

Chapter 2: Literary Review

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Chapter 2

Literary Review

Origin of life, Evolution and the role of Yoga in health and wellbeing

Background

Yoga practices are recognised for their health benefits. Recent scientific advances made in understanding yoga has created an increased awareness of yoga as a health regimen. We have made an attempt to document and understand the traditional literature: How Yoga practices are harmonious to the body and why Yoga is evolution-friendly. It is essential to understand the origin, evolution and the principles underlying Yoga from the literature for addressing the above goal.

I am committed to mention here that the translations provided here are only one of the many possible contexts with which the actual sloka/mantra could have been composed. And, the same may not be considered complete in its sense as described by me.

One of the most common and persistent quests for the philosophers world-wide has been about the nature, origin and purpose of life. Origin of lifeforms has been a serious question in the literature of most civilisations. Various cultures have tried to answer this philosophical question in several ways – based on their understanding. Modern-day scientists have also contributed their share of theories to answer this question. Theology and science have frequently wondered upon several common questions, but no other topic overlaps as much as the inquiry on the origin of life.

हरिः ॐ ॥ ब्रह्मवादिनो वदन्ति ।
किं कारणं ब्रह्मह कुतः स्म जाता
जीवाम केन क च सम्प्र
अधिष्ठिताः केन सुखेतेषु
वर्तामहे रह्मविदो व्यवस्थाम् ॥ श्वे ऊ १ ॥

*hariḥ om ॥ brahnavādino vadanti |
kiṃ kāraṇaṃ brahmah kutaḥ sma jātā
jīvāma kena ka ca sampra
adhiṣṭhitāḥ kena sukhetaṛeṣu
vartāmahe rahmavido vyavasthām ॥ śve ū 1 ॥*

The above-mentioned verse, the first mantra of śvetāśvataropaniśad is a discussion amongst the students, questioning, “What is the cause of the Universe? Is it Bhraman? When are we born? Why do we live? Where is the final resort? Under whose orders are we? Who governs us under happiness and misery? ”

Attempting to perceive the questions asked by the seeker, some of the following associated queries arise:

a. Cause of the Universe:

Trying to understand the cause of the universe from the perspective of a seeker leads to few more questions:

- Is it always necessary to have cause for the origin?
- If there is a cause / if there isn't a cause, what is the final cause?
- Is it Brahman who is behind all this cause?
- Is it because of the time, nature etc., that could have given rise to this universe?

b. When are we born?

Perceiving the second questions asked by the seeker, approaching from the above perspective, it leads to the following questions

- Assuming that the cause has been perfect, how can the imperfect manifest from the perfect and how can finite manifest from the infinite?
- If the universe is not created, it essentially should not appear as an effect. But, why does it appears a result of a cause?
- Is it possible to understand the very basis of a life form with respect to time or matter?
- If it is Brahman who is responsible for this, what is the reason for Brahman to manifest himself in varied forms of individual selves?

c. Why do we live?

- With the appearance of the universe, i.e., the universe to appear to have a cause, what is the purpose of the self to live?
- As mentioned in other scriptures, if humans are the only creatures that can discriminate and understand, what is its necessity?
- If at all, that it is Brahman, who has manifested himself in the varied forms, why is it essential to understand the Brahman? Or is it what is expected of the human life?

d. Where is the final resort?

- The finite ie., the human once born has to die. What is the basis of birth and death?
- If the finite has been manifested from the infinite, is it possible to reunite with the infinite?

e. Under whose orders are we?

- If the human is free to himself, why does suffering arise?
- If the life is of suffering, why does not the human take recourse from it?
- What is that, that avoids humans from avoiding suffering?

These are the questions that arise to a human mind on the very basis of life. An attempt is made to compile the traditional Indian wisdom on the science of origin of universe, life and regulation of health and happiness of human life form

Extensive review of the scriptures suggests the role of the mind in manifesting miseries. In one of the relatively recent literatures, Lord Buddha states in an instance:

॥ मनोपुब्बन्गाम धम्म

मनोसेत्थ मनोमय

मनस चे पदुत्थेन

भसति व करोति व

ततो नम् दुक्खमन्वेति

चक्कम्ब वहतो पदम् ॥ ध प १ ॥

॥ *manopubbangama dhamma*

manosettha manomaya

manasa ce padutthena

bhasati va karoti va

tato nam dukkhamanveti

cakkamva vahato padam ॥ dha pa 1 ॥

All mental phenomena have mind as their forerunner; they have mind as their chief; they are mind-made. If one speaks or acts with an evil mind, '*dukkha*' follows him just as the wheel follows the footprint of the ox that draws the cart.

It can be understood that it is the mind through its close interaction with the organs of action and knowledge, induce a sense of illusion and makes one believe that oneself undergoes suffering.

Considering the complexity of existence, this review is done to understand from the perspective of traditional literature – the origin, existence and adaptation of life forms.

Aim & objectives:

1. To understand the origin of life forms in the Universe
2. To understand the relevance of Yoga for human existence
3. To study the effect of Yoga on various planes of existence
4. To understand the role of Yoga on adaptation in extreme environments

Materials and Methods:

The following texts were systematically reviewed and relevant information with respect to the study has been compiled.

- *nāsadiya sūkta (Ṛg Veda)*
- *Svetasvatara upaniśad*
- *Brahadaranyako upaniśad*
- *Bhagavad Gitā*

- *Pātanjali Yoga Sutra*
- *Brahma Sutra*
- *Īśa Upaniśad*
- *Nyāyā Vaiśeṣika Śāstra*
- *Cāndogya Upaniśad*

Origin of Universe & its present-day understanding

Looking back into the history, it appears that there were conflicting beliefs among different cosmologies about the origin of life. The Christian, Muslim and Jewish cosmologies combine the origin of universe and origin of life on earth as happening at a finite time. Whereas earlier, Greek philosophers like Aristotle believed that the universe had existed forever and would continue to exist forever and so were humans.

In Mesopotamia, water is regarded as the origin of life – from where all creatures came into existence. In Finnish Karelia, there exists an epic, ‘*kalevala*’ that is passed down tradition after tradition. According to them, the daughter of air while letting herself to fall in the sea, was made pregnant by the waves and the wind. The duck, as the water mother comes to her, builds a nest on her knees and lays her eggs. These eggs roll into the sea and break open giving rise to earth, heaven, stars and the moon.

There are several hypotheses that have been put forth regarding the origin of Universe (Table 2.1). Most physicists have not commented on the state of universe preceding the Big-Bang event, doubting that any information about the prior states will ever be accessible. Several hypotheses are presented. In this section, few of the observations are being discussed.

Based on the present understanding, Universe is defined as, “everything that existed, exists and will exist in the future” (Schreuder, 2014). The Universe consists of spacetime, forms of energy and the physical laws that relate them. Some philosophers and scientists suggest that even the ideas such as mathematics and logic are comprised by the universe (Ferris, 1998; Holt, 2012).

An invisible web of strange, yet to be discovered material are known to connect the universe – known as the dark matter. This dark matter is mentioned as the elementary phenomenon that forms the universe – pervading throughout the universe – with negligible to no understanding of the function of the dark matter. Offering an analogy, Lawrence M Krauss, a cosmologist, claims dark matter as substances that acts as like an invisible puppet master with invisible strings that can control each and every movement of the universe – claimed also as the central reason for our existence. Interestingly the all-pervasive dark matter cannot be seen or felt but an undoubted existence is proven – because the gravitational effect of the dark matter has been measured (Springel et al., 2005; Wittman, Tyson, Kirkman, Dell ’antonio, & Bernstein, 2000).

Little progress has been made towards understanding how the all-pervasive dark matter plays a role in shaping up the universe. When big bang happened before 13.8 billion years ago, the infant universe came into existence, the universe should have been hot and filled up with pure energy. This energy cooled and condensed to form some sub-atomic particles, the particles of dark matter. Scientists claim that these should have been the preliminary matter that could have come into existence even before anything else could have formed in the universe. It is also claimed to be possible that two or more sub-atomic particles of the dark matter could have collided during the initial times to form an elementary particle, an electron. The possibility of this event to have happened depends on the composition of the dark matter, which largely remains unknown. Interestingly, the dark matter doesnot react to light or anything else. One of the contenders for the

dark matter is the WIMP (Weakly Interacting Massive Particle). Simulation models have been promising to point out the common features of WIMP and the dark matter.

Table 2.1: Cosmological theories

Theory	Remarks	Grading
The universe developed from a hot, dense beginning.	A Huge amount of supporting evidence from various areas of biology and physics.	Very Good
The universe expanded according to the general theory of relativity	Passes all previous tests, but only a few of these were stringent.	Good
Galaxies consist mainly of dark matter built up from exotic particles	Much indirect evidence, but the particles still have to be discovered and alternative theories disproved.	Satisfactory
The mass of the universe is in general evenly distributed; it acts as Einstein’s cosmological constant and accelerates expansion.	Agrees well with most of the recent measurements, but the evidence is still thin, and theoretical problems are still unsolved.	Poor
The universe initially went through a phase of rapid expansion, the so-called inflation.	Elegant theory, but still no evidence; requires a huge extension of the laws of physics.	Fail

Understanding the dark matter is essential to answer the mystery – how the primordial gas that was held in the universe clubbed together to form the stars? Following the big bang, 84-85% of the matter predicted to exist appears to be invisible or otherwise is unaccounted for. The big bang event, created ripples in the universe that resulted in clumping of the Hydrogen and Helium gases in the Universe. This discretely distributed atoms of Hydrogen and Helium were attracted together

by the gravitational force of the dark matter, initiating a nuclear fusion reaction resulting in formation of the stars. Essentially, it could be speculated that it is the dark matter that is powering the stars with heat and energy that is produced when two particles of dark matter collide.

The dark matter offers a gravitational force to keep the galaxy intact. Considering the above, when the relative speeds of the orbits in centre and periphery were observed, it was observed that all the stars were revolving at the same velocity against the common observation that we see in the solar system i.e., the planets close to sun revolve faster whereas, the planets that are farthest revolve slower. This arrangement doesnot exist in the galaxy. So, the dark matter exerts a different amount of gravitational regulation over the galaxy at different points – that are beyond the present day understanding of the Universe.

In another scenario, it was noted that three galaxies were revolving at a speed greater than escape velocity – which according to the present day physical understanding should have separated the three galaxies in different directions – but it was observed that there was an additional gravitational force that kept all the three galaxies intact. Multiple observations support the presence of dark matter – a primordial matter that was formed during the origin of the universe that regulates how the universe works – with laws that are presently not completely understood by science(“The Big Bang and the Big Crunch - The Physics of the Universe,” n.d.).

In summary, observations and scientific studies have arrived at

- a. During big bang, an atom suddenly puffed up into a size of the universe in a fraction of second.
- b. The theory of relativity and the uncertainty principle doesnot hold completely true while understanding how the universe works

- c. There exists an undiscovered entity – the dark matter, all pervasive in the universe, governing the function of the entire universe – with no understanding of the principle how the universe is regulated by the dark matter.

