

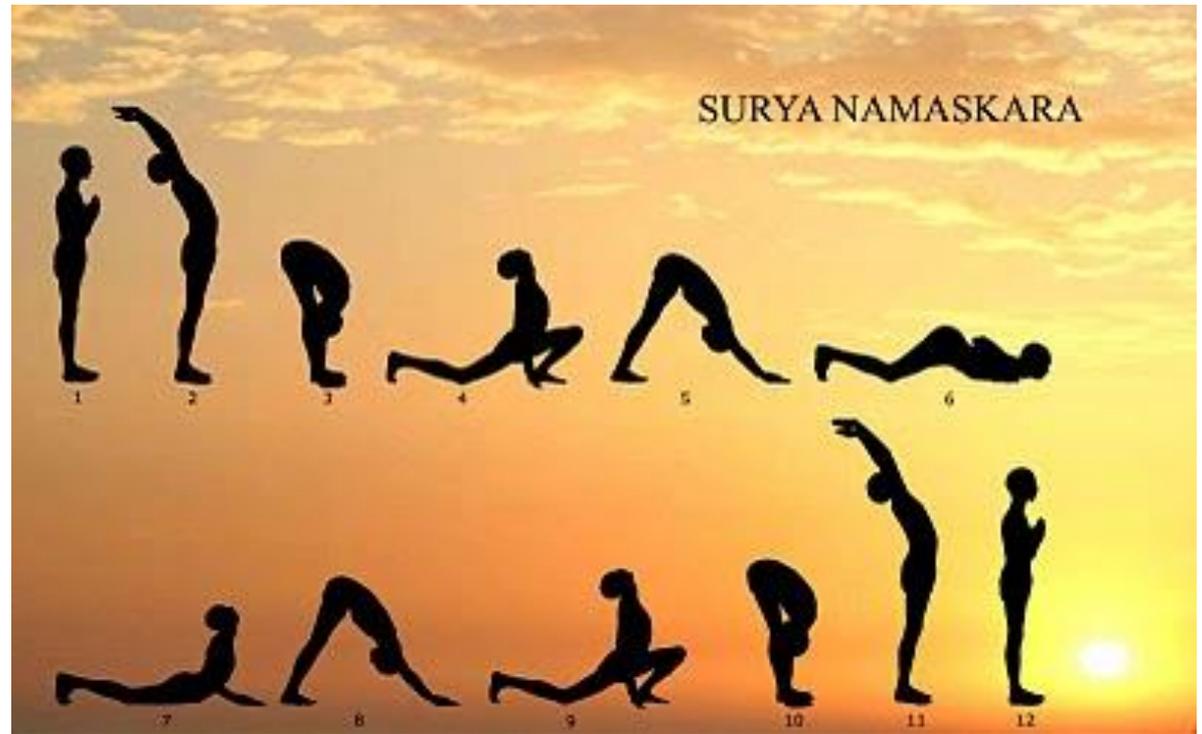
The meaning of yoga

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What is yoga?

- This talk is NOT about physical postures familiar to many under the name of “yoga”.



The root meaning of yoga

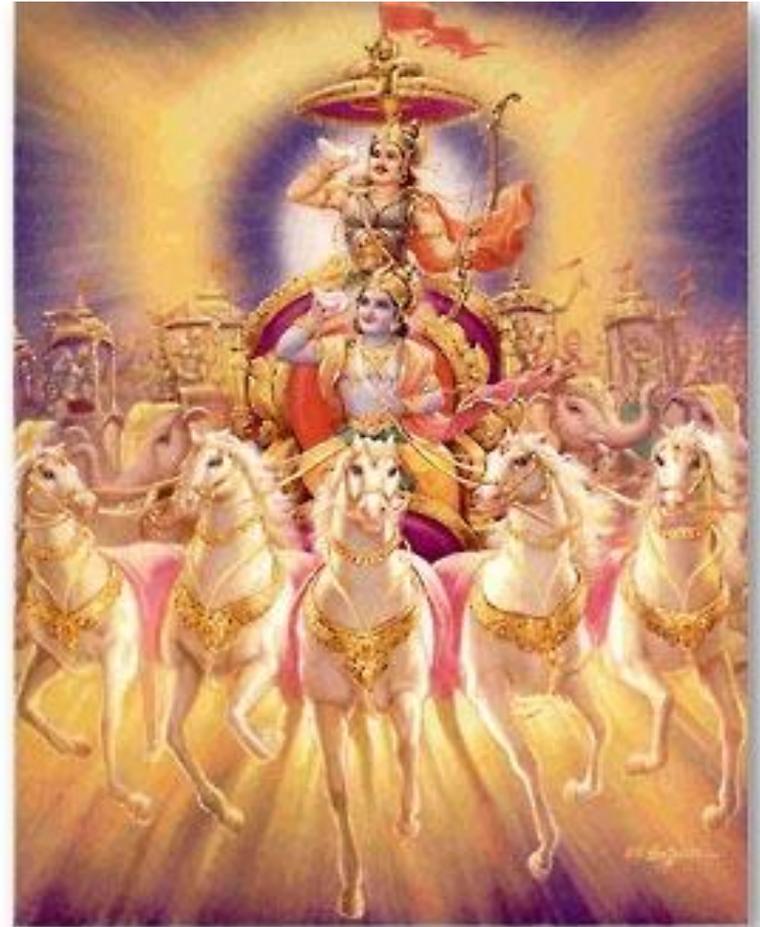
- The word “yoga” is derived from the Sanskrit word “yuj” which means “to yoke”, or “to unify”.
 - In a larger sense it refers to the integration of personality, and is the method of achieving “union within, union without, and union with the ultimate ground.”
 - The average human being has a multitude of thoughts, emotions and energies that are often discordant. Yoga is the method of self-integration.
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We are the eternal mystery

- We are the eternal mystery and our inability to understand life and the world around us emanates from our ignorance of our own mind and its possibilities.
 - We have thoughts but do not know how to think.
 - We experience feelings but do not know how to feel.
 - We perform actions but do not know how to act.
 - We have a mind but know nothing about how it works.
 - Yoga is a method to understand ourselves and realize our higher potential. It is the science of human possibilities and human potentials.
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The imagery of the chariot

- In Indian mythology, one often sees the imagery of the chariot to symbolize the human being and the journey of life.
- The horses represent the energies of the mind and yoga is the unification of these energies.



