

Level 1

Notes

Understanding the meaning of the following words :

1. **Brahman** : Is the absolute reality as described in the philosophy of Vedanta. It is the Infinite, Uncaused, Eternal, Supreme Reality. It is said to be beyond all qualities or attributes, beyond subject and object, to be the source of being, Intelligence, and Bliss (Sat, Chit, Ananda). It can not be known by Intellect To define is to confine, as Brahman is the absolute, what could there be to confine it?
2. **Maya** : Is the power of Brahman. It is the creative and illusory power of Brahman. She is also known as the cosmic illusion. Brahman is the screen onto which the cosmic drama (maya) is projected. Brahman is the upholder of the drama (creation), but it remains unaffected by it.
3. **Atman** : Is the absolute reality or Brahman as seen in the essence of the individual. It is absolute consciousness in the individual. It is one with Brahman and unchanging. Although Brahman and Atman are identical terms, Brahman refers to Absolute when seen in whole universe, while Atman refers to the Absolute when seen in the individual.
4. **An Upadhi** : Is a limiting adjunct. It is a false idea, based on false identification that creates an illusion of limitation. It is the Body and mind.
5. **Avidya** : Is the primordial ignorance due to wrong identification with Upadhis.
6. **Jiva** : Is the apparent individual soul or consciousness. The self identifying with the Upadhi is called Jiva. Jiva believes itself to be bound and limited by the Upadhis and consequently suffers. Jiva will have to be born and reborn again until realising his true nature (Atman) again. So it is Atma that identifies with the Upadhis (Limiting adjuncts).
7. **Ishwara** : Is the Brahman in Association with Maya. It is Saguna Brahman or Brahman in manifestation. It corresponds to the personal God of the various religions. According to non-dualistic Vedanta, Ishwara is one step below Brahman. "Ishwara represents the highest concept a human mind can hold and the human heart can love". Said Swami Vivekananda. Ishwara is endowed with such qualities as omniscience, omnipresence, universal lordship, and unlimited power. Ishwara in his different aspect is called Creator (Brahma), Preserver(Vishnu), and Destroyer(Siva) of the universe, from the standpoint of pure Brahman. The difference between Brahman and Ishwara is described in different scriptures like Eckhart state " God acts; Godhead does not". Bhagawad Gita describes Ishwara as " Standing equally in all beings". so it is the personal God; the God to whom we all pray. Brahma is above and outside all mental concepts. It cannot be objectified.
8. **Purusha** : is absolute consciousness as described in the Sankhya Yoga Darshana . Its Brahman.
9. **Prakriti** : Is the material cause of creation in the form of the three Gunas in balance. Prakriti is the potential creation it is Maya.

Summary : Maya manifests in the individual in the form of Avidya (ignorance). Avidya makes us forget that we are the Self (Atman), and we identify with Upadhis. The self identifying with the Upadhis is called Jiva. Jiva believes itself to be bound and limited by Upadhis, and consequently suffers.

Unit 1

1.Introduction to Yoga and Yogic Practices

1.1 Yoga : Etymology, definitions, aim, objectives and misconceptions.

Definition of Yoga

The Sanskrit word Yoga is Derived from “Yuj” Dhatu. Means union. The union of Jivatma (individual self) And Parmatma (The Universal self). The aim of Yoga is to help us realise our identity with the Real. It is a total transformation of an individual to its ultimate nature.

Yoga is the discipline (sadhana) or a continuous effort to attain that supreme state of realisation through intense concentration.

Yoga takes up the laws of psychology, applicable to the unfolding of the whole consciousness of man on every plane of the world and applies them rationally in a particular case.

Definition of Yoga given by different texts :

Patanjali Yoga Sutras:

Yogaschittavrttinirodhah || 1:2 ||

To block the patterns of consciousness is Yoga.

Yoga Vasishtha :

Manah Prashamanopayah Yoga ityabhidhiyate |

Yoga is called a skilful trick to calm down the mind.

Bhagwat Gita Verse 2:48, 2:50

Yoga-sthah kuru karmani sangam tyaktva dhananjaya,

Siddhi-asiddhyoh samo bhutva samatvam yoga ucyate || 2 : 48 ||

O Dananjaya, Perform action being steadfast in Yoga, abandoning attachment and remaining equanimous in success and failure. Yoga is the equanimity of mind.

Buddhi- yukto jahatiha ubhe sukta-duskarte,

Tasmad yogay yujyasva yogah karmasu kausalam || 2 : 50 ||

Endowed with wisdom of equanimity, cast off in this life both good and bad deeds. Thus, dedicate yourself to Yoga. Skill in Action is Yoga.

Meaning and concept of Yoga :

A Universal Practical Discipline :

Yoga is a psychological, physiological, social and spiritual discipline that has been an integral part of our Indian culture for centuries. Yoga is a complete science of life that originated about thousands of years ago in India and still been practiced in India for centuries.

Process :

Yoga is a process or system that maintains not only the health but also generates a sense of happiness and fulfilment. It also encourages personal growth and development. Yoga brings the mind and body into a mutual state of well-being, balance, ease and vibrant alertness.

Positive approach to Health :

The health of a human being is influenced by various factors. Yoga is one of the systems that include all these factors. These factors are regular exercise in form of physical postures, proper breathing, sufficient rest and relaxation, Meditation, positive thinking, and balance diet. Thus Yoga is an important, natural, preventive measure to ensure good health.

Four Ashrams of Vedic life : was based on an individual's Karma and Dharma. Every doctrine of ancient India, carved out by the ancient saints, is based on scientific and rational reasoning. However, to put them to use they needed to be socially embedded. Hence methods like, the Ashram system, were included in the Vedic society. The average life of an Indian was considered to be 100 years. Based on this there were four ashrams of Vedic life-

- The First Ashrama - "**Brahmacharya**" or the Student Stage
- The Second Ashrama - "**Grihastha**" or the Householder Stage
- The Third Ashrama - "**Vanaprastha**" or the Hermit Stage
- The Fourth Ashrama - "**Sannyasa**" or the Wandering Ascetic Stage

The goal of each stage or ashram was to fulfil the ideals on which these stages were divided.

The stages of ashram life imply that an individual takes shelter in all the four stages of life depending on his age. These stages stratify the duties that man has to practice in his lifetime. These four divisions are elucidated in ancient Manu's scripts. With such methodology the then contemporary society also aimed at holding the social institutions together. From an early age man was shown the paths of ethics, self-restraint, intelligence, pragmatism, love, compassion and discipline. He was guided to stay away from greed, cruelty, sloth, pride and several other vices.

Purusharthas :

Purushartha literally means "aims of man" or "what men live for". It is the prescription to right way of living for a man.

The concept of Purushartha recognises the various urges inherent in man. All actions of man arise out of the necessity of satisfying these urges. If man has to live a meaningful life all these urges or desires have to be taken care.

The Purusharthas are four in number :

1. **Dharma** : Righteousness
2. **Artha** : Wealth or material means
3. **Kama** : Satisfaction of sensual desires
4. **Moksha** : Freedom or spiritual liberation.

The Gurus and Masters :

" To light the candle one needs another burning candle; in the same way those who are unenlightened need the help of an illumined Guru." Swami Sivananda

The word Guru can be broken down into **Gu** meaning "**Darkness**" and **Ru** meaning "**to destroy**". In simple words, the Guru is a spiritually enlightened being that dispels the darkness of ignorance and lifts the veil of Maya or illusion, thus rendering the disciple free from the cycle of death and birth.

The journeying stops with the finding of the Guru.

The Guru is the gateway to the infinite through which the disciple tries to pass. The guru is the instrument of the God we are all striving towards. He is not interested in his disciples from a personal point of view. His interest is to take us all beyond ourselves to the personal realisation of the eternal truth.

The love between guru and the disciple embraces and transcends all other human relationships - mother and child, husband and wife, or lifetime friends. It is through the guru-disciple relationship that the disciple's potential and energy are given shape and direction to work the best possible good in the world as part of the divine plan.

The Gurukul System in India :

Gurukul translates into " the home (family) of the preceptor." The Guru lives with his family and disciples is known as Gurukul. It is a place where the students come to be a part of the family of the Guru for a fixed tenure to learn the Vedas, Sanskrit, fine arts, administration, many other skills and etiquettes. Gurukuls existed in the forests and by the riversides. According to the four ashrams of the Vedic life, the first 25 years of a person's life were to be spent as a Brahmachari - a celibate student - to acquire training in different subjects to serve the society and for Arran his own emancipation. However, admission into the Gurukuls was not a simple process.

Life in Gurukul were far from easy, the guru made the students undergo rigorous Tapas (austerities) to prepare their bodies to withstand the hardships of life and instill good habits like love for hard work, enthusiasm and selfless service. the students served their Guru by performing duties, like fetching water from the river, cleaning, looking after the domestic animals and gathering twigs from the forest for ceremonial worship. Moreover, the disciples had to practice meditation, Yoga and other austerities to master their mind and senses. the classes were held under shady banyan trees in fine weather or in thatched huts during the rainy season. The education was generally free, however, the Guru was given dakshina (in lieu of fee) by his disciples.

Origin of Yoga

Yoga originated in ancient India. The origin of Yoga is traced to the " Vedas". It is difficult to ascertain a fixed time period for the origin of these ancient texts. Since historians differ on the dates when these texts were written.

The system of yoga is an ancient tradition and having its origin in India. The practice of Yoga is believed to have started at the very dawn of civilization.

In the Yogic lore, Lord Shiva is considered to be the first yogi or Adiyogi, and the first Guru or Adi Guru.

Yoga Aim & Misconceptions :

- The ultimate aim of Yoga is self-realisation. This is the state in which one is ultimately free from the miseries and sufferings of life.
- Yoga offers more benefits than anyone can ask for. It could be said that the primary goal of Yoga is to gain balance and control in one's life; to free oneself from confusion and distress; to provide a sense of calm that comes from the practice of yogic Asanas & Pranayama or the breathing practices.
- Yoga teaches us that challenges faced by the modern man show up sooner or later either in physical or mental form. When our physical state is not perfect; it causes an imbalance in our mental state. The practice of Yoga helps us to overcome such imbalance.

- Yoga will teach you that the goal of every individual's life should be to take the inner journey inside one's self. Perfect harmony between the mind and body, we achieve total balance and control.
- Regular practice of the stretches, twists, bends and inversions (the basic movements of Yoga poses) restores strength and stamina in the body.

Misconceptions about Yoga

- For many, the practice of Yoga is restricted to Asana (postures). However, among the Yoga Sutras, just three sutras are dedicated to Asana.
- Fundamentally, Hatha Yoga can be said to be a preparatory process so that the body can sustain higher levels of energy. the process begins with the body, than, the breath, the mind, and the inner self.
- Many consider Yoga as an exercise and well being regimen of the Hindus. On the contrary, Yoga does not adhere to any particular religion; belief system or community, Rather, it has always been approached as a technology for inner well-being. Anyone who practices Yoga with involvement can reap its benefits, irrespective of one's faith; ethnicity or culture.

1.2 Yoga : Its origin, history and development.

History of Yoga

The development of yoga can be traced back to over 5000 years ago but some researchers think that Yoga may have existed even 10000 years back. Yoga's long rich history can be divided into four main periods of innovation, practice and development. These are:

- 1. Pre- Vedic Period**
- 2. Vedic Period**
- 3. Classical yoga Period**
- 4. Post-classical Yoga Period**

1. Pre-Vedic Period

The History of Indus Vally Civilization reveals that the practice of Yoga was one of the significant features.

2.The Vedic Period

The Sanskrit word "Veda" is derived from the root word "Vid". Vid means "to know"

The Vedas are the most ancient scriptural texts of India. The vedas are the eternal truths revealed by Gods to great ancient Rishis of India. The Rishis Saw the truths or heard them. Therefore, the Vedas are what are heard (**Sruti**). The Rishis did not write or created it of mind. They were the seer of the thought which existed already. They were only the Spiritual discoverer of thoughts. They are not the inventor of the Vedas.

- **Rig Veda**
- **Sama Veda**
- **Yajur veda**
- **Atharva Veda**

The Vedas are generally divided into two sections :

- **Karma Kanda (Ritual portion)**
- **Jnana Kanda (Knowledge portion)**

The Upanishads are contained in the knowledge portion of the Vedas. The gem of the concepts of Yoga are widely available in the Upanishads.

The Vedas contain the oldest known yogic teachings called the Vedic Yoga.

Vedic Yogis (rishis) to teach them how to live in divine harmony. The Rishis were also gifted with the ability to see the ultimate reality through their intensive spiritual practice.

The Upanishads : Are the concluding portion and essence of the Vedas. They are also called Vedanta. The Upanishads describe the inner vision of reality resulting in intense self-inquiry. These expound upon three subjects :

1. The Jiva - (Embodied soul).

2. Jagat -(The World).

3. Ishwara -(God or the creator of the universe).

The climax of the enquiry is the experience of the essential identity of an individual soul (Atman) within with the ultimate reality (Brahman).

