

YOGIC JOURNEY OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS

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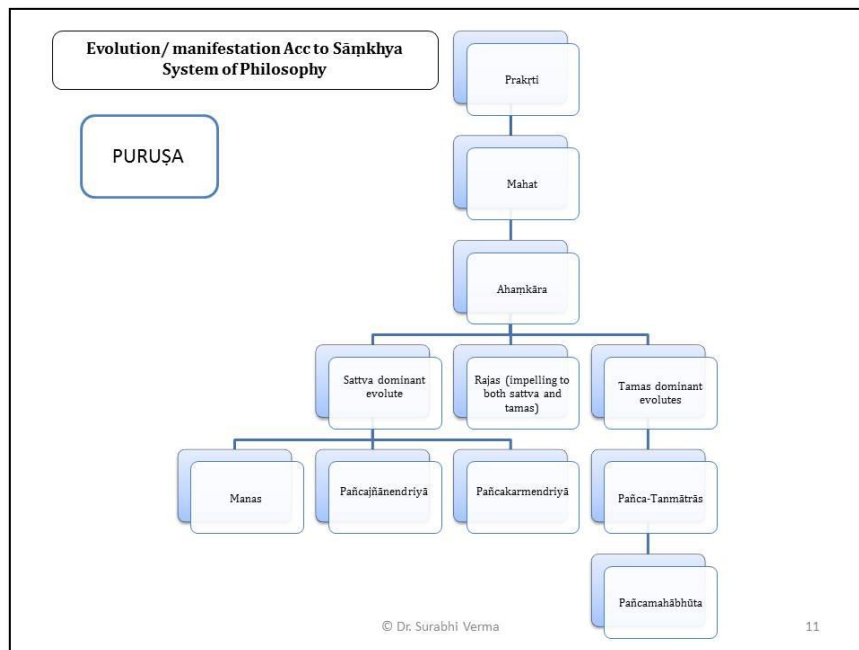
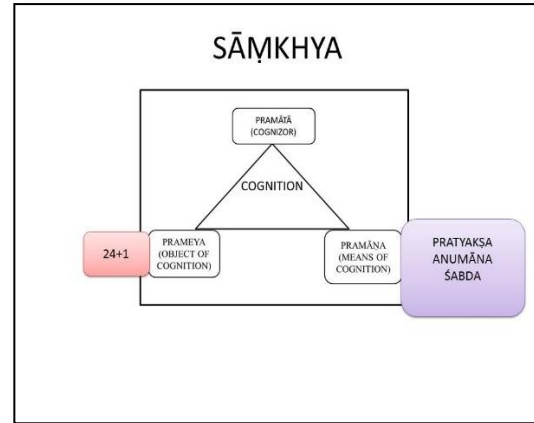
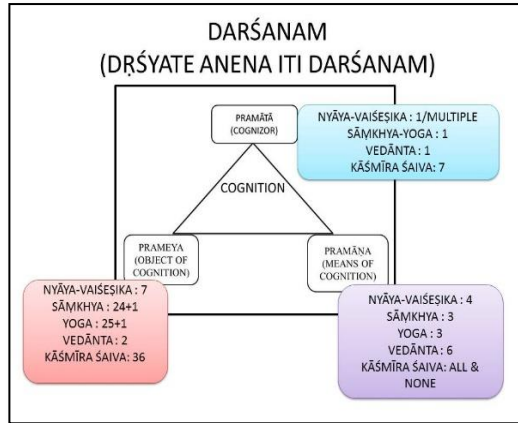
INTRODUCTION

The most desirable thing for Human beings is to get rid of all the pains. In the process of fulfilment of this desire, search of different methods of emancipation starts. In the course of this process, different philosophical schools of Indian wisdom evolved. The chain of these schools consists of a series among which Yoga became a popular doctrine; these days it has reached some more advanced level of popularity. Among the schools of Indian Philosophy, *Kāśmīra Śaivism* is also one of them. It has also laid down many noteworthy theories to explain the reality. When we talk about the Yogic Journey of Human Consciousness, the first and foremost question which comes to our discourse is regarding the "Consciousness". Whatever we understand or think is because of our '*buddhi*'. *Buddhi* is the means of cognition in the complete cognitive process and Consciousness is the object of cognition. When we pour water in some container, it takes the shape of that container. In the same way, we visualize the consciousness same as the nature of our container (*buddhi*) is. This thought is best described and established by the Indian Schools of Philosophy.

