

Spiritual Studies: The Yoga Sutras

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Preface: The Yoga Sutras were written by Patanjali, a Yogi Sage of unknown origin, in approximately 200 BCE. BKS Iyengar writes in his book *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, “He is referred to as a *svayambhu*, an evolved soul incarnated of his own will to help humanity. He assumed human form, experienced our sorrows and joys, and learned to transcend them. In the Yoga Sutras he described the ways of overcoming the afflictions of the body and the fluctuations of the mind: the obstacles to spiritual development.”

“Yoga” comprises all of yoga, not just asana (the physical practice). Yoga means “to unite”, it refers to uniting the mind, soul, and body. The advice and wisdom in the Sutras are for the most part about the mind and soul, not about the physical practice of asana. In fact there are no references to yoga asanas at all.

Your perceptions form the basis of your beliefs; having perceptions that were corrupted by others such as your parents or the media, or distorted by malefic or traumatic experiences in your life, will cause you to have belief systems that are not in alignment with your soul and our Gods, thereby limiting your life and spiritual advancement. The Sutras are designed to clear your mind from false perceptions, help you overcome corrupted perceptions, and free your mind and soul so you can live in your pure and true nature with fulfillment and joy.

I am firmly convinced that through the correct understanding of the Sutras, anyone will find mental and spiritual liberation, and grow closer to our Gods. Mental strength and fortitude, mastery of your mind, inner peace, clarity of life overall, Self-realization and the revealing of your True and uncorrupted identity and Higher Self will be found. You will be able to transform gracefully into your best version of you and become at ease with your own Self, which is why I am very excited to begin this project.

The Sutras have been referred to by Jaganath Carerra, in his book *Inside the Yoga Sutras*, as “the science of joy and a blueprint for living a deeply satisfying life”, and “not simply a philosophy, it presents a holistic system of practices that provide clear progressive steps towards the elimination of suffering and attainment of spiritual liberation”. I fully agree with these statements.

Many people have tried to interpret the Sutras. Sanskrit words, like Latin, often have five to twelve meanings per word; and like Ancient Greek, one word may carry such a large concept that it would take several sentences in English to describe. You can imagine how unenlightened people corrupted by Yehuborism would at least mildly or even grossly misinterpret these works, to the extent that often people have avoided a further study of Yoga due to their disagreement with certain anti-life ideologies being pushed in the mistranslations. There are many misunderstandings regarding Yogic philosophy; I am certain that my work here will clear it all up for everyone.

I will be writing on the Sutras, in order. These will be the translations and interpretations by me, the High Priestess of the Temple of Zeus and certified Yoga teacher. I include multiple variations of translations for some of the same Sutras, as you will see.

This will be a lengthy series of articles, with interpretations of a handful of Sutras in each article. I will post these freely for all. At the bottom of each post will be a PDF version for you to download and keep. Upon the completion of this project, I will gather them all into one book, add more insights, and release it within the Hall of Osiris, making the updated and completed version available only to those

who help the Temple. The free versions will be an estimated 90% of what the updated version will contain.

As the Sutras can be interpreted many ways, like a piece of art or poetry, I invite all of you to contemplate and discuss. I also invite you to do further study from various other sources, as some may resonate more deeply with you than perhaps mine do.

Sutra = thread. The Sutras are comprised of 196 threads of wisdom. Each Sutra is aphoristic, similar to a Buddhist koan. These were deliberately short so people could easily memorize them. They were designed to be contemplated upon to help guide you to Enlightenment; you can print or write down any of these you feel drawn to and contemplate it in meditation, while doing Yoga, or simply while out for a walk. Interestingly, it is believed that these were originally intended to be sung.

Theory without practice is only a shadow. I urge all of you to meditate, not just intellectualize these. Studying without opening yourself to spirituality will still be useful; but to get the full benefits, one must meditate and practice Yoga.

Pada One – Samadhi Pada (Absorption)

Pada = foot, pillar. The Sutras are divided into 4 parts: Samadhi (Absorption, Contemplation), Sadhana (Practice), Vibhuti (Accomplishments, Powers), and Kaivalya (Absoluteness, Freedom). I will write in order.

The purpose of this first Pada is to help you cultivate the experience of Samadhi (meditative absorption, concentration, enlightenment) in your daily life by changing your perspective and enabling you to respond to all situations and experiences in your life with consciousness, rather than responding reactionary. This will also help you move through your karma, build better karma, and overcome negative karma.

This Pada helps show you the path to advancement, and shows the blockages in the way and how to overcome them. Instead of seeing everything in the inferior either/or framework set out by the logical left-brain mind, the practices of this Pada will help you see from a higher, superior perspective, connected to the Divine and your right-brain mind. Samadhi is beyond time, beyond thought.

Samadhi Pada is an introduction and sets the intention for the later 3 Padas. Those Padas will give more nuanced details and advice for what is presented in this Pada.

