

centrated upon, viz. Samādhi on gross objects like light, sound etc., on faculties like Ahaṁkāra (Egoity) and on entities like the "Me-feeling", the individual self. These are called Savīja Samādhi (i.e. supported or assisted by an object). The highest form of Savīja Samādhi is to be absorbed in the thought of Self, i.e., in concentration on pure "I". At first, of course, fixity of mind on an object has to be practised; then it develops into Dhyāna. When by practice Dhyāna becomes deeper, it becomes Samādhi. For instance, to attain Samādhi on pure "I", an idea of pure "I" has to be formed first by ratiocination and a particular mental process; then that idea has to be contemplated upon exclusively and developed into Dhyāna. When that deepens, it will lead to complete absorption in pure "I". When only a sense of the pure "I-feeling" is present and nothing else, the Yogin is not perturbed even by serious pain. No doubt such experience depends on long and constant practice with wisdom and devotion and it is not possible without renunciation of attachment to all gross objects. When the power of Samādhi is acquired by the mind, one can be wholly absorbed in any object of the category of Grāhya (knowable, i.e. phenomenal objects comprehensible by the senses), Grahana (internal and external organs) and Grahītā (the receiver, the empirical self). In the early stages of practice, however, devotees are instructed by experienced teachers to take up subjects for meditation which would bring about a blissful feeling quickly, because Dhyāna on objects of the senses like light, sound, etc., does not bring about blissful feeling quickly and makes the realisation of subtle concepts like pure I or individual self, more remote.

While practising devotion and in some cases spontaneously, people have been known to experience a feeling of blissfulness or an expansive feeling as if one were pervading the whole of space. When devotees get such a feeling as a result of devotional practice, it can be utilised as a support for Dhāraṇā (fixity), which in course of time can be developed into Dhyāna (meditation). If one occasionally gets such a feeling spontaneously, i.e. without any practice, but cannot get it when he desires it, then it is of no use for purposes of Yoga. Again, the coming of such a feeling does not necessarily mean that Dhāraṇa (fixity of thought), Dhyāna (meditation) and Samādhi (intense concentration) have been attained; because even on getting such a blissful feeling or a feeling of pervading space, such minds continue to rove in many directions and are not occupied with only one idea. It cannot therefore come within the definition of Yoga. That feeling may be a sort of realisation and if fixity is developed on the feeling itself then it might lead to the practice of Yoga.