With all the scientific advance, little is understood on the origin of the Universe. Several centuries after formation of the Universe and Earth, life forms came into existence. In the ancient Christian countries, the common belief until early 17th century was that life forms originated spontaneously. However, Francesco Redi in 1668 through experimentation disproved the spontaneous generation theory by showing that maggots appearing on the putrefying meat did not arise spontaneously but from microorganism already present in the meat. Another theory, called panspermia theory explains that the first life forms on Earth were carried on meteorites travelling from different planets. However, due to lack of scientific proof, this theory did not gain much attention.

Origin of universe according to Indian Scriptures

To the Indian mind, Vedas and Upanishads are believed to provide solutions for simplest to the most complex problems of the universe and from there on to the origin of life. Material based scientists regard the deliberations on origin of life in various civilisations to be driven by emotions, supernatural beliefs, and myths rather than rational reasoning. Instead, of neglecting the beliefs of the cultures, the changing meaning of articulation over time should be incorporated to appreciate the underlying wisdom. The contemporary scientists believe that before the big bang event, there was nothing at all, not even time and space and there was no day and night, light and darkness – similar to void or ‘*śūnya*’ as claimed in the *Nāsadiya sūkta*.

Detailed commentary on the *Nāsadiya sūkta* has been made earlier [1-3] and a compilation of interpretations made by several authors is also documented [4]. Descriptions made until date have been focussed mostly on the vedanta underlying the *Nāsadiya sūkta*[5].

नासदासीन्नो सदासीत्तदानीं नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।

किमावरीवः कुह कस्य शर्मन्नम्भः किमासीद्गहनं गभीरम् ॥ ना सू १ ॥

nāsadāsīnno sadāsīttadānīm nāsīdrajo no vyomā paro yat ।

kimāvarīvaḥ kuha kasya śarmannambhaḥ kimāsīdgahanam gabhīram ॥ nā sū 1 ॥

Non existant and existant were not existing then

There was no atmosphere nor the heavens which are beyond

What existed then? In whose care does that exist?

What was that which was impenetrable and mysterious?

न मृत्युरासीद्मृतं न तर्हि न रात्र्या अह्ना आसीत्प्रकेतः ।

आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्धान्यन्न परः किम् चनास ॥ ना सू २ ॥

na mrutyurāsīdamrutam na tarhi na rātryā ahna āsītpraketaḥ ।

ānīdavātam svadhayā tadekaṁ tasmāddhānyanna paraḥ kim canāsa ॥ nā sū 2 ॥

Neither mortal nor immortal was there

There was no distinction between the day and night, there existed no time

That alone breathed in a windless atmosphere through its austerity

Nor was there a physical entity, neither was distinction of day and night – indicating that there was no time existant; when there is no existence of time, it becomes impossible for the pragmatic mind to consolidate it, which is expressed as, ‘what was existing then? In whose care does it exist?’.

तम आसीत्तमसा गूल्हमग्रेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम् ।

तुच्छयेनाभ्वपिहितं यदसीत्तपसस्तन्महिनाजायतैकम् ॥ ना सू ३ ॥

tama āsittamasā gūlhamagre'praketaṁ salilaṁ sarvamā idam ।

tucchayenābhvapihitaṁ yadasittapasastanmahinājāyataikam ॥ nā sū 3 ॥

It was darkness everywhere,

there was flood everywhere with no fine distinctions

The seed of all things was enveloped / concealed

It was through austerity, unsurpassed seed was born

Nāsadiya sūkta is a set of hymns from the tenth maṇḍala of the Ṛg veda, addressing the origin of the universe and life forms. It is known as one of the most translated sūkta in Ṛg veda. The first two slokas declare about the state before the origin of the universe.

Understanding them from the perspective of vyāvahārika sattā, origin of the universe can be described as follows. Non existant and the existant were not existing then. The author substantiates the grandeur of non-existence in the following statements. ‘There was no

atmosphere nor the heavens; if nothing was existant, who existed then? And who was governing it?'. These statements present the common questions that would arise to one's mind.

In the second sloka, continues to describe the granduer of non-existence, addressing all the doubts that would arise in the mind. There was not death during then, also, was there no immortals then. There was no distinction between day or night, clearly indicating that even time was not existant. There was no object for enjoyment nor was there anyone to enjoy the object. This clearly indicates that mind, matter and time were not existing then. However, 'that' alone existed through its inherent power, and nothing existed thereafter.

From the formation of the Universe, the author continues to explain on the origin of the universe as, staying in complete darkness everywhere, with flood and no fine distinctions of land and water, 'that' was enveloped and the authors claim that it appears to them like as if it was through someone's austerity and firm desire 'that' was preserved.

We call 'that' entity described above as 'the seed for all life forms', which was present everywhere and it preserved itself through its own desire. We speculate if this mark the origin of the primitive mind?.

Understanding the description in the light of present day understanding of origin, it appears that Nāsadiya sūkta, should be the earliest documented inquiry of such understanding, holding more comprehension and relevance with the present day cosmology. In summary, according to the modern theories, universe originated from a hot compressed sub atomic component which exploded and resulted in what is manifested as the present day universe according to the big bang theory. Careful observation leads to five major flaws in the Big Bang theory, which seem to be

answered by the Nāsadīya sūkta. We mention below the commonly mentioned flaws of the Big Bang theory.

- a. What was there before the Big Bang?
- b. Did the entire Universe arise from the Black holes
- c. The homogeneity of Universe
- d. Dark matter and precariously balanced universe
- e. Dark Energy

And, interestingly, the answer for the above flaws are addressed by Nāsadīya sūkta.

Origin of Life forms according to modern theories

The RNA world theory proposes that RNA served as the first structural, functional and basic unit of organisation in the most primitive life form. Also because of its omnipresence, RNA has been recognised as LUCA – ‘Last Universal Common Ancestor’. Modern day definition of life includes a couple of features that is relevant for our discussion here. One is that for an organised entity to be called alive, it should be able to replicate itself and the other is that it should have the ability to query the processess or in other words having the ability to change according to the needs of the situation. RNA fulfils both the needs. Being most versatile among all the biochemicals having the ability to store genetic information, act as catalytic enzyme, use recombination and mutation to develop new niches [6], was considered to hold the most appropriate component of evolution. Recent experiments demonstrate the ease with which RNA could have formed in the early prebiotic borth; two prebiotic compunds, melamine and barbituric acid formed glycosidic linkages with ribose and ribose-5-phosphate in water to

produce nucleosides and nucleotides in good yields [7]. A research group demonstrated that structurally complex and highly active RNA ligases were derived from random RNA sequences [8] - suggesting randomness at some point might device key for an orderliness.

Origin of Life Forms according to *Nāsadiya sūkta*

कामस्तदग्रे समवर्तताधि मनसो रेत प्रथमं यदसीत् ।

सतो बन्धुमसाति निरविन्दन् ह्रिदि प्रतीष्या कवयो मनिषा ॥ ना सू ४ ॥

kāmastadagre samavartatādhi manaso reta prathamam yadasīt |

sato bandhumasāti niravindan hridi pratīṣyā kavayo maṇiṣā || nā sū 4 ||

On that, the existence came into existence because of desire

It was the first seed of the virile mind

The unmanifested got into bondage with the manifested, through karma of the virile mind

तिरश्चिनो विततो रश्मिरेषामधः स्विदासी ३ दुपरि स्विदासि ३ त् ।

रेतोधा आसन्महिमान आसन्त्स्वधा अवस्तात्प्रयतिः परस्तात् ॥ ना सू ५ ॥

tiraścrino vitato raśmireṣāmadhaḥ svidāsī 3 dupari svidāsi 3 t |

retodhā āsanmahimāna āsantsoadhā avastātprayatiḥ parastāt || nā sū 5 ||

The manifested was stretched horizontal like a string

The particle of query was present everywhere

The manifested were having a magical power of increasing at will

It was the inherent power before and the intention later on that governed them

In the fifth sloka, the author explains that, ‘that’ appeared like a horizontal string, present everywhere, with its ability to multiply at will. This description clearly matches the present day understanding of the origin of the genetic material in the planet.

को अद्ध वेद क इह प्र वोचत्कुत आजाता कुत इयं विस्त्रिष्टिः

अवर्गिदेवा अस्य विसर्जनेनाथा को वेद यत आबभूव ॥ ना सू ६ ॥

ko addha veda ka iha pra vocatkuta ājātā kuta iyaṁ visriṣṭiḥ

arvāgdevā asya visarjanenāthā ko veda yata ābabhūva || nā sū 6 ||

Who really knows, Who could further explain,

When and from where it started?

Seekers and the sought manifested later

So who knows when all this manifested?

इयं विस्त्रिष्टिर्यत आबभूव यदि वा दधे यदि वा न ।

यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन्त्सो अङ्ग वेद यदि वा न वेद ॥ ना सू ७ ॥

iyaṁ visriṣṭiryata ābabhūva yadi vā dadhe yadi vā na |

yo asyādhyakṣaḥ parame vyomantso aṅga veda yadi vā na veda || nā sū 7 ||

This manifested (2⁰ creation) kept itself similar in a limited way

Present in the ocean, it is self held, addicted to itself

This perceptible to the senses, is protected from all directions

Does this physical entity know this sacred knowledge or does it not know?

Alternate Description:

'from whence this creation arose; did he create, or did he not? HE who presides over it in the highest heaven, HE alone for sure knows, or maybe HE does not know

Several theories have been proposed by the scientists through experiments regarding the origin of life forms on planet - 'RNA World' is one such widely accepted theory. We have come across several similarities between *Nāsadiya sūkta* and RNA world theory, former dating back to several centuries and the later is from 21st century.

The *Nāsadiya sūkta*, similar to the predictions of RNA world theory, declares that when Earth came into existence, it was flooded everywhere with no distinction between land and water and it was covered with turbulent hot oceans. Further, it is described that from unmanifested, the seed for all life forms manifested – which shall be interpreted as 'the seed for all life forms' developed from the abundant prebiotic compounds that were available in the primitive earth.

Nāsadiya sūkta, further declares the quality of the 'seed of all life forms', which resembles the qualities of RNA. It is described that, that seed of all life forms as a particle of query, stretched like a string, driven by its inherent power and desire, 'the seed of all life forms' was protected from all sides, which had the property of increasing at will and is capable of keeping itself identical. RNA is known for evolving itself in a self-replicating fashion and contribute to new functions. The replication process of RNA is very specific that it replicates the same sequence of nucleotides from the nucleotide pool – minimising the chance of error and preserve the function of RNA. The 'querying' and 'capacity to replicate keeping itself identical' might indicate the 'seed of origin of life' mentioned in *Nāsadiya sūkta* to be the present-day RNA. This description

in the *Nāsadiya sūkta* might provide a new dimension in perceiving implicit biological phenomena.

In summary, origin of life forms in *Nāsadiya sūkta* can be interpreted that the life form manifested itself from the unmanifested by its own desire and, the manifested had its inherent nature to explore and replicate itself to a similar entity. This description mentioned in the *Nāsadiya sūkta* matches precisely with the observation proposed by the modern day scientists after scientific experiments. It appears that *Nāsadiya sūkta*, should be the earliest documented inquiry of such understanding, holding more comprehension and relevance with the present day cosmology.