The four yogas

- At the moment, we are very much victim of our thoughts, emotions, actions and psychic processes.
 - Indian philosophy describes four yogas to integrate these four faculties of the mind.
 - These are:
 - “jnana yoga” or yoga of knowledge,
 - “karma yoga” or yoga of action;
 - “bhakti yoga” or yoga of emotions, and
 - “raja yoga” or yoga of psychic control.
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What is jnana yoga?

- This is the yoga of philosophical inquiry. It is the rational approach to life and its meaning.
 - By inquiry, by asking questions, by reflection, we gain knowledge of the world around us and about ourselves.
 - Note that the Sanskrit word “jnana” and the English word “knowledge” have the root “jna” or “gna”. The Greek word “gnosis” also meaning knowledge has the same root.
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The Upanishads

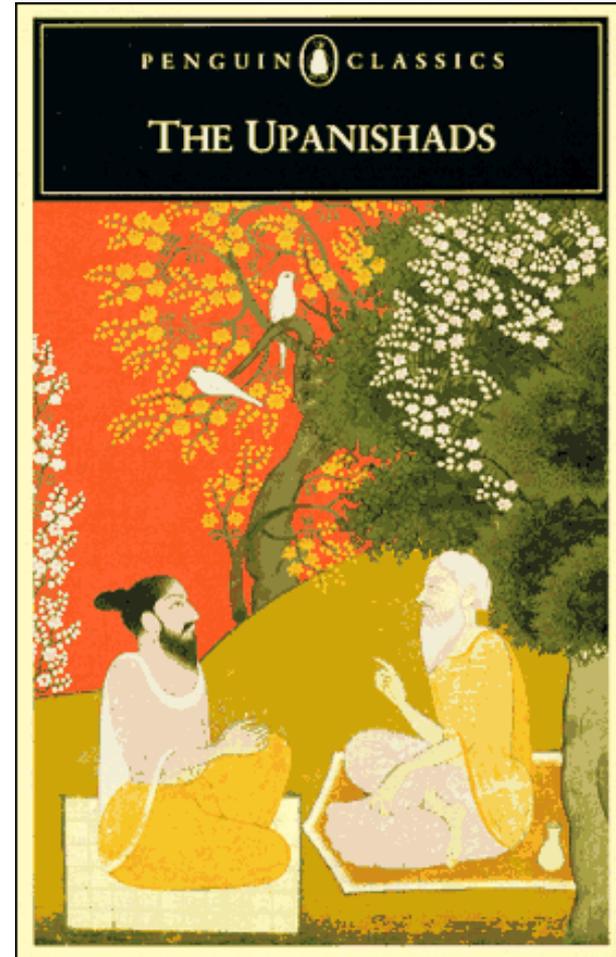
- The foundations of jnana yoga can be found in the Upanishads, texts written in Sanskrit dating back to at least 6th century BCE.
- All of them deal with the nature of reality, the nature of perception and an inquiry into what is mind.
- The universal theme in all of them is that behind the mind-body complex, there is an underlying reality which is pure awareness or pure consciousness (Brahman) which can be experienced through yoga and meditation.



“As the sun radiates light and heat, so does Brahman radiates consciousness and love.”

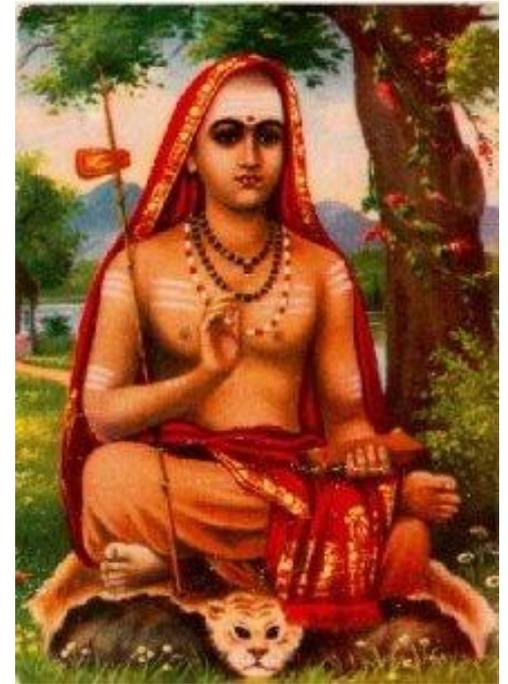
Upa (near) + *ni* (below) + *shad* (sit)

- These are the recorded notes of students sitting “below” or “near” an illumined sage.
- Knowledge cannot be transmitted through books.
- It is transmitted by example, by experience and by life.



Shankara and advaita (non-dualism)

- In his commentary, Shankara begins by asking if there is anything in our experience that we can be certain of.
- This echoes the question of Descartes and Russell.
- Shankara begins by saying “Our senses may deceive us; our memory may be an illusion. The forms of the world may be pure fancy. The objects of knowledge may be open to doubt, but the doubter himself cannot be doubted. ... It cannot be proved because it is the basis of all proof. The self is self-established and is different from all else, physical and mental. As the subject, it is not the object. ... It is undifferentiated consciousness, which remains unaffected even when the body is reduced to ashes and the mind perishes.”



