

Script

Introduction

There are many types of Yoga. People are attracted to the particular school of Yoga, which caters best for his needs. However, the difference of emphasis between these schools is quite considerable- it is as sharp as the cleavage between Roman and Protestant Christian.

Yet in spite of acute difference, all types of Yoga overlap, and the first discovery, which you will make in exploring them is that none is entirely suited to the West. Not one of the many types of Yoga can be absorbed “neat” by Western folk-our way of life forbids it.

You will get a clearer picture by glancing at some of the main Indian schools of Yoga and noting their distinctions. For the moment we shall confine our review to a few of the basic schools.

Japa Yoga

Japa Yoga, for example, disciplines mind and spirit as Hath Yoga does the body. One form of ---deeply on its every significance, as everyone is normally given to a certain amount of mind wandering, the practice of Japa Yoga is extraordinarily difficult. In fact, it is impossible without some preliminary training in the basic Hath school. For instance, breathing exercises are employed to help focus the mind. An Indian follower of Japa Yoga will think nothing of sitting tailor fashion for hours on end monotonously intoning the holy word “OM”, in long-drawn syllables. This chanting, continued with deep breathing, arrests mind wandering, so that the subject becomes drawn into himself, in spiritual contemplation.

Clearly, this form of Yoga would be impracticable under Western conditions. It must be practiced in a retreat. A course of Japa Yoga taken simultaneously with factory, office or household chores would certainly lead to a nervous breakdown. One can but taken from this and the other schools of Yoga what little is adaptable to civilized conditions.

In **Laya Yoga** the pupil is expected to keep perfectly still in the profoundest state of trance. Not even an eyelid will flutter as he pictures himself in the very center of the “Cosmic Fire”. The Serpent Power then ceases of the imprisoned in his physical body. It pours outward and consumes him in its fanning flames. The unquenchable furnace of Kundalini, blazing fiercely, rays out around him in all directions. So he becomes absorbed in the Eternal Light, that Creative energy which produces all manifestations of life. The aim of this Yoga is the realization of God’s creative force. It seeks that perfect bliss which comes from union with the Divine. This condition cannot, of course, continue for more than a brief space of time. Otherwise the Yogi would cease to exist. He must return to earth before he severs all connections with it. This form of Yoga is not safe for one who has not complete control of his emotions.

Karma Yoga

Karma Yoga, although it also aims at final union with the Divine Source of all, hopes

It is wrong to ignore the needs of the body in one's spiritual strivings. We should not "abuse" that good servant, in actions or words. The Karma Yogi endeavors to find God by way of his fellow-beings. By forsaking self. This is essentially a practical Yoga. Not designed for the saving of one's own soul alone. On the contrary, it recognizes that we are all as members of one body. Only by helping others can one help oneself? We receive in just proportion as we give.

What is Karma? It is the principle of causality. The law of Cause and Effect based on the knowledge that for every action there is a corresponding reaction. As we sow, so must we reap? There are certain rules to which the Karma Yogi made. To ignore one will be a set-back to his spiritual talents. He must devote his life to selfless service, without sins of commission whatever to the rewards of his actions. God he should realize. Not a straw can move in the wind without his will. We are instruments in his hands. Body, mind, and all one's faculties must be consecrated to him. The Yogi should be indifferent to praise or blame alike. Never must he accept gifts. Always he must work for work's sake. His heart must be a garden filled with the flowers of good deeds. Love should flow from his lips as from an inexhaustible pitcher. At all times must he radiate joy? His speech should be sweet and rich with wisdom. He must be ready to undertake the most menial or seemingly trivial task. Mahatma Gandhi, whose life was one of devotion to his fellow-creatures, made no distinction between menial and dignified work. Scavenging and cleaning of the latrine were undertaken by him with a cheerful willingness. The Karma Yogi has no fear of anything or anyone, save God. He ever listens to the inner voice of his others is another link which brings him closer to God. When some other cannot perform a menial but necessary task, then he must do it for him. It is related of Krishna that he shampooed the legs of a Raja when the latter's barber was on leave. The spirit of service must be deep-rooted in one's nature. One's mind must be given up to God and one's hands to hard work for humanity. Failures must not discourage the Karma Yogi. These should merely be regarded as stepping-stones to future success. Granted all this is not easy, but it is the steep path which leads up to the light of the sun.

The man who lives a life of idleness and luxury cannot hope to help his fellows. Even if he wishes to do so, which may be the case, he is handicapped by enslavement to his Indriyas (sense-powers). So he must cast these aside. Pointing nothing but the garb of virtue and the staff of react his beggar's rags become the richest robes. A Karma Yogi, however, must not look for any reward for the good things has done, either in gratitude, admiration, or affection from those he has befriended. His Karma fruitful in proportion to his sacrifice.

Bhakti Yoga

Bhakti Yoga is another Path of Devotion. The word Bhakti comes from the root Bhaj, meaning to love, worship, adore. This system of Yoga involves intense devotion towards God. It lays emphasis upon faith. Through God all things are possible. How can one recognize the true follower of Bhakti? Very simply. Their hearts are free from guile. They are humble. They are devoid of egoism. Happiness and sorrow neither elate nor cast down. They are without a single enemy. The eight vices (greed, injustice, rashness, persecution, jealousy, stealing, harsh words and cruelty) are entirely foreign to them.

A Bhakti Yogi, says Swami Sivananda, must refrain from anger, pride, jealousy, hatred, egotism, and should surrender himself ungrudgingly to the Lord. This strikes one as a counsel of perfection almost beyond the possibility of attainment, but it may well serve as an ideal towards which to strive.

