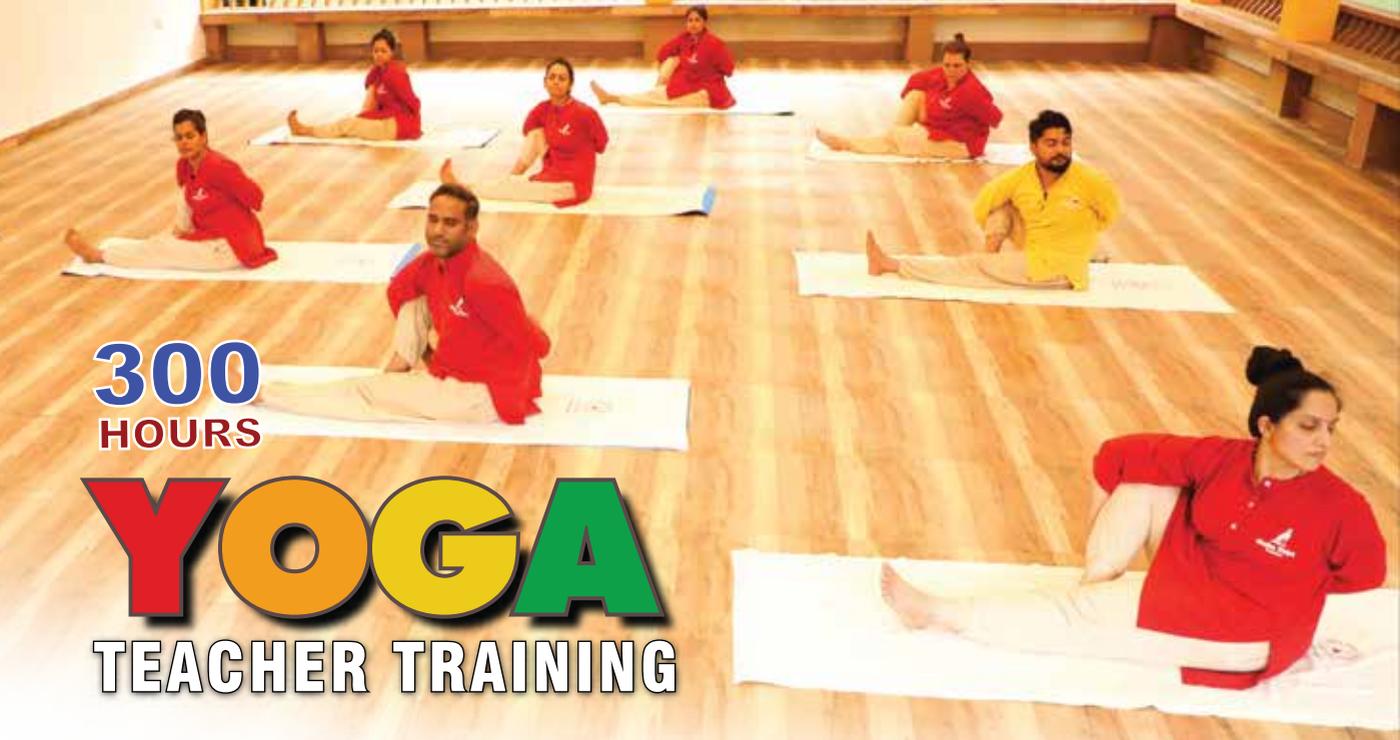


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*Dhyāna-Moolam Gurur-Murthih
Pujā-Moolam Gurur-Padam |
Mantra-Moolam Gurur-Vākyam
Moksha-Moolam Gurur-Kripa ||*

*The Root of Meditation is the Form of the Guru,
The Root of Worship is the Feet of the Guru,
The Root of Mantra is the Word of the Guru,
The Root of Liberation is the Grace of the Guru.*



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From

The Editor's Desk

From Body to Supreme Consciousness

“tasmaat sarvaprayatnena prabodhayitumeeswarim
brahmadvaaramukhe suptaam mudraabhyaasam samaacharet”

- HP 3/5

“Hence, with all possible efforts, the practice of Mudra should be performed ritually to arouse that dormant Kundalini energy in the Brahmadvaram, which is the Eeswari or the consciousness.”

Mudras are mentioned in the yoga shastras to effortlessly attain the union of the body with the mind. Ancient sages in India had discovered that, just as the thoughts and emotions are reflected through the Mudras and the body, thoughts and expressions can be produced in our minds in the same way. As Mudras are used for communicating an idea in dance forms, tantra and medical sciences utilize it for inducing spiritual thought processes in our mind.

Mudra is that which gives happiness (Mudam raati dadaati iti Mudra). This happiness reflects in the consciousness. The use of Mudras helps to transcend the bodily consciousness and provides the sadhak an equal experience of both prosperity and liberation. With the practice of Pancha dharana mudras (Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether), the sadhak who has attained the Bhuta jaya siddhi (control over the five elements) can experience oneness with the Universe. As mentioned in the authentic texts, the practice of Mudras which produces results in the subtle levels of the body, should be learned secretly from a competent master.

However today, “hashta mudras” (hand mudras) which is widely used in hatha yoga is not actually a part of it. To awaken the Kundalini, hatha yoga advises using 10 types of Mudras. This should be learnt directly under the guidance of a Guru. Hashta mudras has its own importance and use. But it is completely based on Tantra shastras and these hashta mudras are extensively used in the application of tantric practices.

Only if we understand the yogic philosophy shall we be able to absorb its real essence into our lives and thereby sync with the society and the Universe. With this idea, Hatha Vidya is bringing out the relevent articles which provides the right perspective for the aspirants and the sadhaks to pursue their goal.