Adi Shankara (8th century CE)

The dream and the dreamer

- The dream depends on the dreamer for its existence. But the dreamer does not depend on the dream.
 - The dream is real as long as the dreamer is dreaming. But not so when the dreamer awakes from the dream. Just as there is a difference in the level of awareness between the dream and awakening, so also is the chasm between the waking state and the enlightened state.
 - This is Shankara's famous mayavada, or the doctrine of illusion. It is often misunderstood as the statement "the world is unreal."
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The snake and the rope

- Shankara says that just as we realize upon awaking that the dream images were simply our imagination, so we will realize that this world was simply our mental projection when we “awake” to the awareness of Brahman.
- “In a dark place, you see a rope, but you are not sure you are seeing a rope. You think you are seeing a snake, a jet of water or some such thing. All these are illusions. There is nothing but a rope and you have the illusion that the rope is a snake.”
- “Because of this illusion, fear comes and a host of other images. The snake has no existence independent of the rope. Similarly, this world has no existence independent of Brahman.” The relationship between the world we see and Brahman is the same as the relationship between the snake and the rope.

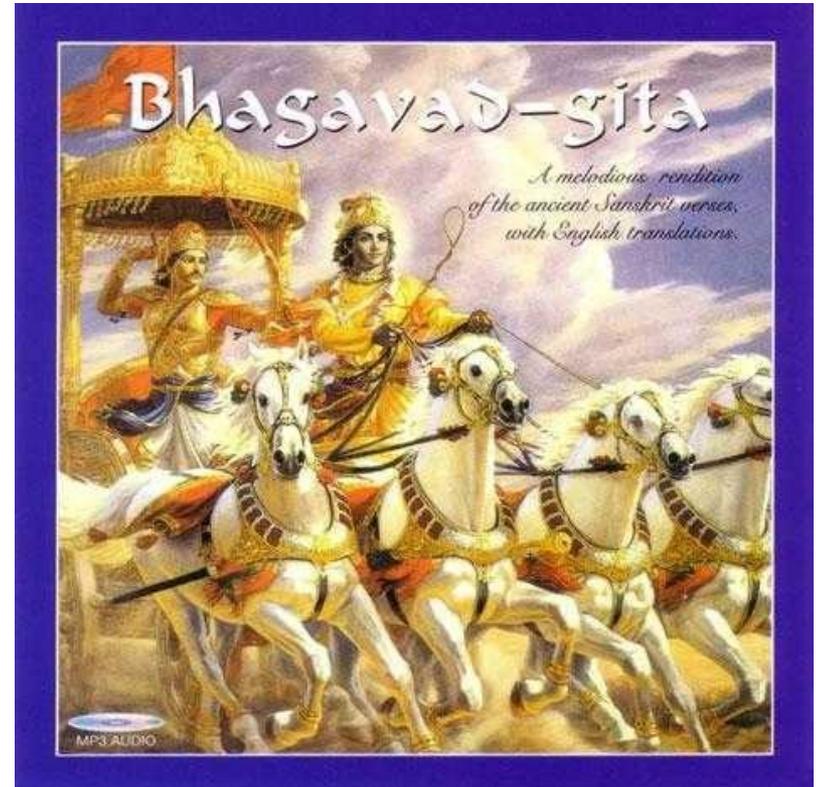


The meaning of “maya”

- We look at the world through our preconceived notions and prejudices. This is the meaning of Shankara’s “maya”.
 - Thus, to mitigate the effect of maya, one needs to approach experience with a detached, objective attitude.
 - This is the essence of jnana yoga, and of course, it is not an intellectual position but must become a matter of experience.
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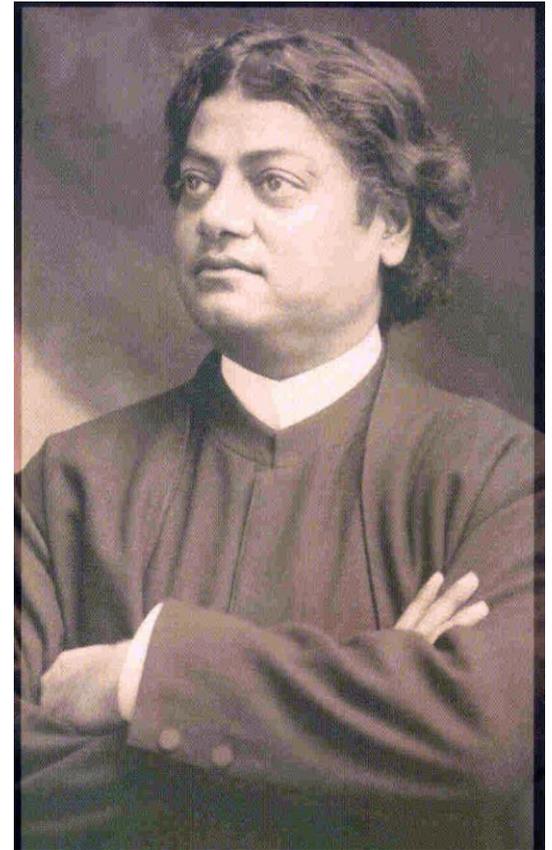
What is karma yoga or the yoga of action?

- We all do work but is there a science of work?
- Most of us do not work in a concentrated way. We fritter away our energies through distraction.
- Is there a way to focus the mind and its energies on the work at hand so that we maximize the desired result and minimize our expenditure of energy?
- This is the essence of karma yoga and it is first treated explicitly as a yoga in the Bhagavadgita (or the Gita for short) written as part of the Mahabharata which is dated around 6th century BCE.
- The Gita is a long dialogue between Krishna (the teacher) and Arjuna (the warrior) in the middle of the battlefield.