Teaching the sacrifice of the ego through self-knowledge, action (Karma Yogi) and wisdom (Jnana Yogi). Yogic Practices, particularly meditation, are also found in Buddhism and Jainism.

3. Classical Yoga :

Yoga Darshana

Maharishi Patanjali

The Classical Yoga Period is defined by Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, the first systematic presentation of Yoga. Written sometime between the 3rd and 6th century B.C., this text describes the path of Ashtanga Yoga, often called "Classical Yoga".

Propounded the Ashtanga Yoga i.e. 8 limbs

Divided into 4 Chapters or Pada

1. Samadhi Pada - 51 Sutras

2. Sadhana Pada - 55 Sutras

3. Vibhuti Pada - 55 Sutras

4. Kaivalya Pada - 34 Sutras

Total - 195 Sutras

8 Limbs : Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, & Samadhi.

One leading to other higher Anga. Samadhi is the goal

Chapter 1- 2 Sutra - is very important

All mind oriented so have given 5 Vrittis (thought waves)

1. **Pramana** - Right Knowledge

2. **Viparyaya** - False knowledge

3. **Vikalpa** - fancy or imagination

4. **Nidra** - Deep sleep

5. **Smriti** - memory

How to overcome with Vrittis?

1. **Abhyasa** - Practice

2. **Vairagya** - Detachment

3. **Samprajnata & Asamprajnata** - States

4. **Ishwara & Ishwara Pranidhana** - Surrendering to God.

5. **Pranava Japa** - OM Chanting.

He talked about Antarayas (obstacles on Path) & their accompaniments (Vikshepa Sahabhuvas) Ek Tatva Abhyasa (practice of one principle) to pacify/calm the mind, the concept & types of Samapatti, Sabija Samadhi, Prajna or intuition, Nirbeeja Samadhi ext.

Chapter 2 - It is dealing with Kleshas - Avidya, Asmita, Raga, Dvesha & Abhinivesha And also giving methods to clear it by - Kriya Yoga, Dyana and Pratiprasava. Also looking towards the pain and eliminating Kleshas there are - Yamas, Niyamas, Pratipaksha bhavana, Asana, Pranayama & Pratyahara etc.

Chapter 3 deals with Dharana, Dhyana, & Samadhi. Concept of Samyama Various types of Vibhuti/Siddhis

Chapter 4 tells us about more philosophic nature. It defines Dharma megha Samadhi as the ultimate state of Kaivalya Samadhi.

The "Eight Limbed Path" Containing the steps and stages towards obtaining Samadhi or enlightenment.

Following are the Eight Limbs:

1. Yamas - Restrains

- Ahimsa- non-violence, non-injury
- Satya - truthfulness, non-telling of lies
- Asteys- non-stealing, non- covetousness, lack of jealousy
- Brahmacharya - Chastity, sublimation of the sexual energy
- Aparigraha - non- accepting of Gifts or Bribe

2. Niyama - Observances

- Saucha- purity
- Santosha - Contentment
- Tapas - Austerity
- Swadhyaya- Study of religious structure
- Eshwara Pranidhana- Worship of God

3. Asana - Study of Pose

4. Pranayama - Control of the vital and Astral energy

5. Pratyahara - Withdrawal of senses from objects

6. Dharana - Concentration

7. Dhyana - Meditation

8. Samadhi - Super conscious state. Represents the goal of all existence

4. Post Classical Yoga

Hatha Yogais sourced from Tantra. This is more physically oriented. Hatha yoga Practices starts with Kriyas (Purification practices) as against Patanjali Yoga i.e. Ashtanga Yoga starts with Yama and Niyama.

Following are the deferent texts of Hatha Yoga :

	Text	Creator
1	Hatha Yoga Pradipika	Swatmarama
2	Gheranda Samhita	Sage Gheranda
3	Goraksha Samhita	Gorakshnath
4	Shiva Samhita	Unknown
5	Yoga Ratnavali or hath Ratnavali	Srinivas Yogi
6	Yoga Taravali	Adi Shankaracharya

Hatha is the Sanskrit combination word. 'Ha' means **Sun** and 'Tha' means **Moon**. So it is the Union of opposites. Qualities of Sun are heat, masculinity and effort, while Moon qualities are coolness, femininity and surrender. Hatha Yoga is designed to help us bring pairs of opposites together in our heart, mind and Body for the purpose of discovering something deeper about the nature of our existence.

the term Hatha is wrongly understood as stubbornness.

The focus is more on the present. Harmony in empirical is emphasised upon. At this point, we see a proliferation of literature as well as the practice designed to rejuvenate the body and prolong life. They rejected the teachings of the ancient Vedas (Though not totally) and embraced the concept of physical body as the means to achieve enlightenment. Tantra Yoga Been developed, which consists of radical techniques to cleanse the body and mind to break the knots that bind us to our physical existence. This exploration of physical-spiritual connection and body-centred practices led to the creation of what we today understand is Hatha Yoga.

1.3 Guiding principles to be followed by Yoga Practitioners :

The Five points of Yoga by Swami Vishnudevananda :

The yogis sees life as a triangle the Physical body undergoes Birth, growth, change, decay and death. The growth period reaches a plateau at about the age of eighteen to twenty years. In the first year of life the youthful period the rate of cell rejuvenation(anabolic) exceeds the rate of cell decay (catabolic). In the average person, the body maintains an equilibrium of these processes from the age of twenty until around thirty-five. Then the decaying or catabolic process begins to take precedence and the body starts its decline. His process later results in old age with its accompanying ills and despair. However yogis say that we were not born merely to be subject to pain and suffering, disease and death. There is a far greater purpose to life. But the spiritual investigation of life's purposes require a keen intellect and strong will, these are the products of a healthy body and mind. For this reason the ancient sages developed an integral system to ward off or retard the decaying or catabolic process and to keep the physical and mental faculties strong.

This is the system of Yoga a simple and natural programme involving five main principles:

- 1. Proper Exercise - Asana**
- 2. Proper Breathing - Pranayama**
- 3. Proper relaxation - Savasana**
- 4. Proper Diet - Vegetarian**
- 5. Positive thinking and Meditation - Vedanta and Dhyana**

1. Proper Exercise - Asana:

There are numerous modern physical culture systems designed to develop the muscles through mechanical movements and exercises. As yoga regards the body as a vehicle for soul in its journey towards perfection, Asana are designed to develop not only the body but they also broaden the mental faculties and spiritual capacities.

The fundamental difference between yoga exercise and ordinary physical exercise is that physical culture emphasises violent movement of the muscles yoga exercises oppose violent movements as they produce large quantities of lactic acid in the muscle fibers. The effect of this acid and the fatigue it causes is neutralised by the inhalation of oxygen (deep breathing). Muscle development does not necessarily mean a healthy body as is commonly assumed. Health is a state wherein all organs function perfectly under the intelligent control of the mind, yoga physical exercises are called "Asana", a term which means steady pose. The yoga Asana is meant to be held for some time however this is

quite as advanced practice. Initially our concern is simply to increase body flexibility. Your body is as young as it is flexible. Yoga postures focus first on the health of the spine, its strength and flexibility. The spinal column houses the all important nervous system, the telegraphic system of the body. By maintaining the spine's flexibility and strength through exercise, circulation is increased and the nerves are ensured their supply of nutrients and oxygen. Asana work on the internal machinery of the body, the glands and organs as well as the muscles.

2. Proper Breathing - Pranayama :

Most people use only a fraction of their potential lung capacity when breathing. They breathe shallowly, barely expanding the rib cage. Their shoulders are hunched. They have painful tension in the upper part of the back and neck, and they suffer from lack of oxygen. These people become tired easily and don't know why. Usually these people are not using their diaphragms properly, breathing with only the top or middle of the lungs.

Control of the Prana or subtle energy, leads to control of the mind. Yogic breathing exercises are called Pranayama which means to control the Prana.

The grossest manifestation of prana in the human body is the motion of the lungs. This motion acts like the flywheel that sets the other forces of the body in motion.

Pranayama begins by controlling the motion of the lungs, by which the prana is controlled. When the subtle prana is controlled all gross manifestations of Prana in physical body will slowly come under control. When we are able to do this, the whole body will be under our control. All diseases of the body can be destroyed at the root by controlling and regulating the prana. This is the secret knowledge of healing. In ordinary breathing we extract only very little Prana. But when we concentrate and consciously regulate the breathing we are able to store a greater amount. The person who has abundant pranic energy radiates vitality and strength, this can be felt by all who come into contact with him/her.

3. Proper Relaxation - Savasan :

When the body and the mind are constantly overworked, their natural efficiency diminishes. Modern social life, food, work and even entertainment make it difficult for people to relax. Many have even forgotten that rest and relaxation are nature's way of recharging. Even while trying to rest, the average person expends a lot of physical and mental energy through tension. Much of the body's energy is wasted uselessly. More of our energy is spent in keeping the muscles in continual readiness of work than in actual useful work done. In order to regulate and balance the work of the body and mind, it is best to learn to economize the energy produced by our body. This may be done by learning to relax.

In order to achieve perfect relaxation, three methods are used by Yogis : Physical, mental, and spiritual relaxation. Relaxation is not complete until the person reaches that stage of spiritual relaxation, which only advanced spiritual aspirants know.

Physical Relaxation : we know that every action is result of thought. Thoughts take form in action, the body reacting to the thought. Just as the mind may send a message to the muscles ordering them to contract, the mind may also send another message to bring relaxation to the tired muscles. Physical relaxation first begins with the toes and then moves upward. The autosuggestion passes through the muscles and reaches the eye and ears at the top. Then slowly messages are sent to internal organs. This relaxation position is known as **Savasana, the 'corpse pose'**.

4. Proper Diet - Vegetarian :

The Yogic diet is a facto-vegetarian one, consisting of pure, simple, natural food which are easily digested and promote health. Simple meals aid the digestion and assimilation of food. Nutritional requirements fall into five categories : Protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, fats and fiber. One should have certain knowledge of dietetics in order to balance the diet. Eating foods first-hand from nature, grown in fertile soil (preferably organic, free from chemicals and pesticides and not genetically modified) will help ensure a better supply of these nutritional needs. Processing refining and over-cooking destroys much food value. There is a cycle in nature known as the 'food cycle' or 'food chain'. The sun is the source of energy for all life on our planet, it nourishes the plants (the top of the food chain) which are eaten by animals (herbivores or vegetarian) which are then eaten by other animals (carnivores).

The food at the top of the food chain being directly nourished by the sun, has the greatest life-promoting properties.

5. Positive thinking and Meditation - Vedanta and Dhyana :

We can control the mental agitation by concentrating the mind either internally or externally. Internally we focus on the self or the consciousness of I am. Externally we use other points of focus.

When we take up some recreation such as golf, through concentration on putting the ball into the hole, the other thoughts are slowed down or stilled. We feel we have played a good game when we have achieved perfect concentration. The happiness we experience comes because the mind has been concentrated. At that time, all the worries and problems of the world disappeared. The mental ability to concentrate is inherent to all, it is not extraordinary nor mysterious.

Meditation is not something that yogi has to teach you, you already have the ability to shut out thoughts. The only difference between this and meditation (the positive way), is that generally we have learned to focus the mind externally on objects. When the mind is fully concentrated, time passes unnoticed, as if time did not exist. When the mind is focused, there is no time! Time is nothing but a modification of the mind. Time, space and causation and external experiences are mental creations. All happiness achieved through the mind is temporary and fleeting. It is limited by nature. To achieve that state of lasting happiness and absolute peace, we must first know how to calm the mind, to concentrate and go beyond the mind. By turning the mind's concentration inward, upon the self, we can deepen that experience of perfect concentration. This is the state of meditation.

1.4 Principles of Yoga (Triguna, Antahkarana-chatustaya, Tri-Sharira/ Panchakosha).

Antahkarana Chatustaya (Fourfold Mind) :

Antahkarana is term used by **Vedantins** it includes

Manas

Buddhi

Chitta

Ahamkara

When used in a broad sense, it means the internal instrument. **Antah** means **internal**, **Karana** means **instrument**. It is the inner instrument (As distinguished from **Bahyakarana**, outer instruments or the senses) through which you sense, perceive , think and reason.

Ahamkara, Ego, is derived from the **Prithvi (Earth) Tanmatra**. (Tanmatras are subtle elements from which the five gross elements are derived)

Chitta, consciousness, is derived from **Jala (Water) Tanmatra**,

Buddhi, Discriminative mind from **Agni (Fire) Tanmatra**,

Manas finite mind, from **Vayu (Air) Tanmatra**.

Mind is **Chetana (Intelligent)** when compared with the senses. It is **Jada (non-intelligent)** when compared with the senses. In Sankhya philosophy, **Buddhi is will and intellect combined**. Some put Chitta under Mind and Ahamkara under Buddhi.

Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and Ahamkara are only **functional aspects of the mind**.