Acharya *Bala*

Knowing the subtle body



Hatha yogic practices are known to provide inner peace and balance in life. At the outset it may appear that such practices works primarily on body limbs and breathing pattern. However, these practices have much more profound application. Hatha yoga practices use body as an instrument to go beyond the limited body and mind consciousness to realize the ultimate supreme state. In yogic practices sound understanding of one's body is of paramount importance. As per traditional texts, human body is a representation of cosmic universe and by having deep understanding of the body one can understand the universe and it is functioning.

In order to reap the full benefits of the yogic practices, it is essential for any partitioner to understand how these practices work. Yogic practices work on subtle faculties within us which are much deeper beyond body limbs and organs. The existence, relevance and significance of such subtle elements within the body are well established beyond doubts, as these practices are time tested across millenniums. References to these practices can be seen only in traditional hatha yogic texts.

Understanding these subtle elements within the body will be of tremendous use for any common yogic practitioner to exploit the benefits of the practices in its fullest. For a true seeker undergoing yoga sadhana such an understanding is a must.

In this edition of tradition speaks we will throw light on the fine factors within our body relevant in yogic practices, with the help of an important verse from Goraksha Paddathi (1.12), one of the most revered book on Hatha Yoga. Goraksha Paddhati is known to be authored by Gorakshanath, one of the most prominent siddhas. As the name of the text implies, it serves as a complete scheme of practice providing a

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systematic approach and techniques for yoga sadhana.

षट्चक्रं षोडशाधारं द्वलिक्ष्यं व्योमपञ्चकम् ऽ
स्वदेहे ये न जानन्ति कथं सधियन्ति योगिनः ॥ १२

ṣaṭ cakram ṣoḍaśādharam dvi-lakṣyam
vyomapañcakam I
sva-dehe ye na jānanti katham siddhyanti
yoginaḥ II

The translation of this verse in English is as follows:

“How can yogis achieve siddhi (perfection) if they do not know the six chakras, the sixteen adharas, twolakshyas (objects), and five elements located within their own bodies?”

In this verse Gorakshanath clearly highlights the key faculties relevant in yogic practices and stresses the importance of understanding these by expressly stating that one who does not know these cannot be considered a yogi.

Mind starts functioning from the repository of memories, from memories arises thoughts, thoughts turn to words, words become action, action leads to experience and then the through experience one gains knowledge.

Through this verse, Gorakshanath is also emphasizing on some of the important conceptual understanding that is essential for yoga seekers. By making reference to the chakras, adharas, two objects of meditation, and the five elements within one’s own body, Gorakshanath is also indicating certain advance practices in yoga sadhana that work on these

aspects. This also signifies the ultimate aim of yoga and the systematic schemes of practices that are necessary to achieve the state of yoga.

Before we dwell into the faculties highlighted in the verse, it is important to reiterate on what yoga is, to better understand these concepts. Yoga is the state where one is completely free of thought and ripples of the mind, where only pure conscious awareness remains. It is a state of equipoise where there is neither sadness nor happiness and is a state of true bliss. Yoga is that state where neither the experiences nor the thoughts exist. That is the supreme state of bliss which never ceases. Happiness gained through the sensory object is not the real happiness. Such happiness which common man enjoys is short lived and any changes in the contributing factors to such happiness will lead to disturbances.

One can realize one’s natural state of bliss only by understanding the thought process of the mind which influences the dynamics of one’s life and accordingly equip oneself with in the capabilities to balance the vagaries of mind through strong will power. Mind starts functioning from the repository of memories, from memories arises thoughts, thoughts turn to words, words become action, action leads to experience and then through experience one gains knowledge.

In order to enable one to realize the ultimate everlasting state of supreme bliss our ancient masters had identified,

through their own experiences, the subtle faculties in our body that should be worked upon to elevate their consciousness to achieve the ultimate state of yoga i.e., everlasting supreme bliss.

Let's look at the faculties highlighted in this verse:

- Sat Chakras, are the six energy centers within the body which are Mooladhara, Swadisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddhi and Ajna.
- Sodasa Adharas implies the 16 base or support centers which include Padangushta, Mooladhara, Gudadhara, Medhradhara, Udyanadhara, Nabhyadhara, Hradyadhara, Kanthadhara, Ghantikadhara, Talvadhara, Jihvadhara, Bhrumadyadhara, Nasadhara, Kapatadadhara, Lalatadhara, and Bhramarandhra.
- Dvi-lakshyas refer to the two key focal points or object of meditation, which include andharlakshya (internal objects) and bahirlakshya (external objects).
- Vyoma Panchakas refers to the 5 spaces within the body for dharana practice. These include prithvitatwa (earth element), ambutatwa (water), tejotatwa (fire element), vayutatwa (air element), and akasatatwa (ether element).

All the factors described in the verse above have immense influence on one's perception and thought process. Usually, these faculties are dormant in laymen. Acquiring control over these elements will in turn enable one to gain control over the senses and help to understand the life beyond the limited sensual perceptions. Hatha yogic practices are

intended to enable one to gain awareness and to purify these factors within the body. All the yogic practices, including the widely practiced asanas, and further advanced practices in yoga work on these aspects at varying degrees so that our fullest potential is achieved.

When hatha yogic practices are adopted merely as bodily exercise as commonly understood, one completely misses the real purpose and indeed loses the opportunity to understand their own self. Thereby denying possibility of experiencing the natural and everlasting state of happiness which yoga is meant for.

In order to experience yoga in its true sense, it is important to have proper knowledge of the chakras, adharas, dvilakshyas, and vyoma panchakas such as their locations and functionalities as well as the techniques to invoke them. The Hatha Yogic literatures provide these details.

