

UNIT : 1 Introduction to Yoga and Yogic Practices

1.4 Principles of Yoga (Triguna, Antahkaran Chatustaya, Tri-Sharira / Panchkosha)

Panchmahabhuta (Panchtatva) :

Pancha Mahabhuta consists of three words:

Pancha = five, 'maha' = great and 'bhuta' meaning that which exists, Tatva=Element.

According to yoga and Ayurveda, all living and non-living things in the universe are made up of this Pancha mahabhutas, more commonly known as the five fundamental elements of life –

Panchamahabhuta physical elements: Earth (Prithvi), Water (Jal), Fire (Agni), Air (Vayu) and Ether / Space (Aakash).

These elements have a great significance in the nature and human life as well.

Panchamahabhuta are the five fundamental elements responsible for creation of the universe.

First Space (Akash) was created then Air (Vayu), Agni , Jal and then Earth.

Since we live in this universes humans are also made form Panch maha bhuta.

यथा पिंडे तथा ब्रह्माण्डे, यथा ब्रह्माण्डे तथा पिंडे यजुर्वेद

"Yatha Pinde tatha Brahmande, Yatha Brahmande tatha Pinde " — Yajurveda.

Meaning : As is the Individual, so is the Universe ; as is the Universe, so is the Individual

What is in Universe in gross form is there in our body in Subtle form.

These Five elements have different characteristics and account for different faculties of human experience.

Pancha mahabhutas are present in the human body.

Aakash (Space) is seen in the voids within the body such as nostrils, mouth and abdomen.

Vayu (Air) represents movement in the muscles and nervous system.

Agni (Fire) controls digestion, metabolism and it corresponds to intelligence.

Jal (Water) is present in all bodily fluids like saliva, blood, and digestive juices.

Prithvi (Earth) is in the form of body structure, including bones, teeth, flesh, and hair.

Triguna :

Before we understand about Triguna it is important to know Tridosha. Vata, Pitta, Kapha are Tridoshas of the body. Doshas are roughly equivalent to humour in medical science, are vata (wind), pitta (bile), and Kapha (phlegm). These are made from 5 elements or Panch Mahabhutas, the elements of the universe which we have just learned:

Vata (wind) is made of Air element or tatva ,

Pitta (bile) is made fire and water element.

Kapha (phlegm) is made of Earth and water element

These three doshas are the important energies of the body.

Similarly, Trigunas : Three Qualities Sattva, Rajas and Tamas collectively called as Triguna is the energy of the mind.

These qualities are mentioned in many ancient scriptures like Atharva veda, Bhagwadgita and Sankhya darshan. Philosophy is called as Darshan in Yoga.

According to Sankhya philosophy, 'Purusha' and 'Prakriti' are two spiritual principles. Purusha represents "pure consciousness" or energy. Whereas the 'Prakriti' Tattva is principle of matter. The universe was born from the union of ' Prakriti ' and ' Purusha ' Prakriti is the basis of all the things in the universe :- physical and mental, living and non-living things.

There are three types of qualities (gunas) are present in nature: Satva guna, Rajas guna and Tamas guna. Bhagwad Gita's "Gunatraya Vibhag Yoga" 14th chapter is entirely dedicated to three gunas. In this chapter, The beneficial elements of Trigunas and their effects on humans have been discussed in detail.

A person has all three qualities in different quantities. The excess or deficiency of each quality differentiates one person from another. The personality of person is expressed by trigunas.

Sattva gun - In Sattva gun the word Sattva means "purity and wisdom" or 'expression of truth'. The qualities of a person under influence of Sattva gun are : knowledge, awareness, concentration, satisfaction, fulfillment, happiness, joy, auspiciousness etc. Psychologically Sattva Guna produces the great qualities in persons like : Patience, Peace, Stability, Righteousness. It is a symbol of purity, Therefore, this quality is represented by white colour.

The person who is under this guna is called as Sattvic person

Rajas guna – The word Rajas means 'impurity'. This property is responsible for disturbance, activity, mobility etc. It produces sufferings in life. The rajas mind is sharp, intense and has the ability to ignite. Psychologically it represents anger, aggression, enthusiasm, desire etc. The Rajas quality is represented by 'red' color.

Tamas gun – The word Tamas means 'darkness'. It produces laziness, lethargy and indifference. Tamas is responsible for ignorance, ambiguity, imagination and all types of low level activities. Sleep and dozing off is the result of Tamas Guna. At the mental level, these qualities generate despair, fear, violence and crookedness.