Manas has all things for its objects and extends through the past, present and future, it is one but has various functions. You are a judge when you exercise your judicial powers in the court. You are a cook when you work in the kitchen. You are the president of an association when you sit on the chair in that capacity. You are the same person but you function differently and are called by different names according to those different functions. Similarly, when the **Mind does sankalpa-vikalpa (Will-thought and doubt) it is called Manas**, when it **discriminates and decides it is called Buddhi**, when it **self-arrogates it is Ahamkara**, when it is **the storehouse of samskaras and seat of memory and also when it performs concentration and enquiry it is Chitta**.

Who gave coolness to Water, Warmth to fire, motion to Air? These qualities are their very nature. Even so mind has its **Swabhava, inherent nature**, of **running towards objects**, **Buddhi of determining**, **ahamkara of self assertion and self identification**, **Chitta of thinking of those objects which are identified by Ahamkara**. When the mind is at work, **Buddhi and Ahamkara work in healthy co-operation**. Mind thinks whether a certain thing is good or bad. **Buddhi comes in for determination**. It is **Buddhi which discriminates the vishaya, (Subject)**. The **Swarupa, Essential form**, of mind is **thought only**. It is **discriminative when it forwards the decisions of Buddhi**, the messages from buddhi, to the organs of action for execution. The mind selects, attends and rejects.

Align your mind, body and soul...

Triguna : Three Qualities

Triguna Theory and personality Psychology

The concept of Gunas dates back to the Atharva veda it is discussed in the Bhagwad Gita and is included in Sankhya Darshana. The concept of Trigunas has been utilised to explain human personality in modern era as well. Indian researchers have also deliberated on this concept of triguna's in their writings.

In Sankhya Philosophy Purusha and Prakriti are the two meta-physical principles. Purusha represents Pure consciousness and Prakriti is the principle of matter. This Prakriti is the material cause of all the objects in the universe, physical and mental, living and non-living. This Prakriti is comprised of three Gunas, Namely Sattva Guna, Rajas Guna and Tamas Guna. These three Gunas are like the three strands of rope. Without the strands there is no road. Similarly, without the Gunas there is no Prakriti. Since, Prakriti is composed of three Gunas, and Prakriti is the material cause of all the objects in the universe, all the objects in the universe are made up of the three Gunas.

Description of Gunas :

	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas
Meaning	“Sattva” Stands for “The Essence of truth/existence”	“Rajas” stand for “Foulness”	“Tamas” stands for “Darkness”
Qualities	Illumination, Knowledge, concentration, awareness, Satisfaction, Gratification, happiness, Joy, Bills, light, buoyant, calmness, Peace, serenity, tranquility, Action without expectation of fruits	Action, activity, pain, restlessness, hyperactivity, mobility, anger, aggressiveness, ambition, passion, desires, A person with this Guna perform actions and expect fruits/results and bound by attachment.	Inertia, laziness, lethargy, indifference, ignorance, cowardice, sleep, drowsiness, ambiguity, fantasy, stubbornness, heavy, shrouds one from knowledge and pulls down, apprehensive, revengeful, disillusionment, cynicism, self-centred
Colour	White Colour	Red Colour	Black Colour

Pancha Koshas : Five Sheaths

The theory of Pancha Koshas has been propounded by Adi Shankaracharya taking from Taittiriya Upanishad. This Upanishad speaks about five different manifestations of the ultimate reality or Brahman. this Upanishads never spoke about Koshas but Adi Shankaracharya converted all to Koshas to suit his philosophy. So Like for Annamaya Brahma he mapped as Annamaya Kosha. This Theory asserts that relative world comprising microcosm and macrocosm is made up of five sheaths which cover the real self (Atman, or Purusha or soul)

Following are the Five Koshas :

no	Kosha	Mapped in Physical Body	Consists	Helps to strengthen
1	Annamaya kosha	Outer most sheath. Food body	Constituted by food and made up of Five elements - Ether, Air, fire, Water, Earth.	Food, Kriyas, Asana

2	Pranamaya kosha	Energy body, The Pranic Sheath, Mapped in Physical body and extends slightly from it as Aura.	Responsible for all physiological & mental functions, It is the bridge between Body and mind, 5 Pranas, 5 karma indriyas(organs of action - Hand, feet, speech, procreation, evacuation	Pranayama
3	Manomaya Kosha	Mental body, Thinking, feeling & emotions.	Manas, Ahankar, Lower Buddhi. 5 Jnana indriyas (senses) eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin.	Pranayama, Pratyahara.
4	Vijnanamaya Kosha	Wisdom/higher intellect body,	Higher Thinking and Intuition, Ahankara, Buddhi.	Meditation
5	Anandamay a Kosha	Bliss Body, Spirituality reigns here	Closer to our real Self (Atman Transending Body, mind & intellect and towards Bliss, Avidya	Meditation

1. Annamaya Kosha : That is the kosha of matter, which is basically the physical vehicle
2. Pranamaya Kosha : The Prana Kosha is one of the “Vital” Vehicle
3. Manomaya Kosha : means the Manas kosha it is the mental vehicle.
4. Vijnanamaya Kosha : The kosha of Vijnana. the vehicle of higher reason.
5. Anandamaya Kosha : The Kosha of Ananda.

Annamaya Kosa (the physical body) also known as “gross body” (sthula Sharira).

Anandamaya kosa (the blissful body) is also known as “causal body” (karana-sharira).

Sukshmarsharira, “ subtle body” comprises the pranamaya, manomaya and vijnanamaya kosas, along with the Pranamaya Kosha which disintegrates at death of an individual.

1. **Annamaya kosa** :This is first part of tangible body made of Five Fundamental elements or Panchabhuthas (5 Elements). Each and every substance contains five primary elements in it, one of them being a principal element. Based on this importance of primary element, the substances which contain the Akasa (space/ether) element are known as Akasiya Dravya (substance), the substance which contain the Vayu (air) element are known as Vayavya Dravya, the substances which contain the Agni (fire) element are known as Tejas Dravya, the substances which contain the Jala (water) element are known as Apya Dravya, the substances which contain the Prithvi (earth) element are known as Parthiva Dravya.

2. Pranamaya kosha ; second sheath of the body of a human being is that of the prana. Prana the vital breath which man lives by, is the bridge between the gross and subtle bodies. All the functions of wisdom are done by the Pranamaya Kosha, which is built by Prana. Based on the functions performed, Prana is named differently, There are 10 distinctly named Pranas. 5 Major pranas and 5 minor or upapranas.

With the regular exercise of Pranayama the work performance of pranamaya Kosha is enhanced.

This is described in Yoga Vasistha that when the mind becomes disturbed it reflects in the body. This results in disturbances in the flow of prana in the nadi's. This manifests as disturbed digestive function which becomes either. Excessive or irregular or ends up in indigestion.

3. Manomaya Kosha : the first important acting part of the subtle body is Manomaya Kosha. Mind, intellect, ego and conscience are the integral parts of manomaya Kosha, which are termed as the catustaya. It is purified by Meditation.

4. Vijñanamaya Kosha : This is referred to as Wisdom body or sheath of higher intellect (intuition). The second part of the subtle body. (Sukshma Sharira) The practitioner who works under the guidance of Vijñanamaya Kosha having a good understanding of it, Alienating all kinds of illusions, passions, interests etc.

5. Anandamaya Kosha : This Kosha also known with other terms like, "Hridaya Kosha", "Karanasarira", "linga sarira". It is indicated as situated in our heart. It has an immense relevance to our inner realm and its relation with the external world is considerably very less. With this practitioner achieves Nirbeeja (seedless) samadhi, attaining the blissful state and forever he resides there.

Tri-Sharira : Three Bodies

Bady	Kosha (Sheath)	Element
Sthula Sarira (Physical)	Annamaya Kosha (Food Sheath)	Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether
Sukma Sarira (Subtle Body)	Pranamaya Kosha (Vital Sheath)	5 Pranas, 5 Action organs (Karmendriyas)
	Manomaya Kosha (Mental Sheath)	Manas, Chitta, 5 Sense organs (Jñanedriyas)
	Vijñanamaya Kosha (Intellectual Sheath)	Buddhi, Ahamkara
Karana Sarira (Causal Body)	Anandamaya Kosha (Bliss Sheath)	Karmas, Samskaras

Pancha Maha Bhuta : Five elements

1. Akasha : Space/Ether
2. Vayu : Air
3. Agni : Fire
4. Jala : Water
5. Prithvi : Earth

The lateral meaning of Bhuta(element) is one that exists or that is real. Mahabhuta are the major five elements that are present in all animate and inanimate objects of the universe.

First element is Space/Ether

From Space/Ether Air comes

From Air Fire comes

From Fire Water comes

And From Water Earth.

Following is the chart of physical properties and functions of Five Elements :

	Space/Ether	Air	Fire	Water	Earth
Attributes	Light, Minute, Quick, Clear, Soft	Light, Dry, Rough, Mobile, Cold, Minute, Clear.	Dry, Hot, Sharp, Light, Rough, Minute, Clear	Heavy, Moist, Fluid, Slimy, Cold, Thick, Soft.	Heavy, Rough, Solid, Massive, Firm, Hard.
Role in the Body	Body cavities & passages	Movement, pulsation, Conduction, & Triggers of activities in the body	Whole body metabolism, transformations & degeneration.	All adhesions, joints & integrations at cellular, Tissue, & organ level.	Body organs, mass, inertia, stability & resistance to degeneration.

Tanmatras : Seeding of Element

Tanmatra means very minute or miniature form or seeding of Five Elements (Mahabhuta)

Element	Sanskrit word of Tanmatra	English translation
Space/Ether	Shabda	Sound
Air	Sparsa	Touch
Fire	Rupa	Shape/Visual/Light
Water	Rasa	Taste
Earth	Gandha	Smell

Pancha Jnanedriya : Five Sense Organs

Element	Sense Organ
Space/ether	Ears
Air	Skin
Fire	Eyes
Water	Tongue
Earth	Nose

Pancha Karmendriya : Five action organs

Element	Action Organ	Function
Space/Ether	Tongue	Speech
Air	Hand	Receiving and Holding
Fire	Feet	Movement from one place to another
Water	Genitals	Reproduction
Earth	Anus	Discharging the waste

Sapta Dhatu : Seven Tissues

Our Body is supported and maintained by seven basic tissues which are known as Dhatu. These are basic structural building blocks of the body, on the same time former Dhatu in the series becomes a source of nutrition to the later Dhatu of the body. The word 'Dhatu' is a Sanskrit word which means 'that which enters into the formation of the body'. Primary and main function of Dhatu is Dharana of the body. Here Dharana denotes the meaning of sustenance and maintenance of the body.

1. **Rasa : Plasma**
2. **Rakta : Blood**
3. **Mamsa : Muscle**
4. **Meda : Adipose**
5. **Asthi : Bone**
6. **Mjja : Bone Marrow**
7. **Shukra : Reproductive Tissues**

Tri Doshas : Three constitutions

Biological system weaves five Mahabhutas(Five Elements) into three patterns known as 'Tridosha'. Here 'Tri' means **three** and 'Dosha' corresponds to a **humor(bio-entity)**.

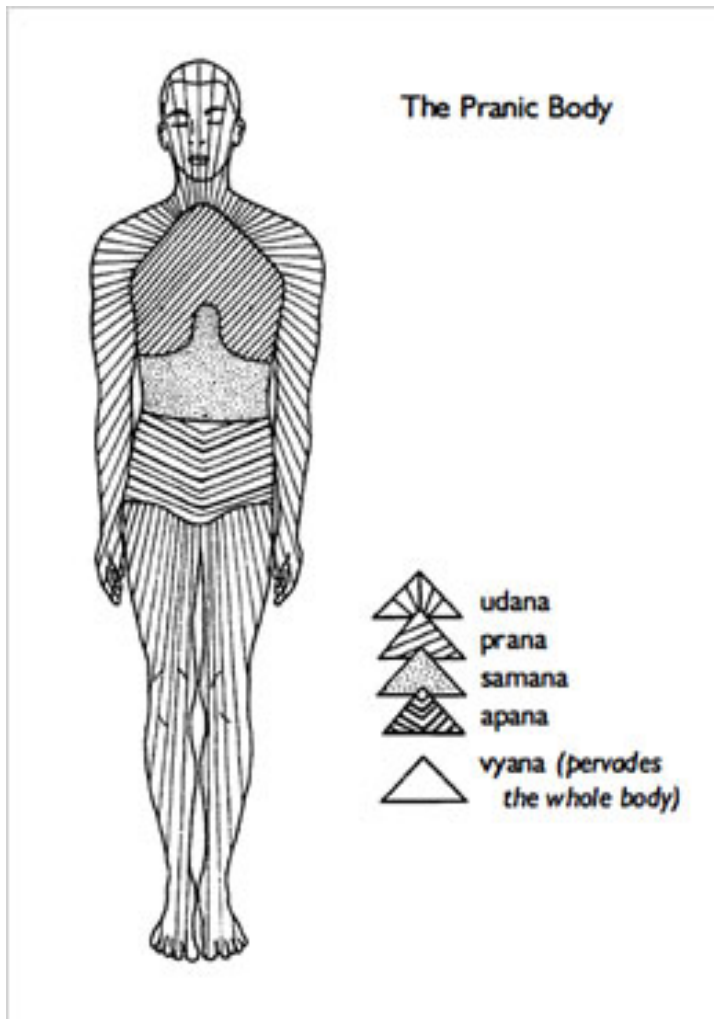
Vata, Pitta and Kapha are the **Tri Doshas**. All three Doshas are present in every cell, tissue and organ -for movement, metabolism and protection and are essential components of life.

