

# atha yogānuśāsanam

Now the study of yoga begins

## Patanjali's Yoga Sutras:

## Commentary on Chapter 2

Main abbreviations are as follows (for a fuller list, see the [general introduction](#) to the commentary):

B Bouanchaud, *The Essence of Yoga*

D *Patanjali's Yogasutras*, translated by TKV Desikachar

H Swami Hariharananda Aranya, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali* (translated by P.N. Mukerji)

S *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, translation and commentary by Sri Swami Satchidananda

T IK Taimni, *The Science of Yoga*

V Vyasa's *Yoga Bhasya*, as translated by PN Mukerji in Swami Hariharananda Aranya, *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali*

**This page covers sutras 1-28. For sutras 29-55 go to [the next page](#).**

## YS 2.1

### *tapahsvādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāni kriyāyogaḥ*

*tapah* = accepting pain as purification [S], austerer or sturdy self-discipline - mental, moral and physical [H], asceticism [T]; *svādhyāya* = study of spiritual books [S], repetition of sacred mantras or study of sacred literature [H], study which leads to knowledge of the self through japa [T]; *īśvara* = Supreme Being [S], God [H, T]; *praṇidhānāni* = surrendering [S], complete surrender [H], self-surrender, resignation [T]; *kriyāyogaḥ* = yoga in practice [S], yoga in the form of action [H], preliminary (practical) yoga [T]

### Translations:

[B] The yoga of action is a way of discipline involving self-reflection based on the sacred texts, and surrendering the fruits of action to a higher force.

[D] The practice of yoga must reduce both physical and mental impurities. It must develop our capacity for self examination and help us to understand that, in the final analysis, we are not the masters of everything we do.

[H] Tapas, svādhyāya and īśvarapraṇidhāna are Kriya-Yoga.

[S] Accepting pain as help for purification, study of spiritual books, and surrender to the Supreme being constitute Yoga in practice.

[T] Austerity, self-study and resignation to īśvara constitute preliminary Yoga.

### Commentary:

This sutra is an essential sutra for the student to understand. The translations above and the definitions of the individual words show that there is apparently a wide range of interpretations. However, I found that when you look closely at what the translators and commentators have to say, each one seems to supplement or complement to the others, so that eventually it is possible to come to an understanding of what Patanjali is saying here. One particularly important point, touched on by S and T in particular, is the connotation of "heating" or "cooking" in the word *tapas*. And another point of special interest is the differentiation made by F between Kriya-Yoga and the Karma-Yoga of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

D says, "The more we refine ourselves through Yoga the more we realise that all our actions need to be re-examined systematically and we must not take the fruits of our actions for granted."

F comments as follows: "The words *kriyā* and *karmā* both mean "action", but Kriya Yoga is different from the Karma-Yoga of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Karma-Yoga is... the path of "inaction in action", or ego-transcending activity. Patanjali's Kriya-Yoga is the path of ecstatic identification with the Self by which the subliminal activators (*samskāra*), which maintain the individual consciousness, are gradually eliminated. [See Feuerstein, *The Yoga Tradition*, pages 253-255 for F's discussion of Karma-Yoga.]

H gives a very useful and humanly manageable definition of *tapas*. He defines *tapasas* "attempt to desist from actions which might bring momentary pleasures and putting up with the resulting hardship." He adds, "That form of austerity which does not cause any pathological disturbance and which results in the non-performance of actions based on attachment and antipathy, is favourable to Yoga." He refers also to YS2.32, and in a footnote also says "*tapas* involves correct thinking, full control over one's turbid emotions, clear understanding of moral values and consequent purification of one's character."

R notes that "the word *tapas* has been translated as "purificatory action", because *tapas* means that which burns up impurities.

S observes that *tapas* is a term that is often misunderstood. "*Tapas* means 'to burn or create heat.' Anything burned out will be purified.... But how can this burning process be effected with our mental impurities? By accepting all the pain that comes to us, even though the nature of the mind is to run after pleasure. We will actually be happy to receive pain if we keep in mind its purifying effects. Such acceptance makes the mind steady and strong because, although it is easy to give pain to others, it is hard to accept without returning it." And this sort of self-discipline has to be practised in our daily lives. "But *tapas* also refers to self-discipline. This is not the self-torture of sadhus lying on beds of nails. Self-torture is an obstacle to progress, whereas self-discipline is an aid to self progress.

S refers to BG17, in which Krishna talks about *tapas*, classifying 3 groups of *tapas*- physical, verbal, mental:-

- physical: worship, purity, straightforwardness, celibacy and non-injury are austerities of the body;
- verbal: speech should be tranquil, truthful, pleasant, beneficial (N.B. Don't speak what is true if it is not pleasant, don't speak what is pleasant if it is false);
- mental: serenity of mind, goodheartedness, self-control, purity of nature.

Of *svādhyāya*, S explains that this means "study that concerns the true Self" - it's not just analysing the mind and emotions. "Anything that will elevate your mind and remind you of your true Self should be studied" - and study of this sort requires that you really understand and take to heart whatever you are studying. This entails reading and re-reading, since each re-reading elevates you a bit more. "The more we elevate the mind, the better our understanding is." "The Self cannot be known by theory alone.... Only when you transcend the mind can you understand it.... So, limit your reading and put into practice what you read."

S explains *īśvarapraṇidhāna* as meaning "dedicating the fruits of your actions to God or to humanity - God in manifestation." "Try not to possess anything for yourself. Temporarily keep things but feel you are just a trustee, not an owner."