Tamasic mind is slow, sluggish, harmful and exhibits negativity. It is a symbol of inactivity and therefore the Tamas quality is represented by the color 'black'.

According to the principle of quality, it is but natural to have change in the quality. Therefore, none of these quality can express its effect permanently.

Personality development always takes place in Sattva quality. Therefore, in Yoga and all religious scriptures, Emphasis has been given to develop Sattva guna for achieving personality development.

Anthakaran Chatushtayah

Antaḥ means 'inner' and karaṇa means 'instrument' or 'function'.

Therefore anthakaran means inner instruments or functions.

The Vedanta philosophy describes the mind as the **antahkaran chatushtaya**. It is a fourfold inner instrument that resides in the region of the heart not a physical one but in the subtle body.

Man or manas, buddhi, chitta and Ahamkar

manas (the mind or lower mind),

buddhi (the intellect or higher mind),

chitta (memory, or, consciousness),

ahamkara (ego, or, I-maker).

Antakaran Chatushtayah is mentioned in the Upanishad. According to Upanishad as four parts of conscience

In brief :

Mana (*Sankalp-Vikalp*- resolution making and breaking), Buddhi (decision maker),

Chitta (Storehouse of experiences), Ahamkara (ego).

Man : Mind

The one who makes resolutions and breaks it. It been said in the Upnishad that

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः *mana eva manuṣyāṇāṃ kāraṇaṃ bandhamokṣayoḥ*

For Human being, mind is the cause of bondage and mind is the cause of liberation.

Mind absorbed in sense objects is the cause of bondage and mind detached from the sense objects is the cause of liberation

The state of mind keeps changing due to the influence of qualities gunas or Trigunas for that matter.

Buddhi – Intellect.

Decision making ability based on Knowledge, experience, reason, evidence, fact, logic, ability to decide something. The intellect uses parameters like circumstances to decide.

Ahamkar - Ego

Belief in one's own relationship / linking one's identity with the material world and material actions.

The word 'mind' of western psychology has been described many times in Patanjali as Chitta. When Chitta is considered synonymous with mind, so the functions of intellect, ego and manas are included in it.

Chitta is used in a broader sense which clearly means mental thoughts or mental Area. According to the predominance of the qualities of the mind, there are five types of Chitta, which we will be learning in Patanjali Yog Sutras in detail.

Trisharir – Sharir Traya

The human body structure is divided into three parts –

Sthul Sharir (Gross Body), Sukshma Sharir (subtle body) & Karan Sharir (causal body)

Sthul Sharir (Gross body) –

The physical mortal body made with organs that eats, breathes and moves. It is the body which is visible to us. It has been created from the Panch mahabhutas.

This is a Annamaya Kosha

Sukshma Sharir (Subtle body) –

Subtle body is the body of the mind and the vital energies, which keep the physical body alive. Vital Energy is the pran which is made from the air we breath.

This includes Pranayama Kosha, Manomaya Kosha and Vijnanamaya Kosha.

Karan Sharir (Causal body)

The causal body is considered as the most complex of the three bodies. It contains the impressions of experience, which results from past experience.

Under the causal body comes the anandamaya kosha.

