

# ☐☐☐ Yoga

There are many versions of ☐☐☐ Yoga. Some versions of ☐☐☐ Yoga derive from Tantra.

The most subtle and profound version of yoga is covered in the Yoga Vasistha.

I am still learning about the Yoga Vasistha and will put up my detailed thoughts on this at a later date.

The Bhagavad Gita is also a very important ☐☐☐ Yoga.

Just like ☐☐☐ Yoga, the Gita cannot be understood just by reading it.

Just like ☐☐☐ Yoga, the Gita can only be understood by devoted and constant practice of its teachings.

The Gita can be read in less than 4 hours.

You may be able to read the Gita in less than 4 hours, but to understand it and practice it will take many lifetimes and even that is not enough.

Another important but little known yoga is Laya Yoga (Kundalini Yoga).

It is derived from Tantra.

Practitioners of Laya Yoga claim it is a really powerful form of Yoga.

I have also written a small article on Laya Yoga based on the wonderful book I have read by Shyam Sundar Goswami, the founder of the Goswami Institute.

Another form of yoga now gaining popularity is Kriya Yoga.

This is a combination of pranayama (regulated breathing),

mudras, and mantras.

Many people, especially those belonging to the Abrahamic Religions think that योग Yoga is a part of the “Hindu” religion.

**योग Yoga is for all of humanity, it has nothing to do with a particular religion.**

The highest goal of योग Yoga is:

**Oneness or Union with Brahman**

It does not matter which religion you belong to, all religions finally preach the same thing:

**Oneness or Union with Brahman**

Once we discover Oneness with Brahman, we realise our oneness with the whole Universe:

**Sarvam Khalv Idam Brahman**

**All this is God**

To achieve oneness with Brahman, you must practice Yoga to achieve its highest state of dissolution Samadhi, which basically consists of:

समभावः Samathvam or Equanimity

The Bhagavad Gita says in (II.48):

**Such equanimity (समभावः Samathvam) is called Yoga.”**

**समभावः योग उच्यते (Samathvam Yoga Ucyate)**

**What exactly does समभावः Samathvam mean?**

As Shyam Sundar Goswami said in his wonderful book about his named Master’s teaching:

**A yogi can be in the forests of the Himalaya or in a big city;**

**a real yogi is unconcerned with his own environment as he is with himself.**

My summary of Yoga above is in a layman's language simple to understand for today's simple minded lifestyle.

Here is an article of an excellent summary of Yoga by a monk, Acharaya Karunamoya Saraswati, one of Bharat's greatest experts on scriptures of the Sanathan Dharma who lived in the 1940s in Calcutta.

The essence of what I have mentioned above is the same, but it is described in a more profound manner.

The above article by Acharaya Karunamoya Saraswati is extracted from the book by Shyam Sundar Gowsami:

Layayoga: The Definitive Guide to the Chakras and Kundalini

Shyam Sundar Goswami is the founder of the Goswami Institute.

Bharat rose to the greatest of heights only when Yoga was a dominant part of society.

Whenever a true form of Yoga is practiced in a human being no matter of what religion, they reach great heights.

Whenever the majority of residents in a nation practice Yoga, the nation soon becomes Ram Rajya.

### **ASHT ANGA (EIGHT LIMBED )YOGA**

Ashtanga Yoga has gained a lot of popularity, especially in the West.

The Ashtanga Yoga taught today is completely misunderstood.

It is considered a "Hindu" trend for weight loss and relaxation.

**Ashtanga Yoga actually consists of EIGHT(ASHT) LIMBS(ANGA) or paths – ASHTANGA**

It is based on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali who was the compiler of the first treatise of the vast Vedic knowledge on Yoga.

**Ashtanga Yoga** has its roots of more than 5000 years ago.

Patanjali said Yoga consisted of Eight Limbs.

**A person can be said to truly practice yoga only if they follow all the eight(ASHT) limbs (ANGA) or paths – ASHTANGA.**

### **1. Yama (Moral code)**

There is a great meaning to the term Yama. It is a reverse of the term Maya (illusion).

Reverse of Maya (illusion) (MA YA) reverse= YA MA = Yama

You can only realize and merge with  $\text{ Brahman } \text{ if you can get past the charms of Maya (illusion).$

The only way to get past the charms of Maya (illusion) is to reverse it and do its opposite.

Hence the term: **Yama.**

Yama consists of:

- **Ahimsa** – Non-violence in thought, word and deed.
- **Satya** – Truthfulness
- **Asteya** – Non stealing, non greed and non envy
- **Brahmacharya** – Celibacy, fidelity and chastity
- **Aparigraha**– Selflessness and non possessiveness

### **2. Niyama (Virtuous personal behaviour)**

Niyama basically means rules or practices and principles to follow.

- **Saucha**-Purity of mind, body, sound and spirit.
- **Santosha** – Contentment and acceptance of ones condition

and relationships with others

- **Tapas** – Austerity and penance
- **Swadhyaya** – Study of the **ATMA (SELF or consciousness)**.

Some think it means study of Vedas or other religious texts.

Study of the ATMA involves trying to arrive at who you really are?

Not you by your name, ancestry, gender, religion, caste, economic, social status to anything that thinks accurately describes you.

**Study of the ATMA means, study of YOU as Pure Consciousness.**

- **Ishwara Pranidhana** – Focusing and dedicating all attention to Brahman

**3. Asana** – Yoga postures to attain a state of relaxation and mental equilibrium

**4. Pranayama** – Yogic regulation of breath

**5. Pratyahara** – Withdrawal of senses to focus on the ATMA

**6. Dharana** – Focus consistently on a single object without distraction – it could be a mantra, breath, idea or concept.

But according to many experts, focusing solely on the “prana”(life force) is the core path to **Dhyana** (द्वितीय) and this can be achieved by Ujjai Yoga which is a part of Asht Anga yoga.

**7. Dhyana** (द्वितीय) – There is no proper English translation of द्वितीय.

**8. Samadhi** – (Merging into oneness) Merging individual ATMA into the infinite universal consciousness (Brahman).

So finally ASHT ANGA Yoga also achieves the ultimate of all other Yogas:

## **Oneness or Union with Brahman**