T comments on the interesting fact that the last three of the five *Niyamas* listed by Patanjali in YS 2.32 are presented here as Kriya Yoga. His explanation is that both these sutras serve different purposes. The difference between the Yoga outlook and the outlook of the ordinary person is so great that it is not possible to adopt the Yoga outlook all at once. "A preparatory period of self-training in which he gradually assimilates the Yogic philosophy and its technique and accustoms himself to self-discipline makes the transition from the one life to the other easier and safer." It also gives the aspirant a chance to discover if (s)he is really suited to the Yogic life, since there's a lot of confusion over what the Yogic life really is. "This preparatory self-discipline is triple in its nature corresponding to the triple nature of a human being. *Tapas* is related to his will, *svādhyāya* to the intellect and *īśvarapraṇidhāna* to the emotions. This discipline, therefore, tests and develops all the three aspects of his nature and produces an all-round and balanced growth of the individuality which is essential for the attainment of any high ideal."

## YS 2.2

### ***samādhībhāvanārthaḥ kleśatanūkaraṇārthaśca***

*samādhi* - contemplation; *bhāvana* - to make appear, to establish; *arthaḥ* - intent, goal; *kleśa* - cause of suffering, affliction; *tanū* - tenuous, thin; *karaṇa* - production, accomplishment; *arthaḥ* - goal; *ca* - and

### **Translations:**

[B] The intent is to gradually attain contemplation and diminish the causes of suffering.

[D] Then such practices will be certain to remove obstacles to clear perception.

[F] [This Yoga has] the purpose of cultivating ecstasy and also the purpose of attenuating the causes-of-affliction.

[H] For bringing about *samādhi* and minimising the *kleśas*.

[R] For the purpose of bringing about trance and for the purpose of attenuating afflictions.

[S] They help us minimize obstacles and attain *samādhi*.

[T] [Kriyā-Yoga] is practised for attenuating *kleśas* and bringing about *samādhi*.

### **Commentary:**

Patanjali is explaining why you should practise *kriyā-yoga*. There are two reasons:

1. To work towards achieving *samādhi* (a term that was explained in some detail in YS I.40-51, and which he returns to again in YSII.29, 45; III.1-12).
  2. To work towards a reduction in the causes of suffering.
- These two things are so closely linked that they work together. If you begin by working on reduction in causes of suffering, this naturally makes it gradually easier to attain a good quality of concentration because the mind becomes calmer.

As B says, "What links these objectives is realizing that concentration is impossible unless we reduce our personal problems and suffering." B also points out that P mentions *samādhi* (something to strive for) before mentioning the *kleśas* (something we must reduce and try to eliminate). So we see the carrot before we feel the stick. T comments, "The more the *kleśas* are attenuated the greater becomes the capacity of the *sadhaka* [spiritual practitioner] to practise *samā* and the nearer he draws to his goal of *kaivalya* [liberation]."

V's commentary is useful. He says, "When *Kriyā-Yogais* properly performed, it conduces to the state of *samAdhi* and considerably attenuates all the *kleśas*. The fire of *Prasamkhyāna* or discriminative knowledge sterilises the attenuated *kleśas* like roasted seeds. When they are attenuated, they cannot obscure the realisation of the distinction between *Buddhi* and *Puruṣa*. Such realisation then lapses in the absence of the manifestation of the *Guṇas*."

## YS 2.3

### *avidyāsmītārāga dveṣābhīniveśāḥ kleśāḥ*

*avidyā* - ignorance; *asmītā* - consciousness of "I", egoism; *rāga* - attachment, passionate desire; *dveṣa* - repulsion, aversion, hatred; *abhiniveśāḥ* - fear, fear of death, clinging to bodily life; *kleśāḥ* - causes of suffering, afflictions.

#### Translations:

[B] The causes of suffering are ignorance, consciousness of "I" (egoism), attachment, repulsion, and fear.

[D] The obstacles are misapprehensions, confused values, excessive attachments, unreasonable dislikes and insecurity.

[H] *avidyā* (misapprehension about the real nature of things), *asmītā* (egoism), *rāga* (attachment), *dveṣa* (aversion) and *abhiniveśāḥ* (fear of death) are the five *kleśās* (afflictions).

[S] Ignorance, egoism, attachment, hatred, and clinging to bodily life are the five obstacles.

[T] The lack of awareness of Reality, the sense of egoism or "I-am-ness", attractions and repulsions towards objects and the strong desire for life are the great afflictions or causes of all miseries in life.

#### Commentary:

Another key sutra. As T says, "The philosophy of *kleśās* is really the foundation of the system of yoga outlined by Patanjali. It is necessary to understand this philosophy thoroughly because it provides a satisfactory answer to the initial and pertinent question, 'Why should we practise yoga?' The philosophy of *kleśās* is not peculiar to this system of Yoga. In its essential ideas it forms the substratum of all schools of Yoga in India though perhaps it has not been expounded as clearly and systematically as in the *Sāṃkhya* and *Yoga Darśanas*." T provides a useful [synopsis of the philosophy of kleśās](#).

It is very important to come to a full understanding of all the terms used, and close study of YS, II.3-12 will make this possible. It's also worth using the index in your own edition of the *Yoga Sutras* to look up other sutras where these terms are mentioned or discussed. V says that when the *kleśās* become active "they strengthen the sway of the *Guṇas*, bring about change, set in motion the flow of cause and effect and in conjunction with one another bring about the fructification of action." H's commentary on V says, "The common feature of all the afflictions is erroneous cognition." [compare YS I.8 on *viparyaya*.] *Avidyā* is the source of the other four.