Karma yoga

- Karma yoga is one of the brilliant new contributions of the Bhagavadgita. It is not found in the Upanishads explicitly.
- The best introduction to Karma yoga is given by the 19th century philosopher, Vivekananda.
- It is good to begin with Vivekananda's explanation of the meaning of Karma yoga.
- “The word *karma* is derived from the Sanskrit *kri* meaning “to do”; all action is karma. Technically, the word also means the effects of actions. In connection to metaphysics, it sometimes means the effects of which our past actions were the causes. But in karma yoga, we have simply to do with the word *karma* as meaning work.”

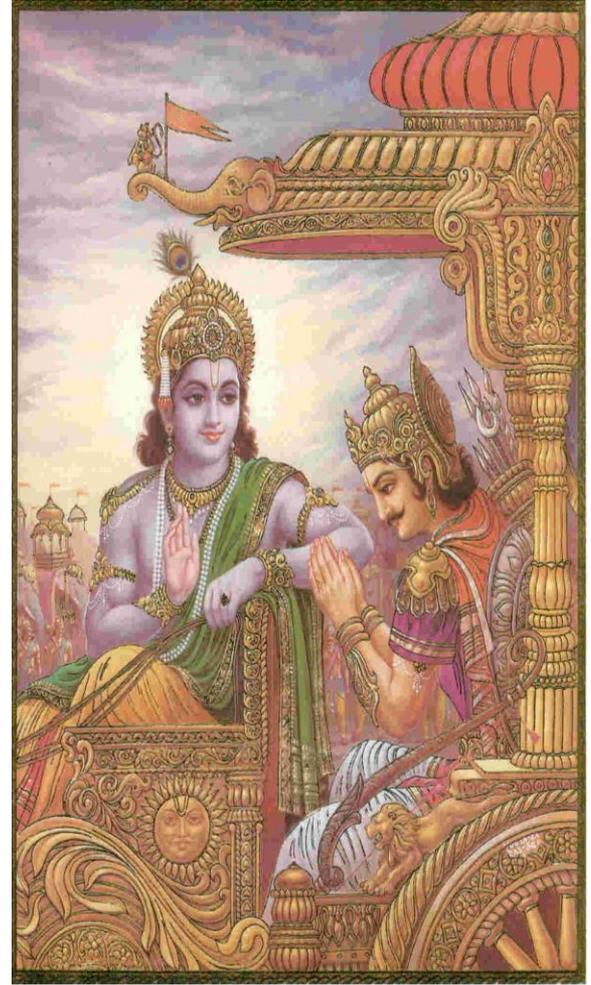




- “Thus we are all doing karma all the time. I am talking to you; that is karma. You are listening; that is karma. We breathe, that is karma. Everything we do, physical or mental, is karma and it leaves its marks on us.”
- “We are responsible for what we are; and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in the future can be produced by our present actions; so we have to know how to act.”
- “There is such a thing as frittering away our energies. With regard to karma yoga, the Gita says that it is doing work with cleverness and as a science, by knowing how to work, one can obtain the greatest results.”

Krishna teaches in the Gita

- “In the path of karma yoga, no effort is ever lost and no obstacle prevails. Even a little practice of this yoga saves one from great fear. The resolute understanding is single. Thoughts of the irresolute are many-branched and endless.”
- “Firmly fix the thought on the Supreme Self, and relinquish all selfish desire. To action alone, you have the right, but not to the fruits of action. Don’t let the fruits of action be your motive. Neither should you be attached to inaction. Fixed in this yoga, do your work, abandoning attachment and being even minded in both success and failure. Evenness of mind is called yoga.
- *Yoga samatvam ucyate*



The first steps of karma yoga

- The first step in karma yoga is to fix the thought on the realization of the Supreme Self. Thus, the teaching of the Upanishads is made the foundation on which the yoga is built. The foundation of karma yoga is the yoga of knowledge, or jnana yoga.
 - The second step is to act but not with a selfish motive. If we examine our life, we find it is full of self-interest. How can we work if we are not motivated by self-interest?
 - Does this mean we should abandon work? Krishna emphatically says no. You should not resort to inaction either. The ideal is to work with an evenness of mind, in both success and failure. Is this possible?
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Vivekananda gives a personal view



- “I have been asked many times how we can work if we do not have the passion which we generally feel for work. I also thought in that way years ago, but as I am growing older, getting more experience, I find it is not true. The less passion there is, the better we work.”
- “The calmer we are, the better for us, and the more amount of work we can do. When we let loose our feelings, we waste so much energy, shatter our nerves, disturb our minds, and accomplish very little work. The energy which ought to have gone out as work is spent as mere feeling, which counts for nothing.”
- “It is only when the mind is very calm and collected that the whole of its energy is spent in doing good work. ... The man who gives way to anger, or hatred, or any other passion, cannot work; he only breaks himself to pieces, and does nothing practical. It is the calm, forgiving, equable, well-balanced mind that does the greatest amount of work.”

Krishna continues



“Action should be guided by intelligence, not by self-interest. One who has joined himself to *buddhi*, or illumined reason, and works, is said to be skillful in action. Yoga is said to be this skill in action.”

Yogah karmasu kausalam.

In these verses, Krishna outlines his theory of work and gives two definitions of yoga. The first is evenness of mind and the second is skill in action. Both of these attitudes have to be combined to gain a proper understanding of this philosophy of work. At the same time, we must not be attached to the fruits of our work.

This is the essence of karma yoga.

