

InnerWellbeing

YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

Claudia Carballal



inner-wellbeing.com





**IF HAPPINESS IS OUR REAL
NATURE, WHY DO WE NOT
FEEL HAPPY ALL THE TIME?**



SELF KNOWLEDGE

We know ourselves to a certain extent, but we don't clearly know the essence of our nature-our true Self.

All the great spiritual teachings of the world make emphasis on Self-knowledge.

SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

Hindu philosophy
helps us find our
true inner Self.



PART
1

**WHAT IS
YOGA
PSYCHOLOGY?**



YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

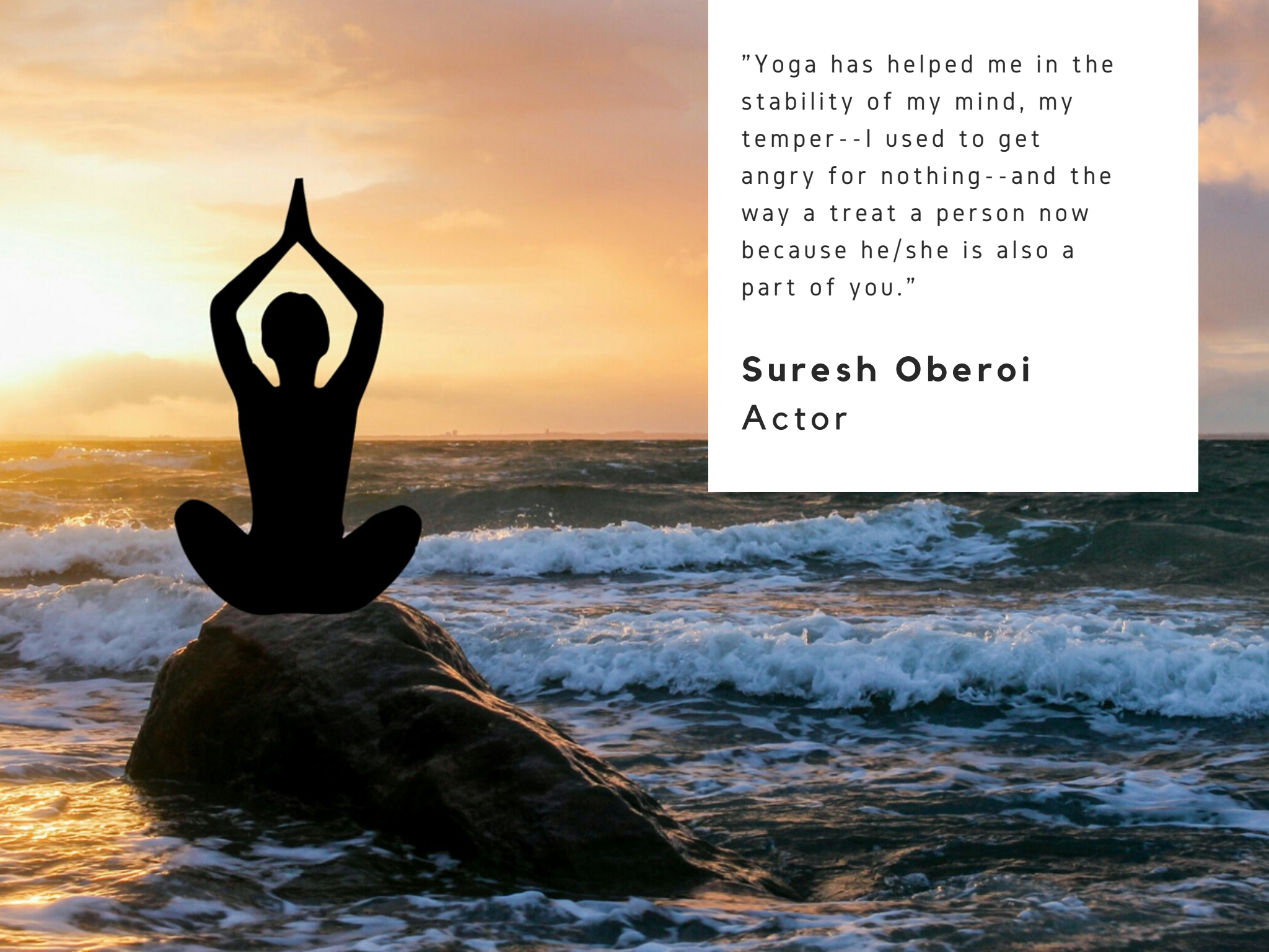
***Absolute understanding
and control of our nature.
We must be the masters,
and not the slaves, of our
mind and body.***

YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

Study and clearing of
the mind through
meditative and
contemplative practices,
principles, and
exercises.