Factors governing human lifeforms

तमेकनेमिं त्रिष्टतं षोडशान्तं

शतार्धरं विंशतिप्रत्यराभिः ।

अष्टकैः षडभिविश्वरूपैकपाशं

त्रिमागभिदं द्विनिमित्तैकमोहम् ॥ ष्व ऊप् ४ ॥

tamekanemim triṣṭatam ṣoḍaśāntam

śatārdharam viṃśatipratyarābhiḥ|

aṣṭakaiḥ ṣaḍabhiviśvarupaikapāśam

trimārgabhedam dvinimittaikamoham || ṣv ūp 4 ||

One thinks of him as the universe resembling a wheel which has one felly with a triple tyre, sixteen extremities, fifty spokes, twenty counter spokes and six sets of eight which is driven

along three roads by means of a belt that is single yet manifold and which on each revolution gives rise to two.

This mantra is described in *sāṅkhya* terminology with detailed imagery conveying a sense to the reader that, for one bound by the intellect and the senses, the Universe is explainable only as an expression of the supreme being. Hence, the God is meditated upon as the wheel of this Universe. In this Shloka, the Universe itself is compared to a wheel in order to indicate its dynamic nature – expansion and also the cyclic nature of the Universe – both at the level of galaxies and lifeforms – both are born and die at some point of time.

Describing the sloka in detail, following components are mentioned as the components of the universe and life forms

1. Felly: Wheel – represents nature known variously as the unmanifested, *māyā*, *prakṛiti*, *śakti* etc., the cause on which the entire creation depends ,
2. Three tyres: It can be considered as the trigunas - the three qualities viz. *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* or it may be considered as representing time, space and causation i.e., *tripuṭi* of *vedanta*
3. 16 extremities: 16 products or vikritis of sankhya philosophy [11 organs (*indriyas*); 5 gross elements (*panchamahabhutas*)]
4. Fifty spokes:
 - a. 5 viparyayas/ misconceptions;
 - b. 28 ashakthi / disabilities;
 - c. 9 tushtis/satisfactions;

- d. 8 siddhis/perfections [cross referenced in: Sankhyasutra III 37,45 & Sankhyakaarika 47 & PYS I-8: II-2]
5. 20 counter spokes:
- These are the wedges that support the spokes and they refer to
- a. ten senses
 - b. ten objects of senses
6. 6 sets of 8:
- a. 8 fold nature [*prakṛtyaṣṭaka*]: 5 elements of mind, intellect [*Buddhi*] and Ego [*ahaṅkara*]
 - b. 8 ingredients of the body [*dhātvaṣṭaka*]: Skin [*Carma*], internal skin [*Tvak*], blood [*asṛk*], flesh [*māṁsa*], fat [*medas*], bone [*āsthi*], marrow [*majjā*] and sukra [*śukra*]
 - c. 8 psychic power [*aiśvaryaṣṭaka*]: *Anima, Mahima, Garima, Lahima, Prapti, prakamyā, Ishitva and Vashitva*
 - d. 8 mental states [*bhāvāṣṭaka*]: Righteousness [*dharma*], unrighteousness [*adharmā*], knowledge [*jnana*], ignorance [*ajnana*], renunciation [*vairagya*] and attachment [*avairagya*], super-human powers [*aiśvarya*] and want of super-human powers [*anaiśvarya*]
 - e. 8 super human beings [*devāṣṭaka*]: *Brahmā, prajāpati, devas, gandharvas, yakṣas, rakṣasas, pitrs, piśā*

- f. 8 virtues of the soul [*guṇāṣṭaka*]: compassion [*dayā*], forbearance [*kṣamā*],
absense of jealousy [*anusuya*], freedom from poverty [*akārpaṇya*] and
desirelessness [*aspṛhā*]
7. 3 different roads: virtue [*dharmā*], vice [*adharmā*], Knowledge [*jnāna*]
8. Belt: Kama or desire and it is mentioned to be manifold
9. Each Revolution: Moha literally means delusion and it is synonymous with brahma. In its application to the wheel, *moha* can mean only delusion. So, the revolution represents delusion, giving rise to two opposites: merit [*punya*] and sin [*papa*].

पञ्चस्रोतोभुं पञ्चयोन्युग्रवक्रां

पञ्चप्राणोर्मिं पञ्चबुध्दयादिमूलम् ।

पञ्चवर्ता पञ्चदुःखौघवेगां

पञ्चशब्देदां पञ्चपर्वाधीमः ॥ ष्वे ऊप् ५ ॥

pañcastrotobhbum pañcayonyugravakrām

pañcapraṇormiṁ pañcabudhdayādimūlam ।

pañcavartām pañcaduḥkhaughavegām

pañcaśabhdedām pañcaparvādhīmaḥ ॥ ṣve ūp 5 ॥

We think of him in his manifestation as the Universe who is like a river that contains the waters of five streams; that has five big turnings due to five causes; that has the five pranas for the waves, the mind – the basis of five-fold perception – of the source and the five-fold misery for its rapids; and that has five whirlpools five branches and innumerable aspects

The points of resemblance between the river and the universe are mentioned in this verse.

- a. As the river water comes from the sea and goes back to the sea, the Universe springs from God and goes back to him.
- b. As the river is full of potential dangers to the unthinking masses living on its banks on account of possible floods, so is the world capable of mischief to men absorbed in it. But, then just as how the river contributes to the prosperity and convenience of people who make use of it for irrigation and communication, the world also helps the spiritual evolution of those who have the right outlook in it
- c. The waters of the river always change but keep a unity because of the banks, so also the universe is full of change, but it keeps up an appearance of unity within the limits of its banks of time and space situated in the bed of causation
- d. As the waters of the river are not different from the ocean, the universe is not different from god in the absolute sense.
 1. Five streams – represent five senses
 2. Five causes – represent five elements or the panchamahabhutas
 3. Mind for the source – this expression indicates that the expression of the Universe depends on the mind and that if the mind is transcended in *Samadhi*, the Universe disappears. This explanation describes the present day understanding of the universe as mentioned by the quantum physicists.
 4. Five-fold misery – It consists of the sorrows of pre-natal existence in the womb, those attendant on birth, the miseries of old age, the pains of diseases and the sorrows of death.
 5. Five whirlpools – the objects of five senses: sound, touch, colour, taste and smell in which an individual gets entangled and drowned.

The Nature of human mind

संयुक्तमेतत् क्षरमक्षरं च

व्यक्ताव्यक्तं भरते विक्ष्वमीशः

अनीशश्चात्मा बध्यते भोक्त्रु

भवाज् ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥ष्वे ऊप् ८ ॥

saṁyuktametataḥ kṣaramakṣaram ca

vyaktāvyaktam bharate vikṣvamīśaḥ

anīśaścātmā badhyate bhoktru

bhavāj jñātvā devaṁ mucyate sarvopāśaiḥ ||ṣvee ūp 8||

This universe is supported by a combination of perishable and imperishable, the manifest and the unmanifest. As long as the self does not know the Lord, it gets attached to the worldly pleasures and is bound; but when it knows the absolute reality - *śunya*, all obstacles fall away. When one becomes aware and discriminates the conscious self, the unconscious master and the dependant object, the ultimate reality manifests and one gets free from bondages. It is the mind that portrays the world as it is and makes one to perceive that he perceives.

यत् अर्थप्रतिभानं तत् मन इत्यभिधीयते ।

नास्त्यस्य मनसो रूपं संकल्पात् तत् न भिद्यते ॥

अविद्या संसृतिः चित्तं बन्धोऽज्ञानं मनः तमः ।

इति संकल्पजालस्य नामान्येतानि राघव ॥ यो व ॥

yat arthapratibhānam tat mana ityabhidhīyate |
nāstyasya manaso rūpaṁ saṅkalpāt tat na bhidyate ||
avidyā saṁsṛtiḥ cittam bandho'jñānam manaḥ tamaḥ|
iti saṅkalpajālasya nāmānyetāni rāghava|| yo va ||

The universe which verily is seen all round is made of mind. There is no form for this mind. Mind is not separated from thought or imagination. Stream of worldly life, thinking, substance, bondage, ignorance, light, darkness, these are the names of the web thoughts. When the thoughts disappear, one's own natural state is left behind. When this state is accomplished only stillness (*Shunya*) remains.

Disease and its manifestation

In summary life forms in the universe are governed by multiple principles – which are all perceived by the mind. Mind is defined as a conglomeration of thoughts which are gained in the process of life based on subjective experience. And, one can free himself from the bondages and sufferings by overcoming his mind and establishing himself in his actual state of *śunya*.

Understanding the functioning of our mind forms the basis of Buddhist philosophy and practice; as the first verse of the Dhammapada (quotations from the Buddha) states: "All things are preceded by the mind, led by the mind, created by the mind."

Taittreya Upanishad, a classical treatise on Yoga mentions that the root cause of all diseases lies in the mind. The philosophy of manifestation of disease is mentioned in detail in *pancha kośa viveha*. It states that, the human body is made up of five sheaths (*panchakośa*)– *Annamayakośa*,

pranamayakośa, *manomayakośa*, *vijnanamayakośa* and *anandamayakośa*. Diseases have their root in the *manomayakośa*, creating a disturbance in the *pranamayakośa*, which leads to the manifestation of disease in the *annamayakośa*, at a site in the body which is inherently weak. This probably answers a common observation of a similar stress resulting in obesity, diabetes or hypertension in different individuals.

Mind is defined in Buddhism as a non-physical phenomenon which perceives, thinks, recognises, experiences and reacts to the environment. The mind is described as having two main aspects: clarity and knowing; meaning that the mind is clear, formless and allows for objects to arise in it, and that the mind is knowing, awareness, a consciousness which can engage with objects. The two main types of mind are explained as the conceptual and the non-conceptual.

दुःखःदौर्मनस्यांगमेजयत्वश्वासप्रश्वासाः विक्लेषसहभुवः॥ ।प यो सु १.३१।

Dukhadaurmanasyāmgamejayatvaśvāsapraśvāsāḥ vikshepasahabhuvah|| ।pa yo sū 1.31|

Disease, dullness (chronic fatigue), doubt, procrastination, laziness, craving, erroneous perception, inability to achieve finer stages and instability are the obstacles. Mental pain, depression, nervousness and hard breathing are the accompanying symptoms of mental distraction (*Vikshepasahabhuvah*)

The relation between the mind and disease is also mentioned by *Patanjali* in his *Yoga Sūtra*'s where he mentions nine distractions of mind and the very first one is disease or *Vyādhi* (1.30). In addition, he also mentions of *dùkha*, *daurmanasya*, irregular breathing (1.31) etc., are the symptoms of a distracted mind.

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवदखेदहृदम् ।

तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥ । भ गी ६-३४ ।

cañcalam hi manaḥ kṛṣṇa pramāthi balavadṛḍham ।

tasyāhaṁ nigrahaṁ manye vāyooriva suduṣkaram ॥

O Kṛṣṇa! Verily, the mind is fickle, turbulent, powerful and unyielding. To control it, I think, is as difficult as controlling the wind itself.

The mind is so strong and obstinate that it sometimes overcomes the intelligence, although mind is supposed to be subservient to the intelligence. For a man in the practical world who has to fight so many opposing elements, it is certainly very difficult to control the mind. Artificially, one may establish a mental equilibrium toward both friend and enemy, but ultimately no worldly man can do so, for this is more difficult than controlling the raging wind.