Bhakti yoga or the yoga of devotion

- This can be said to be the 2nd main contribution of the Gita to the world's philosophical thought. In these verses, Krishna assimilates in a masterly way all dualistic views into the non-dualistic framework.
 - As long as one thinks of oneself as an embodied being, a dualistic view will intervene no matter how hard we try to avoid it. One need not lament about that. The essential thing is “to have no ill-will towards anyone, to be free from egotism, to be even-minded in pain and pleasure.” This is the essence of devotion.
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Vivekananda on bhakti yoga

- “The one great advantage of bhakti is that it is the easiest and the most natural way to reach the great divine end in view; its great disadvantage is that in its lower forms it oftentimes degenerates into hideous fanaticism.”
 - However, if we are able to transcend this stage, then “no more is there any fear of these hideous manifestations of fanaticism; that soul which is overpowered by this higher form of bhakti is too near the God of Love to become an instrument for the diffusion of hatred.”
-

Hanuman in Tulsidas Ramayana on bhakti

- *shri nathe janaki nathe abhede paramatmani
tathapi mama sarvasvam ramah kamala-locana*
 - “I know that Vishnu and Rama are manifestations of the same Supreme Being; still my devotion is to the lotus-eyed Rama.” (Prema Bhakti Chandrika, verse 29)
 - *Ekam sat vipra bahudah vadanti* (Rig Veda, verse 164)
 - “That which exists is One, sages call it by various names.”
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The direction of emotional energy

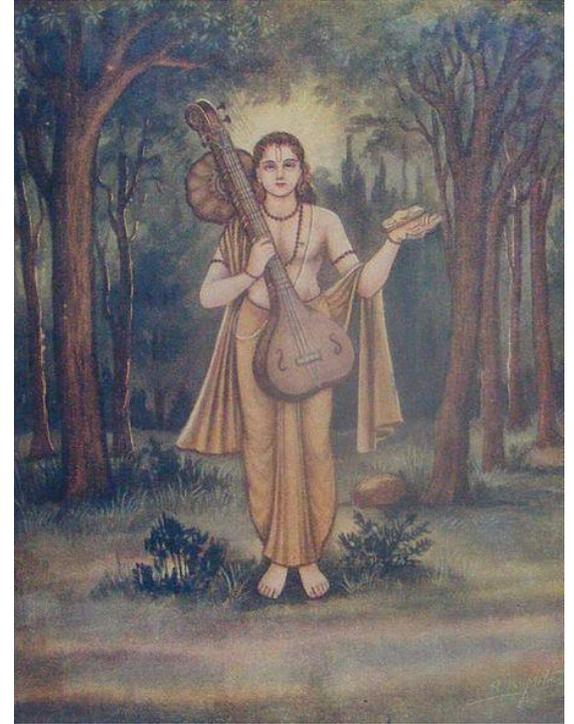
- One of the essential features of bhakti yoga is the direction of our emotional energy to a higher ideal.
 - All dualistic religions of the world fit into this framework.
 - Even art, literature and music are seen as creative expressions of emotional energy.
 - All religions are expressions of the human being aspiring towards a divine ideal.
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The need for a variety of symbols and images

- It is natural for the human mind to think in terms of symbols and images.
 - Commenting on this, Vivekananda humorously writes, “If buffaloes want to worship God, they will, in keeping with their own nature see God as a huge buffalo; if a fish wants to worship God, it will have to form an idea of God as a big fish. ... Man, buffalo, fish all may be supposed to represent so many different vessels and all these vessels go to the sea of God to get filled with water, each according to its own shape and capacity ... in each of these vessels there is the same water of the sea of God ... so we cannot help seeing God in human form and therefore are bound to worship in that form.”
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The history of the bhakti tradition

- Though bhakti yoga appears as a chapter in the Gita, the tradition has earlier roots.
- Narada Bhakti Sutras give an exposition of bhakti yoga and describes it as the easiest path to enlightenment.
- In Raja Yoga, devotion to those who have succeeded on the spiritual path is emphasized in its philosophy of Isvara which will be explained later.



Narada

Harikatha

- As part of the ancient bhakti tradition, there were wandering minstrels reciting stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata from time immemorial.
- This art form is called harikatha.



Hari kirtan of Chaitanya (15th century)

Raja Yoga of Patanjali

- Patanjali's Yoga Sutras were written around the 2nd century B.C.
 - The philosophy is a discipline for the mind. It suspends metaphysical speculation and focuses on meditation and psychic control.
 - It is also called raja yoga, the kingly path, and is one of the four yogas of the Gita.
 - Rightly viewed, raja yoga includes all of the other yogas.
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How does knowledge arise?

- Knowledge arises from concentration of mind.
 - Vivekananda writes with his characteristic humor, “Every science must have its own method of investigation. If you want to become an astronomer and sit down and cry “Astronomy! Astronomy!” it will never come to you. The same with chemistry. A certain method must be followed. You must go to the laboratory, take different substances, mix them up and compound them, experiment with them and out of that will come a knowledge of chemistry.”
 - “If you want to be an astronomer, you must go to an observatory, take a telescope, study the stars and planets, and then you will become an astronomer.”
 - “It is comparatively easy to observe facts in the external world, for many instruments have been invented for that purpose, but in the internal world, we have no instrument to help us. ... The science of raja yoga proposes to give such a means ... the instrument is the mind itself.”
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Mental modifications

- The first verse in the treatise is: *yoga chitta vritti nirodah*. Yoga is the restraint of mental modifications.
 - That is, yoga is the control of thoughts and feelings.
 - “They are restrained by practice and non-attachment (abhyasa and vairagya). Practice is repeated effort. ... It becomes firm when it has been cultivated for a long time, with earnest devotion. Non-attachment is self-mastery.”
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States of mind

- Patanjali writes that the human is usually in one of five general states: wandering (ksipta), forgetful (mudha), occasionally steady or distracted (viksipta), one-pointed (ekagrata) and restrained (niruddha).
 - The last two are referred to as higher levels of awareness.
 - Normally, our mind is in the first three states.
 - The highest state Patanjali refers to as samadhi, or perfect understanding.
 - It is said to be of two kinds: with image (savikalpa) and without image (nirvikalpa).
 - The last stage is characterized by the fact that there is no thought wave in the mind, it is perfectly still, and supremely aware of itself.
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Concentration