Based on the
experiences of rishis
and seers of India,
through different
processes of meditation
and reasoning.



A silhouette of a person in a yoga pose (Padmasana with arms raised in Anjali Mudra) is superimposed on a photograph of a person sitting on a rock in the ocean at sunset. The person is in a meditative pose, sitting cross-legged on a large, dark rock. Their arms are raised, with hands pressed together in a prayer position (Anjali Mudra) above their head. The background shows the ocean with white-capped waves breaking against the shore. The sky is a warm, golden-orange color from the setting sun, with a few distant buildings visible on the horizon. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

"Yoga has helped me in the stability of my mind, my temper--I used to get angry for nothing--and the way a treat a person now because he/she is also a part of you."

Suresh Oberoi
Actor

PART
2

**WHAT IS
MIND?**

"In modern science there's a tendency to identify consciousness, mind and brain; make mind a function of the brain, consciousness a function of the mind, and to treat them chemically to alter them. Well-being and consciousness are good chemistry of the brain and unhappiness is bad chemistry of the brain, and no one is responsible."

Dr. David Frawley

"In the Yogic thought, brain (body), mind (chitta), and consciousness (purusha) are three different things, but related at a certain level."

Dr. David Frawley

Yoga psychology is the science of using our mind in the proper way without getting stuck in it. It uses a model of healing that is based on consciousness and not on drugs to alter the brain's chemistry.

DIMENSIONS OF MIND

In Yogic science, there are 16 parts of the mind divided into four categories. The mind is not the brain. The brain is just part of the physical body; mind is a vast entity that is not made of physical matter.

Buddhi: Intellect. Makes decisions. Protects our identity.

Ahankara: Identity. Enables the intellect to function by protecting our identity.
"If intellect is the knife, identity is the hand that holds it."

Manas: Mind. Like a transparent lake. Faculty of doubt and volition. Memory. Gives rise to desire. We carry all the memories accumulated in the world. There are many stages and dimensions (8) of memory.

Chitta: Mind-stuff. Not bounded by memory. Intelligence beyond bounds. Unconscious storehouse of past thoughts and experiences. Stored experiences can be sent to manas (conscious memory).

DEFINITIONS OF MIND

Mind is a series of changing phenomena. It's continuously changing. Mind is universal. All the minds are fragments of that mind. This is how thought transference is possible. Mind seems to be layer on layer. Mind is an instrument in the hands of the Soul (purusha). Purusha is the only thing that is intelligent.

Western Definitions

Mind is the element of a person that enables them to be aware of the world and their experiences, to think, to feel, to perceive, and to reason. It's the faculty of consciousness and thought. The organized conscious and unconscious adaptive mental activity of an organism.

PART
3

**SOURCES
OF YOGA
PSYCHOLOGY**



SOURCES OF YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

Vedas

Upanishads

Bhagavad Gita

Sankhya

Yoga Sutras

Secondary sources



VEDAS

Scriptures written by the seers or rishis in India, who had first-hand experience of the supreme consciousness through meditation.



Vedas are books of knowledge regarding the nature of reality; the best way to understand the experience of the seers of India with respect to human existence and experiencing God.

VEDAS

Also called "shrutis"
from the Sanskrit root
"shruta" meaning that
which is heard.

Vedanta-

Anta: meaning
completion/summatio.

Veda: related to the
Latin word "video"
meaning "to see."

FOUR BOOKS

Rig Veda

Sam Veda

Yajur Veda

Attharva Veda

Fundamental revelation of the
Hindu way of life, generated
between 1,500 and 1,200 BC.



UPANISHADS

End portion of the Vedas that contain the majority of the philosophical knowledge and the heart of Hinduism.

UPANISHADS

108, about 10 of these are the key Upanishads that most people read.

"Upa" - come near.
"Shad" - to destroy.