अन्यदा भ्रशमुदावेग्नमना नष्टद्रावेण इव क्रपणः सकरुणमातेतर्षेण

हारेणकुणकावेरहावेहवलहृदयसन्तापस्तमेवानुशोचन् किल कश्मल

महदाभिराम्भेत इति होवाच ॥ ।श्री भा ५. ८.१५।

anyadā bhrśamudvignamanā naṣṭadraviṇa iva krpaṇaḥ sakaruṇamatitarṣeṇa

hariṇakuṇakavirahavihvalahradayasantāpastamevānuśocan kila kaśmalaṁ

mahadabhirambhita iti hovāca ॥ ।śrī bhā 5.8.15 ।

Whenever person failed to see what he needs then, he would feel extremely perturbed like a miser who had lost his fortune and sorrowing for it alone with a heart full of agony and overwhelmed with grief at his separation.

अथेस्य साधने सिद्वे उत्कर्षे रक्षणे व्यये।

नाशोपभोग आयाशस्त्रासाश्चिन्ता भ्रमो नुणाम् ।श्री भा ११.२३.१७।

arthasya sādhanē sidve utkarṣe rakṣaṇe vyaye।

nāśopabhoga āyāśastrāsaścintā bhramo nuṇām ।śrī bhā 11.23.17।

Bodily exertion, apprehension, anxiety and delusion fall to the lot of men engaged in the acquisition of wealth, augmenting and preserving it once it has been acquired, and anxiety (grief alone) is involved in its expenditure, loss and enjoyment.

दूरेन ह्यवर कमे बुद्धियोगाद्धनन्जय।

बुद्धौ शरणमान्वेच्छ क्रपणाः फलहेतवः॥ । भ गं २.४९।

dūrena hyavaram kama buddhiyogāddhananjaya ।

buddhau śaraṇamanviccha krpaṇāḥ phalahetavaḥ॥ । bha gī 2.49 ।

O Arjuna, mere action (with attachment) is far inferior to action done with the mind poised in evenness. Seek shelter in this state of unperturbed evenness (which can arise only in a desireless mind in communion with the divine). Those who work for selfish gains are indeed pitiable.

बुद्ध्युक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते।

तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्॥ । भ गी २.५०।

buddhiyukto jahātīha ubhe sukṛtaduṣkṛte।

tasmādyogāya yujyasva yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam॥ । bha gī 2.50।

When consciousness is unified, however, all vein anxiety is left behind. There is no cause for worry, whether things go well or ill. Therefore, devote yourself to the disciplines of *yoga*, for *Yoga* is skill in action.

The effects of desire, the source of *klesa*, is beautifully brought out by *Sri Kṛṣṇa* in the second chapter of *Bhagavad Gita*:

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषुपजायते।

सङ्गात् सजायते कामः कामात् क्रोधोभेजायते॥ । भ गी २.६२।

क्रोधाद्भवाते सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतीवेभ्रमः।

स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात् प्रणश्याते॥ । भ गी २.६३।

dhyāyato viṣayānpuṁsaḥ saṅgasteṣupajāyate।

saṅgāt saṁjāyate kāmaḥ kāmāt krodhobhijāyate॥ । bha gī 2.62।

krodhādbhavati sammohaḥ sammohātsmṛtīvebhramaḥ।

smṛtibhramśādbuddhināśo buddhināśāt praṇaśyati॥ । bha gī 2.63।

In one who dwells longingly on sense objects, an inclination towards them is generated. This inclination develops into desire (strong likes and dislikes) and desire (unfulfilled) ensues anger (greed, lust, fear, possessiveness, etc.). From anger arises delusion and delusion results in loss of memory. Loss of memory brings about the destruction of discriminative intelligence and loss of reason (discrimination), he goes to complete ruin.

This dramatic narration matches with the description of *Patañjali's* comprehensive concept of *Klesa*. Egocentric personalities are characterized by strong obsessions, ambitions, likes and dislikes. Emotional imbalances often emerge out of them as upsurges. Else, if they get suppressed they percolate to the physical level resulting in various psychosomatic diseases. When the emotional outbursts like anger continues for a long time, we become infatuated and obsessed losing all power of discrimination and act from the instinctive level. *Patanjali* called this as *Abhinivesa*, a state of helplessness, constriction, slavery or bondage which is the grossest manifestation of stress.

चिन्तामपारेमेया च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः।

कामोपभोगपरमा एतावादीते निश्चिताः॥ | भ गौ १६.११।

cintāmaparimeyāṁ ca pralayāntāmupāśritāḥ |

kāmopabhogaparamā etāvaditi niścitāḥ|| | bha gī 16.11 |

Gratification of the senses is the prime necessity of human civilization. Thus, there is no end to one's anxiety. Being bound by hundreds and thousands of desires, by lust and anger, one secures wealth by illegal means for sense gratification.

चित्ते विधुरते देहः सक्षोभमनुयात्यलम्।

तथाहे रुषेतो जन्तुरग्रमेव न पश्याते॥ |यो व ३०॥

citte vidhurite dehaḥ sarkṣobhamanuyātyalam |

tathāhi ruṣito janturagrāmeva na paśyati || |yo va 30||

The mind being disturbed by anxieties the body is disordered also in its functions, as the man that is overtaken by anger loses the sight of whatever is present before his eyes.

प्राक्तनौ चोहेको वापे शुभा वाप्यसुभा मातेः।

येवाधिका सेव तथा तास्मिन्योजयाते क्रमे॥ |यो व २१।

prāktanī caihikī vāpi śubhā vāpyasubhā matih |

yevadhikā seva tathā tasminyojayati krame || |yo va 21|

As the good or bad proclivities of men, are the results of their actions of prior and present births, so the anxieties and diseases of the present state, are the effects of the good and bad deeds both of this life as also those of the past.

नावेरतो दुश्चारेतान्नशान्तो नासमाहितः।

नाशान्तमानसो वापे प्रज्जानेनैनमाप्नुयात्॥ |कटो १.२.२४।

nāvirato duścāritānnaśānto nāsamāhitaḥ |

nāśāntamānaso vāpi prajñānenainamāpnuyāt || |kaṭo 1.2.24|

Unless one desists from bad conduct and keeps his senses under control and mind concentrated and free from anxiety, he cannot realise the Self through knowledge.

आत्मनः प्रीयते नात्मा परतः स्वत एव वा।

लक्षयेलब्धकाम त्वा चिन्तया शबल मुख॥ श्री भा ६.१४.२१।

ātmanah priyate nātmā parataḥ svata eva vā |

lakṣayelabdhakāmaṁ tvāṁ cintayā śabalaṁ mukhaṁ || |śrī bhā 6.14.21|

Our mind is not pleased either with others or with your own self. (For) I find your face discolored with anxiety, and (thereby) conclude that you have not attained the object of your desire.

Patanjali uses the term *क्लेश (Klesa)* which aptly describes stress. In his text Yoga Sutra, the *Klesas* have been described as:

आवेद्यास्मितारागद्वेषाभिनेवेशा क्लेशाः॥ १५ यो सु २.३।

Avidyā' smitārāgadveshābhinivesāh klesāh. |pa yo sū 2.3|

Stress in the form of mental, emotional, and biopsychic hindrances (*Klesās*) originates from *Avidyā* (unawareness) of our true nature. As a result of this ignorance [which veils the bright light of truth], other *Klesās* arise such as *Asmitā* (the limited false identification of egoism), *Rāga* (fixation and craving), *Dvesā* (repulsion, dislike, hatred, anger, fear, antipathy, or aversion), and the fear of dissolution (*Abhinivesāh*). In our original state one is stress-free. That state, devoid of any tension and pressure is the source of all bliss, knowledge, creativity and freedom.

Afflictions causing disturbance are lack of spiritual awareness, misapprehension, ego, desire, passion, greed, hatred, jealous, attachment to life, fear, anxiety and sorrow. *Patanjali* gives the

details of the *kleśas*. Because of materialistic tendencies, man thinks that selfish miseries are the only miseries. Philosophers and psychologists have tried to discover the basis of pain and they have found that pain is not rooted in the present mind but far back in the past.

व्याधिस्त्यानसशयप्रमादालस्यावेरातेभ्रान्तेदशेनालब्धभूमिकत्वानवास्थितत्वाने

चित्तावेक्षेपास्तेन्तरायाः ॥ १३० ॥

vyādhistyānasarṣayapramādālasyāvairatibhrāntidarśanālabdhabhūmikatoāvasthitatvāni

cittavikṣepāstentarāyāḥ ॥ १३० ॥

Disease, languor, doubt, carelessness, laziness, worldly-mindedness, delusion, nonachievement of a stage, instability, these (nine) cause the distraction of the mind and they are the obstacles.

The Ayurvedic approach is termed holistic as it treats man as a whole. That is why it considers three important causes for diseases, as mentioned in *Caraka sūtrasthāna*.

कालबुद्धीन्द्रियाथोनामयोगो मिथ्या न चाति च ।

द्वयाश्रयाणा व्याधीना त्रिवेधो हेतुसग्रहः ॥ १५४ ॥

kālabuddhīndriyārthānāmayogoo mithyā na cāti ca ।

dvayāśrayāṇām vyādhīnām trividhoo hetusaṅgrahaḥ ॥ १५४ ॥

Perverted, negative, and excessive use of time, intelligence, and sense objects is the threefold cause of both psychic and somatic disorders. This is considered as:

- Improper utilization of sensory faculty - *Asātmyendiryārtha samyoga*

- Improper utilization of mental faculty - *Prajnāparādha* and
- Improper utilization of time - *Kāla*

It is also clearly mentioned that psychological disorders are caused by non-fulfillment of desire and facing of the undesired. The very first verse of *Aṣṭāṅga Hrudaya* says that of all diseases, the disease which are called *rāgādirogān* are most formidable. These permeate the whole body of every living organism and they are always there diffused throughout the whole system. These diseases cause intense excitement, unconsciousness, and restlessness just like fever or other serious diseases.

Rāgā means desire. Desire is a normal quality of the human mind. But when it exceeds the normal limit, it causes bondage with the object of desire and results in disease. The *Rāgā* are: *kama* (lust), *lobha* (greed), *moha* (infatuation), *kroda* (anger), *mada* (arrogance) and *mātsarya* (jealousy). The first three are derived from *excess attraction* and last three from *excess repulsion*. These passions are described in *Āyurveda* as 6 enemies of man.

It is also mentioned that disease is disequilibrium - *vikāro dhātuvaiṣamyam* and disease is misery *vikāro dukhaḥmeva ca*. The first aspect represents disequilibrium of the body tissues and functions and the second aspect represents the state of mind. Mind is said to be one of the two abodes of diseases. Involvement of mind is also postulated in the manifestation of bodily disorders and vice versa. *Caraka* emphatically states that excellence of mental health results in milder manifestation of the disease and poor mental strength projects a minor one to be a serious one.

Even physical ailments are caused by nonphysical or mental emotions. *Caraka* says people who are *sadā āturāḥ* i.e., constantly ill because they in the pre-occupations of their mind, do not attend to the calls of nature at proper time, nor do they attend to their food, exercise, or rest regularly. Thus, the mental attitude has much to do with health and happiness of man.