Dosha means '**that which vitiates**'. Etymologically it is derived from the root '**Dush**' which is equivalent in the English prefix '**Dys**', such as in **dysfunction, dystrophy** etc. in Sanskrit the '**Dush**' means to **vitate** or to **spoil**. '**Dosha**' are named so because they have a tendency to be vitiated and also to vitiate other I.e. **Dhatu's**. Dosha can be regarded as a fault, mistake, error or a transgression against the cosmic rhythm.

Properties of Dosha :

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
Dry, Light, Cold, Rough, Minute, Unsteady	Unctuous, Hot, Sharp, Light, Bad Smell, Quick in move, Liquid.	Unctuous, Cold, Massive, Sluggish, Slippery, Soft, Steady.

Pancha Prana : Five Pranas in the body



There are 10 distinctly named Pranas. 5 Major pranas and 5 minor or upapranas.

Pranas :

1. **Prana** -Head down to Navel, the Pranic centre in the human Body.
2. **Apana**- From the navel down to the Muladhara chakra or Perineal region.
3. **Udana**- From the Navel to the head.
4. **Samana**- In the navel Region
5. **Vyana**- Throughout the body

Upapranas :

1. **Naga** : Responsible for Hiccoughs, Burps, and Regurgitation.
2. **Kurma** : Responsible for Blinking the eyes.
3. **Krikal** : Responsible for Hunger, Thirst, sneezing and coughing.
4. **Devadatta** : Responsible for Yawning, drowsiness and sleep.
5. **Dhananjaya** : Which lingers around the body immediately after death.

1.5 Introduction to major schools of Yoga (Jnana, Bhakti, Karma)

There are different systems and paths of Philosophic schools in ancient India.

There are two types of Schools(View/Darshana) in India :

Astik Darshana : the schools who follow Vedas

Nastik Darshana : the schools who do not take authority of Vedas

Astik Darshanas :

There are Six Astik Darshanas :

	School Name	Founder
1	Nyaya	Gautama Rishi
2	Vaisesika	Kanada Rishi
3	Sankhya	Kapila Muni
4	Yoga	Patanjali Maharishi
5	Purva Mimamsa	Jaimini Rishi
6	Uttara Mimamsa or Vedanta	Vyasa Maharishi

Nastik Darshana :

- 1. Charvaka**
- 2. Buddhism**
- 3. Jaina**

- 1. Jnana Yoga :** Jnana means Knowledge. It is called the Yoga of wisdom. It shows the path of self-realisation through discerning the real from the unreal or illusory. Jnana Yoga is a strictly non-dualistic (Advaita Vedanta) path that encourages the Yogi to separate the real from the unreal and the self from the non-self. One must use the mind to outwit itself. The principal techniques this path are contemplation and meditation. The three stages of Jnana Yoga practice are considered as Sravana, Manana, and Nidhidyasana.

This is the most difficult path requiring tremendous strength of will and intellect.

The Sadhana chatustaya helps in the preparation of the intellect, emotion and will.

Manas, Buddhi, Chitta, Ahamkara

The three stages of Jnana Yoga practice.

- 1. Sravana :** Listening or absorbing the instructions.
- 2. Mañana :** Reflection or contemplation involving reasoning and arriving at intellectual convictions
- 3. Nidhidyasana :** repeated meditation implementation of convictions or attaining to one-ness with Reality.

- 2. Bhakti Yoga :** unconditional and intense love for God is Bhakti. It is the Yoga of Devotion. The union of lover (the yogi) and beloved (the Devine). Narada Bhakti Sutra (NBS) is a premier treatise on the nature of Bhakti that emphasises the connection between Bhakti and Prema and treats the age old enigma about the nature of love in an original fashion. It softens the heart and removes jealousy, hatred, lust, anger, egoism, pride and arrogance. It infuses joy, divine ecstasy, bliss, peace and knowledge. He attains the immortal abode of everlasting peace, bliss and knowledge. It is the surest, safest and easiest form of Yoga to practice. The Bhakta attempt to realise the Truth by devotion.

Prayer, chanting, Japa, Telling stories of God, Pujas, Rituals are the basic techniques of Bhakti

The relationship with God may seem is different ways **Friend, Child, A Mother, or A Teacher**

The type of Bhaktas are mention in BG:

1. **Arta - Distressed**
2. **Jidnasu - Inquisitive**
3. **Artharthee - Desirer of wealth**
4. **Jnani - Who is in search of the knowledge of the Absolute.**

3. KarmaYoga :

Karma means Action. Yoga means union. Karma Yoga means Yoga or union through action. It is been primarily by those who are of an outgoing/action-oriented nature. The aspirant act selflessly, without personal gain, or reward. By detaching yourself from the fruits of your actions and offering them up to God, Sublimating the ego. According to the Bhagwad Gita, "Karma Yoga is the selfless devotion of all inner as well as the outer activities.

The 4 major laws of Karma Yoga Described in BG

1. Work with a sense of duty.
2. Work without getting intensely attached (focussed attention) to the work.
3. Never allow the anxieties about the results interfere with your mind during the currency of the job.
4. Accept failure and success with equanimity.

4. Raja Yoga :

Raja yoga means royal or kingly Yoga. It is the supposed climax of all different paths of Yoga. Swatmarama in his hatha Yoga Pradipika says that hatha Yoga is a staircase leading to Raja Yoga. Raja Yoga here may not refer to a particular form of Yoga but to the ultimate state of Self-realisation. Patanjali Aims at the point of cessation of mental modifications so that Real Self within is restored to its pristine purity.

1.6 Introduction to Yoga Practices for health and well being

Health : Meaning and Definition

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) the state of health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity.

In Sanskrit, the word for health is "Swasthya", which has a profound meaning. It is made of two root Sanskrit words - "Swa" or the Self and "Stha" meaning "abiding". So swasthya can be roughly translated as "Abiding in once's own Self". The Self, in Indian philosophy is generally described as "Sat-Chit-Ananda" or being-Consciousness-Bliss. This is the true nature of every being. Any deviation from this state of well-being can be considered as a disease. Therefore abiding in one's Self produces health (bliss).

Qualities of physical well-being According to yoga:

1. Relaxed Muscles.
2. Loose joints to conserve energy.
3. Low metabolic rate.
4. Efficiency utility of energy by the body.
5. Coordinated functioning of organ systems even in the stressed state.

Strength : There are a number of Asana (Supine Naukasana, Utkatasana, Bhujangasana etc.) in Yoga which develop the strength of muscles like in classic forms of exercises (push-ups, lunges or squats).

Balance: One of the vital elements of fitness is balance, Which is generally ignored in the routine life of traditional gym. Yoga poses like Vrikshasana (The tree pose) teaches practitioners how to stay firm only on one leg. Balance also helps you to keep fit for daily activities.

Joint Mobility : Many poses in Yoga require you to move your joints in way that may be different than the linear manner you are accustomed to with walking, swimming, biking or running. This improves the overall range of motions and discourages injury. Stiffness and pain can significantly diminish with a regular practice.

The Yogic view of health is exemplified in Shvetasvatara Upanishad where it is said that the first effects of entering Yoga are lightness of body, health, desire less mind, clearness of completion, a beautiful voice, an agreeable odour and scantiness of excretions.

In Patanjali's Yoga Darshan we find an excellent description of the attributes of a perfect body (Kaya sampat). It is said in Vibhuti Pada that perfection of body includes beauty, gracefulness, strength and adamant hardness. It is said that deep concentration on resulting in mastery of samana vayu (energy of digestion) leads to radiant effulgence.

Mental well-being :

1. Conscious process of calming down the mind erases the weaknesses.
2. Builds will power.
3. Steadfastness becomes the core.
4. Converts all the challenges into opportunities.

Emotional well-being :

1. Overcomes his/her emotional conflicts, complexes, and turmoils.
2. Systematically sharpens and sensitizes his/her emotions.

1.8 Introduction to Yogic Sukshma Vyayama, Sthula Vyayama, and Surya Namaskar

Surya Namaskar :

Introduction :

Surya namaskar is a practice which has been handed down from the sages of vidic times. "Surya" means Sun and Namaskar means "Salutation". In ancient times the sun was worshipped as a daily ritual because it is a powerful symbol of spiritual consciousness. Workshop of the outer and inner sun was a religion-social ritual which attempted to placate those forces of nature beyond man's control. It was initiated by enlightened sages who know that these practices maintained health and led to greater social creativity and productivity.

Worship in the Vedic tradition :

The seers of the Rig Veda described the Sun As :

The remover of all weakness,
Healer of all illness,
Lord of all that stands and goes,
He slays the demons
And guards the worshippers.

Finally they state :

We meditate in the adorable glory
Of the radiant sun,
May he inspire our intelligence.

Salute to the Sun :

Surya Namaskar is a series of twelve physical postures. These alternation backward and forward bending asanas flex and stretch the spinal column and limbs through their maximum range. The series gives such a profound stretch to the whole of the body that few other forms of exercise can be compare with it.

Most beginners will discover stiffness in their bodies from muscular tension, tightness in the tendons and toxic deposits in the joints. Stiffness, lack of coordination and the tendency to strain can all be overcome through practising very slowly, with an emphasis on awareness and relaxation in each posture. What little physical effort is applied then appears effortless. Regular practice of Surya Namaskar is one of the most rapid methods of obtaining a supple body.

The practice should be mastered by first becoming familiar with the postures individually and then as a whole. Synchronising the breath with the movements is the next step. When this is achieved it will be found that the breathing sequence complements each posture, and to breathe in any other manner would be awkward and difficult. The basic breathing principle followed is inhalation during backward bending postures due to expansion of the chest, and exhalation with forward bending postures due to compression of the chest and abdomen.

Preparation :

Before commencing the practice, stand with the feet together, or slightly apart, arms relaxed by the sides of your body. Close your eyes and become aware of the whole physical body.

Develop awareness of your body as you would in the practice of Yoga Nidra. Starting at the top of the head work your awareness down through the body, relaxed and comfortable with myself? Adjust your position so that you are more comfortable. Feel that you are being pulled upwards by a thread attached to the top of your head.

Now take your awareness to bottom of your feet and feel the soles in contact with the floor. Feel that your whole body is being pulled downwards by gravity and that all the tensions from the top of your feet and into the ground. At the same time be aware of the vital force moving up through your body, allowing you to maintain a relaxed and comfortable upright position.

Be aware of this for a few moments and then go on to the practice of Surya Namaskara.

When and where to practice :

The ideal time to practice SN is at sunrise, the most peaceful time of day. At this time the atmosphere is filled with the sun's ultraviolet rays, which are so important to the body. Whenever possible practice in the open air, wearing light, loose clothing to allow the skin to breathe and to absorb the sun's energy.

Surya Namaskara is ideally practised facing the rising Sun. If it is not possible in the early morning, then the practice can be done at any convenient time, provided the stomach is empty. No food should be taken for at least three to four hours beforehand. In the evening before dinner is also a good time to practice as it stimulates the digestive fire.

Limitations :

There is no limitation as far as age is concerned. Surya namaskar can be practised beneficially throughout all stages of growth, maturity and old age. However, elderly people are advised to avoid over-exertion. As a rule children under eight years of age usually do not need SN even though they may be quite capable of performing it. SN should not be practised by people with high blood pressure, coronary artery disease or those who have had a stroke, as it may overstimulate or damage a weak heart or blood vessel system. Nor should it be practised in cases of hernia or intestinal tuberculosis.

People with spinal problems should consult a medical expert before commencing SN. Many spinal problems can be alleviated through this practise. However, conditions such as slipped disc and sciatica may be aggravated by SN and a special program of other yoga asanas beneficial.

During menstruation women can continue to practise SN. However, as a precaution it may be sensible to avoid this practice during a heavy or painful period. During pregnancy, SN can be practiced until the beginning of the twelfth week. Following childbirth, it may be gradually recommenced for retaining of the uterine muscles, approximately forty days after delivery.

The most important point to keep in mind, however is not the strain. SN teaches us to tune into our own capabilities and limitations. With time and practise you will find these limitations receding. By developing sensitivity to the body, we can use SN to greatly increase our awareness, health and wellbeing.

The rhythms of Life :

The organs of the body are like the well-tuned instruments of an orchestra which are conducted by the brain and nervous system. Each organ functions in rhythm and harmony with all the other organ functions with all the other organs of the body, performing at that time of the day when their activity is required. However, an unhealthy body is out of tune and discordant. This occurs when our energy systems are depleted of, or oversupplied with, vital energy, or when one part of the controlling neural circuits is not directing the body appropriately.

