breath in the same time frame, a practitioner will experience the real joy of yoga practice. Each of the important postures is practiced with many elaborate variations and movements. Each variation is linked to the next one by a succession of specific transitional movements, synchronised with the breath. The mind

closely follows the slow, smooth, deliberate yogic breathing; and the connecting of the mind and body takes place with the breath acting as the harness.

Vinyasa strictly follows the most complete definition of classical yoga. Yoga is typically defined in two ways: in one sense, it is defined as union; in another, it is mental peace. By using the breath as a harness, vinyasa integrates body and mind and so is the yoga of union. And because the mind follows the breath, the mind is made part of the whole process and achieves an elevated level of mental peace. Thus, the undercurrent of peace and joy is established permanently.

Vini Yoga refers to a general concept that means proper application based on the situation and it applies in many different contexts. It is the proper application of the practices of yoga based on the needs of the individual and he situation. So, the practices that are taught, and the ways thrugh which are taught, will vary according to the individual and situation. However, the way the postures are taught always depends on the needs of the person in that particular situation. When appropriate, the postures are not taught that way at all. Indeed, sometimes the postures may not be taught at all. Other yoga practices, such as breathing, meditation, chanting, self-reflection or devotion, may be more appropriate for the the individual's need or the situation. When understood in this way, it does not make sense to describe Vini Yoga as a style of yoga in which the postures are done in a particular way.

Tirumalai Krishnamacharya is considered the cornerstone of modern yoga in India. Rooted in the teachings of Patanjali's *Yogasutra*, his approach emphasised asana practice as a journey from limitation to ability. Unlike many contemporary practices that focus on mere physical movement, Krishnamacharya championed a mindful, adaptable practice suitable to each individual's needs, abilities, and goals—an approach more relevant today than ever.

14.6 YOGIC CONTRIBUTION OF SRI SRIMANTA SANKARADEVA (1449-1568)

Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva was a revered Assamese saint, scholar, poet, playwright, social reformer, and the founder of Vaishnavism in Assam. He played a pivotal role in inspiring the Bhakti movement in the region and uniting people through his neo-Vaishnavite movement, Ekasaran Naam Dharma. Sankaradeva's contributions to Assamese language and literature are immeasurable, as he enriched the culture with his poetry, dramas (ankia naat), and songs (borgeet and bhatima). Additionally, he is hailed as the father of Assamese classical dance – Sattriya Dance.



Born in 1449 in Alipukhuri, near Bordua in Nagaon district of Assam, Sankaradeva experienced the loss of his parents at an early age, being raised by his grandmother, Khersuti. He attended the tol (school) of Mahendra Kandali, where he began his studies in grammar and Indian scriptures. It was here that he composed his first verses, *Karatala Kamala*, demonstrating his understanding of all the vowels despite not having formal education. His creative prowess continued to flourish, and his first work, *Harishchandra Upakhyan*, was written during his time at Mahendra Kandali's tol.

Known for his physical strength, there is a popular legend that Sankaradeva was able to swim across the mighty Brahmaputra, one of the largest rivers in the world. In his late teens, he left the to and assumed the

responsibilities of Shiromani Bhuyan. Later, he moved to Bordowa, where he married his first wife, Suryavati. Tragically, shortly after giving birth to a daughter, Suryavati passed away.

In 1481, Sankardeva embarked on his first pilgrimage, travelling to sacred places such as Puri, Mathura, Vrindavan, Gaya, Ayodhya, Dwaraka, Sitakunda, and Rameswaram. He spent many years in Puri, and his first pilgrimage spanned twelve years. Upon his return in 1493, Sankardeva, though hesitant, assumed the responsibility of the Shiromani (spiritual leader). However, he soon entrusted the duties to his son-in-law, Hari. At the age of 54, Sankardeva remarried and moved from Alipukhuri to Bordowa. His second wife, Kalindi, became a significant part of his life. In 1550, Sankardeva set out on his second pilgrimage, accompanied by more than 100 disciples, including Madhavdeva. At the request of his wife Kalindi, the group returned within six months, marking the end of the pilgrimage.

Sankardeva used Krishna as a divine manifestation to promote devotion to a singular God, who could be worshiped through the recitation of His various names (naam). This is known as *Eka Sarana* (the path of one refuge). One of Sankardeva's most revered disciples was Madhavdeva, an equally gifted saint from Lakhimpur, Assam. The famous debate between Sankardeva and Madhavdeva, which led to Madhavdeva's conversion to Vaishnavism, is considered a pivotal moment in the history of the Neo-Vaishnavite movement in Assam. As part of *Eka Sarana*, Srimanta Sankardeva introduced a system of spiritual initiation (Sarana) into his faith. He boldly opposed social injustices, including the caste system, and offered *sarana* to individuals from all castes and religions, even including Muslims. The followers of his teachings are known by various names, including Mahapurushia, Sarania, or Sankari.