However, these should be learned systematically only from an eminent Acharya or Guru who has accomplished in such practices.

Nadanusandana

Exploring the eternal sound



Among various hatha yogic practices Nadanusandana occupies a very prominent place. Only due to the significance of this practice, Svatantra has included Nadanusandana as a dedicated limb of hatha yogic practices in Hathayogapradipika, unlike in other texts on hatha yoga. For a yoga sadhak (practitioner) who has established in asanas, pranayama and mudra practices, the practice of Nadanusandana is prescribed as the gateway for reaching the ultimate state of Samadhi (equipoise state).

Life is a compendium of experiences one gains through the five senses and the sense objects such as Sabda (sound), Sparsha (touch), Roopa (vision), Rasa (taste) and Gandha

(smell). However, as the sensual experiences overpowers and when one gets drowned in such experiences invariably life goes out of control leading to loss of peace. Yogic practices provides a way out of the miseries from sensual experiences by gradually restraining the senses through which the objects are experienced and thereby achieving equanimity.

In the practice of Nadanusandana, in order to restrain the senses from getting attached to the sense objects, mind is directed towards the subtle internal sounds by detaching away from the sensual objects i.e. mind is restricted from the experiences of the sensual objects of sabda (sound), sparsha (touch), roopa (vision), rasa (taste), and gandha



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(smell). By gradually restraining from external sounds, and instead focusing on the subtle internal sounds, and further establishing the awareness on even subtler sound vibrations known as Nada, the mind dissolves in Nada leading one to the state of samadhi. In short, this sadhana (intense practice) involves detaching the mind from external objects and instead focusing one's awareness on internal extremely subtle Nada.

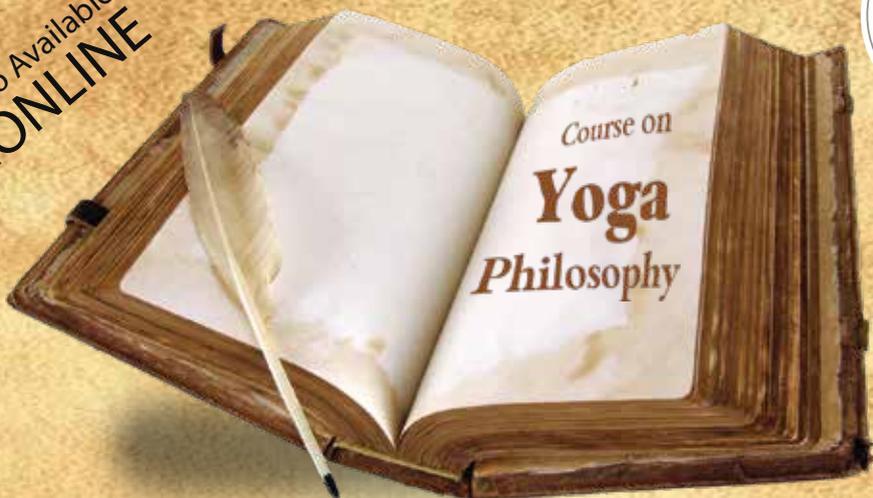
During the practice of the mind's inward journey to Nada, sadhaks experience various types of internal sounds. Based on the nature and type of the sounds experienced they are categorized into four states of progression such as Arambha (initial), Ghata (concentrated), Parichaya (controlled), and Nishpatti (accomplished). These states of Nada

can be related to the states achieved from the practice of pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi. The state of Nada experienced can also represent and reflect the states of piercing of the three grandhis (Brahma, Vishnu, and Rudra grandhis) during the kundalini awakening practices.

If we consider that entire creations in the universe, be it physical and subtle, are the manifestation of eternal sound vibrations, Nadasandana is a practice that will enable the practitioner to realize the one-ness with the cosmos.

Among the several Laya yoga practices that were originated from Adinatha, Nadasandana can be considered as one of the most significant practice.

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Goraksha Padhati

An Introduction



The evolution of Yoga Shastra originated from Lord Shiva, Adinatha. Yoga is the way to realize “Swaroopa”. Swaroopa is nothing but the knowledge of the truth within us. The misfortunes we experience in our life is because of the misidentification of our Swaroopa (self).

All the yoga shastras, especially Hatha Yoga consists of resources which systematically leads one to the awareness of Swaroopa.

Sage Patanjali when profoundly and holistically presented eternal Yoga in Patanjala Yoga Sutras, he cited the practice methods in a very subtle and discreet way. At the same time, the tradition of Hatha Yoga which was prudently passed down from Sage Matsyendranatha to Sage Gorashanatha and since then to Siddha Parampara has given significance to the observances with direct knowledge and specifics to the practice methods.

In order to preserve the knowledge and eschew it from reaching ineligible hands, Hatha Yogic principles were preached only to proficient disciples confidentially and maintaining this secretive nature intact, Sage Gorakshanatha has written Goraksha Padhati also

known as Goraksha Samhita.

As the name suggests, this is a “Padhati Grandham” or a manual, especially mentioning the rudimentary principles of yogic disciplines in the Natha tradition.

Padhati can be translated as practices that are arranged systematically to support progressive advancement in the yogic discipline. The term “manual” is specifically mentioned as it deliberates on the systematic methods which are previously practiced thoroughly and the further practices which needs to be learnt.

Therefore, the practices mentioned in the text are not for beginners, but for practitioners who have successfully completed the initial stage of their yogic journey and are willing to move on to the next stage in order to attain Siddhis or accomplishments in practices. Hence the subject matter of this text, should not be delved into independently.