The body's daily or diurnal rhythms are set by the environment and by our lifestyle. The inner rhythms must not only be attuned to inner needs but must work in concerted harmony with outer demands and forces. Many of the inner rhythms are set by the daily pattern of light and dark and by our pattern of activity within the daily revolution of the earth as it spins upon its own axis while moving around the sun. Professor Wieslaw Romanowski of the Department of Physiology, Academy of physical Education, Warsaw, a pioneer worker in the research of yogic asanas states that : " Movement and rhythm are characteristic of the universe in which we live..."In living organisms certain rhythmic functional changes occur dependent on the periodicity of processes occurring in the outer environment and known as exogenous (external) rhythms.

There also exists a specific rhythmicity in the biological unit-endogenous (internal) rhythmicity".

According to the theory of biorhythms, these internal and external rhythms can be classified according to frequency in the following ways :

1. Low frequency, such as seasons and monthly cycles
2. Moderate frequency, such as respiratory and heart cycles
3. High frequency, such as the pulsation of enzymatic systems or the atoms in a crystal.

Modern life has removed man from nature's benign and rhythmic influence. The internal rhythms, the inherent clockwork-like nature of the nervous and endocrine systems, have become unbalanced through the effects of stress and tension, resulting in feelings of discomfort and lack of wellbeing, and leading to disease and neurosis. The brainwaves of most "normal" people clearly indicate lack of integration between parts of the brain, forming random and asymmetric patterns.

In the clinical situation we see this, for example as one part of the body relaxing while another part is preparing the body for stress. This shows lack of concerted harmony between parts. Rather, organs assume autonomy and act as separate entities (this may be the macrocosmic reflection of a macrocosmic situation) the subjective experiences that of disordered thought patterns, mild manic depressive states, inability to concentrate and emotional and mental instability or the effects may be severe.

In order to resume normal internal rhythmic function, we have to find some way to adjust the patterns which have become disordered over perhaps many years. This requires tools or techniques that can penetrate into the 'stroma' of the nervous system, its basic meshwork consisting of sensory, motor and autonomic components. It is this stroma which determines such parameters as brainwave patterns, personality, how we think, feel and respond to the external world. It is responsible for maintaining habit and conditioned responses, whether sick or healthy. The stroma can be changed if we know how to do it. The Yogic method of altering inner rhythms proceeds in a slow and systematic way. It does not attempt to radically change anything. Rather it seeks to slowly mould and modify the existing structures by becoming a new and health-giving extension of our day to day life. It imposes a regular and consistent benevolent force which aims at flowing with and reinforcing the natural inherent body rhythms. It works with nature, not against it. This is why the practices of yoga have to be performed regularly, daily, even if for only a few minutes.

Surya namaskar emerges as a powerful means to exert conscious control over our usually occult inner body systems, a regulator or fine tuning mechanism for body processes. We ourselves emerge from the constricting forces of neurotic and inappropriate habit patterns and compelling inner forces and begin to enjoy a more creative and spontaneous life, one which is in tune with the solar rhythms of nature.

1.9 Introduction to Yogasanas : meaning, principles and their health benefits.

Introduction of Asana :

The meaning of the Sanskrit word Asana is 'A steady and comfortable posture'. It is often believed that asanas are physical exercises, and of course this is true, they do have a profound influence on the body, but this does not convey their full significance. Each person is made up of three aspects Body, Mind, and consciousness, which merge together to constitute our whole being. Asana aims at influencing all these three aspects and moulding and yoking them onto one harmonious whole.

Asana not as physical poses but as states of being. Correct performance of Asanas requires participation of one's whole being, with awareness of oneself in relation to the physical position and movement, the breath, relaxation of the muscles and so forth. It is impossible to work actively in life with an unhealthy mind and body. This applies to work and play as well as to spiritual aspiration. The fundamental requirement is the healthiest possible mind and body. The ancient yogis realised this thousands of years ago and for this reason developed the system of Asanas.

Many modern systems, in all fields of activity, are often based only on few years experience, they rarely last for very long periods and are usually modified because of inadequacies in their makeup. Asanas, on the other hand are a well-tested system for attaining mental and physical health.

The prime aim of Asana is to help us tread the path to higher consciousness so we can begin to understand and know our relationship with existence. We cannot even consider attaining higher awareness if we are ill with disease, aches and pains or mental depression. Therefore, the initial purpose of practising asanas is to eliminate these afflictions and disturbances. Asanas loosen up the joints of the body, stretch and tone the muscles and remove poisons which tend to accumulate in various parts of the body. They also harmonise the nervous system and with a gentle massage they improve the functioning of all the internal organs such as the heart, lungs, abdominal organs, endocrine glands, blood vessels and so on. This slowly but surely leads to the best possible physical health.

The mind and body are not really separate entities, they are two parts of the human organism. The mind is the controller or the computer and the body is the machinery. They are closely interrelated. Improvement in the general health of the body automatically helps to bring about positive mental changes.

Asana automatically bring about a change in breathing. Rapid and irregular breathing signifies tension in mind and body, whereas slow, deep and rhythmical breathing indicates calmness and well being. Asanas bring about mental and emotional equanimity by slowing down the breathing and deepening the inhalation and exhalation.

Awareness is an essential feature of the practice of Asanas. While performing asanas one should be fully aware of what is being done and not allow the mind to wander here and there. Without awareness Asanas are not really asanas, no matter how well they may be physically performed. This awareness of breath movement while doing Asanas draw our attention away from entanglement with superficial worries and problems at least for a period of time. This includes relaxation of one's personality.

Regular practice of Asanas helps to make one master of the mind and body, and not the slave.

Preparations and Rules of asana :

- Place of practice should be clean, quite and well ventilated. And try to use the same place every day to build up an atmosphere of peace.
- Take a wash or bath and go to the toilet before the practice if possible.
- Wait for at list 3 hours after food before doing Asana.
- Do neti before commencing your practice.
- The best time to practice is before breakfast early in the morning. But you can practice in the afternoon also. In fact you will find that asanas are much easier to do in the afternoon and evening because body is always stiffer in the morning.
- The duration of practice should be regulated according to your available time, though the longer the better.
- The program of asanas should be carefully chosen.
- If you feel physically or mentally tired before or during the program perform relaxation asana such as Savasana.
- Don't use excessive force to attain the final positions of the Asana. Your muscles should slowly encouraged to stretch over a period of time.
- Clothing should be as light as possible under climatic conditions, so that free movement is not impeded.
- Breathing should be through the nose not through the mouth. It should be as deep and rhythmical as possible
- Close your eyes as much as possible throughout the practice.
- The less physical effort that is required the better. The aim is to perform asanas with as little tension or muscular effort as possible.
- Don't hurry under any circumstances. If you lack time to complete your daily program leave out a few asanas and do the other at a normal slow relaxed pace.
- Don't underestimate the importance of the movements to and from the final pose. They should be done slowly, smoothly, with control and in synchronisation with the breath.
- There are no specific limitations on the practice of Asanas with regard to age or sex.
- Don't practice Asana if you are ill with a cold or diarrhoea.
- Asanas are not competitive. If you perform your asanas in a group don't compare yourself with other.

1.10 Introduction to Pranayama and Dhyana and their health benefits.

Pranayama/Breathing :

Breathing is a process that we rarely give any thought to. It occurs automatically without our awareness, yet at the same time it is something that most people do incorrectly. If breathing is a spontaneous function of the body, How is it possible to do it incorrectly? The answer is that our respiratory muscles become lax and cease to give optimum inhalation and exhalation.

Our whole life is entirely dependent on breathing. If we stop breathing then life itself ceases in the body. Remember when a person dies we say that he expires, the same word used for breathing out, or for breath leaving the lungs. We can survive for a few days without drinking water, a few months without taking food, but how long can the average person survive without drawing air into the lungs? In most cases no more than a few minutes. It is written in the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, " life is the period between one breath and the next; a person who only half breathes, only half lives. He who breaths correctly, acquires control of the whole being." The ancient yogis were fully aware of the importance of breath; no breath no life; breath is life.

In Yoga it is said that each person has a fixed number of breaths allocated to him/her. If one breathes slowly then one will live longer, for the number of breaths allocated for the lifetime; if one breathes rapidly the given number of breaths are used up more quickly resulting in a shorter life span. Whether you accept this idea or not, there is nevertheless a great deal of truth in it. A fast breathing rate is associated with tension, fear, worry etc. which tends to lead to bad health, unhappiness and of course a shorter life. A person who breathes slowly is relaxed calm and happy, which is conducive to longevity. A person who breathes quickly tends to inhale small volumes of air and exhale the same small volumes; this tends to allow germs to accumulate in the lower areas of the lungs. Conversely a person who breathes slowly tends to also breathe deeply and thereby fill the lungs to a greater depth. This helps to remove stagnant air from the lower reaches of the lungs and to destroy the breeding ground of germs and the germs themselves. There are reasons that relate longevity to slow and deep breathing. For example, deep breathing impacts a good massage to the abdominal organs via the diaphragm. This is a natural and essential subsidiary function of the breathing process, which is often overlooked. The massage of the liver, stomach etc. keeps them in good working order by expelling old, impure blood and allowing pure, oxygenated blood to replace it. Shall breathing connected with fast breathing does not give the internal organs the massage they require. This can lead to various diseases. It in itself does not cause them, but tends to encourage the onset in conjunction with other body factors.

Shallow breathing also leads to insufficient oxygen in the body. This causes functional disturbances and illness concerned with circulatory, digestive and nervous systems, since the efficiency of these systems is entirely dependent on healthy well nourished nerves and organs, which depend completely on oxygen for survival.

Breathing capacities :

A person who is reasonably relaxed and sitting inhales and exhales approximately half a litre of air (this is called tidal volume in physiology) at a time. Now if that same person expanded his chest and abdomen to the maximum that is possible and thereby drew more air into the lungs, it would be possible for him to draw in approximately an extra two litres. This is over and above the normal half litre that can be inhaled. This extra volume of air that can be inhaled is known as the inspiratory reserve volume in physiology. If after normal expiration the chest and abdomen are contracted as much as is comfortably possible, then it is possible to expel an extra one and a half litres of air from the lungs,

over and above the half litre that is exhaled during normal respiration. This is referred to as expiratory reserve volume. There is also some air that will remain in the lungs even after the deepest exhalation. This is due to the fact that the lungs can never be fully deflated, the lungs can never be squeezed sufficiently by the chest and the diaphragm to remove all the air. This is known as the residual volume. It is generally in the order of one and a half litres.

Let us compare the normal volume of respiration with the maximum that can be respired. $1/2$ litre (tidal volume) + 2 litres (inspiratory reserve volume) + $1\frac{1}{2}$ litres (expiratory reserve volume) = 4 Litres.

This gives a total of 4 litres which is eight times the normal volume of inhalation and exhalation.

Most people while sitting breathe less than half a litre of air and so their lung usage is actually less than one-eighth their capacity. It is for this reason that learning to breathe properly is so important.

The mechanics of breathing :

Do you know how air is drawn into your lungs? You know that it happens but do you know why? This is important because if you understand how you breathe then you'll know how to correct improper breathing habits.

The breathing process functions briefly as follows:

Consider the lungs to be two very flexible and strong bags which can be inflated or deflated as air flows in or out of them during inhalation and exhalation respectively. The lungs have the ability to expand greatly and also can be contracted into a small space.

The lungs are surrounded at the top and sides by the thorax or the ribcage and at the bottom by a very important flat muscle called the Diaphragm. The diaphragm separates the abdomen from the lungs. The lungs are not fixed to the diaphragm or the ribcage but they nevertheless closely follow any change in shape of this enclosure.

If the ribs expand and diaphragm moves downwards due to muscular action then there is a tendency for a vacuum to be created between the outside of the lungs and the enclosure. Since a vacuum is not normally tolerated in nature the lungs automatically expand to fill it. They expand in such a way as to assume the same shape as the enclosure. In this way air is drawn into the lungs and inhalation takes place. Similarly when the ribs contract and the diaphragm moves upwards due to release of muscular contraction then the lungs are squeezed. This pushes air out of the lungs. Exhalation takes place.

This is the operation of breathing. The more the lungs are expanded and contracted the deeper will be the breathing.

Pranayama :

The definition of pranayama is usually given as breath control. Through this may seem a fair interpretation in the light of the practices involved, it does not convey the full significance of pranayama. If one bears in mind about prana and the bioplastic body, one can appreciate that the primary aim of pranayama is to bring about control of Prana far more than one's breath. Though oxygen is a form of prana, pranayama is more concerned with influencing the more subtle forms of prana. As such one should not make the mistake of regarding pranayama as merely breathing exercises. Of course the practices do improve the introduction of oxygen into the physical body and the removal of carbon dioxide. Of this there is no doubt and this in itself brings about wonderful physiological benefits. But pranayama actually utilises the breathing process as a means to manipulate all forms of prana within the human framework whether gross or subtle. This in turn has repercussions on the mind and the physical body.