Covered in this article: Sutras 1.1 – 1.4. These Sutras give a brief overview of “What is Yoga?” and pertain to mental purity.

Sutra 1.1
अथ योगानुशासनम्
atha yoga-anuśāsanam

Now, the instructions of the practice of Yoga.
or,
Now, the teachings of Yoga begin.

Patanjali begins this Sutra, thus beginning the entire body of work, with the word *Atha*, meaning Now. This is deliberate, a calling of attention to the present. One must pay attention to learn, and you pay attention by being right here right now.

“Now” is also a call to mindfulness. If you wish to learn, you can’t be distracted, dwelling on the past or daydreaming about the future, or worrying about what is not even real right now. We must train ourselves to put all that aside, at least temporarily, and focus our attention. Only in the moment of now, can a Yoga practice commence and be of benefit to our growth.

Anuśāsanam translates as instructions to the practice, and discipline; also exposition, the study of a subject. Patanjali makes his intent clear right at the beginning, that these Sutras are intended to teach us. The human mind is often chaotic and uncertain, weak, scattered, unclear, foggy. He is assuring us that through the study of the Sutras, he will guide us to train our minds and master ourselves. As it has often been stated by many people, self-discipline is self-mastery.

These next 3 Sutras are to be read together:

Sutra 1.2

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोध

yogaś-citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ

Yoga is the restraint of the fluctuations of mental chatter.

or,

Yoga is the stilling or controlling of the whirling thoughts of the mind.

Sutra 1.3

तदा द्रष्टुं स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम्

tadā draṣṭuṃ svarūpe-‘vasthānam

Then your own form (true nature) is supported,

or,

Then you rest in your own true state,

Sutra 1.4

वृत्ति सारूप्यमितरत्र

vṛtti sārūpyam-itaratra

Otherwise [meaning, if you don’t control your thoughts] you will take the form of your chaotic thoughts.

or,

Otherwise, you will identify as what your mind creates from its whirling thoughts.

Chitta means thoughts, mental chatter, to perceive, to observe. *Vritti* means ripples, fluctuations, modifications, to whirl, turn, or revolve. *Nirodhah* means restraint, cessation, prevention, to stop. Void meditation sums this up perfectly; the Awareness meditations also apply.

It has been said that humans have a “monkey mind”, with thoughts jumping all over the place. Who are you really, when you allow your thoughts to chaotically form instantly at random all over the spectrum of positive and negative? Many people erroneously identify as their thoughts. You are not your chaotic random thoughts, you are you; so by controlling your thoughts, you can allow your true essence to shine clear. As BKS Iyengar has stated, “When your mind is silent, your soul can speak”.

Imagine your soul is a lake. The top of the lake is the surface area, the bottom of the lake is your deepest innermost Self. If there are many ripples (*Vritti*) on the surface, and currents below, can you see the bottom of the lake? You cannot see the bottom at all; or if you can, it will be a distorted view. It is only when the lake is completely serene, that you can clearly see the bottom.

When you constantly dwell on the same thought, permitting it to repeat over and over, a *Samskara* forms. A *Samskara* is a mental or subconscious impression, a psychological imprint. *Samskaras* can be positive/beneficial, or they can be negative/malefic. Once formed, they influence your behavior and actions. One aim of the *Sutras* is to enable you to remove your current malefic *samskaras* and prevent new malefic ones from forming.

To explain *Samskaras*: Think of this as a path on the ground. You are walking on the same path constantly, making a deeper and deeper groove in the ground every time you walk it. It takes a great deal of effort to climb out of it once it's very deep like a trench. But before the *Samskara* has formed, when it's only a slight path, you can easily step off it onto a new path. Void meditation (the restraint of the fluctuations of mental chatter) allows you to see other paths more clearly.

Many people think they have certain personality or character traits, or behavioral tendencies, when in fact they are *Samskaras* formed in childhood or any stage of life, or past lives, or inherited from your parents and ancestral line. The malefic ones can be removed, and beneficial ones put in place. This completely relates to self-hypnosis and affirmations. One aim of the *Sutras* is to help you remove malefic *Samskaras* and allow your True identity to shine. You cannot truly know yourself when your mind is filled with stubborn malefic imprints.

Samskaras are the root of impulses and tendencies, influencing how you perceive yourself, and how you perceive the external. *Samskaras* also influence your Karma.

Samskara broadly means accomplishing well, to make perfect, putting together. Using self-hypnosis and affirmations, and taking correct actions, will form beneficial *samskaras* and better karma for you.

“Yoga is the stilling or controlling of the fluctuations of the mind”. In 2020, **Lord Anubis** told me that void meditation helps things in life fall into place correctly, instead of needlessly struggling and using excess force that can be used for other things. Void meditation aligns the mind and soul.

Covered in the next article: Sutras 1.5 – 1.11. These Sutras give an overview of how the mind works, continuing the above section regarding mental purity, and define the 5 types of Vritti.