Of the other four, B points out that they "represent excessive or inappropriate manifestations of natural impulses that become distorted and become sources of conflict. Each of these natural impulses, good in itself, becomes a poison when manifested in excess, at the wrong moment, or when mistaking the object."

## YS 2.4

### *avidyā kṣetramuttareṣām prasuptatanuvicchinodārāṇām*

*avidyā* - ignorance; *kṣetram* - field, soil; *uttareṣām* - following, next, future; *prasupta* - asleep, dormant; *tanu* - feeble, attenuated; *vicchinna* - intermittent, interrupted; *udārāṇām* - active, fully operative, sustained.

## Translations:

[B] Ignorance is the source of the other four causes of suffering, whether these are latent, feeble, intermittent, or intense.

[D] Misapprehension is the source of all the other obstacles. They need not appear simultaneously and their impact varies. Sometimes they are obscure and barely visible. At other times they are exposed and dominant.

[H] *Avidyā* is the breeding ground for the others whether they be dormant, attenuated, interrupted or active.

[S] Ignorance is the field for the others mentioned after it, whether they be dormant, feeble, intercepted, or sustained.

[T] *Avidyā* is the source of those that are mentioned after it, whether they be in the dormant, attenuated, alternating or expanding condition.

## Commentary:

As B says, "Ignorance, by definition, always remains hidden." But it is the breeding ground for the four other causes of suffering which are always there in varying degrees of intensity. The nearer you are to a yoga state, the more control you have over these causes of suffering. T says, "The relation existing between the five *kleśas* may be likened to the relation of root, trunk, branches, leaves and fruit in a tree." D also uses this metaphor in [Heart of Yoga, Chapter 2](#), where he discusses the *kleśas*.

S (p. 86) gives a nice illustration of the different stages: "Imagine there is a nice performance at a night club. A friend is going, and he invites you to come. Let's say you feel drawn to go, but finally you decide, 'I have seen hundreds of shows like that; what can I gain by another one? No. I'm going to a Raja Yoga lecture instead.' The obstacle is there but you overpower it. That is the 'intercepted' stage. 'If you continue with such discipline, the obstacle will sink to the bottom; but, since a trace will still be there, occasionally you'll be reminded of it. 'Why shouldn't I go to a club?' A gentle trace will arise, which you can easily overpower. 'No, I'm not going.' It just comes up to remind you, 'I'm still here.' That is the feeble stage. 'In the case of average people, the moment a night club is thought of, both legs immediately go toward it and the people simply follow. From there, they probably go to an adjoining bar and so on. In their cases the obstacles are 'sustained'."

## YS 2.5

***anityāśuciduḥkhānātmasu nityaśucisukhātmakhyātiravidyā***

*anitya* - ephemeral, impermanent; *āśuci* - impure; *duḥkha* - pain, unhappiness; *ānātmasu* - non-Self; *nitya* - permanent, eternal; *śuci* - pure; *sukha* - happiness, pleasure; *ātma* - Self; *khyātiḥ* - giving a name to; *avidyā* - ignorance

## Translations:

[B] Ignorance is the confusion of the temporary with the permanent, the pure with the impure, anguish with the pleasure of being, and the relative with the absolute.

[D] Misapprehension leads to errors in comprehension of the character, origin and effects of the objects perceived.

[H] *Avidyā* consists in regarding a transient object as everlasting, an impure object as pure, misery as happiness and the not-Self as Self.

[S] Ignorance is regarding the impermanent as permanent, the impure as pure, the painful as pleasant, and the non-Self as the Self.

[T] *Avidyā* is taking the non-eternal, impure, evil and non-ātman to be eternal, pure, good and ātman respectively.

## Commentary:

V says that *avidyā* must be understood as being false cognition/knowledge, rather than lack of knowledge. H adds the comment that "Normally there is a preponderance of wrong cognition and paucity of right cognition." He also says that "*avidyā* is only a form (unreal) of modification of the mind.... every modification of the mind is really a mixture of *vidyā* and *avidyā*."

B explains that the four pairs of contrasting concepts work at four different but interacting levels:

physical (perishable confused with the eternal)

- thought (ignorance leads to lack of discernment)
- feeling (pleasure found in what can only lead to suffering)
- spirit (mistaken beliefs about Self).

"Depending on the individual, the time of life, and thresholds of perception, our values normally evolve toward a more judicious recognition of the deep reality of the self and of all things, and, therefore, towards reducing misconception."

S uses the story of the man who mistook a coil of rope for a snake to illustrate *avidyā*, adding that if we have a light to shine on things, misconceptions don't arise. He also says that yoga is neither for the enlightened person nor for the totally ignorant, but for the person in between.

## YS 2.6

### *dṛgdarśanaśaktyorekātmatevāsmitā*

*dṛg*- one who sees or observes, Seer; *darśana* - the instrument of seeing; *śaktyoḥ* - capacity, powers; *eka* - one; *ātmata* - essence, nature; *iva* - as if, as it were; *asmitā* - consciousness of "I"

#### Translations:

[B] Individual ego consciousness of "I" sees mental and physical activity as the source of consciousness.

[D] False identity results when we regard mental activity as the very source of perception.

[H] *Asmitā* is tantamount to the identification of *puruṣa* or pure consciousness with *Buddhi*.