Spiritual references :

Hatha Yoga Pradipika

“ When there is prana in the body it is called life; when it leaves the body it results in death”.

“When prana fluctuates then the chitta (mind) also fluctuates: when the prana becomes steady then the chitta also becomes steady.” 2:2

The warning is also given “ Pranayama can remove all diseases if it is done correctly; if it is done incorrectly then it can actually cause illness.”

The Chakras :

Sad Chakras :

Chakras means wheel or circle. In Yogic context it refers to a ‘vortex’ or a minor ‘whirlpool’. Chakras are prana energy entering at specific areas in the body from where Prana is supplied to all the parts of the entire human structure.

Shad Chakras are related to Pranamaya Kosha.

It is the storehouse of prana within the pranic body of man. Prana is a vibration, it is in constant motion, each Chakra is associated with specific frequency levels.

In Kundalini yoga or Chakra System, chakras represent specific level of awareness- the higher the chakra, the higher the level of awareness. With particular awareness. Chakras has two defining Characteristics i.e. Prana and consciousness/ awareness.

Following are the main Chakras :

1. **Mooladhara**
2. **Swadishtana**
3. **Manipura**
4. **Anahata**
5. **Vishuddhi**
6. **Ajna**
7. **Sahasrara.**

Sahasrara is not really a chakra, It transcends all the Chakras. Sometimes an eighth Chakra called Bindu or Manas Chakra is mentioned.

Chakra Locations in short :

Mooladhara Chakra : Is outside the bottom of the spine. At the floor of the Perineum. Associated body parts - Reproductive organs, base of the spine, back, feet ovaries, hips, vagina, legs.

Ajuna Chakra : Is in the centre of the brain behind the point between the eyebrows. It is At the top of the spine. Body part - Pituitary gland, small brain, communicates with the rest of the endocrine system communicate with CNS

Sahasrara : Is at the top of the head. Centre in the crown of the head. It is not actually a Chakra but the culmination of the evolution of the other six Chakras. Body parts - Pineal Gland.

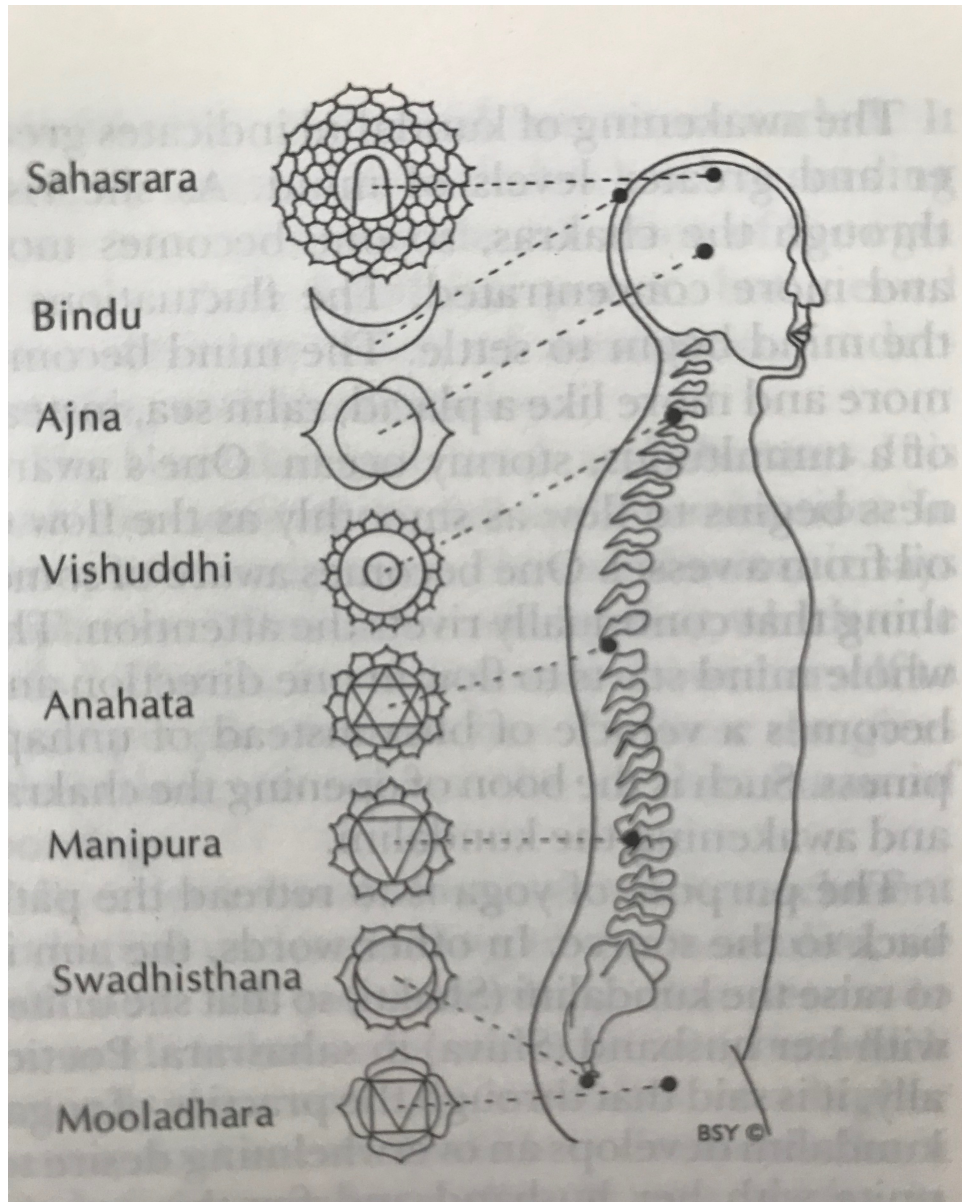
These chakras are both real and symbolic. They imply two things. They represent :

1. Centres of subtle energies (prana) within the pranic body of man, each chakra being associated with pranic energy at specific frequency levels and subtlety. Each chakra is a switch which turns on or opens up specific levels of the mind.
2. Progressively higher states of awareness. That is, the chakras symbolise different levels of awareness in man from the more instinctive realm associated with **Mooladhara** chakra to the more intuitive realms associated with **Ajna** chakra. They symbolise the spiritual path.

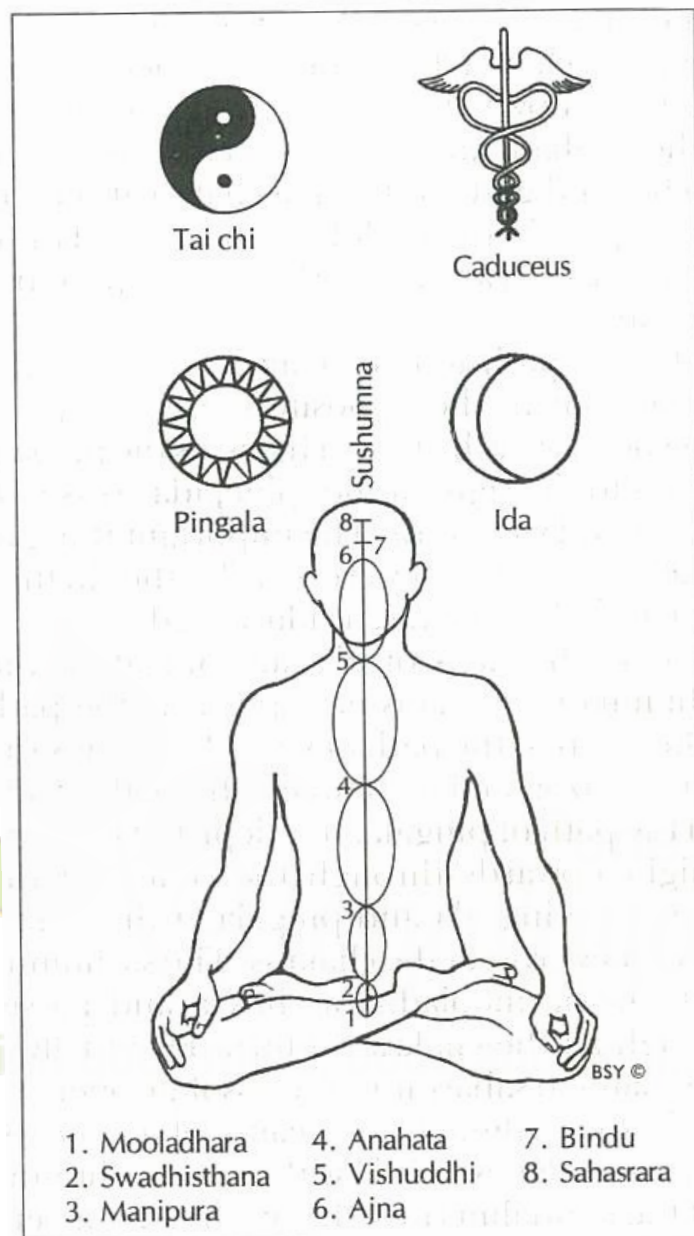
These two aspects are really two different ways of saying the same thing for manipulation and control of prana in any of the centres will induce a corresponding state of awareness.

Meaning of Chakras :

The chakras are an indication of the fullest potential of each and every person. They indicate that man can transcend his individual limitations.



The Nadis and psychic passages :



The Nadis are pathways along which prana or bioplastic energy travels. Various ancient yogis said that there are seventy two thousand nadir in the psychic body. Of these nadis three are particularly important. They are known as **the ida, pingala and sushumna**. The most important one is the sushumna, which runs within the spine. It should not be confused with or identified with the physical spine that we are normally aware of. This nadi runs from the region of the perineum (between the anus and sexual organs) to the region of the brain. It connects the mooladhara chakra (chakra meaning panic or psychic centre) in the perineum to ajna (mid brain) chakra at the top of the spine passing through various other chakras Enroute. Again these chakras should not be regarded as physical entities; they are part of the bioplastic or pranic body. As such they are located within but are not of the physical body.

The ida and pingala nadis are the pathways of two different aspects of prana.

Quality	Ida	Pingala
Breath	Left Nostril	Right Nostril
Temperature	Cold	Hot
Sex	Female	Male
Activity	Mental	Physical
Energy	Negative	Positive
Planet	Moon	Sun
Tao	Yin	Yan

The ancient yogis, with their detailed awareness of human body, found that the flow of breath did not pass equally through each nostril. In fact at any given time it was more than likely that the flow of air through one nostril would be greater than the other nostril.

The yogis discovered that when the left nostril had predominant flow of air then the pranic flow in ida nadi was also predominant. And when the right nostril had the greater flow the pingala had the greatest flow of prana. The flow of air through the nostrils and consequently the pranic flow continually alternates. Under normal conditions the flow through the left nostril is predominant for about an hour and then the right flow becomes predominant for about an hour. During changeover from one to the other, flows are equal and the prana flows through the sushumna nadi. This generally lasts for a few minutes. These flows can also be artificially altered in response to individual needs.

Modes of Pranayama Practice :

While controlling the breath in Pranayama practice there are four important activities. These are :

- 1. Pooraka (Inhalation)**
- 2. Rechaka (Exhalation)**
- 3. Kumbhaka : Antar Kumbhaka (Retention of breath after inhalation I.e. with lungs full of Air)**
- 4. Kumbhaka : Bahir Kumbhaka (Retention of breath after exhalation I.e. with lungs emptied as much as possible.)**

The different practices of pranayama involve various techniques; but they all basically utilise the four listed above. There is also another mode of pranayama which is called Kevala Kumbhaka. This is an advanced stage of pranayama which automatically occurs during high states of meditation. During this state the pressure in the lungs becomes the same as atmospheric pressure. Respiration ceases and the lungs stop their activity. Under these circumstances the veil which prevents us seeing into the deeper aspects of existence is lifted and we obtain an intuitional apprehension of higher truths.

Pranayama Rules :

- the posture for pranayama can be any comfortable sitting position, preferably on a blanket. While sitting the body should be relaxed and the back kept straight without any strain.
- The clothing worn should be as light and as loose as circumstances will permit. Loose cloths for better breathing.
- The place of practice should be clean, quite and properly ventilated.

- The best time to practice is early in the morning after asanas and before meditation. The evening is reasonably good time to practice providing one can abide by the restrictions on food.
- One should practice pranayama at least half an hour before taking food and four hours after food.
- It is best to empty the bowels as much as possible.
- Nasal blockage makes it very difficult to practice pranayama. Therefore nasal nets should be done when necessary before beginning the practice.
- Awareness is an essential part of pranayama.
- Violent respiration is not advocated during pranayama.
- If there is any discomfort while doing pranayama then it should be stopped immediately.

Dhyana (Meditation) :

Meditation- The concept :

According to Ashtanga Yoga of Patanjali, "Dhyana" is the seventh rung of the yogangas. Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama and Pratyahara are the five Angas(limb) which are considered to be Bahya, (external Angas)(limbs), whereas Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi are the Antarik the inner Angas(limbs). To enter into the grandeur inner kingdom and build bridge between the inner and outer world, Dharana works like a bridge., whereas Dhyana, the meditation is equal to gateway to the inner world. There may be so many traditions and paths in this world and all of them may have different kinds of practices to follow to reach ultimate goal. But all of them have no differences about meditation. Therefore, meditation is the most essential part of the practice.