Come near me and I will destroy your delusion regarding the nature of reality.

They try to put in words the experience of Supreme Consciousness.

Not authoritative but contextual authority as the closest experience of the Supreme Consciousness.

Because it's difficult to put that experience in words, the rishis wrote it in poetic form.

Bhagavad Gita contains the essence of the Upanishads.



Upanishads explain the essential nature of humanity as Atman and the essential nature of the cosmos as Brahman.

CONCLUSION OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY

The underpinning to everything is spiritual. When the Ultimate Reality is not viewed as the spirit, but as a personality, it's addressed as God.



DANGEROUS IDEA?

If everything is God, then the good and the bad are all acceptable? There are no morals? Everything that happens is God?

"To Hindus, Brahman (God) does not mean a man above all others or the lord. It is the innermost energy that "dances" the entire universe."



Alan Watts



BHAGAVAD GITA

The text of authority of the Hindus based on the experience of rishis. It helps translate the rishis' experience into practice.



BHAGAVAD GITA

It means “holy song” or
the song of god.

Written by sage Vyasa (or
Krishna Dvaipayana)
between 400-200 BC.

Philosophical heart of
Hinduism.

BHAGAVAD GITA

Author- Vyasa,
meaning
"compiler" or
"one who
compiles.

Spiritual discourse given by Krishna at a pivotal point within the Hindu epic Mahabharat. Krishna imparts the essence of Upanishadic teachings to Arjun on the battlefield and tells him how to put these teachings into context.

KEY TEACHINGS

- *Dharma: spiritual practice.
- *Artha: wealth and success.
- *Kama: legitimate pleasures.
- *Moksha: liberation.

OTHER PRINCIPLES

Renunciation

The only way to find Supreme Consciousness
is to stop chasing after minor goals.

Karma

For every action there is an effect or consequence.

BHAGAVAD GITA

It encourages the use of different pathways (pluralistic view) to fulfill our aspiration for spirituality and the realization of the principles Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha.



Jnana Yoga
Raja Yoga
Bhakti Yoga
Karma Yoga

ESSENCE OF VEDANTA

Our true nature is infinite bliss, infinite consciousness, but we don't have knowledge of our true nature and perceive ourselves as limited by the body and mind.

This limitation is only apparent and can be removed by the achievement of knowledge. The focus is to awaken consciousness so we can see that we are not bound by the limitations of time, space, and causation.

We can acquire knowledge of our true nature through several paths: Jnana Yoga, Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga.

OUR TRUE NATURE

Our true nature is infinite bliss (Atman), identical with the infinite consciousness (Brahman) that is the foundation of all existence.

Our ignorance (Maya) creates bondage; it makes reality appear different as it truly is. Our bondage is caused by our ignorance of our true nature or essence.