[S] Egoism is the identification, as it were, of the power of the Seer (*puruṣa*) with that of the instrument of seeing [body-mind].

[T] *Asmitā* is the identity or blending together, as it were, of the power of consciousness (*puruṣa*) with the power of cognition (*buddhi*).

#### Commentary:

B reminds us of the essential dualist nature of the yoga system of philosophy: a spiritual principle, here called *dṛg*, which is identical with *puruṣa*; the material aspect or instrument of perception, here called *darśana*, which is identical with *prakṛti*.

Both *dṛg* and *darśana* have the same root (*driś* = see, perceive). P has chosen these words to emphasise the interrelationship of seer and seen, perceiver and the perceived: the one can't exist without the other. In our normal waking lives, our mental and psychic activity, our thoughts, feelings and perceptions fill our minds and block out higher consciousness.

V explains: "*Puruṣa* is an absolute Awareness while *Buddhi* or the cognitive principle is the instrument of knowing. Looking upon these two as the same is the affliction known as *Asmitā*.... When the real nature of the two is known it leads to liberation or the Self-in-itself."

## YS 2.7

### *sukhānuśayī rāgaḥ*

*sukha* - pleasure, happiness; *anuśayī* - that which follows; *rāgaḥ* - passionate desire, attachment.

#### Translations:

[B] Attachment is the consequence of pleasure.

[D] Excessive attachment is based on the assumption that it will contribute to everlasting happiness.

[H] Attachment is that [modification] which follows remembrance of pleasure.

[S] Attachment is that which follows identification with pleasurable experiences.

[T] That attraction, which follows pleasure, is called *rāga*.

#### Commentary:

Obviously, if you enjoy some experience you will want to have the same experience again. But when this wanting develops into a strong desire, it can cause unhappiness and even suffering. It can, depending on the object of desire, cause illness, broken relationships, over-indulgence... As B says, "Interest, even powerful interest, is positive, since nothing can be done where there is no interest. Passion in excess, however, is one of the principal causes of a human being's slavery. Addictions (*kleśa*) are distortions of natural functions.

H explains why *rāga* is a kind of *avidyā*: "The word *anuśayī* or 'following' implies that it exists as a latent impression in the mind. In attachment, desire and senses are drawn involuntarily and unconsciously towards objects, and the power to consciously restrain desire disappears. That is why attachment is regarded as a kind of misapprehension. By this the Self gets linked up with the senses and their objects. Here the misapprehension is to regard the detached Self as bound up with the latent impressions of pleasure pertaining to the senses which really do not belong to the Self."

As S says, there is no need to expend energy running in pursuit of happiness, since happiness is already in us as the true Self.

## YS 2.8

### *duḥkhānuśayī dveṣaḥ*

*duḥkha* - pain, unhappiness; *anuśayī* - that which follows; *dveṣaḥ* - repulsion, aversion, hatred.

#### Translations:

[B] Aversion is the consequence of displeasure.

[D] Unreasonable dislikes are usually the result of painful experiences in the past, connected with particular objects and situations.

[H] Aversion is that [modification] which results from misery.

[S] Aversion is that which follows identification with painful experiences.

[T] That repulsion which accompanies pain is *dveṣa*.

#### Commentary:

As with *rāga*, *dveṣa* can lead to inner discontent and isolation. As with *rāga*, it builds on the *samskāras* of past experience. B says, "It is an active negative attitude of rejection and is one of the chief causes of failure in family, personal and professional relationships."

H says, "As in attachment so in aversion, the latencies of misery which do not belong to the Self are attributed to it and the inactive Self is regarded as the doer. This is also false cognition."

T has several interesting things to say about *rāga* and *dveṣa* in his commentary on this sutra. Among other things, he says, "The attractions and repulsions which bind us to innumerable persons and things... condition our life to an unbelievable extent.... There is hardly any freedom left for the individual to act, feel and think freely. The conditioning of the mind which takes place when we are under the domination of any overpowering attraction or repulsion is recognised, but few people have any idea of the distortion produced in our life by the less prominent attractions and repulsions or the extent to which our life is conditioned by them."

He also says, "That *rāga* and *dveṣa* in their gross form are responsible for much of human misery and suffering will become apparent to anyone who can view life dispassionately and can trace causes and effects intelligently. But only those who systematically try to attenuate the *kleśas* by means of *Kriyā Yoga* can see the subtler workings of these *kleśas*, how they permeate the whole fabric of our worldly life and prevent us from having any peace of mind."

## YS 2.9

### *svarasavāhī viduṣo 'pi samārūḍho 'bhiniveśaḥ*

*sva* - one's own; *rasa* - inner substance, quintessence; *vāhī* - that which bears or carries, flowing; *viduṣaḥ* - one who knows, the learned; *api* - even; *samārūḍhaḥ* - that which has firmly taken root; *abhiniveśaḥ* - great fear of death, feeling of insecurity, clinging to life.

#### Translations:

[B] Fear is present even for the sage and develops from its own inherent source.

[D] Insecurity is the inborn feeling of anxiety for what is to come. It affects both the ignorant and the wise.

[H] As in the ignorant so in the learned the firmly established inborn fear of annihilation is the affliction called *abhiniveśa*.

[S] Clinging to life, flowing by its own potency [due to past experience], exists even in the wise.

[T] *Abhiniveśa* is the strong desire for life which dominates even the learned [or the wise].