The Chief qualifications for the attainment of Bhakti are a pure heart, faith, innocence, simplicity, and absolute truthfulness. One must cleanse the heart from a lust Charity must be substituted for greed, pride must give place to humility, spite be converted into magnanimity. Bhakti Yogi it is just as much a sin to waste time as to waste talents. For him the sins of omission are as great as the sins of commission.

We come last to **Raja Yoga**, of which there are eight stages. The last (Samadhi) is absolute bliss, wherein the mind is withdrawn from all earthly attachments. The exponent is taught to stop his thinking process so completely that his consciousness is absorbed into the Infinite. Just as a river flows to the sea, the individual mind is merged in the ocean of Absolute Consciousness. Samadhi is not an inert state- far from it. It is an experience of infinite expansion, of oneness beyond the range of the five senses. It cannot be described in words. It can only be felt in one's innermost being.

There are two kinds of Samadhi, viz., Savikalpa and Nirvikalpa. Savikalpa distinguishes knower, knowledge and the knowable. Nirvikalpa is perfect awareness wherein the knowledge and the knowable becomes one. Then the Yogi sees without eyes, tastes without tongue, hears without ears, smells without nose, and touches without contact. In Asamprajnta Samadhi there is complete inhibition of all mental functions, obtained only by perfect control of mind. When the Yogi reaches the highest peak of Samadhi, all that we mean by mind, intellect, and five senses will cease to function. Sound and form are then no more. All suffering and ignorance, the outcome of egoism, disappear. All likes and dislikes are destroyed. The Yogi has attained Kaivalya- supreme liberation from earthly limitations.

Raja Yoga, because it is directly concerned with the mind, has been given a name, which signifies "King of Yoga's". It recognizes seven principles in man. These are the physical body, the ether double, the astral vehicle, intellect (or Buddhi), the instinctive mind, the spiritual mind and the spirit. It is a synthesis of all systems of Yoga, as will be evident from its eight branches. These are Yamas (restrain), Niyamas (observance), Asana (posture), Pranayama (breath-control), Pratyahara (abstraction), Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation), and Samadhi (super-conscious ate).

The Niyamas or rules to be observed are basically five: Ahimsa (non-injury), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (continence), and Aparigraha (non-acceptance of gifts conducive to luxury). The Niyamas are Soucha (cleanliness), Tapas (austerity), Swadhyaya (study), and Ishwarapranidhana (adoration of God).

The gaining of a healthy body and a calm and passive mind in all circumstances is common to all Yogis. Nothing is considered impossible to the student who has a strong will and patience. Our mental processes are not limited by the field of our conscious activities. The subconscious mind has a wider range and its power can be harnessed. When faced with a difficult problem, the subliminal mind can solve it in a flash. So

impressing upon it, before filling asleep at night, that you wish to wake at a certain hour, you will be able to do so. Also, you can so obtain a better night's rest and your health can be improved by the same method.

Concentrate on health before falling asleep, and your sub-conscious mind will respond to the demand. In the waking state, the seat of the mind is the brain; in the dream state it is transferred to the cerebellum. Thus one can control one's dreams, utilize them to good purpose. Many diseases of mind and body can be cured in this way. It is well worth remembering that the mind can only attend to one thing at a time! Therefore, evil can be expelled by substituting a good thought for a bad one. All forms of Yoga curb the tendency of the mind to wander. They seek rather to reach regions of bliss beyond normal knowledge. The whole universe is created by the Vriti, which play in the mind. They are the source of all unhappiness and suffering. By pouring oil upon the troubled waves of thought, Yoga calms the soul and brings that peace which passes understanding. Raja Yoga becomes one in thought with the cosmic mind and thus comes to know the inner workings of all man's mind is made up of three elements- Sattwa Rajas and Tamas. Sattwa is purity, goodness, harmony and wisdom. Rajas are passion, action and motion. Tamas is inertia, darkness, and ignorance. In the non-Yogi, these basic elements are constantly warring with each other. Tama's must be converted into Rajas through work, Rajas into Sattwa by meditation.

Truly, Raja Yoga is a lofty summary of all other types of Yoga. It is the Yoga of perfection.

What does all this mount up to? In essence Yoga is the fulfillment of the Divine purpose in one's own being. And what is the first step to take? Attain a sound mind in a sound body. Without this basis, the spirit must be in bondage. Yoga turns the thoughts inwards with the object of attaining. Ignorance of one's true, one's higher Self creates a false sense of separation from one's fellow-beings. The realization which each of us has at last to reach is that we are all one, in God. There is no division of entities in the eternal, all-pervasive Absolute. When one has come to know oneself, then one will know one follows-God. This is the end of the road, long and stony, full of pitfalls upon which the true Yogi embarks. Only a little of what he practices, and only a fraction of what he learns, can be mastered by Western man. But that little will much repay the seeking. For with all its atomic science, skill and education, the Western world is aware of the deep, fundamental void, which Yoga claims to fill.

Conclusions

All school of yoga generally accepted methodology of Patanjali but each lies emphasize on its chosen phases of discipline and brings into play the other methods as well. Each has its own schedule of action. Ultimate attainment has almost everywhere remains essentially the same as that advocate by traditional yoga. When man is able to control his energies absolutely that is to bind them under the yoga of 'SELF'. This is required in all schools of yoga so, the aim of all types of yoga is one union of God and Soul 'MOKSA'.