Emotions like anger, fear, pleasure, etc., delays healing. The *pitta* is deranged by anger and fear (*Susruta sūtrasthāna 1:21*) and blood is vitiated by anger. *Vāyu* is provoked by *kama* and grief. Certain fevers are produced due to emotional causes like fear, grief, etc. There are many somatic disorders in which mental symptoms have been described and also vice versa. *Caraka* therefore mentions that somatic and psychic disorders follow one another and occasionally occur together.

विन्जाय नोवेद्य गत पाते प्रजाः पुरोहेतामात्यसुहृद्गणादयः।

वोचेक्युरुव्योमातेशोककातरा यथा निगूढ पुरुष कुयोगेनः॥ |श्री भा ४.१३.४८।

vinjāya nirvidya gataṁ patim prajāḥ purohitāmātyasuhradgaṇādayaḥ |

vicikyururovyāmātiśokakātarā yathā nigūḍhaṁ puruṣaṁ kuyoginaḥ||śrī bhā 4.13.48 |

No intelligent man would welcome that embodiment of delusion called a son who is the cause of untold infamy, unrighteousness, antagonism, and mental worries. The householder's life is plagued with sorrow if there is such a son.

Yoga: An elixir for humans

Patañjali's idea of stress can be understood by the study of his concepts of modifications of the mind (*Chitta Vrtti*) and the causes for pains in the mental status (*Klesa*). *Yoga* is mastery of the mind. *Patañjali* defines in his second *Pātanjala* aphorism:

योगः चित्तवृत्ते निरोधः ।

yogah cittavrutti nirodhah । ।pa yo su 1.2।

Yoga is a process of cessation of mental modification.

This is the technique of 'mind regulation' prescribed by *Patanjali*. Mental regulation involves two aspects - a power to concentrate on any desired subject or object and a capacity to remain quiet any time. All of us have been developing the first aspect namely concentration. Rarely the second capacity of man, to remain calm and silent, has not been harnessed. Hence, *Yoga* mainly emphasizes, this second aspect.

He puts forth five major modifications of the mind as the determinants of stress (*Patanjali Yoga Sutra 1:6*): right knowledge (*Pramāna*), wrong knowledge (*Viparyaya*), fancy (*Vikalpa*), sleep (*Nidrā*), and memory (*Smrti*).

In the *Yoga Sutrās* (1: 32- 39), *Patanjali* suggests 8 suitable stress management principles to overcome stress and attain a state of complete mental well- being.

1. For removing of those obstacles and accompanying symptoms, the practice of concentration on one principle is undertaken.

2. In relation to happiness, misery, virtue and vice, by cultivating the attitudes of friendliness, compassion, gladness and indifference respectively, the mind becomes purified and peaceful
3. Or by the expiration and retention of the breath one can control the mind
4. Or else the mind can be made steady by bringing it into activity through sense experience
5. Or the luminous state which is beyond sorrow can control the mind
6. Or else the mind can be brought under control by making a passionless person the object for concentrating the mind
7. Or else the mind can be made steady by giving it the knowledge of dream and sleep for support
8. Or else by any desired meditation, mind can be steadied

The ultimate goal of yoga is to bring about the status of complete mental well-being by restraining mental modifications. Control over the mind's fluctuations comes from persevering practice (*Abhyāsa*) and non-attachment (*Vairāgya*). Repeating the sacred syllable (*Pranava Japa*) and pondering its meaning (*Arthabhāvanam*) lead to experience of the ultimate mental well-being.

Patanjali states that four qualities should become the basis of our association with other people for effective stress management.

मौत्रेकरुणामादितोपेक्षाणा सुखदुखपुण्यापुण्यावेषयाणा

भावनताश्चित्तप्रसादनम्॥ ।प यो र १.३३।

Maitrīkarunāmuditopekshānām sukhadukhapunyāpunyāvishayānām

bhāvanātaścittaprasādanam || |pa yo su 1.33|

The meaning is that: “The mind becomes purified and peaceful by cultivating the attitudes of friendliness, compassion, gladness and indifference respectively towards happiness, misery, virtue and vice.

In the very third sūtra Patanjali gives definition for **Svastha** / Healthy person:

तदा द्रष्टु स्वरूपे अवस्थानम्॥ ।प यो सु १-३।

Tadā drashtṛ svarūpe avasthānam|| | pa yo su 1.3|

Then the observer of spiritual practice gets established in his own nature.

Here ‘**sva**’ is *svarūpa* and ‘**stha**’ is *avasthānam* – the same as *svastha* in *Āyurveda*. So to be established in one’s own self is ideal health. According to *Patanjali* this happens after one has successfully inhibited the modifications of the mind. So it also means that healthy state is achieved by mastery over the mind.

For Stress Management, Maharishi *Patanjali* proposed *Ashtānga Yoga* (eight limbs).

1. *Yama* (Universal Moral Commandments)

a. *Ahimsā* (Non- violence)

b. *Satya* (Truth)

- c. Asteya (Non-stealing)
 - d. Brahmacharya (Continence)
 - e. Aparigraha (Non-coveting)
2. Niyama (Self- Purification by Discipline)
- a. Saucha (Cleanliness)
 - b. Santosha (Contentment)
 - c. Tapas (Austerity)
 - d. Svādhyāya (Self-study)
 - e. Īsvaraṇidhāna (Surrender to God)
3. Āsana (Posture)
4. Prānāyāma (Breath Control)
5. Pratyāhāra (Withdrawal of Mind from Senses)
6. Dhāranā (Concentration)
7. Dhyana (Meditation)
8. Samādhi (Super-Consciousness)

Yogavāsistha clearly mentions that physical ailments born out of mental illness is destroyed by removal of mental sickness and the most excellent medicine is overcoming the mind.

In *Yoga Vāsistha*, the essence of *Yoga* is portrayed as:

मन प्रश्मनोपाय योग इत्याभिधीयते ।

manaḥ praśamanopāyaḥ yogaḥ ityabhidhīyate । |yo va 3.9.32|

Yoga is called a skilful trick to calm down the mind. It is an *upāyah* (solution). It is a skilful subtle process and not a brutal, mechanical gross effort to stop the thoughts in the mind. An unskilled layman trying to perform a surgery is almost sure to kill the patient, while an experienced and skilful physician knows exactly on what to lay hands and to rectify the problem. He operates at the right place. Knowledge is the key. Similarly, for the control of mind, a novice tries hard and gets disgusted when he finds himself more messed up, while *Yoga* gives him the necessary techniques to operate at the right place at the right time to gain complete mastery. This skill is the trick of allowing the mind to calm down and not to use brutal force to stop it. In action, *Yoga* is a special skill which makes the mind reach its subtler state and to remove anxiety.

Yoga Vāsistha also mentions the ill effects of desire as:

सवेससारदोषाणा ऋणैका दीघदुःखदा ॥ | यो व ३८|

sarvasarṁsāradoṣāṇām trṣṇaikā dīrghaduakhadā || | yo va 38|

Of all the ills of wordly life, it is desire alone that gives lasting grief.

Yoga Vāsistha further describes how mental agitation causes physical ailments as follows:

“When the mind is agitated, the body also goes to the state of agitation. On account of agitation, the vital airs (currents of bio-energy) becomes uneven, this results in bad digestion, indigestion, or even over digestion of food. Such food remaining in the body causes obstruction and physical ailments”

देहदुःख विदुव्योधिमाध्याख्य वासनामयम्।

मौख्येमूले हि ते विद्यातत्त्वज्ञाने पारेक्षयः॥ |यो व १४|

dehadukham vidurvyādhimādhyākhyam vāsanāmayam |

maurkhyamūle hi te vidyāttattvajnāne parikṣayaḥ || |yo va 14|

It is ailing of the body, that we call our sickness, and it is the trouble of the mind that we term our uneasiness. Both of them take their rise from our inordinate desires, and it is our ignorance only of the nature of things, that is the source of both. (our intemperance and covetousness, which are dispelled by our right knowledge).

द्विवेधो व्याधिरस्तौह सामान्यः सार एव च।

व्यवहारस्तु सामान्यः सारो जन्ममयः स्मृतः॥ |यो व २३|

dvividho vyādhirastīha sāmānyah sāra eva ca |

vyavahārastu sāmānyah sāro janmamayaḥ smṛtaḥ || |yo va 23|

There are two sorts of diseases here common to human nature, namely: the ordinary ones and the essential; the ordinary ones are the occurrences of daily life, and the essential is what is inborn in our nature. (the ordinary cares for supplying our natural wants are of the first sorts, and the inbred errors and afflictions of the mind are of other kind).

प्राप्तेनाभिमतैव नश्यान्ते व्यावहारेकाः।

आधिक्षयेणाधिभवाः क्षियन्ते व्याधयोप्यलम्॥ |यो व २४|

prāptenābhimatenaiva naśyanti vyāvahārikāḥ |

ādhiṣṭayenādhivavāḥ kṣiyante vyādhayopyalam || |yo va 24|

The ordinary anxieties are removed by the attainments of the objects in want; and the diseases growing out of them, are also removed by the removal of our anxious cares.

आधिव्याधीवेलासाना राम साराधिसक्षयः
सर्वेषा मूलहा प्रावृण्णदोव तदवीरुधाम्॥ |यो व २६।
ādhivyādhivīlāsānām rāma sārādhisakṣayaḥ |

sarveṣām mūlahā prāvṛṇṇadīva tadavīrudhām || |yo va 26|

The erroneous affections of the mind, being known as the source of all our anxiety and maladies; it is enough to put a stop to this mainspring in order to prevent their outlets, so that mind does not disrupt the body.

Mahabharatha emphasizes that mind is superior to the body or sense organs and it is the main difference towards freedom or bondage. This is summed up in the below verse

चक्षुः पश्याते रूपाण् मनसा न चक्षुषा
न चोन्द्रियाणे पश्यान्ते मन एवात्र पश्याते॥ | म भा १२.२९९.१६।
cakṣuḥ paśyati rūpāṅ manasā na cakṣuṣā |
na cendriyāṅi paśyanti mana aivātra paśyati || |Ma bhā 12.299.16 |

The eye perceives not through the organ of vision but through the mind. It is the mind that perceives and not the special organs of sense.

Again in *Shanthi Parva* of *Mahābhārata* the importance of the mind when compared to the limbs is beautifully illustrated by the following lines:

याभ्याम् आलीन्गेत कान्ता तभ्याम् आलीन्गेते सुता॥
Yābhyām ālinṅeta kāntā tabhyām ālinṅete sutā||

The same limbs which embrace the beloved wife embrace the beloved son!! In one, there is the emotion of sexual gratification and in the other, there is the emotion of affection. The limbs are moved and led by the mind in either case for a different purpose. The leader is the mind, the limbs only follow.

To alleviate the problems of stress, anxiety and depression, *Bhagavat Gita* suggests *karma yoga*. The path of work, *Karma Yoga*, involves doing action with an attitude of detachment to fruits of action. This makes man release himself from the strong attachments and thereby brings in him a steadiness of mind which verily is *Yoga* - '*Samatvam Yoga Ucyate*' (*Gītā* 2.48).