Goraksha Padhati classifies and explains Hatha Yogic practices into six limbs. Keeping its secretive nature and dividing it into Poorvam, Utharam in 100 verses for each sadhak who fall into the category of Madhyama and Uthama

Adhikari respectively.

The text which starts with paying reverence to Guru, alludes into the presupposition, source of the practice methods along with the practice methods, addressing everything a Sadhak should be aware of.

Then it continues to discuss pertinently about Chakras (energy centers) and Nadis (energy channels). Poorva Shatakam concludes by citing about Kundalini awakening, Mudra Kathanam, the requirement of Prana Samrodham (retention of prana) and how it can be properly done commencing with Nadhi Shudhi (cleansing of energy channels).

Uttara Shathakam begins by mentioning about Prana Samrodham and its benefits, talks about the traits of Samadhi and the hints about the psyhic powers of Hatha Yoga, explaining in detail about the Chakras and the different methods of Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses).

Uttara Shatakam concludes with Phala Shruthi (result of the study) and elucidates on Dharana, different methods of Dhyana and stages of Samadhi.

Goraksha Padhathi is the greatest traditional text for seekers who consider Hathayoga practice important. A seeker can undergo the systematic practice with its support, only with the guidance of a Guru.

Ritam Vadishyāmi ॐ

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Diabetes



Diabetes mellitus or simply, diabetes, is a group of diseases characterized by high blood glucose levels that result from defects in the body's ability to either produce and/or use insulin. This high blood sugar produces the classical symptoms of frequent urination, increased thirst and increased hunger.

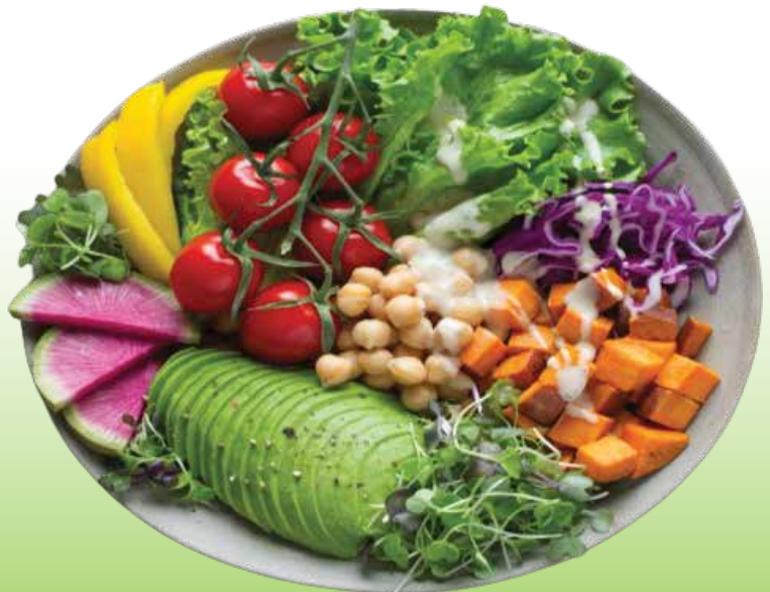
There are two main types of diabetes:

- Type 1 diabetes: results from the body's failure to produce insulin, and presently requires the person to inject insulin. (Also referred to as *insulin-dependent* diabetes mellitus, *IDDM* for short, and *juvenile* diabetes.)
- Type 2 diabetes: results from insulin resistance, a condition in which cells fail to use insulin properly, sometimes combined with an absolute insulin deficiency. (Formerly referred to as *non-insulin-dependent* diabetes mellitus, *NIDDM* for short, and *adult-onset* diabetes.)

Type 2 diabetes occurs due to faulty lifestyle and is the most common form of prevalent diabetes. The management includes control of diet, yoga, exercise & medication.

Diabetes is also a lifestyle disease and correcting our lifestyle through yoga can help to avoid this disease and provide better management for those already suffering from it, through a combination of Asanas, Pranayama and Mitahara.

The yogic diet of Mitahara advocates eating only to 75% of one's capacity, savouring each morsel of food and eating natural, fresh and homemade food as far as possible. Though simple solutions, these methods are time tested and maybe the



answer to the Diabetic epidemic the world is currently facing. In addition to this, Mitahara advocates eating without distractions which helps in focusing on the food and getting maximum benefit out of the food eaten and prevents over-eating.

The modern dietary recommendations include a diet that is high in fibre and low in fat and moderate in carbohydrates & proteins, with recommendations to eliminate table sugar and foods made with it.

General guidelines:

- Eat lots of vegetables and fruits. Try picking from the rainbow of colors available to maximize variety.
- Fruits may be eaten however, they are high in carbohydrates and thus they need to be accounted for in your diet and cannot be eaten in unlimited amounts. A qualified dietitian can help you plan fruits into your daily diet.
- Eat non-starchy vegetables such as spinach, fenugreek leaves, carrots, broccoli or green beans with meals.
- Avoid overdependence on any one food.
- Avoid eating too much food at one time.
- Space meals evenly throughout the day and do not skip any meal.
- Choose whole grain foods over processed grain products. Use cereals like jowar, bajra, makai, quinoa etc. instead of just wheat and rice.

- Include dried beans (kidney or pinto beans) and lentils into your meals.
- Choose water or coconut water instead of soda or other sweetened drinks.
- Cut out sugar from your diet, sugar substitutes may be used sparingly.
- Learn to read labels as many prepared and packaged foods contain sugar.
- Choose healthy oils for cooking and avoid trans fats.