#### Commentary:

This fear is inherent in all things. V says, "Every creature always has this craving - 'Let me never be non-existent; let me be alive.' One who has not felt the dread of death before cannot have this kind of craving. This demonstrates the experience of a previous birth." He also says, "As in a confirmed idiot, so in a learned man possessed of knowledge regarding previous life and the subsequent life...this fear is found to exist, because, devoid of true knowledge, both the learned and the fool have the same *vāsanā* arising out of the experience of the pain of death."

T points out that it doesn't matter how wise you are, you may still experience *abhiniveśa*. "Unless and until the tree of *kleśas* is destroyed, root and branch, by a systematic course of yogic discipline the attachment to life in smaller or greater degree will continue in spite of all the philosophies we may know or preach." T also says that in those who are particularly influenced by *rāga* and *dveṣa*, the attachment to life is stronger.

## YS2.10

### *te pratiprasavaheyāḥ sūkṣmāḥ*

*te* - these/they; *pratiprasava* - resolving back into their cause/re-absorption, resolution into respective cause or origin; *heyāḥ* - destroyed/capable of being reduced or avoided or abolished; *sūkṣmāḥ* - subtle.

#### Translations:

[B] Recognising inherent impulses eliminates the causes of suffering at a subtle level.

[D] When the obstacles do not seem to be present, it is important to be vigilant.

[H] The subtle *kleśas* are forsaken (i.e. destroyed) by the cessation of productivity (i.e. disappearance of the mind).

[S] In subtle form, these obstacles can be destroyed by resolving them back into their primal cause [the ego].

[T] These, the subtle ones, can be reduced by resolving them backward into their origin.

#### Commentary:

Having completed his description of the *kleśas*, P now proposes (in YS II.10-11) two ways of working towards their reduction. First (sutra 10) you can work at eliminating those that are latent, or just about to appear. This requires a well-developed awareness of the potential of the *kleśas* to take root in us.

V says "Those five *kleśas* become like parched seed and disappear with the mind of the Yogin, which having fulfilled the purpose of its existence becomes defunct." H explains - parched seeds can't germinate. The *kleśas* reach this state once you realise "I am neither the body nor the senses", because once you have attained this knowledge, no disorder of the body or the senses can affect the mind. "The *kleśas* so reduced disappear with the mind." [N.B. This for most of us is a distant goal, because the disappearance of the mind marks the end of birth, life and further experience.]

T has a lot to say which is quite helpful. The *kleśas* exist in two states - active and potential. The active state is easy to recognise and thus easier to deal with. Through the practice of *Kriyā Yoga* *kleśas* become dormant; but under certain conditions they can become active again, so they have to be "parched" and thus rendered completely inactive. T also explains "resolving them back to their origin" (*pratiprasava*) as follows: the five *kleśas* evolve, each from the one before it, beginning with *avidyā* and ending with *abhiniveśa*. So to eliminate them all you begin with *abhiniveśa*, work back through the other *kleśas* in reverse order to *avidyā*, and once *avidya* is eliminated you have enlightenment! But since the seeds are latent, they present a potential danger right up until the achievement of Enlightenment.

Therefore, as D warns in his note, "A temporary state of clarity should not be confused with a permanent state. To assume then that everything will be free from now on can be fraught with danger. It is now even more important to be careful. The fall from clarity to confusion is more disturbing than a state with no clarity at all." So always be vigilant. Don't let your practice slip (refer back to YS I.12-16 for more on practice and detachment). As B says, "This aphorism warns us not to neglect the causes of suffering simply because they remain latent. They may still be reactivated, even in this state."

## YS 2.11

### *dhyānaheyāstadvṛttayaḥ*

*dhyāna* - meditation; *heyāḥ* - that which must be avoided; *tad* - their; *vṛttayaḥ* -fluctuations or activities of the mind.

#### Translations:

[B] Meditation eliminates mental fluctuations set in motion by erroneous impulses.

[D] Advance towards a state of reflection to reduce their impact and prevent them from taking over.

[H] Their means of subsistence or their gross states are avoidable by meditation.

[S] In the active state, they can be destroyed by meditation.

[T] Their active modifications are to be suppressed by meditation.

#### Commentary:

*Dhyāna* (meditation) was first mentioned in YS I.39 as a way of confronting and reducing the *antarāyāḥ* (inner obstacles) listed in YS I.30. In YS .12, *dhyāna* is presented as the second tool for reducing the mental fluctuations triggered off by the *kleśas*.

B describes three ways in which *dhyāna* can be used: diversion - e.g. turning one's attention towards another object or activity reconsideration - e.g. through detachment or discussion with a teacher appeal to a higher or divine source

through prayer or silence.

V says, "The gross manifestations of *kleśas* having been attenuated by *Kriyā-Yoga* are to be destroyed through meditation on *Prasamkhyāna* or discriminative knowledge until they become reduced to the state of the parched seed.... The gross *kleśas* are weak obstacles while the subtle ones are more difficult to overcome." On this, H comments, "*Keśa* is a kind of wrong knowledge; hence it has to be dissipated by true knowledge. Discriminative knowledge is the best form of knowledge; that is why afflictive modifications have to be removed by meditation or self-discernment.... The three stages in the process of destruction of *kleśas* have to be carefully noted, viz. thinning by *Kriyā-Yoga*, reduction to an unproductive state by meditative insight and total disappearance by the dissolution of the mind." His comment is useful in that it returns our attention to what P said about *Kriyā-Yoga* in YS II.1 and about *vritti* in his definition of yoga in YS I.2.