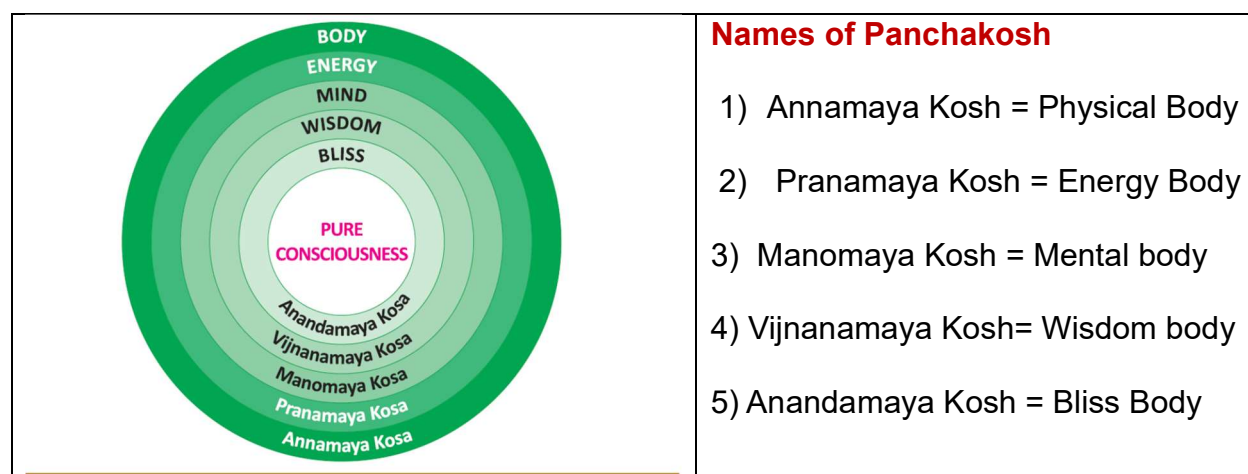
Panchakosh

Many people have a limited understanding of yoga, thinking that it is restricted to the asana practice to increases flexibility, tones up muscles, relaxes the body, increases strength, improves balance and finds stress relief.

While yoga does all of the above, it is a limited view of what yoga really has to offer us. The true purpose of yoga is to develop a relationship with the Self that exists deep within our core.

Therefore, it is important to understand the Panch kosh concept.

Panch means five. Kosh means sheath, covering or layer or level. The Panchakosha concept is mentioned in Taittiriya Upanishad. According to this, the human body is made up of five Sheaths or coverings, which covers the inner part of the human being i.e. the soul.



1) Annamaya Kosha – This is the first sheath of the tangible body, made up of panch tattva or five elements. Annamaya Kosh is made up of Sapta dhatus. Sapta means seven and dhatu means that which bears or supports.

Sapta Dhatu : constituent elements.

They are : Ras, Rakta, Mans, Med, Asthi, Majja and Shukra
(Body fluid, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and Sperm in males and Ova in females).

Annamaya Kosh is made up of the food we consume. With balanced diet and disciplined lifestyle, Annamaya Kosh can be kept healthy and energetic.

Kriya, Asana and Pranayam are helpful in strengthening it.

2) Pranamaya Kosha – Pranamaya Kosha is the second Sheath of the human body. It works as a bridge between gross and subtle body. Similarly, it is a bridge connecting body and mind.

Pran means vital breath. With this the body and the mind is connected. Pran, the vital energy is divided into ten parts on the basis of functions.

There are 5 major Pran and 5 are minor called as *upa pran*.

Major Pran – Pran, Apan, Saman, Udan and Vyan.

Minor Pran (*upa pran*) – Dhananjay, Naga, Kurma, Krikal and Devdutt.

The exclusive functions of Prânâs are – ingestion, digestion, excretion, circulation and higher functions, like communication, analysis, feelings and emotions.

Naga - belching and hiccups, Kurma – opening and closing of the eyelids

Krikal – Thirst & Hunger, Devdutt - induces sleep and yawning

Dhananjay -Still remains in the body after death.

With the regular exercise of Prânmâya, the work performance of prânmaya kosa is enhanced.

When the mind becomes disturbed it reflects in the body. This results in disturbances in the flow of prâṇa in the nadis. This manifests as disturbed digestive function which becomes either excessive or irregular or ends up in indigestion.

Manomay Kosha –

The first important acting part of the subtle body is Manomaya kosa. Mind, intellect, ego and conscience are the integral parts of Manomaya kosa, which are termed as the catustaya. Manomaya kosa is purified and strengthened with the wisdom and meditation.

This kosh belongs to emotions, thoughts and feelings. Clear understanding, wisdom and meditation makes this kosh strong and clean. Pranayama and pratyahara are helpful in purifying the manomaya kosha.

Vijnanamay Kosha –

This is referred to Wisdom body or sheath of higher intellect (intuition)

The ability to discriminate is part of this Kosh. It is the second part of the subtle body (sukshma Sarira)

Intellect, and all the sensory organs, that work with wisdom fall in this category. The practitioner, who works under the guidance of Vijnanamaya kosa having a good understanding of it, attains 'ritambhara prajna' through incessant meditation and Samâdhi, alienating all kinds of illusions, passions, interests, etc.

Anandamaya Kosha - This sheath is known by the names Hiranyamaya Kosha, Hridayaguha, Hridayakaash, Karanasharira, Linga sharira etc. goes. It is known to be located in the heart.

It has an immense relevance to our inner kingdom and its relation with the external world is considerably very less.

Human life, the existence of gross body of a human being, all kinds of worldly conduct is depended on this kosa. The practitioner achieves nirbeeja (seedless) samâdhi, attaining the blissful state and forever he resides there.

The ultimate goal of Yoga – to take man from annamaya kosha to anandamaya kosha to reach the inner soul. For that it is necessary to undertake internal travel.