The concept of meditation is the most misunderstood or inadequately understood in modern times. Basically, all meditation techniques are related to the mind. they involve the controlling of the mind which finally transcends.

There are various forms of meditation to suit different levels of practitioners.

Interchangeably referred as contemplation, meditation practices typically involve breath observation, auto suggestion, visualisation, mantra chanting, rotation of beads in Japa, concentration on an object of choice and non-judgemental awareness of thoughts. These practices entail training of the senses and the mind to disassociate from the object and stand apart as a witness. Thoughts are viewed without any identification, analysis, judgement, resistance or verbalising. Meditation practice helps in developing concentration or of the state of being single pointed.

What starts off as a technique of practice, slowly evolves into a state of being. Once perfected, the meditative stance percolates and permeates through all our thoughts and deeds. There is greater clarity and sharpness in seeing things as they are without the pre-conditioned colouring of memory and judgement. Muddy waters cannot reflect the brilliance of the sun, only pure and placed waters reflect the sunlight. Therefore, a mind which has been cleared of its dross thought the technique of meditation, is tuned to reflect the light of awareness.

Buddhist monks are known to practice mindfulness in their day to day activities.

Mindfulness is referred to being aware of what you are doing at the time of doing, no matter what you are doing.

Practical techniques of meditation :

For a novice to sit in meditation without any thoughts is an uphill task. Therefore, practitioners are advised to begin with a support such as the breath or a deity of choice. By using a support, the vagrant mind is given a limited field within which it is allowed to meander.

Concentration Meditation :

The mind needs something to get attached to concentration and meditation. It takes time to build up, it is advisable to practice for a few minutes initially and continue the practice with fervour and determination.

The mind will wander but try to refocus the mind and bring it back to object of meditation. Involuntary thoughts will occur, but over a period of time, the mind gets channelised and remains focused on the object of meditation for longer durations. You will notice that this practice helps in developing our ability to concentrate in our daily activities as well.

Mindfulness meditation :

Mindful meditation practice entails a free flow of thoughts as and when they come, the practitioner is required to simply stand apart from the thoughts and not identify with or judge them.

Through this practice, the practitioner slowly realises the the thoughts by itself have no power, it is the unnecessary identification with the thoughts that causes any agitation.

Through mindfulness meditation, you realise that thoughts tend to flow in preconditioned patterns. Continuous practice helps in the development of state of internal harmony and balance.

Simple meditation techniques for beginners :

1. Make a firm resolve that “I will meditate daily”. Start off with a daily target of two minutes of sitting still.
2. Try to meditate at a fix time and a fixed place.
3. One must meditate in the morning, when the cosmic rhythm is conducive to silence and stillness.
4. the place for meditation just be kept clean and should be away from noise.
5. Set a reminder to fix the time.
6. Sit comfortably on a chair or on your couch, keeping the back erect.
7. Wear comfortable cloths.
8. once you are comfortable for two minutes, than start optimising on the posture. to stay longer and longer in your practice.
9. Observe the state of mind- is it restless, agitated, oscillating? How is the breath- is it smooth, interrupted, deep, shallow? Simply watch.
10. If you feel drowsy, then take a deep breath and forcefully exhale.
11. Gradually increase the time spent in practice.
12. when mind wonders get rid of the futile thoughts immediately.

The difference between Dharana and Dhyana :

This difference is beautifully brought out in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. Here, Dharana refers to confining the mind to one object and in this process, all the efforts are expended in bringing the mind again and again to the object from its continuous distractions.

When the individual can hold his attention continuously on the one object without any distraction, he is said to be in a state of Dhyana or meditation.

Incidentally, when this Dhyana becomes prolonged and intense, wherein the self-nature of the meditation is as if not there, and the process of meditation is as if it is not there and only the object of meditation shines forth, it is said to be the state of Samadhi.

Each time the mind evades you, runs here and there and you bring it back that is called concentration.

Meditation is when you have tried concentration and are successful.

Japa :

Japa is the repeated chanting of a mantra or a name of deity. Japa can be practised in a meditative posture or while performing daily activities. Japa practice makes the mind single-pointed. the more one think of object, the more one gets attached to it. Start today, start now, Japa is the easiest sadhana to perform, given our busy lives.

Mantra or Japa of mantra can be done in four ways :

1. **Vaikhari - loud, audible chanting.**
2. **Upanshu - whispering chanting, audible only to the person who is chanting**
3. **Mansik - Mental chanting**
4. **Likhit - Japa by writing.**

Ajapa japa is continuous resonance of a mantra in one's being resulting from fervent practice over a prolonged, uninterrupted period of time. It is like an ear worm that plays in the background constantly.

Varities of Japa :

Mental repetition : Mental repetition of Mantra (Mantaram)

Beads : A support in the form of a string of rosary beads may used. The Japa Mala may be made of Tulasi beads or Rudraksha beads. It usually contains 108 beads or 51 beads. the off-head of the Mala is called the Meru. The Mala must be placed at the conduction of the ring finger with the thumb. Turn each bead with the thumb and middle finger and repeat the mantra with every turn, keeping the index finger apart.

The index finger is typically used in an accusatory manner pointing to the 'other'. The index finger represents the ego, duality, separateness. Thus the index finger is kept apart in Japa.

Complete one round of 108 times, do not cross the Meru. Turn the Mala at the Meru and re-start the next round of Japa the Meru is symbol of the Supreme and as such, must not be pressed before the next round.

Mantrachakras :

Another form of Japa. Practiced by Buddhist monks involves the rotation of prayer wheels.

Mantra : Mantra means the combination of two words "**man**" and "**tra**". **Man** represents **mind** and **tra** comes from **trayati**, which means "**to protect**". Therefore, Mantra is that which protects the mind -

“Mananat trayati iti Mantra”.

Most of Vedic mantras have seers/rishis who have given them to the world. Maharishi Vishwamitra became the recipient of the Gayatri Mantra.

Mantra may be pure sounds (**Bija mantra**) or prayers to God. Bija mantras bring their effect due to the vibrations generated by their chanting, whereas mantras which are prayers lead to the blessings from God.

Following are the Vedantic mantras :

Tat Tvam Asi - That Thou Art

Aham brahma Asmi - I am Brahman Shioham Shivoham - I am Shiva

Following are the Pauranic mantras :

Om Namah Shivaya

Om Namo Narayanaya

Sri Ram Jay Ram Jay Jay Rama Hare Rama Hare Krishna

Japa, Mantra Chanting must be done sincerely with intense fervour and a spirit of surrender and devotion. Mantras have the power to bring about a transformation in one's personality. In the Gita, lord Krishna proclaims. “I am, among the Yogas, the japa Yoga”.

Benefits of Meditation :

1. Controls blood pressure
2. Better blood circulation
3. Normalised heart rate
4. Slower respiration
5. Less anxiety
6. Delay in onset of mental ailments, such as depression and Alzheimer's disease.

These benefits are by-products of the practice of meditation and not the goal of meditation. The goal of Meditation is to enable the practitioner sharpen his awareness so that he may discover his true essence.

Practical :

(A) 4.10 Practices leading to Meditation and Dhyana Sadhana :

**Introduction to yogic relaxation techniques with special reference to Yoga Nidra :
Yoga Nidra - The Blissful Relaxation : Swami Satyananda Saraswati**

**Most people sleep without resolving their tensions,
This is termed Nidra.**

**Nidra means sleep, no matter what or why, But yoga Nidra means sleep after
throwing off the burdens,
It is of a blissful, higher quality altogether.**

**When awareness is separate and distinct from the Vrittis,
When waking, dream and deep sleep pass like clouds,
Yet awareness of atta remains
This is the experience of total relaxation.**

**Relaxation does not mean sleep.
Relaxation means to be blissful happy,
It has not end.
I call bliss absolute relaxation:
Sleep is a different matter.
Sleep gives only mind and sense relaxation,
Bliss relaxes the atom, the inner self;
That is why in tantra,
Yoga Nidra is the doorway to Samadhi.**

Yoga Nidra :

Yoga Nidra Which is derived from the tantras, is a powerful technique in which you learn to relax consciously. In Yoga Nidra, sleep is not regarded as relaxation. People feel that they are relaxing when they collapse in an easy chair with a cup of coffee, a drink or a cigarette, and read a newspaper or switch on the television. But this will never suffice as a scientific definition of relaxation. These are only sensory diversions. True relaxation is actually an experience far beyond all this. For absolute relaxation you must remain aware. This is yoga Nidra, the state of dynamic sleep.

Yoga Nidra is a systematic method of inducing complete physical, mental and emotional relaxation. The term Yoga Nidra is derived from two Sanskrit words, Yoga meaning union or one-pointed awareness, and Nidra which means sleep. During the practice of Yoga Nidra, one appears to be asleep, but the consciousness is functioning at a deeper level of awareness. For this reason, Yoga Nidra is often referred to as psychic sleep or deep relaxation with inner awareness. In this threshold state between sleep and wakefulness, contact with the subconscious and unconscious dimensions occurs spontaneously. In Yoga Nidra, the state of relaxation is reached by turning inwards, away from outer experiences. If the consciousness can be separated from external awareness and from sleep, it becomes very powerful and can be applied in many ways, for example, to develop the memory, increase knowledge and creativity, or transform one's nature.

In the Raja Yoga of Patanjali there is a state called Pratyahara where the mind and mental awareness are dissociated from the sensory channels. Yoga Nidra is one aspect of Pratyahara which leads to the higher states of concentration and samadhi.

The Birth of Yoga Nidra :

When I was living with my Guru, Swami Sivananda, in Rishikesh, I had a very important experience which triggered my interest in developing the science of Yoga Nidra. I had been appointed to watch over a Sanskrit school where small boys were learning to chant the Vedas. It was my duty to remain awake all night to guard the school while the Acharya was away. At three am I used to fall into a deep sleep, and at six I would get up and return to the Ashram. Meanwhile, the boys got up at four, bathed and chanted Sanskrit prayers, but I never heard them.

Some time later my Ashram was holding a large function, and the boys of that Sanskrit school were brought to chant the Vedic mantras. During the function they recited certain shlokas which I did not know, yet somehow I felt that I had heard them before. As I listened the feeling grew stronger, and I tried in vain to remember where and when I had heard them. I was absolutely certain that I had never read or written them, yet they sounded so familiar to me.

Finally, I decided to ask the boy's Guru, who was seated nearby, if he could explain the meaning of this. What he told me changed my entire outlook on life. He said that this feeling of familiarity was not at all surprising, because my subtle body had heard the boys chanting the same mantras many times while I was sleeping in their school. This was a great revelation to me. I knew that knowledge is transmitted directly through the senses, but from this experience I realised that you can also gain direct knowledge without any sensory medium as well. That was the birth of Yoga Nidra.

From that experience further ideas and insights came to my mind. I realised that sleep was not a state of total unconsciousness. When one is awake and fully alert to the outer situations. I found by training mind, it is possible to utilise this state.

Tantric Origin :

The characteristic feature of Yoga Nidra was the systematic rotation of consciousness in the body, which originated from the tantric practice of 'Nyasa' (meaning 'to place' or 'to take the mind to that point'). Nyasa was practiced in a sitting posture and involved the use of specific mantras which were placed, felt or experienced at different parts of the body. First the name of the part was recited, then it was visualised or touched, and the mantra was placed there. Nyasa was a means of consecrating the physical body by instilling higher awareness or divine consciousness into the various parts during tantric ritual practices.

The present form of Yoga Nidra, which I have devised, enables people who are unfamiliar with Sanskrit mantras to gain the full benefits of the traditional Nyasa. It can be beneficially practised by people of any religion or culture. In the beginning I used to call this practice "Yoga Sleep", but now I have become more aware of the vast potentialities of yoga Nidra and I think that yoga Nidra is nothing but Yoga Nidra. If you ask me to translate Yoga Nidra into French or Spanish, I will say "Yoga Nidra". It is an international practice.

Impressing the Mind :

How does this happen? The answer is simple. When the relaxation is complete, the receptivity is greater. When the consciousness is connected to all senses, the receptivity is less. This is the secret of Yoga Nidra. Due to the intellectualisation process, the knowledge that goes into the brain does not really impress itself there. But when you withdraw your mind a little bit, and enter into a state where you are neither in deep sleep nor completely awake, whatever impressions enter the mind at that time become powerful, and they remain there.

The are of relaxation :

During the last 100 years or so, the way of life has changed greatly throughout the world. The social system and other systems are no longer the same as they used to be in ancient times. This has brought about a dispersion of human energies at all levels. The mind of man has lost the point of balance and harmony in every sphere of existence. We are so engrossed in material survival that we are not aware of what has been happening to us. Psychosomatic illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension, migraine, asthma, ulcers, digestive disorders and skin diseases arise from tensions in the body and mind. The leading causes of death in developed countries, cancer and heart disease, also stem from tension.