- “Concentration upon a single object may reach four stages: examination or questioning (vitarka), reflection or discernment (vichara), joyful peace (ananda), and unqualified egoism.”
 - Examination or inquiry refers to isolating what is to be attended to. The first step in concentrating the mind is to determine what to concentrate it on, to prioritize, to isolate the task before us and then, to begin.
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Questioning as a means to concentration

- Quest and question are cognate words. In our quest for knowledge of the external or internal world, we may begin by questioning. Through proper questioning, the mind is concentrated.
 - If we stop this questioning because the question is difficult, the mind slips back into the distracted state, a state with which we are all familiar with.
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Refinement of questioning

- However, if we focus the mind by refining our questioning, then this leads to finer knowledge. As one reflects on this finer knowledge, one experiences a “joyful peace.”
 - This is the “Eureka” moment, or what is called a “peak experience” in modern psychology. It is accompanied by a feeling, “I understand.”
 - Beyond this stage is that of “unqualified egoism”, where one experiences the sense of “I” without any object. This is reminiscent of the state Buddha experienced before he attained nirvana.
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Aids to concentration

- “Concentration is achieved through faith, energy, recollection, absorption, and illumination.”
 - Faith is two-fold; we must have faith in our ability and we must have faith that the goal can be attained.
 - When we examine our mind, we find a powerful undercurrent of “background thought.” The early stages of concentration can be viewed as “house-cleaning”, when we remove gross distractions.
 - External distractions are easier to remove than internal distractions.
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Internal obstacles are psychological

- “Internal obstacles arise from feeling incompetent for the task. They are slowly removed by repeated effort and energy.”
 - “Studying the experiences of others who have succeeded energizes the mind.” This is called recollection.
 - By recollection, concentration is sustained.
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The river of knowledge or Isvara

- “The mighty river of teaching can be traced back to immemorial time. Isvara is the Teacher of even the ancient teachers, being not limited by time. Its manifesting word is Om.”
 - “The mind can be gathered and focused by awareness of the principle of Isvara.
 - Here then, we find the value of study. Study gathers the mind. Life inspires life. The study of great lives energizes the mind and gathers it for the purpose of concentration.
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What is gained by this devotion?

- “All mental obstacles are destroyed by this devotion.”
 - This is a departure from the methods of modern psychoanalysis. Mental obstacles are not destroyed by direct confrontation, but rather by devotion to “the mighty river of teaching and example.”
 - When we give attention to anything, that very thing becomes magnified. The way to diminish mental obstacles, according to Patanjali, is to keep focused on the goal “through devotion to Isvara”.
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What are the mental obstacles?

- “Disease, mental laziness, indecision, carelessness, sloth, sensuality, mistaken notion, missing the point, and instability cause distraction of the mind.”
 - In this system, once the goal has been fixed to concentrate the mind, the ethical and moral principles become corollaries. They are an aid to concentration. They are not the goal.
 - “Undisturbed calmness of mind is attained by cultivating friendliness towards the happy, compassion to the unhappy, delight in the virtuous, and indifference to the wicked.”
 - Our relationships with others do have an effect on the mind. Ethical and moral principles are to minimize these disturbances and keep the mind calm.
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Breathing and the mind

- Patanjali offers another method for calming the mind, namely, rhythmic breathing. This is called pranayama, or the regulation of the breathing.
 - When our mind is disturbed, the breathing becomes irregular. At such moments, Patanjali says to sit alone and calm oneself by rhythmic breathing.
 - Once the mind has been calmed, it is fit to begin meditation on a single idea such as the “light within” or the “illuminated being” or “pure awareness.”
 - Concentration can also be achieved by fixing the mind on a divine form or symbol.
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“As one thinks, so one becomes”

- As the mind learns to contemplate, it becomes subtle and at the same time, wide in its vision.
 - “As one thinks, so one becomes.”
 - “Becoming like a transparent crystal, on the modifications disappearing, the mind acquires the power of thought transformation (samapatti), the power of appearing in the shape of whatever object is presented to it, be it the knower, the knowable or the act of knowing.”
 - The comparison is made to a piece of crystal. The crystal becomes colored by the object placed before it. Similarly, the mind becomes colored by the thought or idea it holds.
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Sabda, artha and jnana

- As the mind holds a thought, it comes into contact with the matrix of associations represented by the idea.
 - This contact has three aspects: word (sabda), meaning (artha) and knowledge (jnana), or deeper meaning. In the early stages of meditation, these three are mingled together and the mind is not able to separate them.
 - As one goes deeper, the mind can separate and see the “meaning” alone or the “meaning of the meaning.”
 - This ultimately leads to the “seedless samadhi”.
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Ashtanga yoga

- The method to reach the higher level of awareness is the eight-limbed yoga, or *ashtanga yoga*.
 - The eight limbs are: restraints (yamas), observances (niyamas), posture (asana), regulation of breath (pranayama), drawing in the senses (pratyahara), concentration (dharana), meditation (dhyana) and transcendence (samadhi).
 - The restraints are five: non-injury (ahimsa), truthfulness (satyam), non-stealing (asteya), chastity (brahmacharya), and non-possession (aparigraha).
 - These five embody ethical principles and bring calmness to the mind, making it fit for meditation. They are observances of the mind.
 - Each is observed at three levels, thought, word and deed.
 - Non-possession refers to the human tendency of being greedy, grasping, or extending the “tentacles of selfishness.”
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Niyama