## YS 2.12

***kleśamūlaḥ karmāśayo dṛṣṭādrṣṭajanmavedanīyaḥ***

*kleśa* - cause of suffering, torment, affliction; *mūlaḥ* - root, base, foundation, cause; *karma* - action; *āśayaḥ* - latent impression, residue; *dṛṣṭa* - seen, in this present life; *ādrṣṭa* - unseen, in the future; *janma* - existence, life, birth; *vedanīyaḥ* - experiences discovered and revealed

### Translations:

- [B] Acts stemming from mental disturbance leave imprints that always show themselves in some form or other, visible or invisible.  
 [D] Our actions and their consequences are influenced by these obstacles. The consequences may or may not be evident at the time of the action.  
 [H] *Karmāśaya* or latent impression of action based on afflictions, becomes active in this life or in a life to come.  
 [S] The womb of karmas (actions and reactions) has its root in these obstacles, and the karmas bring experiences in the seen [present] or in the unseen [future] births.  
 [T] The reservoir of *Karmas* which are rooted in *Kleśas* brings all kinds of experiences in the present and future lives.

### Commentary:

to follow

## YS 2.13

***sati mūle tadvipāko jātyāyurbhogāḥ***

*sati* - being, existing; *mūle* - in the root, foundation, cause; *tad* - this; *vipākaḥ* - fruit, result; *jāti* - birth, caste, rank, level; *āyuh* - length, duration, span of life; *bhogāḥ* - final result, enjoyment, experience

### Translations:

- [B] When these causes engender acts, their effects influence existence, time, and the experience of events.  
 [D] As long as the obstacles prevail they will affectation in every respect: in its execution, its duration and its consequences.  
 [H] As long as *kleśa* remains at the root, *karmāśaya* produces three consequences in the form of birth, span of life and experience.  
 [S] With the existence of the root, there will be fruits also; namely, the births of different species of life, their life spans and experiences.  
 [T] As long as the root is there it must ripen and result in lives of different class, length and experiences.

### Commentary:

to follow

## YS 2.14

***te hlādaparītāpaphalāḥ puṇyāpuṇyahetutvāt***



*te* - these; *hlāda* - joy; *paritāpa* - anguish, remorse, sorrow; *phalāḥ* - fruit, result; *puṇya* - just, correct, meritorious; *apuṇya* - incorrect, improper, unmeritorious; *hetuvāt* - of a cause, on account of

### Translations:

- [B] The three kinds of conditioning produce pleasure if the origin is positive, and torment if it is disturbed.  
 [D] The consequences of an action will be painful or beneficial depending on whether the obstacles were present in the concept or implementation of the action.  
 [H] Because of virtue and vice these (birth, span and experience) produce pleasurable and painful experiences.  
 [S] The karmas bear fruits of pleasure and pain caused by merit and demerit.  
 [T] They have joy or sorrow for their fruit according as their cause is virtue or vice.

### Commentary:

to follow

## YS 2.15

***pariṇāmatāpasamṣkāraduḥkhaiguṇavṛttivirodhācca duḥkhameva sarvaṃ vivekinaḥ***

*pariṇāma* - transformation, consequences, development; *tāpa* - worry, pain, sorrow; *samṣkāra* - conditioning, habit, impression left by past action; *duḥkhaiḥ* - ache, pain, sadness; *guṇa* - constituent qualities of nature; *vṛtti* - fluctuation, movement; *virodhāt* - incompatibility, hostility, contradictions; *ca* - and; *duḥkham* - suffering; *eva* - for sure, indeed; *sarvaṃ* - all; *vivekinaḥ* - for the discerning person

### Translations:

- [B] The discerning person sees that all is suffering, because of changes due to the passage of time, to worries and conditioning, and to inappropriate manifestations of the constituent qualities of nature..  
 [D] Painful effects from any object or situation can be a result of one or more of the following: changes in the perceived object, the desire to repeat pleasurable experiences and the strong effect of conditioning from the past. In addition changes within the individual can be contributory factors.  
 [H] The discriminating persons apprehend (by analysis and anticipation) all worldly objects as sorrowful because they cause suffering in consequence, in their afflictive experiences and in their latencies and also because of the contrary nature of the guṇas (which produces changes all the time).  
 [S] To one of discrimination, everything is painful indeed, due to its consequences: the anxiety and fear over losing what is gained; the resulting impressions left in the mind to create renewed cravings; and the constant conflict among the three guṇas, which control the mind.  
 [T] To the people who have developed discrimination all is misery on account of the pains resulting from change, anxiety and tendencies, as also on account of the conflicts between the functioning of the *Guṇas* and the *Vṛttis* (of the mind).

### Commentary:

to follow

## YS 2.16

***heyam duḥkhamanāgatam***

*heyam* - what is to be avoided; *duḥkham* - suffering; *anāgatam* - what has not yet happened

### Translations:

- [B] Future suffering should be avoided.  
 [D] Painful effects which are likely to occur should be anticipated and avoided.  
 [H] Pain which is yet to come is to be discarded.  
 [S] Pain that has not yet come is avoidable.  
 [T] The misery which is not yet come can and is to be avoided.

### Commentary:

to follow

## YS 2.17

***draṣṭṛdrśyayoḥ saṃyogo heyahetuḥ***

*draṣṭṛ* - of the one who observes, the Seer; *drśyayoḥ* - of that which is perceived, the Seen; *saṃyogaḥ* - union, close contact; *heya* -that which is to be avoided; *hetuḥ* - the cause

### Translations:

[B] The cause of pain is the union between the inner being who perceives and that which is perceived.

