

# YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI

## A Guide to Self-knowledge

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विभूति पादः  
VIBHŪTI-PĀDAḤ

न च तत्सालम्बनम तस्याविषयीभूतत्वात् ॥ २० ॥

२०. na ca tat-sālabanaṁ tasyāviṣayī-bhūtatvāt

*na – not*

*ca – and*

*did – this*

*sālabana – with the support*

*tasya – whose*

*aviṣayī – absent*

*bhūtatvāt – become, really happened*

*But the object of thought is not an object of observation.*

Reading someone's individual thoughts, however, is not in a yogi's interest. But they recognise what is going on in a person's consciousness, whether they have positive or negative tendencies, fears or complexes.

कायरूपसभयसात्तद्ग्राह्यशक्तिस्तम्भे चक्षुःप्रकाशासम्प्रयोगेऽन्तर्धानम् ॥ २१ ॥

## २१. kāya-rūpa-saṁyamāt-tad-grāhya-śakti-stambhecakṣuḥ-prakāśāsamprayoge 'ntardhānam

*kāya – body*

*rūpa – form*

*saṁyama – self-control*

*tad – this*

*grāhya – to receive*

*śakti – power*

*stambha – attachment, immobility*

*cakṣuḥ – eye*

*prakāśa – light*

*asamprayoga – not connection*

*antaradhāna – disappearance, invisibility*

**Through *samyama* on one's own body, the connection of light to the eye can be cut off, so that it becomes invisible to others.**

It is possible to develop the *siddhi* of making oneself invisible at will. If one can control the *prāna-shakti* by means of meditation and *prāṇāyāma* (a detailed explanation follows in *sūtra* 40), one attains this ability. This is called body-*samyama*. This process cannot be explained. Only by mastering concentration, meditation and *samādhic* can this "miraculous power" be developed.

एतेन शब्दाद्यन्तर्धानमुक्तम् ॥ २२ ॥

## 22. etenaśabdādyantardhānamuktam

*etena (etad) – through these*

*śabda – word*

*adi – other*

*antaradhāna – disappearance, invisibility*

*uktam – described, explained*

**In this way, sounds and other sensory perceptions can also be switched off.**

Just as the yogi suppresses visual appearance, through *samyama* they can also suppress the perception of other sensations, from sounds to pain.

सोपक्रमभ निरुपक्रमभ च कर्मतत्सभयमादपरान्तज्ञानमरिष्टेयोवा ॥ २३ ॥

23. **sopakramaṁnirupakramaṁ ca karma tatsaṁyamād-aparānta-jñānamariṣṭebhyovā**

*sopakrama = sa-upakrama – immediately manifested*

*nirupakrama – not yet manifested*

*karma – deed, action, act of fate*

*tat – this*

*saṁyamāt – through practice of absorption*

*aparānta – death*

*jñāna – knowledge*

*ariṣṭa – unfavourable omen, sign of death*

*vā – or*

**Through *samyama* on the manifested and on the not yet manifested *karma* as well as through observation of omens, the knowledge of one's own hour of death arises.**

Through this ability, the meditator can recognise which *karmas* influence their present life and which will still unfold their effect in the future. One who has this *siddhi* knows about the cause and effect of fate, and also foresees future developments by gaining insight into the *karmas* that are already present but are currently still "asleep". Through this knowledge, it becomes possible for them to take action to change destiny.

Likewise, through this *siddhi*, the Yogi also becomes aware of the nature and hour of their own death. Śrī Mahāprabhuji announced the day and hour of their departure from the world a year before, and it came to pass just as they have predicted.

Have you ever thought about what will happen to you – to the self that lives within you – after death? In Prague I saw painted on a house an old German saying, "We build here so firmly, and yet here we are only guests, but where we are to be eternal we build in so little." Have you ever thought of making yourself a comfortable "abode" for the next life? A wise man makes provision for it by a spiritual life and good deeds.

मैत्र्यादिषु बलानि ॥ २४ ॥

#### 24. maitryādiṣubalāni

*maitrī – friendship, love, kindness, friendliness*  
*ādi – others*  
*balāni – powers*

Through **samyama on love and other virtues, corresponding powers develop.**

There are three "good" *siddhis* (see also *sūtra*33 in the *Samādhi-Pāda*):

- *maitrī* – love, kindness, benevolence
- *karunā* – kindness, mercy, compassion
- *muditā* – selfless joy, "fellow-joy"

#### MAITRĪBHĀVANA

Some people are liked by everyone, and everyone is happy to meet them. Conversely, there are people whose proximity everyone avoids as much as possible. On what does this depend? When a person feels loving-kindness, friendship and brotherhood towards all living beings, they develop an aura that causes everyone to love them and seek their nearness.

First you must give love – practice this day by day and start today! Even if others are unkind to you, treat them as friends. To speak or think ill of someone is an expression of arrogance, because you think you are better than the one you criticise. Where do you get the right to judge others? Every negative thought about others is self-poisoning. You absorb the bad qualities that you denounce in others.

The teaching of *karma* is that when you think good things about someone, their positive qualities and *karmas* flow to you.

If, on the other hand, you think and speak negatively, you burden yourself with the other person's bad *karma*. Conversely, if someone speaks badly about you, they take away your bad *karma* and your burden is lessened – so basically, you benefit. If someone praises you, you are also happy that you can share some of your good *karma* with others.

Practise *maitrī-bhāvana* for half a year and you will see people approaching you kindly and placing you in high esteem. When you are sad and lonely and think that no one likes you, do not fall into such weak thoughts, but exude love, and you will not remain alone for long.

## KARUNĀ-BHĀVANA

Practice kindness, understanding and forgiveness daily, especially toward those who are thought to be bad or guilty. A sense of duty and patience only prove themselves in difficult situations. You cannot be sure of a friend's or partner's loyalty and sincerity until they prove themselves in hard times. In good times, many call themselves your friends. When things go bad for you, few remain by your side. A true friend, however, stands by you at all times and holds your hand tightly. It is the same with your life partner. If you have problems and just then your partner leaves you, the partnership was not genuine. The pain of the one who leaves follows the one who left. One day they will experience even more pain than they have caused. This is the law of *karma*.

Give your understanding especially to those who suffer. Help the helpless, the desperate, those abandoned and condemned by all. Through this exercise, your heart expands to the ocean of mercy. Bless everyone who seeks help and refuge with you, and your blessing will be effective.

MUDITĀ BHĀVANA is the pure, unselfish joy in the happiness and well-being of others and brings you into contact with the pure beings of the spiritual planes.