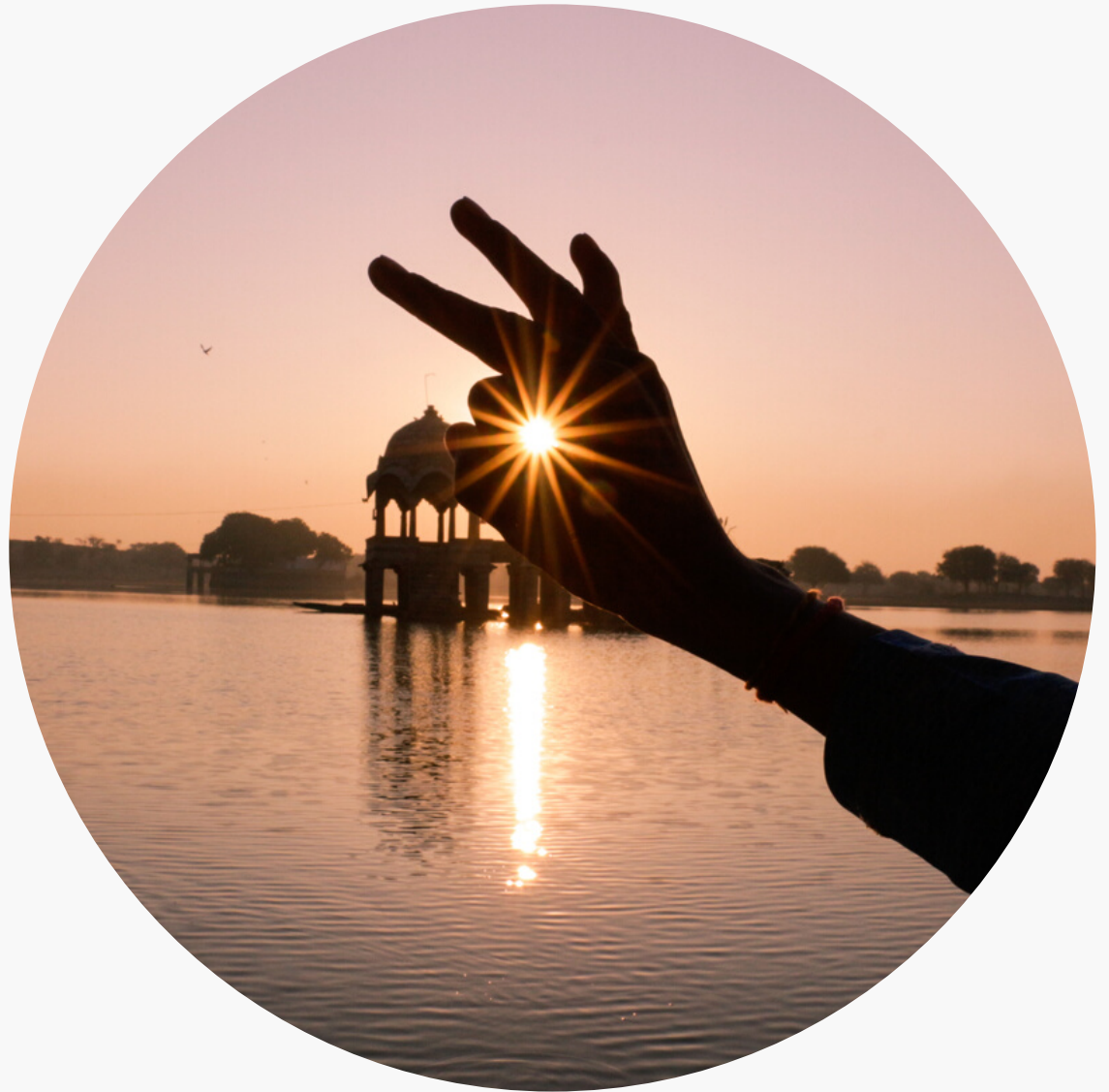
Our experience of identifying with the body and mind (bondage) has reinforced our ignorance. Acquisition of liberation (moksha) is not only a cognitive matter; it is a matter of direct realization which comes through practice.

Adapted from a presentation by Dr. Jeffery D. Long,
Professor of Religion and Asian Studies at Elizabethtown University.

JNANA YOGA

Path of reason and
logic. Through our
intellect we learn to
see the world as it is.

Discernment between
what is real (Brahman)
and unreal (Maya).



RAJA YOGA

Turning inward through meditation. Also called Dhyana.

Raja means "king"- one who acts with independence, self-confidence and assurance.

Swami Vivekananda equated it with Yoga Sutras.



BHAKTI YOGA

Devotion to chosen
deity or supreme
consciousness.

Subordinates the ego to
the divine, helping us
achieve detachment and
liberation.



KARMA YOGA

Selfless work.
Dedication of work to
the divine, losing
yourself into work with
focus.

When we act for our
own personal interest,
we become mean and
small and lose spiritual
status or progress.



HOW DOES THIS TRANSLATE INTO PSYCHOLOGY?

Some people are more inclined to understand the nature of their problems through logic and reasoning. Intellect, cognitive methods. (Jnana Yoga)

Other people react better by going inward, through contemplation and meditation on the nature of their mind. (Raja Yoga)

Faith and hope can always help people, depending on their faith and belief system. (Bhakti Yoga)

Offering our work to a supreme consciousness can reduce the burden of work and obligations. Mind is focused on the job at hand rather than scattered and overthinking. (Karma Yoga)

PART
4

**YOGA
SUTRAS AND
THE MIND**



YOGA SUTRAS

Manual for the study and practice of Yoga.
Practical advice on mastering the mind and achieving mental, physical and emotional harmony.

YOGA SUTRAS

Author: Patanjali

A sage, meaning a profound philosopher distinguished by wisdom.