Ritam Vadishyāmi ॐ

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Post Classical Period

Emergence of Hatha Yoga



In these modern times, people are increasingly realizing the timeless relevance and significance of yoga. It is essential for those who intend to seriously approach the subject of yoga to understand about Yoga's origin, its internal components, philosophical ideology and traditional conventions on the practices.

This edition of the History of Yoga will explore on the Yogic practices that prevailed during the post classical period especially Hatha Yoga that rose into prominence in this era.

Emergence of Hatha Yoga

The period between 800 AD to 1700 AD has been recognized as the Post Classical Period of Yoga while its origin can be dated back to the Vedas. Based on the essence of the Vedas, the Upanishads came into existence. Darshanas emerged from the Upanishads and out of the Darshanas, systems of practical application of the doctrines were formed. Thereby, based on the Darshanas and on the broader perspec-

12 YEARS SADHANA



tive of Tantra the Hatha Yogic system and the practices emerged.

While Vedas says that the evolution (or spread) of Yoga originated from Hiranyagarbha, as per Tantra it originated from Shiva, the pure consciousness. Philosophically both are same wherein the origin of pure consciousness is conceptualised as Adinatha. In this way the yogic path that developed system of practices, techniques and application from fundamental doctrines which were spread through traditions emerged as Hatha Yoga.

The Nath Tradition of Yoga

After the emergence of Patanjali Yoga Sutras, the teachings of great yogis of Natha Yoga Tradition starting from Gorakshanatha, came in to prominence during the post classical period. The Natha yogis popularized Hatha Yoga practices during this period.

Gorakhnath (800 – 1200 A.D.) is a predominant contributor of Hatha yoga system. ‘SidhasiddhantaPadhati’ and ‘GorakshaSatakam’, the two renowned texts written by Gorakshanath introduces several important elements of Hathayoga. GorakshaSamhitā, also known as GorakshaPaddhati explains Shadanga Yoga, referring to Yoga of six limbs, namely Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi (the implication being that Yama and Niyama have already been understood). He goes on to list auxiliary techniques including mudra, bandha, kundalini-udbodha (arousing) and the

shatchakras that figure so prominently in later classical texts like the Hatha Pradipika and the Shiva Samhitha. The six limbs together with their prescribed techniques are to ensure the absolute control over the mind which will bring final emancipation.

The Three Pillars of Hatha Yogic Practices

The three conventional texts of Hatha Yoga are Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Gheranda Samhita and Siva Samhita. These are considered as the pillars of Hatha Yoga originated in the Post Classical period and belonged to the Post classical period viz., Hatha Pradīpikā (1300 – 1400 A.D.) by Swami Swatmarama, Gheranda Samhita by Sage Gheranda Muni (1657–1700 A.D.) and Siva Samhitā during the seventeenth century.

Yogi Svātmārāma wrote Hatha-Yoga Pradīpikā which was composed in the 15th century as a compilation of the earlier Haṭha yoga texts. Svātmārāma incorporates older Sanskrit concepts into his synthesis. Hatha Yoga as a set of practices is explained under four limbs also known as Chaturanga Yoga, namely Asana, Kumbhaka, Mudra & Nadaanusandhana. He introduces this system as methods to achieve the highest state of Raja Yoga.

Gheranda Samhita is a late 17th-century text, probably from north-east India, structured as a teaching manual based on a dialogue between Gheranda and his disciple Chanda

Kapali. This is a step by step manual, and the system is also known as Saptanga Yoga. Shatkarma, Asana, Mudra, Pratyahara, Pranayama, Dhyana and Samadhi form the seven limbs of Yoga as enumerated in Gheranda Samhita.

According to Sage Gheraṇḍa, when body is purified through ṣaṭkarma, it is made firm and stable by āsana, prāṇa is controlled and retained by mudrā, then one can naturally do the practice of pratyāhāra. Practice of pranayama with specific mantras creates direct impact on energy fields within the body and mind through the vibrations of the mantras which eventually contribute for the expansion of awareness. Dhyāna arises naturally when the body is pure, firm and stable and the mind is withdrawn within it self leading to Samadhi, being the ultimate state of Yoga i.e., the state of equipoise.

Siva Samhita, the third classical book of Hatha yoga, dates back to the 17th Century, while some scholars such as James Mallison believe the text to be between the 1300 and 1500 CE. This book is presented as being addressed by Siva to his consort Parvati and explains the concept of yoga, its philosophy and practice in detail.

Other Yogic Practices in Post Classical Era

Many other forms of literature came into surface during the post classical period and one of them is ‘Amarougha Prabodha’ which is a 12th

century Shaivite Sanskrit text on hatha yoga, attributed to Gorakshanath. It is closely related to the 11th century AmritasiddhiVajrayanaBuddhist work, describing the same physical yoga practices, but adding Shaivite philosophy, subsuming hatha yoga under raja yoga. The Amaraugha Prabodha is the earliest text that combines hatha yoga with raja yoga. It was likely used by Svatomarama when he wrote the 15th century Hatha yoga Pradipika.

The ‘Dattatreya Yoga Shastra’ is another popular text that relates to the post classical era. It is the first text to describe and teach yoga as having three categories, namely Mantra yoga, Layayoga and Hatha yoga. All the three leads to Samadhi the goal of Raja Yoga.

Drishyate anena
In yogic perspective

To watch the video
on *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*



A Vaishnava text composed in the 13th century CE, is the earliest text which provides a systematized form of Hatha yoga under that name and the earliest to place its yoga techniques under the name Haṭha.