कमेण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन मा
कमेफलहेतुभूमो ते सण्गनोस्त्वकर्मोने | | भ गी २.४७|
karmāṇyevadhikāraste mā phaleṣu kadācana mā
karmaphalaheturbhūrmā te saṅgno'stvakarmani | | bha gī 2.47|

The right is to work only, but never to its fruits; let not the fruit-of-action be they motive, nor let they attachment be to inaction.

योग कमेसु कौशलम् | | भ गी २. ५०|
yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam | | bha gī 2.50|

Yoga is dexterity in action. The dexterity is in maintaining relaxation and awareness in action. The relaxed action is the process. Efficiency in action is an outcome. Thus, *Yoga* is a skilful science of gaining mastery over the mind. *Yoga* is traditionally conjectured and popularly known as a process or a technique to reach the ultimate state of perfection. However, *yoga* is found defined even as the states of higher powers and potentialities and even as ultimate state of *Silence*, thus helps one to eliminate *Anxiety*.

If there are unlimited desires and if we are unable to fulfil them, we enter into stress, depression, and anxiety. It is not that we cannot have any goals, ambitions but the way we plan and execute is important to reach the destination. A very good and simple example we can think of is, a person performing acrobatics i.e., walking on a rope with a balanced stick will have a goal to reach the other end of pole, but he never looks at the pole. Instead he will concentrate only on his work i.e. on his every step. We know that if he keeps looking at the other end of pole often, he is sure to lose balance and fall is certain. We can achieve whatever we want by setting goals without getting into anxious state by practicing detachment to fruits of action.

Bhagavat Gita suggests *Bhakti yoga* as another means to alleviate the problems of stress, anxiety and depression. The control of emotions is the key in the path of worship (*Bhakti Yoga*). In this modern world, man is tossed up and down due to emotional onslaughts. The path of *Bhakti* is a boon to gain control over emotional instabilities by properly harnessing the energy involved in it.

Krishna says -

अनपेक्ष् शुचिदेक्ष् उदसीनो गतव्यथः
सवेरभपरित्यागे यो मन्द्रक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ । भ गी १२.१६।
anapekṣḥ śucirdakṣ udāsīno gataavyathaḥ।
sarvarabhaparityagi yo mandraktaḥ sa me priyaḥ ॥ । bha gī 12.16।

He who is free from wants, pure, alert, unconcerned, untroubled renouncing all undertakings (or commencements) – he who is (this) devoted to Me, is dear to Me.

When a desired object is gained *Joy* comes; if not gained, one becomes *envious* at those who have; when satisfied *Greed* for more; when we possess what we desire *Fear* of losing it – when the desired object is missing *Anxiety* over its destiny – all these are not in one who has no desire for objects.

In this day and age there is another process recommended, in *bhakti yoga*, or the *yoga* of devotion. This is a simple process possible for anyone-even a child. The first two steps of *bhakti yoga* are to hear about God from an authorised source, and the second step is to chant his names. Though there are nine different practices in *bhakti yoga*, these first two practises are sufficient to help us achieve perfection. By this easy process one will awaken transcendental love within the heart. Even without the rigid practises of *astanga yoga* one will gradually come to the point of self realisation and can grow beyond all problems of negative emotions like anger, jealous, hatred etc. Thus by practising *Bhakthi* one can overcome anxiety, stress and depression. Key is not to suppress your emotions but to sublimate.

Bhagavat Gita suggests *Jnana yoga* as yet another means to alleviate the problems of stress, anxiety and depression. The path of philosophy (*jnāna yoga*) is apt for the keen intellectuals and is centered on the analysis of ‘happiness’, the vital contribution of *upaniśads*. Also many other fundamental questions regarding the mind, the outside and inside world and the reality are taken up. Basic questions are raised even involving the intellect itself to reach the very basis of intellect.

Krishna says in *Gita* –

दुरेण ह्यवर कमे बुद्धियोगाद्यनन्जय।
बुध्यो शरनमान्विच्छ क्रुपणाः फलहेतवः॥ । भ गी २.४९ ।
dureṇa hyavaram karma buddhiyogādyanāñjaya ।

budhyau śaranamanvīccha krupaṇāḥ phalahetavaḥ || | bha gī 2.49|

Far lower than the *Yoga-of-wisdom* is action, O *Dhananjaya*. Seek thou refuge in wisdom; wretched are they whose motive is the “fruit”.

Work done with a mind undisturbed by anxieties or stress for the results is indeed superior to the work done by a dissipated mind, ever worrying over the results. When the thought flow is in a state of flux and agitated, it is called the ‘mind’; and when it is single-pointed, calm and serene in its own determination, it is called the ‘intellect’. Thus, *Buddhi (Jnana) Yoga* means “to be established in the devotion to the intellect”. Steady in your conviction, your mind perfectly under the control of your discriminative intellect, to live thus as a master of your inner and outer world is called *Jnana Yoga*. In *Yoga* we pursue our duties in life, without ever losing sight of our ultimate Goal in life.

Much importance is given on the mental hygiene as noted previously because without mental hygiene an individual’s as well as societal health is at risk. *Sri Kriṣṇa* explains this as:

शक्नोतीहैव य सोदु प्राक्शरोरावेमोक्षणात्।
कामक्रोधोद्भव वेग स युक्तः स सुखी नरः
śaknotīhaiva ya soodum prākśarīravimokṣaṇāt |

kāmakrodhodbhavaṁ vegaṁ sa yuktaḥ sa sukhī naraḥ || | bha gī 5.23 |

He who can withstand in this very life, before the fall of the body, the flood tide arising from lust and anger; he is a happy man, a spiritually integrated one.

दुखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्प्रहः।
बीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनेरुच्यते॥ | भ गी २.५६।
dukheṣvanudvignamanāḥ sukheṣu vigatasprhaḥ |

bītarāgabhayakrodhaḥ sthitadhīrmunirucyate || | *bha gī 2.56* |

Whose mind is not agitated in adversity, which is free from desire, and who is devoid of attachments, fear and anger- such a person is called a sage of steady wisdom.

तस्मादसक्तः सतत कार्ये कमे समाचर।

असक्तो ह्याचरन्कमे परमाप्नोते पूरुषः॥ | भ गो ३.१९।

tasmādasaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara |

asakto hyācarankarma paramāpnoti pūruṣaḥ || | *bha gī 3.19* |

Therefore perform action always without attachment, for; by working without attachment, a man attains the supreme.

दैवी ह्ययेषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया।

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेता तरन्ति ते॥ | भ गी ७.१४।

daivī hyayeṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā |

māmeva ye prapadyante māyāmetāṁ taranti te || | *bha gī 7.14* |

Those who voluntarily surrender at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord can overcome the laws of material nature by following the higher laws of the spiritual nature. The secret of conquering illusion and anxiety, transcending material suffering and realizing the unity of interest of all living beings, is to make God the center and object of all our activities.

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मा ये जनाः पर्युपासते।

तेषा नित्याभियुक्ताना योगक्षेम वहाम्यहम्॥ | भ गी ९.२२।

ananyāścintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate |

teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānām yogakṣemaṁ vahāmyaham || | *bha gī 9.22* |

For those who worship Lord with devotion, meditating on his transcendental form, I carry to them what they lack and preserve what they have." The devotees have no anxiety over what will happen next, where they will stay or what they will eat, for everything is maintained and supplied by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

यस्मान्नोद्देजते लोको लोकान्नोद्देजते च यः।

हृषोमषेभयोद्देगैमुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः॥ । भ गौ १२.१५।

yasmānnodvijate loko lokānnodvijate ca yaḥ ।

harṣāmarṣabhayodvegairmukto yaḥ sa ca me priyaḥ ॥ । bha gī 12.15 ।

हृषोमषेभयोद्देगैः Mental agitation caused by euphoria or anger or fear or excitement. He by whom the world is not agitated and who cannot be agitated by the world, and who is freed from joy, envy, fear and anxiety – he is dear to Me.

अनेकाचेतावेभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः।

प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतान्ते नरकेशुचौ॥ । भ गौ १६.१६।

anekacittavibhrāntā mohajālasamāvūtāḥ ।

prasaktāḥ kāmabhogeṣu patanti narakeśucau ॥ । bha gī 16.16 ।

Thus perplexed by various anxieties and bound by a network of illusions, one becomes too strongly attached to sense enjoyment and falls down into hell.

त्रिवेध नरकस्येद द्वार नाशनमात्मनः।

कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्रय त्यजेत्॥ । भ गौ १६.२१।

trividham narakasyedaṁ dvāraṁ nāśanamātmanaḥ ।

kāmaḥ krodhastathā lobhastasmādetattrayaṁ tyajet ॥ । bha gī 16.21 ।

Triple is the gate of this hell. Leading to the ruin of the soul-lust (desire), anger and greed. Therefore, one should abandon these three.

Krishna says in Gita:

योगस्थह कुरु कर्मोने सन्गम् त्यक्त्व धनन्जय
सिद्ध्यासिद्धयो समो भुत्व समत्वम् योग उच्यते। । भ गी २.४८ ।
yogasthah kuru karmani sangam tyaktva dhananjaya
siddhyasiddhyo samo bhutva samatvam yoga ucyate | | bha gī 2.48 |

Perform action, O, Dhanañjaya, being fixed in *Yoga*, renouncing attachments and staying even-minded in successes or failures. Evenness is verily *Yoga* or Equanimity is *Yoga*.

रुतौवेप्रातेपन्न् ते यद् स्थस्याते निचल्
षम्वचल् बुद्धि तद् योगमवप्स्यासे। । भ गी २. ५३।
rutivipratipann te yad sthsyati nical
ṣamdhvaca buddhi tad yogamavpsyasi | | bha gī 2.53 |

Even on hearing confusing and conflicting statements when your mind will remain steadfast, unperturbed in a state of ‘*Samādhi*’ then you reach *Yoga*. Thus, the subtle state of mind featured by ‘Steadiness’ is referred to as *Yoga*. *Yoga* is a state of great steadiness at emotional level; balance of concentration and detachment at mental level and homeostasis at body level. It integrates the personality by bringing body-mind coordination in a well-balanced way.

Traditionally it has been taught that just listening to *Vedic* chants and mantras permeates and nurtures the mind and soul. *Vedic mantras* can put you in touch with the source and connect you to a higher level of consciousness. Meditation, singing of *bhajans*, *dhuns*, prayers, *mantras*, *kriyas* (cleansing techniques), *Pranāyāma* practices are much helpful to handle *Manomaya kosa* and also to come out of anxiety, stress and depression.

लोकहानौ चिन्ता न् कये निवेदेतत्मलोकवेदशीलत्त्वात्।

lokahānau cintā n karyā niveditatmalokvedsīlatvat | | nā bha 61|

The bhakta has no cause to worry him over the miseries of the world; for he has surrendered his own self, the world as well as the *Vedas* to the Lord.