Based on Samkhya tradition.

Collection of 196 Sanskrit sutras (aphorisms) on the theory and practice of Yoga.

The first book on psychology and personal growth that provides a method for mind mastering.

Patanjali codified existing knowledge from various sources and his own experience.

- Compiled between 500 and 400 BCE.
- Most translated Indian text in medieval era. Revived by Swami Vivekananda.



YOGA SUTRAS PURPOSE

- *Living scripture to illuminate our spiritual path.
- *Forget our selfishness and broaden our minds.
- *Make progress in mastering our body and mind.
- *Aim of Yoga is *moksha*: liberation from false identity- false perception of self and world.
- *Subject matter: mind, sorting out and clearing mind until it becomes pure to reflect the true Self (Atman or Purusha).
- *Once you master mind, you become true owner. You can manage your kingdom and its resources.



Raja Yoga

Hatha Yoga was designed to facilitate the real practice of Yoga-- Raja Yoga. The understanding and complete mastery over the mind.

200 Sutras divided into four sections:

1. **Portion on Contemplation:** *Samadhi Pada*- theory of Yoga, description of advanced stages of meditation (Samadhi)
2. **Portion on Practice:** *Sadhana Pada*- Eight Limbs of Yoga (Yamas, Niyamas), benefits, obstacles and how to overcome them.
3. **Portion on Accomplishments:** *Vibhuti Pada*- final three inner steps of Raja Yoga.
4. **Portion on Absoluteness:** *Kaivalia Pada*- Yoga from a cosmic, philosophical viewpoint.



SAMADHI PADA

PORTION ON CONTEMPLATION

Chitta

Buddhi

Manas

Vrittis

Sutra 2- Portion on Contemplation

"Yoga citta vrtti nirodhah"

"The restrain of the modifications
of the mind-stuff is Yoga."

If restraint of mental modifications (*vrttis*) is achieved, one has reached the goal of Yoga. Control the rising of the mind into ripples. *Citta* is the sum total of the mind. Within the *citta* are different levels. *Vrttis* are modifications of the mind, waves in the lake of the mind.

CHITTA

Mind.

Natural state of mind is calm, but it gets agitated by desires caused by chitta-vrittis.

LEVELS OF MIND

- Ahamkara: Ego, "i" feeling, the basic mind. Gives rise to the intellect or discriminative faculty called buddhi.
- Buddhui: discriminative part of mind. Intellect.
- Manas: desiring part of mind. Gets attracted to outside things through the senses.

These three things happen one at a time, but so quickly that we rarely distinguish between them.

KEY POINTS

Everything that happens in the outside world is a reflection of your mind. The external world is based on your thoughts, beliefs, reactions, caused by mental modifications (vrittis).

As long as you have control over your thoughts--change them as you want--you are not bound by the outside world.

"The entire world is your own projection."

Swami Satchidananda, translation and commentary of Yoga Sutras

"Everyone thinks it is the time that their own watch marks."

Dr. Jeffery Long

This is why Yoga is not concerned about changing the outside world.

Sutra 3- Portion on Contemplation

"Tada drastuh swarupe vasthanam"

"Then the seer (Self) abides to its
own nature."

You are no the body nor the mind. You are the observer, the true seer. You always see your mind and body acting in front of you. You know that the mind creates thoughts (vrittis); it distinguishes (buddhi) and desires (manas). The observer knows this but is not involved in it. It doesn't engage with the thoughts.

KEY POINTS

Your true nature is peaceful. Your essence is infinite bliss, calmness, and joy.

"To understand that eternal peaceful You, the mind must be quiet; otherwise it seems to distort the truth."

Swami Satchidananda, translation and commentary of Yoga Sutras

If you see your reflection in a mirror, and the mirror is dirty, curved or with many waves, your image will be distorted. Similarly, if there are many waves in the lake of your mind (vrttis) you will appear to be distorted.

You will understand that something is wrong with your thoughts (the mirror). When mind ceases to create waves/thought forms, the citta becomes free from vrttis, it becomes clean and pure like a still lake, and you can see your true Self.

SADHANA PADA

PORTION ON PRACTICE

Pain, spiritual books,
surrender

Kleshas

Karma

Eight limb path



Sutra 1- Portion on Practice

"Tarah swadhyayesvarapranidhanani
kriya yogah."