- Observances (niyama) are five in number: cleanliness (sauca), contentment (santosha), austerity (tapas), study (svadhyaya), and devotion to Isvara (isvarapranidhana).
 - By study, one means also the study of one's own mind. This consists in reflection and introspection. Perfection in this gives one greater control of mind.
 - “Devotion to Isvara” means awareness of the “river of Teaching”, since time immemorial. One becomes quite aware of this as background thought.
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The manipulation of one's own mind

- “To obstruct thoughts which are inimical to yoga, contrary thoughts should be brought.”
 - Vivekananda explains: “If a big wave of anger has come into the mind, how are we to control that? Just by raising the opposite wave. Think of love. Sometimes a mother is very angry with her husband, and while in that state, the baby comes in, and she kisses the baby; old waves die out and a new wave arises, love for the child.”
 - This is seen in daily life. Suppose you are disturbed. Someone you like walks in, and brings you exciting news. The mood changes immediately, not gradually.
 - Patanjali advocates this principle to manipulate both thought and feeling.
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Posture (asana) and breathing (pranayama)

- These two steps have been expanded upon by the yogis over the centuries into a system of stretching exercises. Today they are called hatha yoga.
 - The main idea is to keep the spinal column straight. The reason for this is that during meditation, nerve currents do get displaced and there is quite a lot of activity along the spinal column.
 - In more practical terms, we can see a relationship between posture and mood. When we slouch, it is not only bad for the back, but slowly, the mind becomes sluggish. Thus, by controlling posture, we may control the mind. That is the idea.
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Pratyahara or restraint of sense organs

- Restraint of sense organs is to be combined with concentration (dharana).
 - When we contemplate an abstract idea, we automatically withdraw the senses from the external world. The outgoing tendency of the mind must be restrained.
 - When we sit to do creative work, we find we are unable to start. This is restlessness of the mind. The best way to eliminate it is simply to begin the work at hand. Through effort, restlessness disappears.
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The restless monkey



- Vivekananda relates the following story.
- “The mind has been often compared to a monkey. There was a monkey restless by his own nature, as all monkeys are.”
- “As if that were not enough, someone made him drink freely of wine, so that he became more restless.”
- “Then a scorpion stung him. When a man is stung by a scorpion, he jumps about for a whole day; so the poor monkey found his condition worse than ever.”
- “To complete his misery, a demon entered into him. What language can describe the uncontrollable restlessness of that monkey?”
- “The human mind is like that monkey, incessantly active by its own nature. Then it becomes drunk with the wine of desire, increasing its turbulence.”
- “After desire takes possession comes the sting of the scorpion of jealousy at the success of others, and last of all the demon of pride enters the mind, making it think itself of all importance.”
- “How hard to control such a mind.”

The role of creative work

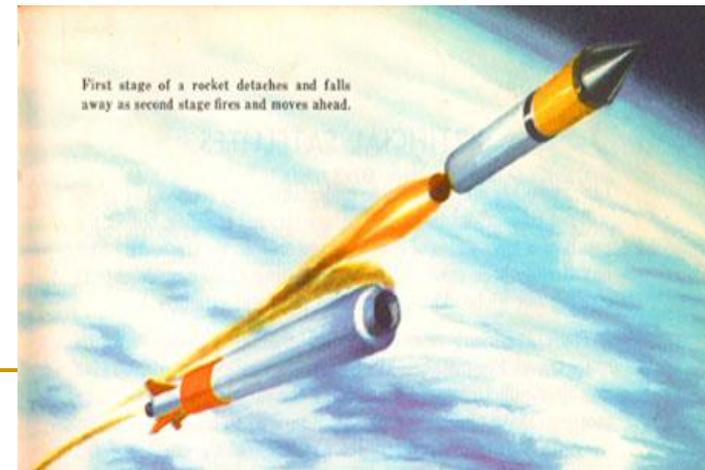
- According to Patanjali, the best way to deal with restlessness of the mind is to put it in creative work and keep it engaged.
 - Another way is to watch the bubbling of thoughts in a detached way and slowly, as one observes them, the oscillations decrease.
 - Pratyahara is not to identify with the thought wave as it rises, but to watch it.
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Dharana and dhyana

- “Dharana is holding the mind on to some particular object or idea. An unbroken flow of knowledge in that object or idea is dhyana.”
 - Dharana is concentration and dhyana is continued concentration.
 - Many times, we find the mind becomes concentrated and inspired but has a tendency of not staying in that state for too long.
 - In dharana, we try to increase the stamina for sustained concentration.
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Samadhi or total absorption

- The final stage is samadhi.
- Patanjali writes that the three, dharana, dhyana and samadhi, comprise samyama and are to be taken together.
- The process has been compared to the trajectory of a three stage rocket, where the lower stages drop off at an appropriate time and the rocket can be propelled into the higher reaches of space.



What is samadhi?

- According to Patanjali, all spiritual personalities have either attained the state of samadhi or approximated it. Without a systematic self-discipline, some have stumbled upon it.
 - Vivekananda writes, “There is a great danger in stumbling upon this state. In a good many cases, there is the danger of the brain being deranged and as a rule, you will find that all those men, however great they were, who had stumbled upon the superconscious state without understanding it, groped in the dark and generally had, along with their knowledge, some quaint superstition.”
 - “To get any reason out of the mass of incongruity we call human life, we have to transcend reason, but we must do it scientifically, slowly, by regular practice, and we must cast off all superstition.”
 - “We must take up the study of the superconscious just as any other science. On reason, we must lay our foundation; we must follow reason as far as it leads, and when reason fails, reason itself will show us the way to the highest plane.”
 - “When you hear a man say, “I am inspired” and then he talks irrationally, reject it. Why? Because these three states – instinct, reason, and superconsciousness, belong to one and the same mind. ... Instinct develops into reason, reason into transcendental consciousness. Real inspiration never contradicts reason, but fulfils it.”
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Later developments of Patanjali's Yoga