Koch King Naranarayan once ordered arrest of Sankardeva. But Chilarai, the General of Koch army, saved him from certain arrest. Later Sankardev impressed Naranarayan with his words. The King honoured Sankardev with a seat next to him. He was also allowed to freely speak of his religion. On the request and patronage of King Nara Narayan and Prince Chilarai, Sankardeva supervised the creations of the Vrindavani vastra, a

60m x 30m woven cloth that depicted the playful activities of Lord Krishna in Vrindavan.

The literary work of Sankardeva extends from Bhagabat to Gunamala. He crated many dramas known as Ankia Naat. Sankardeva is the creator of Sattriya Dance, one of the classic dance forms of India. After living a long, eventful life that shaped Assamese culture and Vaishnavism, Srimanta Sankardev passed away in the year 1568. The cause of his death was said to be a bish phuhora (painful boil). He was 120 years old.

His Teachings

His teachings were in the line of Upanishadic philosophy of enlightenment by knowledge of the self, together with pure devotion to the supreme God as preached in Bhâgavata. He made a fine blending of the two. There are elements of monism, dualism, qualified monism, dualistic non dualism and so many other branches of Hindu philosophy in his teachings. In fact, he carried the entire spectrum of Hinduism in his teachings. But he corroborated his teachings so logically that it came to form a whole new school, which can be termed Vivartanavada in our view. It was a marvellous presentation of the entire range of spiritual inclinations of a person. A devotee could thus evolve through it from the gross to the subtle, from mundane to spiritual and from man to God. Each of his works embodies either the spiritual or physical practice of yoga, reflecting its depth and transformative power.

Poetic Work: Srimanta Sankardeva's poetic works, with their simple and colloquial language, serve as a powerful tool for spreading the message of Bhakti among students. They help cleanse the mind, removing negativity and fostering positive thoughts and feelings. Through the reflection of spiritual wisdom, particularly the life and deeds of Lord Krishna, Sankardeva's poetry plays a key role in shaping strong moral values in students. His works also serve as a rich source for the aesthetic development of students, nurturing their sense of beauty and deeper understanding of life.

Bhakti Theory: The educational significance of Sankardeva's Bhakti theory lies in its effort to establish a classless society by combating untouchability

and intolerance through religious principles. Furthermore, the Bhakti theory emphasises the promotion of democratic values such as brotherhood, unity, and equality, while also advocating for virtues like love, affection, and peace. These ideals are of profound relevance in today's world, offering timeless lessons on how to foster a harmonious and just society.

Drama: The educational significance of Srimanta Sankardeva's dramas lies in their role as powerful instruments of informal education. They served to impart spiritual, cultural, and moral teachings to the common people, particularly the illiterate masses of Assam. Through these dramas, Sankardeva effectively reached out to people, enlightening them with values that shaped their lives and society. **Song**: Borgeet has made a profound contribution to the realisation of the liberal ideals within the Indian educational system. With a deep understanding of devotion, the philosophy behind Srimanta Sankardeva's Borgeet empowers individuals with a wealth of knowledge, a strong sense of values, ethics, and a deep commitment to civic responsibility.

Dance: The dance forms like Satriya and Mati Akhora vibrate the body and mind. It is a form of yoga. Generally Mati-Akhora means exercise done on the ground. The Sattriya dance training begins with these Mati-Akhoras. After completion of all the Mati-Akhoras, the dancer can be taught the individual dance numbers of Sattriya. Mati-Akhoras are foundation for the learners to make a healthy physical, mental and spiritual set-up which is very necessary for a classical dancer. It is worth mentioning that some of these Mati-Akhoras are similar with some yogic postures or asana (based on yoga Shastra), which help the learners to maintain a physical and mental discipline. For example - "chakrasan" of yoga is similar with the thiyo lon of Mati-Akhora, which helps to make the back strong and the body light, which is essential for the dancer. Again "dhanurasan" is similar with the jur kamitona of Mati-Akhora, which makes the body active, strengthens the thaighs and help to remove extra fats from belly areas. Besides these, many Mati-Akhoras have yogic qualities which help the learners to shape their body from all sides. It is worth mentioning that Mahapurush Sankaradeva, the architect

of Sattriya dance was a great exponent and expert of yoga, who studied Yoga Shastra thoroughly. In one school of thought, these Mati-Akhoras are identified or named on the basis of the movements of the hands, while some experts have emphasised their views in naming them as per the movements and the direction of the feet. However, the origin is the same.