Modern medical science has been trying to tackle these problems in many ways, but frankly speaking, they have failed to deliver the necessary health to man. This is because the real problem does not lie in the body; it originates in man's changing ideals, in his way of thinking and feeling. When there is dissipation of energy, dispersion of ideals, how can you expect to experience harmony in your body and mind?

The international problem today is not hunger, poverty, drugs or fear of war. It is tension, hypertension total tension. If you know how to free yourself of tension, you know how to solve your problems in life. If you are able to balance your tensions, you can control your emotions, anger and passions. You can control heart disease, high blood pressure, leukaemia.

The threefold tension :

Whether you think too much or you don't think at all, you accumulate tensions. If you work physically or you do not work at all, you accumulate tensions. Whether you sleep too much or not at all, you accumulate tensions. Whether you take a heavy protein diet, a carbohydrate diet, or a vegetarian diet, you accumulate tensions. And these tensions amass in the different layers of human personality. They accumulate in the muscular, emotional and mental system. In Yoga we deal with the problems of tension with a wide periscope. We realise that if the mind is tense, the stomach will also be tense. And if the stomach is tense, the whole circulatory system is also tense. It is a vicious circle of events. Therefore, in yoga relaxation from tension is one of the chief concerns.

Yogic philosophy, as well as modern psychology, enumerates three basic types of tension which are responsible for all the agonies of modern life. Through the systematic practice of Yoga Nidra, these threefold tensions can be progressively released.

Muscular Tensions : are related to body itself. The nervous system and endocrine imbalances. These are easily removed by the deep physical relaxation attained in the state of Yoga Nidra.

Emotional Tensions : which stem from various dualities such as love-hate, profits-loss, success- failure, happiness - unhappiness, are more difficult to erase. This is because we are unable to express our emotions freely and openly. It is not possible to relax these tensions through ordinary sleep or relaxation. A method such as Yoga Nidra can tranquillise the entire emotional structure of the mind.

Mental tensions : are the result of excessive mental activity. The mind is a whirlpool of fantasies, confusions and oscillations. Throughout our life, the experiences registered by our consciousness are accumulated in the mental body. From time to time these explode, affecting our body, mind, behaviour and reactions. The underlying cause behind man's abnormal behaviour lies in the accumulated tensions on the mental plane. Yoga Nidra is the science of relaxation which enables each of us to dive deep down into the realms of the subconscious mind, thereby releasing and relaxing mental tensions and establishing harmony in all facts of our being.

Yoga Nidra is more efficient and effective form of psychic and physiological rest and rejuvenate than conventional sleep. Those who adopt this technique in their daily routine soon experience profound changes in their sleeping habits. The total systematic relaxation of a yoga Nidra session is equivalent to hours of ordinary sleep without awareness. A single hour of yoga Nidra is as restful as four hours of conventional sleep. This is one of the secrets of the superhuman efficiency and energy of many great yogis, past and present, who have managed to achieve so much in one short lifetime.

Yoga Nidra is not concentration :

In yoga Nidra it is not necessary to concentrate, in fact you should not. Just keep your mind moving from point to point and be aware of every experience. If you try to concentrate in Yoga Nidra you will obstruct the natural flow of awareness which takes the mind deeper into the self.

Whether you hear your teacher's instructions or not does not matter. Even if you are dreaming of something else, the suggestions made by the teacher are still going to work on the subconscious mind. It is very natural for the practitioner of yoga Nidra to miss some

of the instructions because in the practice very often the conscious mind withdraws itself so the the subconscious mind comes to the forefront. Then whatever is being spoken is imprinted on it. So whether you are practising Yoga Nidra with teacher or you are listening to a recorded class, and your mind is drifting and vacillating, it does not matter.

Practical :

(B) Teaching Skills (Methods of Teaching Yoga)

Teaching Yoga :

As Yoga practitioners and educators, one of our main task is to create a zone of respectful silence. in which others can explore and express their thoughts and feelings, and learning and teaching happen most effectively.

The word 'silence' is defined in the Maitri Upanishad by many names. According to it silence is 'tranquil, soundless, fearless, sorrow less, blissful, satisfied, steadfast, immovable, immortal, unshaken, and enduring.

Practicing silence allows us to become attuned not only to our inner wisdom, but also to the presence of others and that is what they need from us.

Good listener.

Participating in conversation

With out imposing our needs, agendas, or anxieties. We learn to pause rather than push.

Environment of Training :

- Non polluted, Fresh and clean space.
- Proper space to practice.
- Proper Yoga mats.
- Appropriate class environment from the point of intelligence, finance and harmony.

Yoga Teaching Steps :

The whole Yoga teaching process centres round the most important principle and that is 'to feel natural and calm.'

1. **Be Prepared** : It is the most important point. What ever subject or Asana Practice you are going to teach prepare for it. Study.
2. Start with enough room while going for the class.
3. **Introduction** : Of yours and students. It is a nice practice.
4. **Starting the class** : Start class with silence or meditative practice.
5. **be Pleasant** : Being pleasant by speech and behaviour also with positive talking.
6. **Laugh off mistakes** : Mistakes are some times ok do not be disheartened as you miss with right and left or you skip something. be ok. Accept it and move on.
7. **Express thanks to students** : At the end of the class show your Gratitude to students.
8. **Accept the situation** : Learn from the good and bad situations aroused in the class and accordingly strategies your class.
9. **Keep teaching** : The more a teacher teaches the more the teaching gets.

The scope of practicing yoga :

If you are having a good skill of teaching than this is A very good profession. In Schools, collages, Gym, Resorts, companies and so on the demand of the Yoga instructor is good. Now a days you and built your own brand or take private classes. in all classes and masses Yoga is popular so one can earn well.

The need for Referral to other professional services :

1. If the time is not permitting or the Classe are full than one should refer the student the other instructor.
2. If the Instructor is not practicing the same which the student is asking for.
3. When the aspirant has reached the plateau in his progress with a teacher the latter can direct the aspirant to another teacher.

Listening :

The instructor/teacher should have the obvious quality of deep listening.

While this may seem simple enough, it is one of the most difficult and most essential traits in the teaching profession.

How to speak and Communicate :

Express yourself in a Right Manner : One should be concise, to the point and clear.

Always Explore and to Explain : Always be prepared to provide relevant and appropriate information. Never expect that others can read your mind without view point.

Never Speak Arguably : This simply means here that never give such statements which may provoke arguments.

Concentrate on Appreciation : It has been found in the studies of psychological theories that a ratio of 5:1 for the appreciation to complaint is recommend.

Turn your criticisms into Requests : the instructor/ teacher can be critical about the students performance in a way that it stimulates the student to perform better. The teacher can turn his/ her criticism into polite advice for better performance.

Never Blame : Whenever listeners are blamed, they come forward to defend themselves and put a stop on their listening. Doing communication without pointing out the faults and blame in each other is vital.

Make a shift from Blame to Wonder : Analyse yourself and find out that whether any contribution to the communication problem arising is made by you. Think over the problems and situation because this will shift mind from critical thinking to creative thinking which helps in developing a healthy relationship rather than being in a state of 'I am right'.

Be Attentive : When a person pays attention and avoids distractions this shows that he/ she is interested in listening to the person who is speaking to him/ her.

Body Language : Your body language should show you are listening to the speaker, always maintain proper eye contact with the speaker, be in the habit of nodding to make sure that you are attentively listening and never cross your arms while listening or talking to some body.

Be a Generous Listener : One should react in a proper manner on what the speaker said in a proper manner on what the speaker said with accuracy. one must also express respect to the feelings of person. Listen in such a way that you are able to listen what the speaker wasn't able to convey, it simply means listening to the emotions of speaker.

Complete Understanding : Always check whether you are able to understand the message properly. one can check this by converting the message in his/ her own words. Open and welcoming attitude as well as respect for what the other is saying. One must agree to the fact that expressing willingness to hear what the speaker is saying is vital.

Response is must rather than an Answer : Give a hint to speaker that you are further interested in listening to his/ her point of view.

If required touch and express reassurance : Communication become quite difficult when the presence of strong emotions is felt. One may show his/ her support to the speaker just by a touch or a hit, if required, when one doesn't know what exactly to say.

Presence :

The sign of an accomplished and matured Yoga teacher is realistically and authentically. A skilful communication is a combined package of the usage of words used by the speaker.

An expert teacher of Yoga has full knowledge of how to do effective communication for telling the beauty and depth of Yoga teachings to students by using skills of verbal and non-verbal communication. All this is done keeping in mind that a comfort zone for all levels of participants. Connecting with them conscientiously.

Directive and Non-Directive Dialogue :

The dialogue is probably the most pressing issue for the training because everyone could never be a master of memorisation.

What is Non-directive Dialogue?

It is something that one should tend to do naturally in life. It feels much more supportive when someone really listens to what the other person is saying rather than trying to think of what he/she is going to say next, or to spit out some pre-conditioned mechanical response that he/she is supposed to say. It feels supportive to have someone say, 'I hear that you are upset, and I am still here supporting you... I see that you are angry, or depressed, or fearful and I am not going to tell you to "look at the bright side". To "focus on the positive." Or to let it go". In essence, this is what a skilled Yoga instructor does in his/her classes. He genuinely listens and offers his/her students support. The teacher does not judge them by what they are saying or feeling. She does not tell them how to "fix" their problems. He/she does not suggest that they should look at things differently, or be different. So, how does this work in sessions? The process is actually very simple, and from a practitioner's standpoint, it involves two main phrases: "what's happening now?" And "Tell me more."

Handling of different Aspirants :**Practitioners of Yoga are categorised into three levels/degrees :**

1. **Adhama Adhikarin** : One who has been initiated into Yoga practice.
2. **Madhama Adhikarin** : One who has been practicing Yoga for a few years
3. **Uttama Adhikarin** : One who is an adept at Yoga.

Students are able to learn properly and improve their postures when teachers do demonstration of yogic poses. Injuries can be prevented when detailed and accurate instructions are given.

Vital need for moral Strength and Courage :

Yoga can be made accessible according to the level of students ability. The size of Yoga classes should be kept small so that proper attention can be paid to all the aspirants. The primary aim should be to help the aspirants to find peace and stillness in the work.

Teaching methods:**Following are some of the basic methods of teachings:**

1. **Lecture Method:** It is perhaps the oldest method used for the formal teaching. It is more useful with mature students who have a high degree of auditory perception since it involves problems of attention, voice level, clarity, use of rest period and vocabulary level. The lecture method has considerable use in teaching yogic practices. It may be used in presenting any type of information related to a particular activity in the perspective of Yoga in general. A lecture can be stimulating, interesting and motivating to the students if the teacher prepares it properly.

The lecture method proves of greater advantage when combined with other methods.

Limitations of this method:

- It is a teacher- centred activity and may encourage lack of participation on the part of the students
- Many students lack ability to learn by this method.
- It may lead teachers to ignore more effective methods.

2. Response-to-Instruction method: In this method the teacher gives precise instructions which precede, follow for are concurrent with a demonstration, and all students respond to the instructions in the same way. An information approach with this method is more Favourable in teaching such activities where there is some variation the performance of individuals. This method can be profitably used after paying due attention to the problems faced by the individuals.

3. Individualise instruction Method: It is based on the principal that learning is highly individualised. in this method attempts are made to provide by different means for individual differences within the pattern of the group structure.

Guidelines to convey instructions clearly :

- Be sure that you have the attention of everyone in the class before any instructions are given.
- when a long explanation is needed it is better to make the learner sit down and it will be even better if they sit close to teacher.
- Ideally, explanations can be best provided in the relaxation phase between two Asanas.
- Make your instructions brief, perfectly clear and your voice must be audible to the learners.
- The instructions should be given for only one thing at a time.
- Try to use different words and expressions to catch the attention of the student.
- Describe the technique and procedure of any activity before the students are actually asked to practice.

one essential step which can be taken to reduce the problem of control is to create an atmosphere of natural freedom, friendliness, mutual help and understanding. These qualities in class should emanate from the leadership of the teacher.

Any practice by the students must be preceded by visual demonstration to be more effective.

Yoga can help with time management in the following five ways :

1. **Be Focused :** Remember to do one thing until that work is finished and then focus on another task.
2. **Be Disciplined :** Meditation or Yoga practice on a daily basis requires a lot of discipline in the practitioners life.
3. **Giving Priority :** One should prioritise the most significant things to be done on their to do list and then start with those things which always help in achieving a balanced life.
4. **In need ask for help :** It is not easy for any practitioners to learn to Yoga postures without somebody's help,
5. **Living life as per Yoga Asanas Practised :** It is appreciable for Yoga practitioners to do Yoga in their own way and avoid any kind of comparisons with anybody else.

Eight steps method to teach :

1. Silent demonstration
2. Demonstration with count and Breathing
3. Demonstration with the explanation with benefits and limitations
4. Practice Asana by Student
5. Divide the entire class into 2 groups for practice. 1st one group will practice and than other.
6. Questions/ Answers.
7. Settle points
8. Group practice.