- Patanjali's yoga sutras are an early attempt at the scientific study of the human mind.
 - Patanjali cautions that the approach must be scientific, guided by reason and experience.
 - Its methods and techniques can be applied by everyone.
 - Later, this system was absorbed into Vedanta as part of the four-fold yoga.
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The synthesis of the yogas

- Krishna makes a final appeal, echoing his earlier message of verses 30 and 31 of the 3rd chapter.
 - *Mayi sarvani karmani samnyasya dhyatmacetasa nirasir nirmamo bhutva yudhasva vigatajvarah*
 - *Ye me matam idam nityam anutisthanti manavah sraddhavanto nasuyanto mucyante te'pi karmabhih.*
 - “Resigning all your works to Me, with your consciousness fixed in the Self, being free from desire and egotism, fight, free from any mental fever. This is my philosophy of life, and whoever follows this teaching will also be released from the bondage of work.”
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The essence of the Gita

- These two verses contain the essence of the Gita. The human mind has four faculties: thinking, feeling, willing and restraining. Just as thinking can be taken to a higher state as illumined reason, so also feeling, willing, restraining can be taken to higher levels.
- The method for raising each faculty to a higher state is called yoga. The four yogas, jnana, bhakti, karma and raja, correspond to the four faculties of the mind, namely thinking, feeling, willing and restraining.
- When Krishna refers to “my philosophy of life,” he means the four-fold combination of all these yogas.
- This is his masterly stroke. This is his magnificent synthesis of all philosophical thought. The human brain should not be developed in a one-sided fashion but must be exercised in this four-fold way giving a higher expression to each of its four faculties.

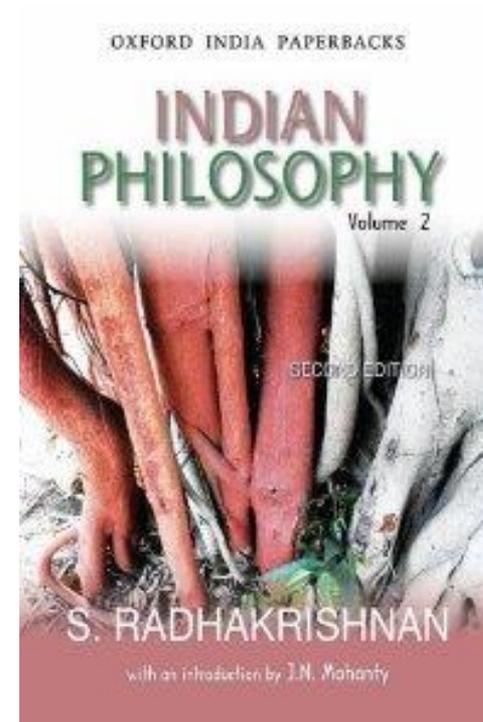
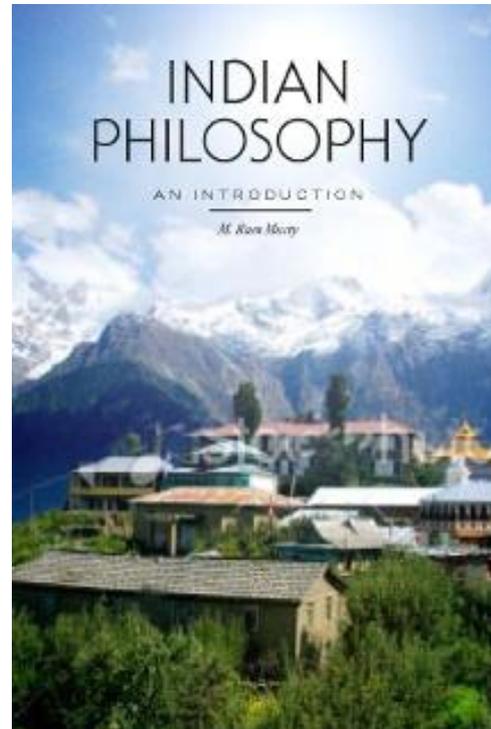
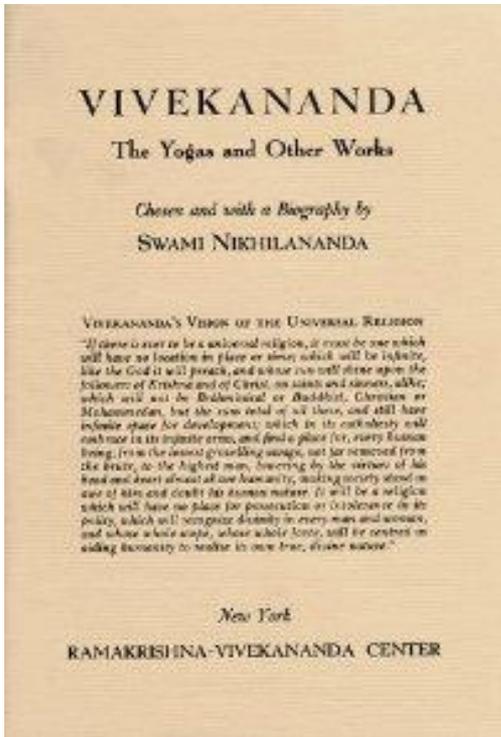


Vivekananda designed this swan-serpent symbol to illustrate the synthesis of the four yogas

Summary

- “Each soul is potentially divine.
 - The goal is to manifest this divinity by controlling nature, external and internal.
 - Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control or philosophy – by one, or more, or all of these and be free.
 - This is the whole of religion.
 - Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals or books, or temples or forms are but secondary details.”
 - *-Vivekananda*
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References



- The Bhagavadgita is also a good reference since it is often considered as a synthesis of all yogas.