



*When we function as Souls,  
we gradually realise  
that all forms around  
are veils of sound, colour and shape  
around the Soul and that  
behind every form and its quality  
there is the functioning of the Soul.  
There is but the Soul  
functioning in many forms as the Souls.  
In truth there are not many Souls  
but one.*

**Dr. K. Parvathi Kumar**

*More and more people sense that they have seen enough in the outer life and feel attracted by the spiritual path. Often however the basics of spiritual life are then ignored. Many study advanced wisdom teachings without first having organised their minds and their personalities, without showing in their lives only one per cent of the wisdom studied. They gather mental fund and are of no use neither for themselves nor for others. Some think that the circumstances of their lives don't permit them to go the path, through sluggishness and imbalance they put up obstacles for themselves. Frequently spirituality is also practised at the expense of common sense, responsibilities and family duties are neglected. All exercises don't bear fruit or only one-sided developments, as long as the foundations have not been laid.*

*Therefore we have to follow the fundamental steps, i.e. to put them into practise. Thus we slowly can learn to express ourselves as souls. "Basics of Spiritual Life" wants to give some hints for this.*

## **YOGA - THE PATH OF SYNTHESIS**

### **UNITY AND SYNTHESIS**

If we bring together the individual petals of a flower and tie them on with a string in the form of a flower, the parts form a unity. If however we observe a flower without plucking it, the petals of the flower are already in oneness. Something constructed is a unity, something created by Nature has come into being on account of Synthesis. Synthesis is the background of every existence. The awareness of the Synthesis of all planes of consciousness, which can be experienced by man, is called in Sanskrit Yoga. So Yoga does not mean union or unity, but Synthesis. The practice of Yoga is for reaching the awareness of Synthesis. He who is attracted by this practice gets his impetus from the energy of Synthesis, no matter with which name it is called. Since "Yoga" means Synthesis, there can be only the *one* Yoga; if it were more, the many would have to be false yogas. But just like the flower has its plurality of petals, there are branches and subdivisions in the Yoga Path, the classical kinds of Yoga. As long as you understand them as branches, you are not lost in the anatomy of a part, but keep the consciousness of the whole.

### **FIERY EXISTENCE**

According to the science of spirituality the entire creation is an expression of energy, of a fire of Exis-

tence expressing itself in different flames. The flames seem to be many, but are One in their essence. It is a fiery Synthesis, whose awareness is called in the East *Agni Yoga* or Yoga of Fire. Three basic forms of fire are described in the scriptures; in more recent wisdom teachings they are called Electrical or Cosmic Fire, Solar or Soul Fire, and Fire by Friction. Our mind is one of the flames blown down from a subtler to the grosser and grosser existence, until in the dense planes we experience resistance and develop consciousness through our sensations. Through the contact of the mind with the body we begin to feel the existence of our bodies. In the imbalances and problems of our personality lives we experience the burning of the Fire by Friction. Fire purifies, it burns all you give to it to ashes. On the evolutionary path, back from multiplicity to the original Fire of Existence, our thought, speech and action are purged in a purification process through fiery aspiration. The age-old Path of Yoga teaches to neutralise the reactions of the mind and the senses towards objectivity to reach balance and poise. The practice of Yoga is a daily purification process, it keeps the mind clean and pure, so that it can reflect Truth. Thus the individual consciousness can withdraw into the background of a greater consciousness. Yoga however is nothing out of touch, but is lived in daily life. Yoga is not a part time job, but a way of life. To read about Yoga doesn't help at all, there

should be an interest in practising. It is a conscious decision to take to the path and not to stop until the awareness of Synthesis is reached.

## THE EIGHT STEPS OF YOGA

According to the Yoga aphorisms of Patanjali the practice of the process comprises eight steps, which are to be followed systematically. Many specialise in some steps, for example body exercises or certain meditations and are satisfied with it. Though essential, this cannot be called yoga.

The first step is called *Yama*, which means regulation - regulating the activity of the mind and body: Regulate the timings of work, food, rest, sleep and then your thoughts.

The second step is *Niyama*, which means rectification - eliminating all what is not required: Eliminate that which is not good for the balance of mind and body. Leave aside foods that are not nutritive though tasteful, and follow a selective way of diet. Even people who are not yoga-students can follow the basic principles of yogic diet and rhythmical life.

The third step is called *Asana*. It should not be confused with the physical asanas, like many yoga-books do; all physical exercises belong to the first two steps. According to Patanjali 'asana' means finding stability in ourselves. The stability is the 'I AM' in us. The 'I AM' in us does not belong to us, but we belong to the 'I AM' and form a part of the light. When we begin to regularly think of the 'I AM' in us, we create an inner centre of action. We act from within and not as a reaction to the environment.

The fourth step is called *Pranayama*. Prana is the pulsation of the vital body. Pranayama is not a controlling of the breath, but the process of regulating the various pulsations in the body. Keep conducting the respiration slow, soft and prolonged, while, at the same time, thinking about your breath in a leisurely fashion. Then the mind learns to live with the breath and restores the rhythm. Step by step the mind learns to live with the pulsation that controls the respiration. - These are the four preliminary steps.

The fifth step is called *Pratyahara* or absorption of the mind and the senses. The word Pratyahara means bringing back or retracing. The sound of the sacred word OM is uttered vocally in a slow, soft and a prolonged manner. The musical spell leads easily and

without concentration to the absorption of the mind and the senses into the higher consciousness via the sound principle.

The sixth step is called *Dharana* and means contemplation or containing the mind by the background consciousness. You should focus the tranquilised mind upon the higher nature of man and the light shining from within. Then focus the same upon 'another thing' until it ceases and you merge with the Presence.

The seventh step is *Dhyana*, meditation in its true sense. The mind, which in Dharana was still directed to an object, is dropped off, and the object of contemplation is the only thing that exists for us. Through contemplation and meditation on the light we can establish contact with our higher selves, it is the Master of our Being. In the daily prayers we will be capable of listening to his will and to conduct our lives in accordance with this will. When we know how we can place our selves under the higher Self, we become capable to take the step to Samadhi.

The eighth step, *Samadhi*, means attainment of oneness, to rule with equanimity over every plane of consciousness. In this state the border between the objective and subjective world disappears, the observer gets absorbed into existence and doesn't exist for anything else but THAT. In the experience of Samadhi there is no time, until you return to the mind. It cannot be described, not even with many words. It is a natural state, be the man in the objective or the subjective world. Just a look or a word of a being with this awareness can transform a man and lift up the imprisoned soul.

Everyone can make himself perfect through the Yoga practice even while living in the world and performing his duties. The success does not lie mainly in a scientific practice of Yoga-rules, but in serving humanity and practising love. It is the absorption of the lower mind into the higher consciousness that is required. Instead of trying to concentrate the mind a yogic student should think of the Master. Then the Master elevates him to the state of meditation, preservation and oneness with the whole creation.

*Sources used: E. Krishnamacharya: The Yoga of Patanjali / Agni Yoga - Yoga of Synthesis.- K.P. Kumar: Sankya. The Sacred Doctrine / seminar notes. The World Teacher Trust - Dhanishta, Visakhapatnam, India (German website: www.kulapati.de)*



**To be spiritual is to be normal**

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