No worry or anxiety should be entertained at the worldly losses, as it is the nature of a true devotee to constantly surrender his limited-self and all its secular and sacred activities to the Lord of his heart. *Narada* boldly declares that even when beset by trials and misfortunes, when obstacles block the path, still Devotion is easy; indeed, Love is superior to all other yogas. “Never entertain anxiety”. “Do not worry”. Never mind whatever happens – this is the attitude for a true seeker to follow. On attaining the consummate love, worldly activities are not to be abandoned. But certainly we must diligently pursue love and learn to renounce our anxiety to enjoy the fruit of our activities. Always, free from, in all mental anxiety, the Lord alone is to be invoked and sought after, with all factors of our personality.

कामक्रोधमोहास्मृतभ्रशब्दाधिनाश सवेनाश कारणत्वात्। |ना भ ४४।

kāmakrodhamohasmrtibhramśabuddhināśa (sarvanāśa) kāraṇatvāt | | nā bha 44|

For it leads to the rousing up of desire, anger, and delusion, to loss of memory, to loss of discrimination, and to utter ruin in the end.

यः कमेफल त्यजाते कर्मोणे सन्न्यस्याते ततो निदेवन्द्वो भवति। |ना भ ४८।

yaḥ karmaphalaṁ tyajati karmāṇi sannnyasyati tato nirdvandvo bhavati | | nā bha 48|

He, who gives up the fruits of all work, renounces all pairs of opposites such as pleasure and pain.

यत् प्राप्य न किञ्चिद् वान्छाते न शोचाते न द्वेषते न रमते नोत्साहो भवाते। । ना भ ५।

yat prāpya na kincid vānchati na śocati na dveṣṭi na ramate notsāhī bhavati । *nā bha 5* ।

Attaining that, man has no more desire for anything; he is free from grief and hatred; he does not rejoice over anything; he does not exert himself in furtherance of self-interest.

सहन सवेदुखानामप्रतीकारपूर्वकम्

चिन्तावेलापराहेत सा तितिक्षा निगधते॥ । वि चु २४॥

sahana sarvadukhānāmapratīkārāpūrvakam ।

cintāvilāparahitaṁ sā titikṣā nigadhate ॥ । *vi cu 24*॥

Titiksa is the capacity to endure all sorrows and sufferings without struggling for redress or for revenge, being always free from anxiety or lament over them.

लोनधीरापे जागाते जाग्रद्धर्मोवेवाजेतः।

बोधो निवोसनो यस्य स जीवन्मुक्त्तः इष्यते॥ । वि चु ४३०।

līnadhīrāpi jāgati jāgraddharmavivarjitaḥ ।

bodho nirvāsano yasya sa jīvanmuktaḥ iṣyate ॥ । *vi cu 430*।

He whose cares about the phenomenal state have been appeased, who, though possessed of a body consisting of parts, is yet devoid of parts, and whose mind is free from anxiety, is accepted as a man liberated-in-life.

एवावेधे मठे स्थित्वा सर्वोचेन्तावेवाजेतः।

गुरूपादेष्टमागेण योगमेव समभ्यसेत्॥ । ह प्र १.१४।

evamvidhe maṭhe sthitvā sarvacintāvivarjitaḥ ।

gurūpaḍiṣṭamāgeṇa yogameva samabhyaset ॥ । *ha pra 1.14* ।

Dwelling in the hermitage, being devoid of all thought', means that by living in a place of spiritual vibrations the mind is free from unnecessary thoughts cultivated by society and the modern lifestyle. Under normal conditions the mind can never be thoughtless. *Swatmarama* is actually

saying that the mind should be devoid of all thoughts that are irrelevant to spiritual life. Anxieties and worries caused by family and business should be absent during *sadhana*, as such disturbances affect ones' ability to concentrate.

न यत्र शोको न जरा न मृत्युनातेने चोद्वेग त्ते कुताश्चेत्।
याच्चेत्ततोदः क्रपयानेदावेदा दुरन्तदुखप्रभवानुदशेनात्॥ |श्री भा २.२.२७|
na yatra śoko na jarā na mrtyunātirna codvega trte kutaścīt|

yaccittatodaḥ krpayānidaṁvidāṁ durantadukhaprabhavānudarśanāt| |śrī bhā 2.2.27|

There is neither grief nor agony, neither old age nor death in that sphere, much less fear of any kind. The only agony they suffer from is the mental anguish they feel out of compassion when they see people who have no knowledge of the process of meditation undergoing repeated births and deaths that entail endless suffering. So, long as man does not seek absolute shelter at thy feet, he will be dominated by the vile sense of “I” and “mine”, the root cause of all suffering, and as a consequence he will be subject to grief, desires, humiliation, and intense greed as also to sorrows on account of wealth, properties and friends.

द्वावेव चिन्तया मुक्तो परमानन्द आप्लुतौ।
यो विमुग्धो जडो बालो यो गुणेभ्यः पर गतः। |श्री भा ११.९.४|
dvāveva cintayā muktoo paramānanda āplutau|

yo vimugdho jaḍo bālo yo guṇebhyaḥ paraṁ gataḥ| |śrī bhā 11.9.4|

Only two are free from cares and anxieties and are immersed in supreme bliss the ignorant and guileless child and he who has transcended the three gunas.

अहम्कारकृत बन्धमात्मनोथोवेपयेयम्।

विद्वन् निवेद्य ससाराचेन्ता तुर्ये स्थितस्त्यजेत्। श्री भा ११.१३.२९।

ahamkārakṛtaṁ bandhamātmanorthaviparyayam।

vidvan nirvidya saṁsāracintāṁ turya sthitastyajet। śrī bhā 11.13.29।

The bondage with sense objects established by *ahankara* the identification with the *buddhi* manifesting as the 'I' sense detracts the atman from the truth, causing infinite sufferings. The wise man should therefore cultivate dispassion for this life of bondage and its experiences, and abandon all thoughts of them, dwelling in God, the fourth.

Desires subside by self-control and not by satisfying them. This is expressed by great emperor of pre-historic India, *Yayāti*:

न जातु कामः कामानाम् उपभोगेन शाम्याते

हावेषा ऋष्णवत्मेव भूय एवाभिवधते॥ श्री भा ९.१९:१४।

na jātu kāmāḥ kāmānām upabhogena śāmyati ।

haviṣā kṛṣṇavartmeva bhūya evābhivardhate॥ । śrī bhā 9.19:14।

Just as the flames of fire are not subdued but only increased by pouring more ghee into it, so also desires cannot be satisfied by becoming prey to them.

भोगे रोगभय कुले च्युतेभय वित्ते न्पालाद्भय।

माने दैन्यभय बले रिपुभय रूपे जराया भयम्॥

शास्त्रे वादेभय गुणे खलभय काये क्रतान्ताद्भय।

सवेम् वस्तु भयाञ्जित भावे न्णा वेराग्यमेवाभयम्॥

bhoge rogabhayaṁ kule cyutibhayaṁ vित्ते nrpālādbhayaṁ ।

māne dainyabhayaṁ bale ripubhayaṁ rūpe jarāyā bhayam ॥

śāstre vādibhayam guṇe khalabhayam kāye krtāntādbhayam |
sarvam vastu bhayāvṇitam bhuvī nrṇām verāgyamevābhayam || vai sha 31|

Vairagya Shathakam says that in enjoyment there is fear of disease; in social position, the fear of falling off; in wealth, the fear of (hostile) kings; in honor, the fear of humiliation; in power, the fear of foe men; in beauty, the fear of old age; in scriptural erudition, the fear of opponents; in virtue, the fear of traducers; in body, the fear of death. All the things of this world pertaining to human beings are attended with fear; renunciation alone stands for fearlessness.

The *Taittirīya Upanisad* has presented this holistic concept of man systematically. It sees man as having five major *Kosās* or sheaths of existence, named the *Annamaya*, *Prānamaya*, *Manomaya*, *Vijnānamaya* & *Ānandamaya Kosā*. Keeping all these in mind makes yogic stress and anxiety management totally holistic. It is based on understanding the impact of stress at all these levels.

Emotional imbalances in the form of strong likes (*Rāga*) and dislikes (*Dvesa*) bring about imbalances in *Prāna* (the vital energy) in the *Prānamaya Kosa* which percolates to the *Annamaya Kosa* causing stress symptoms and hazards. Origin of desires and action guided by strong likes and dislikes (and not by what is right and wrong) will be the expression of imbalance at *Manomaya Kosa*. In *Vijnānamaya Kosa*, the *Avidyā* (Ignorance) goes on reducing until in *Ānandamaya Kosa* it is all bliss. This state is totally stress-free state.

Working at physical level (*Annamaya Kosa*) alone is not enough to reduce stress. Bringing balance to the other four levels is mandatory; the *Prānamaya*, *Manomaya*, *Vijnānamaya* & *Ānandamaya*

Kosa must all be brought to states of balance. This is the holistic approach used in Yoga. Thus, in the *Taittirīya Upanisad*, a more fundamental and generalised concept of stress is presented through this *Pancha Kosa* model. This is the holistic concept of man having five major sheaths of existence.

Upanisads says that fear is the root cause of Anxiety. Anxiety and worry are the effects of fear. Some sort of fear gets buried in the Sub-conscious mind. Fear is a great enemy of man, enemy of his progress. It disturbs his peace and harmony.

द्वैतेयद्वै भयम् भवति॥

dvitiyadvai bhayam bhavati || |*brih up 1.4.2*|

“There is fear from duality.” Non-duality alone is fearless.

अभ्यम् वै ब्रह्मभयम् हि वै ब्रह्म भवति य एवम् वेद |

abhyam vai brahmabhayam hi vai brahma bhavati ya evam veda || |*brih up 4.4.25*|

“Brahman is fearless; one who knows this, becomes the fearless *Brahman*.”

यतो वचो निवर्तन्ते अप्रप्य मनसा सा

अनन्दम् ब्रह्मनो विद्वन् न बिभीते कुतश्चन |

yato vaco nivartante aprapya manasa saha

anandam brahmano vidvan na bibheti kutascana | |*taitt up 2.9*|

“Not reaching it, the speech and the mind return back. One who knows this Bliss of *Brahman*, fears not from anything at all.”

त् योगामीते मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियध्र |

t yogamiti manyante sthiramindriyadhra | |*kath up 2.3.11*|

Yoga is the state in which all our Indriyas are beheld steadily i.e., a state of mastery over senses and mind, as portrayed in ***Kathopanīsat***.

स्वर्गे लोके न भय किञ्चनास्ति न तत्र त्व न जरया बिभोते।
उभे तौत्वाशेनायापेपासे शोकातेगो मोदते स्वर्गलोके॥ | कठो १२।
svarge loka na bhayaṁ kincanāsti na tatra tvaṁ na jarayā bibhoti |
ubhe tittvārśanāyāpipāse śokātigo modate svargaloke || | kath up 12|

Naciketa tells *Yamaraja*, the lord of death: "In the spiritual world there is not fear of old age, or of you, O death. There one crosses beyond both of them. In the spiritual world there is no anxiety to attain food and drink. The residents of the spiritual world enjoy transcendental bliss."