The Mati-Akhoras are broadly categorised into two parts – one part is (a) pure exercises and the other (b) basic dance units. Pure exercises are based on some acrobatic poses. For example– thiyo lon, athu lon, tamal musura, morai pani khowa, etc. These exercises are generally not used in dance, though there are some exceptions. For instance – we can refer to the Natuwa dance of Auniati Sattra, where in these exercises or acrobatic poses are extensively used. On the other hand, most of the Mati Akhoras belong to the basic dance units. It is worth mentioning that generally the dance is divided into two kinds – 1) tandava and 2) lasya. Tandava style of dance represents the masculine and vigorous expression or movements. On the other hand, lasya style of dance represents the smooth, delicate, graceful, gentle expression or movements. This division of tandava and lasya is observed in Mati-Akhoras. It is worth mentioning that Sattriya dance is basically a lasya based dance form. So, though the division of tandava and lasya exists in this dance form, yet we do not have extreme vigorous expression in tandava part of Sattriya dance. Basically, it is divided on the basis of general nature or temperament of man and woman. This division is strictly followed in the Mati - Akhora. For example - Ora (the basic stance or position of Sattriya) is divided into “purush ora” and “prakriti ora” which represent the male and female elements. On the other hand, one of the bhramaris is also divided on the basis of male and female elements, that is purush pak and prakriti pak. It is worth mentioning that the dance numbers of Sattriya are also divided into two types– a) purusha bhangir nach (male style of dancing) or tandava style dance numbers and prakriti or stri bhangir nach (female style of dancing) or lasya style dance numbers, etc. Mati-Akhoras embrace all the features of Sattriya dance. They are – the basic body positions or stances, bhangas or body bending, body movements, foot-stances and foot movements, various utplavanas or jumps, bhramari

or paks, gati or gaits, various hastas, sira bheda or head movements, griva - bheda or neck movements, dristi-bheda or eye movements, etc.

In the discussion of Mati Akharas and Satriya dance, it has been seen that this dance has made a significant contribution- physical, mental, spiritual, and intellectual, in all fields of human origin.

His life and works touched countless souls, leaving an indelible mark on the spiritual landscape of Assam and beyond. Revered as one of the greatest spiritual luminaries in Assamese history, his teachings transcend time, illuminating paths to inner peace, compassion, and self- realisation. His firm dedication to uplift society and his profound wisdom have inspired generations, creating a legacy that continues to guide and elevate millions.



14.7 LET US SUM UP

- Swami Sivananda Saraswati's journey from a compassionate child in a small village to a revered spiritual leader reminds us of the power of faith and determination. His life inspires us to look beyond worldly illusions and seek the eternal truths within.
- Swami Sivananda, the revered yogi, founded the sacred "Umachal Ashram" on December 19, 1929, in the serene Nilachal Hills of Guwahati, Assam. This tranquil sanctuary became a haven for peace and spiritual growth.
- Lahiri Mahasaya, a revered figure in modern yoga, met his guru, Mahavatar Babaji, at 33 in the Himalayan foothills near Ranikhet. In a divine reunion, Babaji's touch awakened Lahiri to a lasting state of spiritual realisation.
- Lahiri Mahasaya emphasised Kriya Yoga as the core spiritual practice, a set of inner pranayama techniques to accelerate spiritual growth. He taught it to all sincere seekers, regardless of religion, often advising disciples to deepen their Kriya practice as the solution to their challenges.

- Tirumalai Krishnamacharya, a renowned Indian yoga teacher, ayurvedic healer, and scholar, revitalised hatha yoga and mastered all six Vedic darshans, becoming the most influential yoga teacher of the 20th century.
- Krishnamacharya emphasised *Vini Yoga*—teaching yoga based on individual needs. His approach highlighted yoga's versatility: promoting health, serving as therapy, and fostering spiritual growth and personal transformation.
- Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva was a revered Assamese saint, scholar, poet, and social reformer who founded Vaishnavism in Assam. He inspired the Bhakti movement through his Ekasaran Naam Dharma, promoting unity and devotion. His contributions to Assamese language and literature are profound.
- Sankaradeva's teachings fused Upanishadic philosophy of self-enlightenment with pure devotion to the supreme God, as taught in the Bhâgavata. They encompassed elements of monism, dualism, and other branches of Hindu thoughts, creating a unique school of thought we term Vivartanavada. His works, whether spiritual or physical, reflected yoga's depth and transformative power, guiding devotees from the mundane to the divine.
- Yoga scholars have played a crucial role in preserving and interpreting yoga's ancient wisdom. From the rishis who first recorded its teachings in the Vedas and Upanishads to modern scholars who make it accessible worldwide, their work has deepened our understanding of yoga as both a spiritual and philosophical journey. These intellectual pioneers have maintained yoga's integrity while ensuring its relevance and growth across cultures and generations.