Dattātreya Yogaśāstra, in a dialogue form between Sānkriti and Lord Dattātreya, is a unique classical yogic text. It imparts the right concept and rational knowledge of yoga with a heavy focus on practice with great effort. It clearly outlines that everyone is entitled to yoga practice regardless of one's age, sex, faith, belief, religion, and physical appearance. The text defines hatha yoga as distinct from mantra yoga, laya yoga, and raja yoga, which works on controlling the breath and the bindu (semen).

Closing Summary

The Post Classical period can also be termed, as an evolution phase, which set the stepping-stone to the Hatha Yoga, as we see in practice today. This form of Yoga is sourced from the Tantra principles and with fundamental conceptual origin from the Vedas. Most of the practices and techniques find their relevance in Tantra Yoga.

The Post Classical period was also an era that many traditional texts came into existence. Many became popular due to the lucidity of the language but most of the texts and techniques mentioned therein in require guidance of an experienced teacher. The knowledge transfer done by mere read-

ing does not have the desired effect on the practitioner, unless an eminent Acharya or Guru, initiates the practitioner in to doing the practice or following a certain chariya (regular observance of practice).

The Post Classical period is the most important period in the evolution of Yoga awareness and from this base, the modern period of Yoga stemmed out. However, it is worthwhile to mention that the techniques as advocated remained obscure for an exceptionally long time due to nature of the practice and the secrecy it required to maintain, to preserve its authenticity. And those who understood and practiced under the guidance of an Acharya or Guru, reaped the benefits of the same, but chose to remain anonymous, not to violate the sanctity of the practice.

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Hatha Yoga

The journey from gross to subtle

Exploration is the most fundamental aspect of Yoga. Hatha Yoga is the first step toward the self-exploration journey. Hatha Yoga is the preparation of the body through the mind to attain the highest goal of Yoga which is Kavilaya, the equanimous state of mind.

Now let's explore how the body and mind are inseparable in the practice of Hatha Yoga. To begin with asanas, the first limb of Hatha Yoga, while performing asanas one needs to explore the nature of the body through the mind. How one moves the body parts in a certain way will affect the functioning of the mind and vice versa. If the same mental energy is not present along with the physical movement of the body, then it turns out to be a mere physical exercise.

According to Hatha Vidya Tradition, Yoga asanas have five essential elements. One needs to metamorphose through each element to attain the final posture. These five vital elements are:

- Vinyasa – Flow
- Shwasa – Breathing
- Sthiti – Maintaining the Position
- Drishti – Focal Points
- Vishranti – Relaxation

The constant awareness of the flow of positioning and dispositioning the body parts while performing an asana is called Vinyasa. Shwasa trans-



lates to the process of breathing. The synchronization of breath with the movements of body parts during the process of attaining the yoga asana elevates one's awareness. Stithi translates to maintaining posture. When a final position is held with mental awareness for a particular duration, it heightens the benefits of the asana. Drishti translates to Focal Point. The art of establishing internal and external focus which is called 'Antar Drishti and Bahir Drishti', helps in enhancing one's understanding of the body and augments one's alertness. Vishranti translates to relaxation. When one reaches the final position, the body and mind should be steady and relaxed. So, one can conclude that all the essential elements of asanas can be achieved only through mental awareness. Otherwise asanas are futile, and will just result in mere enhancing one's flexibility, nothing more than that.

In this way after getting established in asanas, the yoga practitioner should proceed toward pranayama, the second limb of Hatha Yoga. In each practice of pranayama, there is only one note of caution and that is performing all the pranayama practices with awareness of the breath. The condition of the mind has a direct and immediate impact on respiration. For example, when one is angry, the breathing pattern changes.

Though anger is a mental condition, this mental condition immediately influences the normal flow of respiration. And the same is true for the peaceful condition of mind. Any pranayama practices like Nadi Shodhan, Anulom Vilom, and many more to list down, one needs to perform all breathing practices with the mental energy buttoned to the breath. That mental awareness of the breath will only help one control the mind through breath.

In Hatha Yoga, pranayama practices, pre-requisites one to undergo cleansing processes, which are known as Shad kriyas or Shodhan kriyas in the yogic term. In all the shodhan kriya practices, one trains the mind and body for having voluntary control over the involuntary actions of the body.

Moving to the third limb, Mudra.

The practice of mudra makes a bridge between body and mind which is a combination of posture and breathing. The practice of a mudra can give great powers to a practitioner, by establishing the connection between mind and body.

The fourth but the last limb of Hatha Yoga is Nadanusandhana. It is the practice of merging one's awareness with internal sounds.

Throughout the entire practice of Hatha Yoga, one can notice that one metamorphoses from a gross level of asanas to reach to a subtle level of Nadanusandhana. And this journey of the body to mind is possible only when the two, work hand in hand.

Therefore we can conclude that the body and mind are two inseparable entities and the two are integral units.



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Drishyate anena

In yogic perspective

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Dhauti

Cleansing Process

The term Shatkarma is originally taken from the Sanskrit language, which has two root words: Shat and Karma. Shat means “six” and Karma here is referred to as “action performed to achieve some desired results”.

Although if we look from an analytical point of view, all the yogic practices are in some way a cleansing process. Shatkarma is a set of preparatory practices used by ancient yogis to purify the body internally, thus prepare them for higher practices of asana & pranayama. They remove the toxins from body channels to improve the flow of Prana in different body parts. They also create harmony between two major pranic flows, Ida and Pingala, to attain physical and mental purification and balance.