Brahmabindu Upanisad says:

मनयेव मनुश्यानाम् कारणम् बन्ध मोक्षयोः
बन्धाय विषयासक्तम् मुक्त्यै निर्विषयम् स्मृतम्॥ | ब्र ऊप २ |
manayeva manuśyānām kāraṇam bandha mokṣayoḥ
bandhāya viṣayāsaktam muktyai nirviṣayam smṛtam|| | Bra up 2|

The mind is the cause of bondage or freedom. To be entangled in desires is the cause of bondage. Desirelessness is the way to freedom from worry, disease, and distress – this is *Mokṣā*.

Mundaka Upanisad proclaims:

सर्वाभिलाषावेगतः सर्वाचेन्तासमुत्थितः।
सुप्रशान्तः सक्रज्ज्योतेः समाधिरचलोभयः॥ | मु उ ३७।
sarvābhilāṣavigataḥ sarvacintāsamutthitaḥ |
supraśāntaḥ sakrjyotiḥ samādhiracalobhayaḥ || | mu u 37|

The self is free of all sense organs, and is above all internal organs. It is supremely tranquil, eternal effulgence, divine absorption, immutable, and fearless.

The qualities of a healthy mind are stated by *Caraka* in *vimānasthāna* as below:

स्मृतिमन्तो भक्तिमन्तः क्रुतन्जाः प्रान्जाः शुचयो महोत्साहा दक्ष्णा धीराः
समरावेक्रान्तयोर्धनस्त्यक्तावेषादाः सुव्यवास्थितागतेगम्भीरबुद्धिचेष्टाः

कल्याणाभिनेवेशेनश्च सत्वसाराः। तेषु स्वलक्षणैरेव गुणा व्याख्याताः ॥ १ ८.११०।

smrutimanto bhaktimantaḥ krutanjāḥ prānjāḥ śucayoo mahotsāhā dakṣṣā dhīrāḥ
samaravikrāntayoodhinastyaktaviṣādāḥ suvyavasthitagatigambhīrabuddhiceṣṭāḥ
kalyāṇābhiniveśīnaśca satvasārāḥ | teṣu svalakṣaṇaireva guṇā vyākhyātāḥ || vi 8.110|

The persons having *satva* (mind) as essence are endowed with memory, devotion, are grateful, learned, pure, courageous, skillful, resolute, fighting in battle with prowess, free from anxiety, proper gait, having well directed and serious intellect and activities and engaged in virtuous acts. Their characters are explained by their qualities mentioned above.

Caraka further states (*Sārīrasthāna* 5:8) that: The root cause for the advent of all miseries is inclination (*Pravṛtti*) to worldly affairs and happiness is disinclination *Nivṛtti*. The *Nivṛtti* path is the spiritual path. This is known as the Supreme, Highest bliss, identity with the unchangeable, and freedom from bondage.

This spiritual path can be achieved according to *Caraka* by following list of practices as mentioned in *Sārīrasthāna* 5:12:

- Submission to the teacher and implementing his instructions.
- Exclusive service to the fire.
- Going through the religious codes and understanding and clinging on to them by performing actions accordingly.
- Avoiding the wicked and mean
- Speaking words that are true, beneficial to all, unharsh, timely, and after careful examination.
- Viewing all creatures as himself.
- Avoiding mental and physical longing or talking with all types of women.
- Renouncing all acquisition.
- Restraining the sense of liking and affliction to sense objects.
- Not being dejected in the practice of yoga.

He also mentions that (*Sārīrasthāna 5:16*) pure knowledge comes forth from pure mind by which the strong darkness consisting of great ignorance is dispelled; one becomes free from desires by knowing the nature of all beings and yoga is accomplished and *sāṅkhyā* attained.

Mind can be bound to the world of the finite or set free – these two aspects occur many times in Indian Spiritual literature. Says the *Pancadaśī*:

मनो हि द्विविधं प्रोक्तं शुद्धं च अशुद्धमेव च ।
 अशुद्धं कामसंप्रकोत् शुद्धं कामावेवाजितम् ॥ । प ११.११६ ।
mano hi dvividhaṁ proktaṁ śuddhaṁ ca aśuddhameva ca |
aśuddhaṁ kāmasaṅparkāt śuddhaṁ kāmavivarjitaṁ // |pa 11.116|

Mind is said to be of two types, the pure and the impure. It is impure when subjected to pressures of lust and pure when free from them.

Since these different kinds of vicious mental urges are a great risk to social and personal health, *Āyurveda* also mentions that these should be controlled. So *Vāgbhata* says in *aṣṭāṅga hrudaya*:

धायैत्तु सदा वेगान् हितेषो प्रेत्य चेह च।
लोभष्येद्वेषमात्सयेरागादोना जितेन्द्रियः॥ १३ हु ४.२४।
dhāryettu sadā vegān hitaiṣī pretya ceha ca |

lobherṣyadveṣamātsaryarāgādīnām jitendriyaḥ || |as hru 4.24|

He who is desirous of happiness should control the urges such as *rāgādīnām* – lust, anger, greed, infatuation, arrogance, and jealousy. By conscious effort one should try to keep mental feelings and emotions under control. *Caraka (sūtrasthāna)* also states:

इमास्तु धारयेद्वेगान् हितार्थो प्रेत्य चेह च।
साहसानामशस्ताना मनोवाक्कायकमेणाम्॥ १ सू ७.२६॥
imāmstu dhārayedvegān hitārthī pretya ceha ca |
sāhasānāmaśastānām manovākkāyakarmaṇām || |sū 7.26||

One desirous of well-being here and hereafter should hold up urges of evil ventures relating to thought, speech, and action.

Caraka summarizes psychological therapy in *sūtrasthāna 11:46* is as follows:

- Adopting mental faculties which are opposite to the mental disorder (*Pratidvandvi*).
- Restraint of mind from unwholesome virtue, wealth, and enjoyment (*Dharma, Artha, Kāma*).

- Pursuing wholesome ones and constantly keeping an eye to wholesomeness.
- Effort to remain in touch with the experts and to know properly the self (*Ātmajñāna*), place (*desha jñāna*), clan (*kula jñāna*), time (*kāla jñāna*), strength (*balajñāna*), and capacity (*shakti jñāna*).

How to achieve good health? Caraka summarizes the ways in *Caraka shārīrasthāna* as follows:

नरो हिताहारंवेहारसेवो समीक्ष्यकारो विषयेष्वसक्तः।
 दाता समः सत्यपरः क्षमावानाप्तोपसेवो च भवत्यरोगः॥
 मातिवेचः कमे सुखानुबन्ध सत्व विधेय विशदा च बुद्धिः।
 ज्ञान तपस्तत्परता च योगे यस्यास्ते त नानुपतान्ते रोगाः॥ |च श २.४६,४७|

Naro hitāhāravihārasevī samīkshyakārī vishayeshvasaktah|

Dātā samah satyaparah kshamāvānāptopasevi ca bhavatyarogah||

Matirvacah karma sukhānubandham satvam vidheyam visadā ca buddhih|

Jñānam tapastatparatā ca yoge yasyāsti tam nānupatanti rogāh|| |Ca shā 2.46,47|

The man who uses wholesome diet and behavior, moves cautiously, is unattached to sensual pleasures, donates, observes equality, is truthful, forbearing, and devoted to the persons of authority becomes free from diseases. One who is endowed with excellent intellect, speech, and action leading to happy consequence, submissive mind, clear understanding, knowledge, penance, and continued effort in yoga, does not fall a victim to diseases.

According to *Caraka* Health is equilibrium - *sāmyam prakrutirucyate* and health is also happiness - *sukha samjakamārogya*. The first aspect represents equilibrium of the body tissues and functions and the second aspect represents the state of mind. So, the state of one's mind brings in equilibrium which forms the foundation for health.

Summary:

Yoga has gained popularity in the recent past for its therapeutic benefits. But, there still exists few unanswered questions: why yoga and how yoga is unique from other interventions. We propose that yoga is a personalised approach to attain health and harmony. We have attempted to explain that yoga as a unique approach in two sections:

1. Origin of Universe and life forms
2. Yoga as an intervention that addresses the root cause of disease

Origin of Universe has been a topic of contemplation for most civilisations. While the Greek philosophers believed that Universe was eternally existent and will continue to exist, several other cosmologies like Christian and Jewish, have claimed that the Universe occurred at a finite time. Big Bang theory is the widely accepted theory on the origin of universe that has been able to withstand the scientific exploration. Big Bang theory states that,

No cosmologies known to us have described in detail, what was there before the origin of Universe and how life forms came into existence. *Nāsadiya sūkta* is a set of hymns in the Rg Veda describing the origin of universe and life forms. It claims that there the Universe manifested itself from nothing spontaneously before which time and space ceased to exist. The planet was completely dark, hot and covered with dust and smoke. Eventually, ‘the seed of all life forms’ manifested itself through its desire. The description of desire driving the primordial life form suggests the possibility of the origin of the mind in its rudimentary form. Present like a string, it was through its desire that it replicated itself at will. This description clearly matches with the structure of RNA and its function. Recent theories claim that RNA was the first life form to originate on the Earth and several experiments also suggest this possibility. This description in the

Nāsadiya sūkta appears to be the earliest cosmology describing the origin of Universe and life forms.

Consistently across literature, it is mentioned in the Indian Traditional Scriptures that, the root cause of disease lies in the mind. The existence of humans is described to be in five sheaths: Causal (physical), subtle (prana), mental (manas), intellect (vijñana) and bliss (ananda). It is mentioned that any distraction or disturbance in the mind, perturbs the pranic body, which eventually manifests as a disease in the physical body based on the individual's inherent makeup. This explains the reason as how similar type of environment and lifestyle manifests itself as different diseases with different severity in different individuals. This observation of mind being the cause for the disease forms the very basis of description of diseases in Ayurveda. Maharishi Patanjali introduces to the seeker that Yoga is an art and science that enables cessation of mental modifications. Krishna in Bhagavad Gita mentions that through desire one develops attachment, attachment leads to anger. From anger arises delusion and delusion results in lack of clarity in thoughts. Loss of clarity results in destruction of discriminative intelligence and ruins an individual completely. Maharishi *Patanjali* called this as *Abhinivesa*, a state of helplessness, constriction, slavery or bondage which is the grossest manifestation of stress. Bondage with any sensory or mental object or desire is always associated with the fear of losing it.

Yoga suggests multiple solutions based on one's mental makeup to attain the ultimate goal – to realise oneself. It is clearly stated in multiple traditional sources that in-order to establish oneself in the true-self (bliss), all kind of attachments needs to be disowned mentally and action should be performed as a penance with selflessness and no desire for results. It is also mentioned that an

individual established in his true-self is free from all mental afflictions and diseases. Suggestions provided by Maharishi Patanjali to promote mental well-being include:

1. Practice of concentration on one principle.
2. In relation to happiness, misery, virtue and vice, by cultivating the attitudes of friendliness, compassion, gladness and indifference respectively, the mind becomes purified and peaceful
3. By expiration and retention of the breath one can control the mind
4. By making the mind steady by bringing it into activity through sense experience
5. By luminous state which is beyond sorrow can control the mind
6. By making a passionless person the object for concentrating the mind
7. By giving it the knowledge of dream and sleep for support
8. By any desired meditation, mind can be steadied

These observations suggest mind plays a much bigger role than the present day understanding of the role of mind in health and disease. This recommends the need for much wider research and awareness to understand and disseminate the importance of mental wellbeing.