In the Indian Philosophical Systems, *Sāṃkhya* laid down the map of creation in which it described the creation through sequential manifestation of 24 constituents along with the presence of *Puruṣa*. Yoga established the complete metaphysics by describing *Puruṣa* as *citi*. *Samkhya* and *Yoga* both are Dualistic Systems of Indian Philosophy. Yoga established complete discourse totally focussed on the *citi* and *citta*. *Citta* is *buddhi*, and it is a technical term of Yoga philosophy. Yoga as systematically described by *Patañjali*, propounded the concept of Consciousness and its two aspects- Pure Consciousness and Reflected Consciousness on the basis of Reflection Theory and explained that Human Consciousness is just a Reflection of that pure one. Yoga system elaborately described the methods to standardize and elevate the capacity of the means of cognition '*citta*' (*buddhi*) for the cognition of Pure Consciousness; which flourished as the eight limbs of Yoga (*Aṣṭāṅga Yoga*). Thus *Yoga* became a journey to elevate the capacity of the cognitive apparatus for the realization of Pure Consciousness. We are going to discuss this Yogic Journey of Human Consciousness elaborately in this paper.

COGNITIVE PROCESS

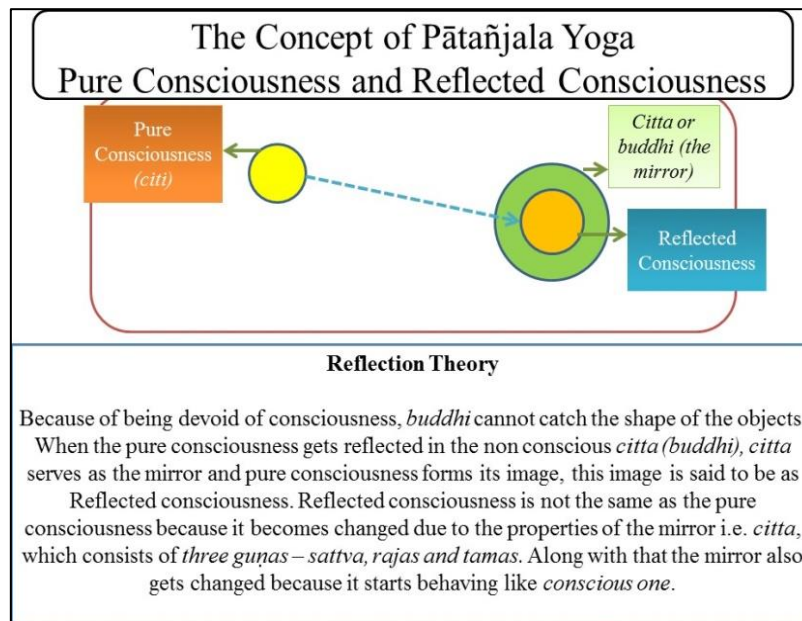
In the cognitive process, there are three constituents- cognisor, the means of cognition and the object of cognition. In the context of Indian Philosophical schools the term "*Darśana*" has the meaning of cognition (to visualize something). The three constituents of *darśana* are *pramāta*, *prameya* and *pramāṇa*. *Pramāta* is the cognisor, *prameya* is the object of cognition and *pramāṇa* is the means of cognition. In *Sāṃkhya* metaphysics, this triad of cognition represents 24 constituents of creation as the object of cognition, three *pramāṇa* (*pratyakṣa*, *anumāna* and *śabda*) as the means of cognition and the one/multiple consciousness as the cognisor.