[D] The cause of actions that produce painful effects is the inability to distinguish what is perceived from what perceives.

[H] Uniting the Seer or the subject with the Seen or the object, is the cause of that which has to be avoided.

[S] The cause of that avoidable pain is the union of the Seer (Purusha) and seen (Prakriti, or Nature)

[T] The cause of that which is to be avoided is the union of the Seer and the Seen.

### Commentary:

to follow

## YS 2.18

***prakāśakriyāsthitiśīlaṃ bhūtendriyātmakam bhogāpavargārtham drśyam***

*prakāśa* - light; *kriyā* - action; *sthiti* - immobility, inertia; *śīlaṃ* - character, tendency; *bhūta* - the five gross elements; *indriya* - the eleven sense organs including thought; *ātmakam* - composed of; *bhoga* - enjoyment, experience; *āpavarga* - liberation; *artham* - aim, purpose; *drśyam* - that which is perceived

### Translations:

[B] What is perceived has clarity, movement, and inertia and is made up of the elements and the eleven sense. It can lead to sensory experience and to deliverance.

[D] All that is perceived includes not only the external objects but also the mind and the senses. They share three qualities: heaviness, activity and clarity. They have two types of effects. To expose the perceiver to their influences or to provide the means to find the distinction between them and itself.

[H] The object or knowable is by nature sentient, mutable and inert. It exists in the form of the elements and the organs, and serves the purpose of experience and emancipation.

[S] The seen is of the nature of the gunas: illumination, activity and inertia; and consists of the elements and sense organs, whose purpose is to provide both experiences and liberation to the Purusha.

[T] The Seen (objective side of manifestation) consists of the elements and sense-organs, is of the nature of cognition, activity and stability (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) and has for its purpose (providing the *Puruṣa* with) experience and liberation.

### Commentary:

to follow

## YS 2.19

***viśeṣāviśeṣālīṅgamātrālīṅgāni guṇaparvāni***

*viśeṣa* - specific, distinct; *aviśeṣa* - non-specific, indistinct; *līṅgamātra* - differentiated, defined; *ālīṅgāni* - undifferentiated, undefinable; *guṇa* - constituent qualities of nature; *parvāni* - degree, division

### Translations:

[B] The origin and characteristics of things are perceived or not perceived.

[D] All that is perceived is related by the common sharing of the three qualities.

[H] Diversified (*viśeṣa*), undiversified (*aviśeṣa*), indicator-only (*līṅgamātra*), and that which is without any indication (*ālīṅga*) are the states of the guṇas.

[S] The stages of the gunas are specific, non-specific, defined and undefinable.

[T] The stages of the *Guṇas* are the particular, the universal, the differentiated and the undifferentiated.

**Commentary:**

to follow

**YS 2.20*****draṣṭā dṛśimātraḥ śuddo 'pi pratyayānupaśyaḥ***

*draṣṭā* - entity who perceives or observes; *dṛśimātraḥ* - being nothing but vision, the power of seeing; *śuddaḥ* - pure, unmixed; *api* - even; *pratyaya* - the experience made by the mind, idea, intention; *anupaśyaḥ* - continually observed

**Translations:**

- [B] The perceiving entity can only perceive. It uses the mind to experiment, but remains unaltered itself.  
 [D] That which perceives is not subject to any variations. But, it always perceives through the mind.  
 [H] The Seer is absolute knower. Although pure, modifications (of buddhi) are witnessed by him as an onlooker.  
 [S] The Seer is nothing but the power of seeing which, although pure, appears to see through the mind.  
 [T] The Seer is pure consciousness but though pure, appears to see through the mind.

**Commentary:**

to follow

**YS 2.21*****tadartha eva dṛśyasyātmā***

*tad* - this latter; *arthah* - aim, goal, purpose; *eva* - assuredly, precisely; *dṛśyasya* - that which is perceived; *ātmā* - proper nature, essence

**Translations:**

- [B] What is perceived exists only to serve as object for the perceiving entity.  
 [D] All that can be perceived has but one purpose: to be perceived.  
 [H] To serve as objective field to puruṣa is the essence or nature of the knowable.  
 [S] The seen exists only for the sake of the Seer.  
 [T] The very being of the Seen is for his sake (i.e. *Prakṛti* exists only for his sake).

**Commentary:**

to follow

**YS 2.22*****kṛtārthaṃ prati naṣṭamapyanaṣṭam tadanyasādhāraṇatvāt***

*kṛta* - realised, accomplished; *ārthaṃ* - the aim, purpose; *prati* - with regard to; *naṣṭam* - disappeared, destroyed; *api* - but, however; *anaṣṭam* - not destroyed; *tad* - that; *anya* - other; *sādhāraṇatvāt* - being in common, universality

**Translations:**

- [B] What is perceived no longer exists for the perceiving entity once the intent is fulfilled, but it still exists to serve others.  
 [D] The existence of all objects of perception and their appearance is independent of the needs of the individual perceiver. They exist without individual reference, to cater for the different needs of different individuals.  
 [H] Although ceasing to exist in relation to him whose purpose is fulfilled the knowable does not cease to exist on account of being of use to others.  
 [S] Although destroyed for him who has attained liberation, it [the seen] still exists for others, being common to them.  
 [T] Although it becomes non-existent for him whose purpose has been fulfilled it continues to exist for others on account of being common to others (besides him).