"Accepting pain as help for purification, study of spiritual books and surrender to the supreme being constitute Yoga in practice."

Difficult experiences make us grow, make us stronger. Pain is a tool for growth because it requires discipline to receive pain without returning it to others.

Learn to see difficult events as way to burn mental impurities. Such self-disciplined cannot be practiced in meditation, but in daily life as we relate to others.

Sutra 3- Portion on Practice

**"Avidyasmita raga
dvesabhinivesah klesah."**

"Ignorance, egoism, attachment, hatred, and clinging to bodily life are the five obstacles (kleshas: afflictions)."

The order is important. Because of ignorance, ego comes. Because of ego, there's attachment to things and people for the ego's selfish pleasure. If things we cling to are taken away, hatred comes. Because we are attached to things and afraid of death, we cling to life in the body.

Sutra 10- Portion on Practice

"Te pratiprasavaheyah suksmah."

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

Our obstacles or afflictions can be destroyed by keeping our ego under control. Our thoughts come in two stages: (1) potential form, before they come to the surface and manifest into action, and (2) manifested form, where we take action. It is easier to control manifested things.

Sutra 11- Portion on Practice

"Dhyanaheyastadvrttayah"

"In the active state, they can be destroyed by meditation."

Thought forms in the potential state (samskaras- mind tendencies) cannot be removed in meditation. When we meditate in these impressions, we bring them to the surface to understand them and gain control over them. Ego is the basis for all afflictions.

Sutra 12- Portion on Practice

"Klesa mulah karmasayodrstadrsta
janma vedaniyah."

"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."

Patanjali explains what karma is, how it is stored, and how it functions. Sanskrit term karma can mean action or result of action. Generally it refers to the reaction of past actions. Every action has a result but is hard to know which comes first. Reactions don't go away, they are stored. Karmas wait for an opportunity to come to the surface. Kleshas cause karmas.



EIGHT LIMB PATH

YAMAS AND NIYAMAS

By the practice of the
limbs of Yoga, the
impurities of mind
dissolve and wisdom is
revealed, leading to
discriminative
discernment.

Sutra 28



EIGHT LIMBS OF YOGA

Yama
Niyama
Asana
Pranayama

Pratyahara
Dharana
Dhyana
Samadhi

YAMA

Abstinence and Regulation

Ahimsa: non-violence

Satya: truthfulness

Asteya: non-stealing

Brahmacarya: continence, moderation of sense drive

Aparigraha: non-greed, no accumulation of things

NIYAMA

Observancee

Sauca: purity

Santosa: contentment

Tapah: accepting pain (heat)

Svadhyaya: study of spiritual books, self-understanding

Isvara: surrender to God

VITARKA

When disturbed by negative thoughts, opposite (positive) thoughts should be thought.



VITARKA: CONTROL METHOD

When negative thoughts come to mind, like hatred, fear, resentment, invite positive thoughts. If it's hard to do, we can get the help of a beautiful picture, landscape, or music.

“When negative thoughts or acts are done, caused, or even approved of, whether incited by greed, anger or infatuation, whether indulged in with mild, medium, or extreme intensity, they are based on ignorance and bring certain pain.”

~ Swami Satchidananda

It's difficult to control negative thoughts by staying in a negative environment. It's difficult to control overthinking if we are in an overly-stimulating environment.



MIND PRACTICES

Pratyahara
Dharana
Dhyana
Samadhi

These practices are more
internally-oriented.

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Pratyahara, dharana, and dhyana are advance stages of mind mastering or concentration that can lead to liberation (samadhi).

After attaining a steady Yoga asana practice to make the body strong and fit for meditation (*asana*), and mastering the different types of breathing (*pranayama*), we destroy the veil of mental darkness and the mind is ready for concentration. Then we can withdraw the senses from the external world and achieve mastery over the senses (*pratyahara*).

~Sutras 46-55



Pratyahara

Another way of controlling the mind. by withdrawing the senses from the external world. Your senses come fully under your control. They are your horses taking you wherever you want.

A scenic landscape photograph of a mountain valley. In the foreground, a calm lake reflects the surrounding mountains and sky. The middle ground shows steep, forested slopes leading up to rugged, rocky mountain peaks. Some peaks are covered in snow or have snow patches. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

VIBHUTI PADA

PORTION ON
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Dharana

Dhyana

Samadhi



Dharana

Sutra 1. Portion on Accomplishments.