Yoga system laid down the complete discourse on the support system of *Samkhya* but it was maximally focussed on the 25th constituent i.e. *Puruṣa*¹ and *Buddhi*² of *Samkhya*. It tried to explore these two constituents much deeply and elaborately and became centred to find out the relationship between *Buddhi* and *Puruṣa*. It described *Buddhi* and *Puruṣa* as the two important technical aspects in the name of *citta*³ and *citi*⁴. *Citta* has been described as *triguṇic* in nature because of the presence of three principle constituents i.e. *Sattva*⁵, *Rajasa*⁶ and *Tamasa*⁷. *Sattva* is the lightening principle, creates clarity at mental level because it illuminates the *buddhi* as well as it creates lightness (light in weight) in the bodies at physical level. *Rajasa* is the functional aspect and creates mobility in the objects; it is responsible for the functionality and motion. *Tamasa* is the covering principle; it covers the *buddhi* and creates the grossness and heaviness at the physical level. *Citta* always functions under the effect of these principle constituents. *Citi* is *aparīṇāminī* means doesn't undergo any change, *apratisaṃkramā* means devoid of any deformity, *darśitaviṣayā* means it is the witness who visualizes everything (*sākṣī*), *śuddha* means it is pure and *ananta* means infinite.

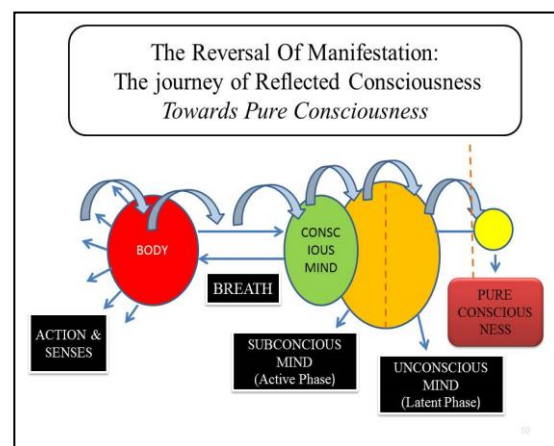
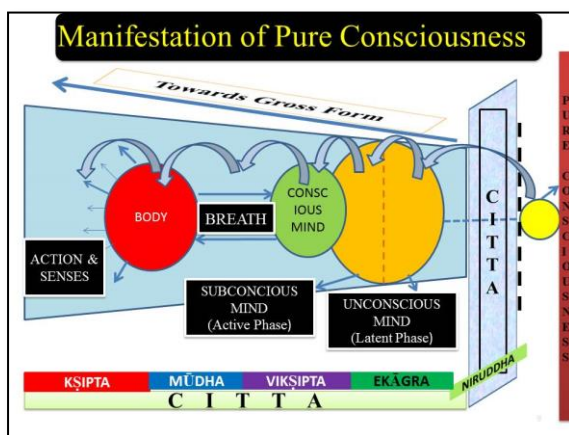
THEORY OF REFLECTION

Buddhi is devoid of consciousness; therefore *buddhi* cannot catch the shape of the objects. When the pure consciousness gets reflected in the non-conscious *citta* (*buddhi*), *citta* serves as the mirror and pure consciousness forms its image, this image is said to be as Reflected consciousness. Reflected consciousness is not the same as the pure consciousness because it becomes changed due to the properties of the mirror i.e. *citta*, which consists of *three gunas* – *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamasa*. Along with that the mirror also gets changed because it starts behaving like *conscious one*. This is known as Reflection Theory.