**Commentary:**  
to follow

## YS 2.23

***svasvāmiśaktyoḥ svarūpopalabdhihetuḥ saṃyogaḥ***

*sva* - that which is perceived, owned; *svāmi* - perceiving entity, owner; *śaktyoḥ* - power, force, faculty; *svarūpa* - proper nature, own form; *upalabdhi* - understanding, recognition; *hetuḥ* - cause; *saṃyogaḥ* - union, close contact

### Translations:

- [B] The union of that which is perceived and the perceiving entity permits understanding of their respective faculties.  
 [D] All that is perceived, whatever it is and whatever its effect may be on a particular individual, has but one ultimate purpose. That is to clarify the distinction between the external that is seen and the internal that sees.  
 [H] Alliance is the means of realising the true nature of the object of the knower and of the owner, the knower (i.e. the sort of alliance which contributes to the realisation of the Seer and the Seen is this relationship).  
 [S] The union of Owner (Puruṣa) and owned (Prakṛiti) causes the recognition of the nature and powers of them both.  
 [T] The purpose of the coming together of the *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* is gaining by the *Puruṣa* of the awareness of its true nature and the unfoldment of powers inherent in him and *Prakṛti*.

**Commentary:**  
to follow

## YS 2.24

***tasya heturavidyā***

*tasya* - of this; *hetuḥ* - cause; *avidyā* - ignorance

### Translations:

- [B] The cause of this union is ignorance.  
 [D] The absence of clarity in distinguishing between what perceives and what is perceived is due to accumulation of misapprehension.  
 [H] *Avidyā* or nescience is its cause.  
 [S] The cause of this union is ignorance.  
 [T] Its cause is the lack of awareness of his Real nature.

**Commentary:**  
to follow

## YS 2.25

***tadabhāvāt saṃyogābhāvo hānaṃ taddṛśeḥ kaivalyam***

*tad* - this; *abhāvāt* - of the absence; *saṃyoga* - union; *ābhāvaḥ* - absence; *hānam* - ceasing, removal; *tad* - of this; *dṛśeḥ* - from the seen; *kaivalyam* - serenity, liberation

### Translations:

- [B] When ignorance vanishes, so does union. Its absence brings serenity.  
 [D] As misapprehension is reduced there is a corresponding increase in clarity. This is the path to freedom.  
 [H] The absence of alliance that arises from lack of it is the freedom and that is the state of liberation of the seer.  
 [S] Without this ignorance, no such union occurs. This is the independence of the Seer.  
 [T] The dissociation of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* brought about by the dispersion of *avidyā* is the real remedy and that is the Liberation of the Seer.

**Commentary:**  
to follow

## YS 2.26

### *vivekakhyātiraviplavā hānopāyaḥ*

*viveka* - discernment; *khyātiḥ* - recognition, perception; *aviplavā* - absence of confusion, total clarity, unwavering; *hāna* - ending, escape, removal; *upāyaḥ* - the means, method

#### Translations:

[B] Awareness of unequivocal discernment ends confused union.

[D] Essentially the means must be directed towards developing clarity so that the distinction between the changing qualities of what is perceived and the unchanging quality of what perceives becomes evident.

[H] Clear and distinct (unimpaired) discriminative knowledge is the means of liberation.

[S] Uninterrupted discriminative discernment is the method for its removal.

[T] The uninterrupted practice of the awareness of the Real is the means of dispersion (of *avidyā*)

#### Commentary:

to follow

## YS 2.27

### *tasya saptadhā prāntabhūmiḥ prajñā*

*tasya* - of this; *saptadha* - seven stages, sevenfold; *prāntabhūmiḥ* - ultimate, final; *prajñā* - inner knowledge

#### Translations:

[B] The ultimate wisdom that emerges has seven stages.

[D] The attainment of clarity is a gradual process.

[H] Seven kinds of ultimate insight come to him (the yogin who has acquired discriminative enlightenment).

[S] One's wisdom in the final stage is sevenfold. [One experiences the end of 1) desire to know anything more; 2) desire to stay away from any thing; 3) desire to gain anything new; 4) desire to do anything; 5) sorrow; 6) fear; 7) delusion.]

[T] In his case the highest stage of Enlightenment is reached by seven stages.

#### Commentary:

to follow

## YS 2.28

### *yogaṅgānuṣṭhānādaśuddhikṣaye jñānadīptirāvivekakhyāteḥ*

*yoga* - of yoga; *aṅga* - the limbs; *ānuṣṭhānāt* - by the execution, by practice; *aśuddhi* - impurity; *kṣaye* - in destruction; *jñāna* - wisdom; *dīptiḥ* - light, radiance; *ā* - up to; *viveka* - discernment; *khyāteḥ* - in recognising

#### Translations:

[B] Eliminating impurity through continued practice of the eight limbs of yoga brings discernment and clear perception.

[D] The practice and enquiry into different components of Yoga gradually reduce the obstacles such as misapprehension. Then the lamp of perception brightens and the distinction between what perceives and what is perceived becomes more and more evident. Now everything can be understood without error.

[H] Through the practice of the different accessories to yoga when impurities are destroyed, there arises enlightenment culminating in discriminative enlightenment.

[S] By the practice of the limbs of yoga, the impurities dwindle away and there dawns the light of wisdom, leading to discriminative discernment.

[T] From the practice of the component exercises of Yoga, on the destruction of impurity, arises spiritual illumination which develops into awareness of Reality.

**Commentary:**  
to follow

