It is the binding of the mind (*citta*) to one place, object, or idea. Intense focus and concentration. You are training the mind in concentration. As you think, so you become. If you think of a rose, your mind will become like a rose. Slowly the rose will appear within.



Dhyana

Sutra 2. Portion on Accomplishments.
Continuous flow of cognition toward the object.

It is a continuous string that doesn't break, like pouring oil from one pot to another pot. Mind is fixed. Time and space have no meaning. You don't know you have a body. It is similar to sleep. Meditation culminates in the state of *samadhi*- the shining of the object alone as if devoid of form.

PART
5

**RAJA YOGA
AND
THE MIND**



RAJA YOGA

***Method of acquiring
control over mental forces
as manifestations of
prana, by mental means.***

RAJA YOGA

Made popular
again by Swami
Vivekananda.

Eight steps of
Raja Yoga.

1. Yama
2. Niyama
3. Asana
4. Pranayama
5. Pratyahara
6. Dharana
7. Dhyana
8. Samadhi

- Yama: non-killing, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, non-hoarding.
- Niyama: cleanliness, contentment, austerity, study, self-surrender.
- These are moral teachings without which the practice of Yoga will not succeed. This is the Yogi life.

MAIN TEACHINGS OF RAJA YOGA

- *All misery comes from fear, from unsatisfied desires. When we find that we never die, we have no fear. There is only one method by which to attain this knowledge: concentration and meditation.
- *The more I concentrate on an object, the more light I can throw upon it. The object becomes illumined.
- *The mind whose dross has been cleared away by pranayama becomes fixed in Brahman." Svetasvatara Upanishad.
- *The external world is but the gross form of the internal or subtle. The fine is always the cause, and the gross the effect.

MAIN TEACHINGS OF RAJA YOGA

- *Start from the internal world, study internal nature, and through that, control both.
- *Experiential: believe nothing until you find out for yourself.
- *No limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point.
- *The concentrated mind will penetrate into its own innermost secrets.
- *The goal is to perceive all the mental states one-by-one: the arising of a sensation, how sensations are carried by nerve centers, how mind receives them, how they are presented to the determinative faculty, and how this last conveys it to the purusha (Soul).
- *Know before thoughts arise to the surface of the lake of the mind.

PART
6

**THE FIVE
KOSHAS**



THE FIVE KOSHAS

Also called "sheats" or layers. Dimensions of being. They are mentioned in the Upanishads.

FIVE KOSHAS

1. **Annamaya kosha:** Physical self. Grosses of the five koshas. Outermost layer.
2. **Pranamaya kosha:** Composed of prana (vital force) that holds together body and mind. It pervades the whole organism. Its physical manifestation is the breath. As long as vital force is in the organism, life continues.
3. **Manomaya kosha:** Composed of mind (manas) and the five sensory organs.
4. **Vijnanamaya kosha:** Intellect (vijnana). Faculty that discriminates and determines.
5. **Anandamaya kosha:** Innermost layer. Causal body or bliss (ananda). A reflection of the Atman. The subtlest of the five koshas. In deep sleep, when mind and senses cease functioning, it stands between the world and the Self (Atman).

THREE LAYERS OF THE BODY

Physical Body:

Organs, bones,
tissue, brain, etc.

Light Body: Mind
and memory.

Causal Body:

Subtle body.
Purusha, atman,
soul.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Claudia Carballal is a Yoga-Vedanta practitioner and teacher of Yoga philosophy, Yoga Psychology, and Ayurveda as paths to personal growth and self-realization. She holds certifications in India and the USA on Ayurveda Counseling and Registered Yoga Teacher. Claudia leads webinars, workshops and retreats on Yoga psychology and Yoga philosophy for personal and spiritual development.

She is board certified APS by the Texas Certification Board of Addiction Professionals. Claudia specializes in prevention through psychosocial education, social-emotional regulation, and other evidence-based strategies, lowering the individual's intention to use unhealthy coping mechanisms.

Claudia holds certifications in psychological first aid and has training and experience in working with multicultural groups, immigrants, refugees, and survivors of domestic violence and human rights violations.



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