

with such feeling makes it perfect, not otherwise. The Sattva Guṇa denotes revelation. Therefore, the effort which makes an act easy or natural, gives rise to appropriate feeling and meditation and reveals the Sāttvika quality or gratification. Just as during inhalation and exhalation, meditation on sentience pervading the lungs brings the senses of lightness and gratification there, so with the whole body.

(b) Prāṇāyāma has to be practised in slow degrees, carefully watching the condition of health and physical well-being.

(c) Prāṇāyāma practised without meditation makes the mind more restless. That is why, in some cases it brings on lunacy. If through meditation the mind cannot first be made like a void in respect of the internal space, it is preferable not to take to Prāṇāyāma. But if the mind can be fixed on an image conceived internally, then Prāṇāyāma may be undertaken. For the practice of Yoga, however, the state of void is more suitable.

(d) Attention should be given to diet. Too much of food, physical exercise, and mental labour diminish chances of progress in Prāṇāyāma. Light food, keeping the stomach partially empty, is frugality in meals. Moderation of diet will be found discussed in detail in the books on Haṭha-Yoga. Articles containing carbohydrate should be taken, oil and fat should not be taken in excess.

It should be remembered that, ultimately, the Yogins have to give up consumption of fat altogether. If suspension of Prāṇa or catalepsy of the body for a long time is desired, fasting also becomes necessary (it reduces the requirement for breathing). That is why the Mahābhārata says, "The Yogin acquires power, i.e. proficiency, by eating grains of rice, husks of sesame and barley gruel without fat and avoiding articles containing fat. Drinking water mixed with milk, for a fortnight, month, season or year, or observing complete fast for a month, the Yogin acquires power". In the beginning, however, fat has to be taken in small quantities. In reducing diet it should be done gradually, in slow degrees.

Only suspension of the activity of Prāṇa or vital energy is not Yogic Prāṇāyāma. There are some people who can