14.8 FURTHER READINGS

- *Krishnamacharya: His Life and Teachings* by A. G. Mohan
- *The Upanishads: In the Light of Kriya Yoga* by Lahiri Mahasaya

- *SRIMANTA SANKARADEVA Vaishnava Saint of Assam* by Dr.Bimal Phukan.
- *Life and Contributions of Srimanta Sankaradeva* by Dr. Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Fill up the blanks:

A. The famous book by Swami Sivananda of Umachal Ashram is _____.

B. Lahiri Mahasaya met his guru, Mahavatar Babaji in the Himalayan foothills near _____.

C _____ is an authentic approach to yoga reflecting the comprehensive teachings ofmKrishnamacharya.

D. Sankardeva's neo-Vaishnavite movement is _____.

E. In _____, Sankardeva embarked on his first pilgrimage.

14.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

A. *Yoga Bole Rog Arogya.*

B. Ranikhet.

C. Vini Yoga.

D. Ekasaran Naam Dharma.

E.1481.

14.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions

1. What is the birthplace of Swami Sivananda Saraswati of Umachal Ashram?

2. Who initiated Swami Sivananda into spiritual life?
3. What was the original name of Swami Sivananda Saraswati?
4. In which year did Swami Sivananda establish Umachal Ashram?
5. Name the Yoga college established by Swami Sivananda.
6. What is the title of Swami Sivananda's influential book on Yoga therapy?
7. Who was the guru of Sri Shyamacharan Lahiri?
8. What is the main yogic technique taught by Lahiri Mahasaya?
9. In which year did Lahiri Mahasaya attain mahasamadhi?
10. What did Lahiri Mahasaya describe as a psychological battle?
11. What kind of life did Lahiri Mahasaya advocate for most of his disciples?
12. What was the relationship between Lahiri Mahasaya and Paramahansa Yogananda's parents?

B) Short Questions

1. Describe the early signs of compassion and spiritual inclination in young Sasibhusan.
2. Why did Swami Sivananda oppose animal sacrifice as a child?
3. What was the purpose behind founding the Umachal Ashram by Swami Sivananda?
4. Mention three key contributions of Umachal Yoga Mahavidyalaya.
5. What role did Swami Sivananda play in promoting Yoga as a healing system?
6. Explain the global reach of Swami Sivananda's yogic teachings.
7. What is Kriya Yoga, according to Lahiri Mahasaya?
8. How did Lahiri Mahasaya's teachings integrate household life with spiritual practice?
9. What was Lahiri Mahasaya's view on scriptural study versus direct spiritual experience?
10. Explain Lahiri Mahasaya's perspective on the guru-disciple relationship.
11. How did Lahiri Mahasaya interpret the Bhagavad Gita?
12. What was the significance of Lahiri Mahasaya's prediction about the West?

C) Long Questions

1. Discuss the spiritual evolution of Swami Sivananda Saraswati from childhood to becoming a yogi.
2. Evaluate the significance of Umachal Ashram and its contributions to modern Yoga education.
3. Examine Swami Sivananda's approach to Yoga therapy and his contributions to healthcare through Yoga.
4. How did Swami Sivananda spread the message of Yoga globally, and what was the impact of his writings?
5. Assess the significance of Lahiri Mahasaya's revival of Kriya Yoga in the modern yogic tradition.
6. Analyze how Lahiri Mahasaya harmonized household responsibilities with spiritual advancement.
7. Explain the teachings of Lahiri Mahasaya on meditation and self-realization through Kriya Yoga.
8. Discuss Lahiri Mahasaya's approach to interpreting sacred texts like the Bhagavad Gita.
9. Describe Lahiri Mahasaya's concept of guru's grace and its role in yogic initiation and practice.
10. In what ways did Lahiri Mahasaya's life and teachings lay the foundation for the global spread of Yoga?

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