Hatha Yoga Pradipika has considered the importance of Shatkar-

mas for the sake of removing excess of fat and phlegm. The different Shatkarmas are Dhauti, Basti, Neti, Trataka, Nauki and Kapalabhati

SHATKARMA / SHODHANAKRIYA

1. DHAUTI

2. NETI

3. BASTI

4. TRATAKA

5. NAULI

6. KAPALABHATI

The literal meaning of Dhauti is internal cleansing. The way, we take shower from time to time to cleanse the body, similarly internal organs need the same for effective working. In this kriya, different techniques are used to flush out toxic and undigested food particles from internal organs. It is a practice that trains the mind and the body for having voluntary control over peristaltic and anti-

peristaltic movements. It is intended mainly to cleanse the digestive tract in its full length but it also cleanses the respiratory tract, ears and eyes. Choosing a particular type of Dhauti, depends upon the practice level of the seeker and the subsequent advancement in the practice.

The ancient yogic text, Gheranda Samhita seems to be more justified in placing cleansing processes as an essential and the first limb of Ghata Yoga.

Dhauti are of four types: Antara Dhauti, Danta Dhauti, Hrida Dhauti and Mula shodhana

Antara Dhauti, which is associated with the food pipe and digestive system, are further classified into: Vatasara, Varisara, Agnisara, and Bahishkrita.

ANTARA DHAUTI

1. VATASARA

2. VARISARA

3. VAHNISARA

4. BAHISKRITA

a) Vatasara Dhauti is done by swallowing air repeatedly to expand the stomach. The air is then expelled along the intestine, with the aid of an inverted asana. Gheranda Samhita states that, 'Until a man is able to hold his breath for ninety minutes, he must not practice this dhauti'.

b) Varisara Dhauti is cleaning of the gut which is done by drinking warm salty water and performing a set sequence of asanas until water flows from the

lower passage. The practice is followed by a week of a specific diet.

c) Agnisara Dhauti, also called Vahnisara Dhauti is stirring of the abdomen using the abdominal muscles to increase fire located near the navel known as gastric fire.

d) Bahiskrita Dhauti, is done by standing waist-deep in water, everting the rectum, washing it, and reinserting in the abdomen. Gheranda Samhita also mentions that, 'Unless one has the capacity to retain the air inside for one and half hour, this practice shall not be attempted'.

Danta Dhauti, dental cleansing, is classified into Dantamula, Jihvamula, Karnayugma and Kapalarandhra Dhauti.

DANTA DHAUTI

1. DANTAMULA

2. JIHVAMULA

3. KARNAYUGMA

4. KAPALARANDHRA

Under Antardhauti, complete foodpipe, right from the throat to the anus has been mentioned, but under Dantamula Dhauti, the upper part of the throat and organs in that area is to be cleaned.

a) Dantamula Dhauti is basically cleaning the root of the teeth i.e. gums by massaging over it with the extract of acacia catechu or pure clay.

b) Jihvamula is cleansing the root of the tongue and later massaging it with the help of butter and milk repeatedly. Jihvasodhana is not related only with

- cleaning of the tongue, but it also prepares one for the sake of Kechari mudra.
- c) Karnayugma Dhauti is cleansing of the ears for better external hearing and to prepare oneself for the higher stage where one has ability to listen to internal sounds.
- d) Kapalarandhra is cleansing of the back of the soft palate on the roof of the mouth. According to Gheranda, this purifies the nadis and eyesight is increased.

Hrid Dhauti or chest cleansing, is classified into Danda Dhauti, Vaman Dhauti, and Vastra Dhauti.

- a) Danda Dhauti is done by passing a long soft stick, traditionally made from stalk of banana, turmeric or cane into the gullet and slowly taking it out. This is beneficial against diseases related to the gullet and stomach.
- b) Vamana Dhauti is done by drinking salty water and inducing vomit by

tickling the back of the throat.

- c) Vastra Dhauti is done by swallowing a long strip of thin cloth and removing it, so as to clean the esophagus and stomach. Based on different yogic texts, the length of the cloth may vary from 15 cubits to 25 cubits.

MulaShodhana which is associated with rectal or root cleansing is basically done by washing the rectum, using water and either a stalk of turmeric or the middle finger. As per Gheranda Samhita, constipation can be removed through Mulashodhana. It gives effulgence on the face and body becomes strong.

These practices should only be done under the guidance of a competent teacher, to avoid possible complications. The cleansing processes are to be done before asana, pranayama and other higher Yoga practices for successful progression of spiritual journey.

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Pranayama

My experience



It has been over 2 years of practice at Hatha vidya yoga centre since I joined the Nishta program for kids. So far it has been a good journey. At first when I joined I was not that flexible and was stiff, but after few months of practice I became better and was able to do more advanced asanas. The teachers were kind and helped a lot. We started our journey in Nishta program with 'The Drops' text book and reached until 'The Mould'. I created new friends as new kids kept on joining. We went into deep learning about more Asana, Meditation and also Pranayama which is what I will be talking about in this article.

Pranayama Steps

My experience about pranayama is that it is very useful for your body and you feel very calm and relaxed. The teachers over here do not push you but they let you go in a comfortable manner. Pranayama has many types, stages etc

We have some basic steps before we get ready for pranayama:

1. Sitting in padmasana and keeping the back straight.
2. Close the eyes and keep the palms on your knees.
3. The right hand should be in Vishnu mudra and the left hand in jnana mudra.

Nadi Shudhi

Keep the right thumb on the right nostril and left hand in jnana mudra. Inhale and exhale through left nostril as per ratio provided by the teacher. Then repeat the same with your right nostril.

Anulom Vilom

Keep the right thumb on the right nostril and inhale from left and then place the ring finger on the left nostril and exhale through right. Then inhale through the same nostril (right) and place the thumb on the right nostril and exhale through left. Continue this process. The breathing ratios are instructed by teachers.

Jiva bhanda

1. Keep the tip of the tongue on the upper palate.
2. Stretch the tongue and push the upper palate while opening the mouth so that you are in jiva bhanda.
3. Hold the position for a few seconds and release the tongue and close the mouth.

This should be repeated as per the prescribed number of rounds as instructed by the teacher.

Bhramari

1. Sit in a comfortable meditative position.
2. Close the eyes and keep the hands on the knees.

3. Fold the tongue and put its tip on the upper palate.

4. Inhale and while exhaling make a sound like a bee as long as you can.

My experience about pranayama

I like pranayama because when you do the practice it feels very quiet makes you stay in that position in a long time. The teachers have taught me pranayama very peacefully and calmly. In Nishta classes, we all do pranayama and meditation together and we all like it.

Drishyate anena॥

In yogic perspective

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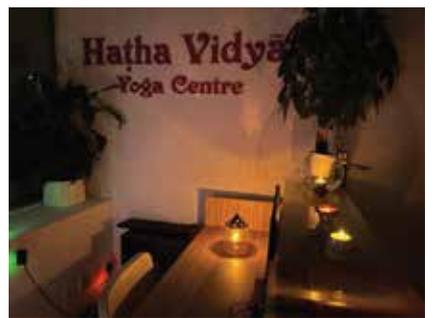
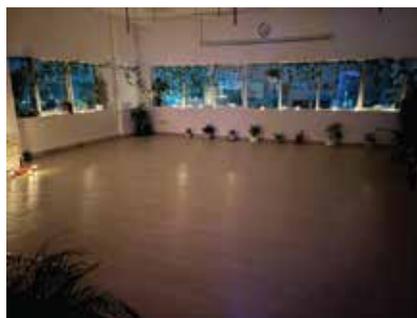
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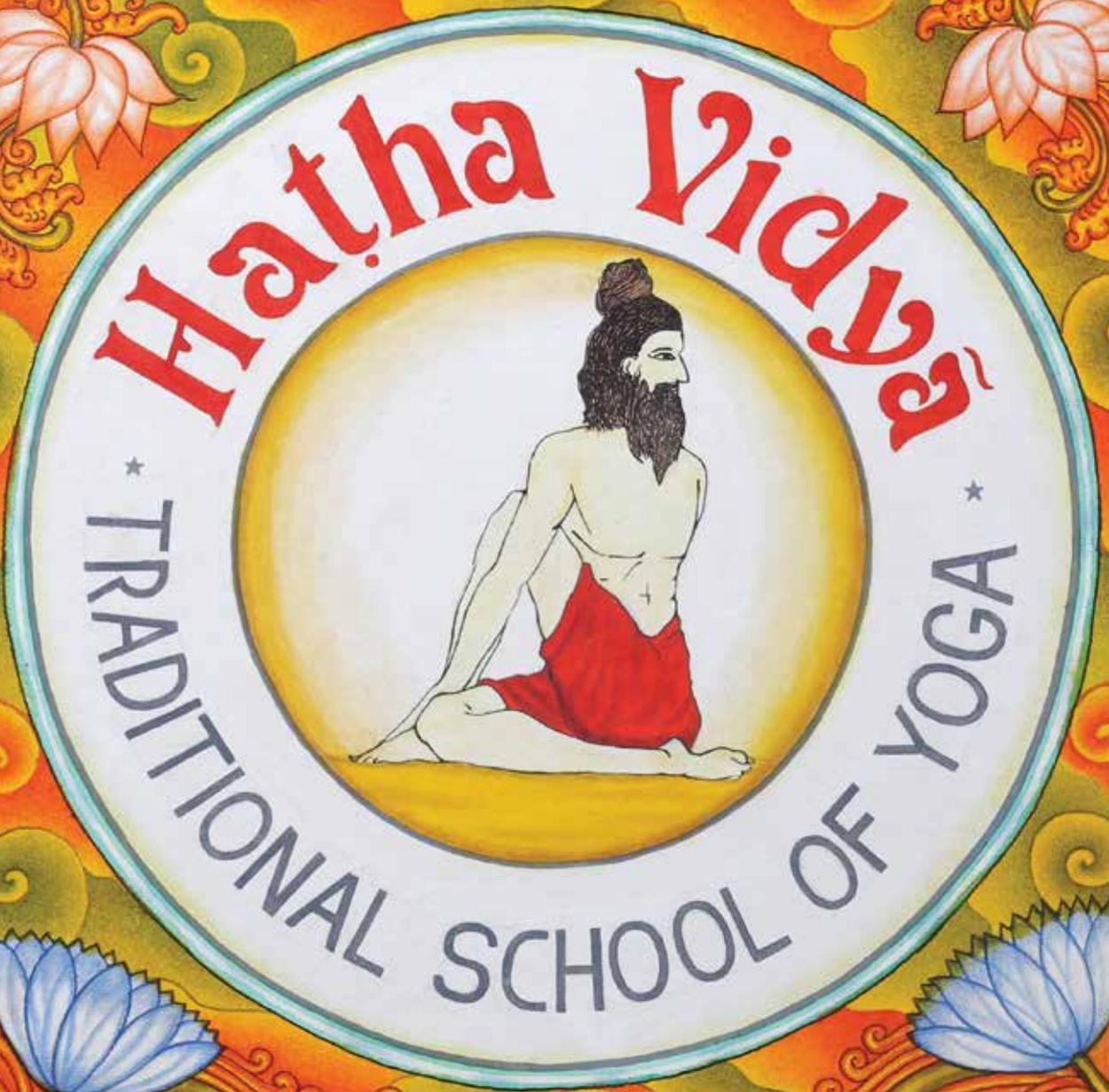


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