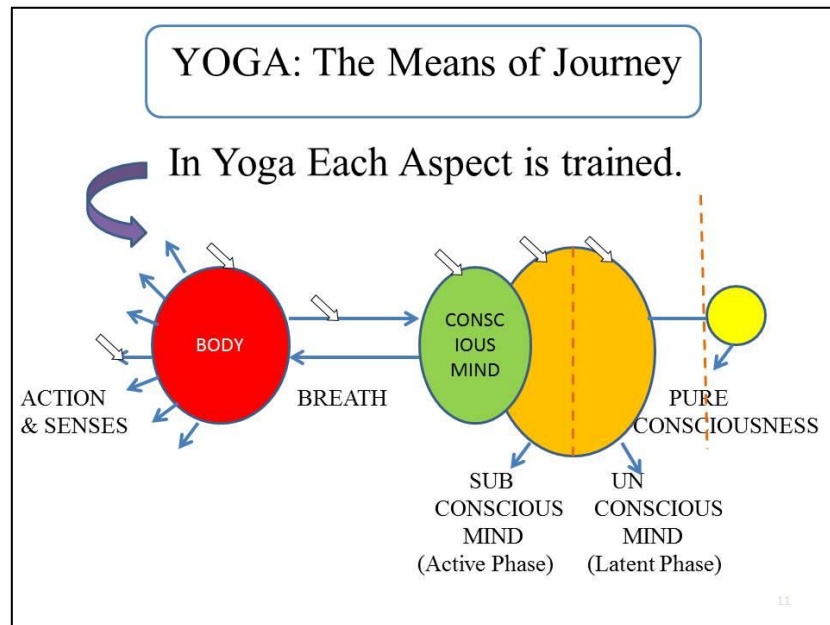
MANIFESTATION AND DISSOLUTION

In the process of manifestation, Pure Consciousness manifests itself into the gross forms through a mirror which is *citta* and creates all the subtle and gross aspects as its reflection. Thus creates Reflected Consciousness. In the process of dissolution the manifested gross entities traverse back to its subtle and subtlest forms. Thus gross manifestation gets dissolved into the subtlest aspect which is Pure Consciousness. This process is just the reversal of manifestation.



YOGA

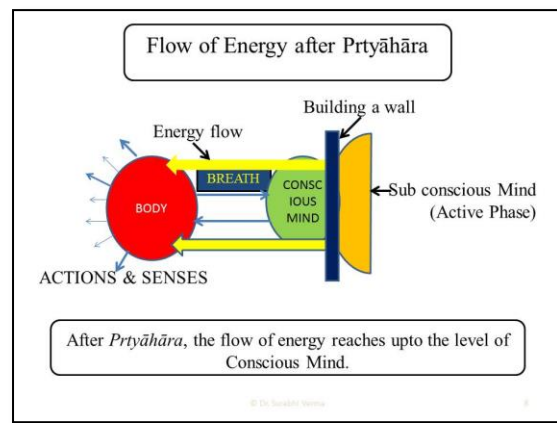
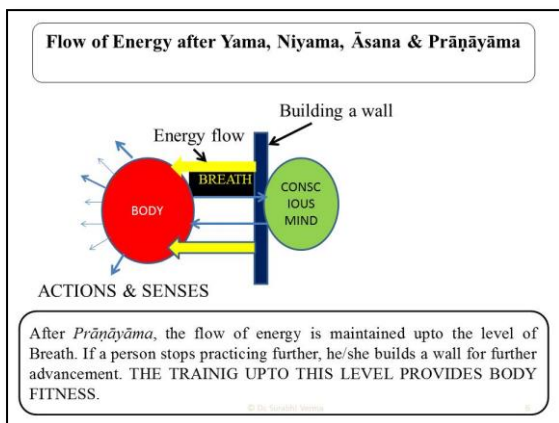
Yoga is that journey through which all the parts of Human body and mind are trained. The gross and subtle manifested forms of traverse back to the subtlest one which is pure consciousness. This process has been systematically categorised into eight parts and well organised as a system.



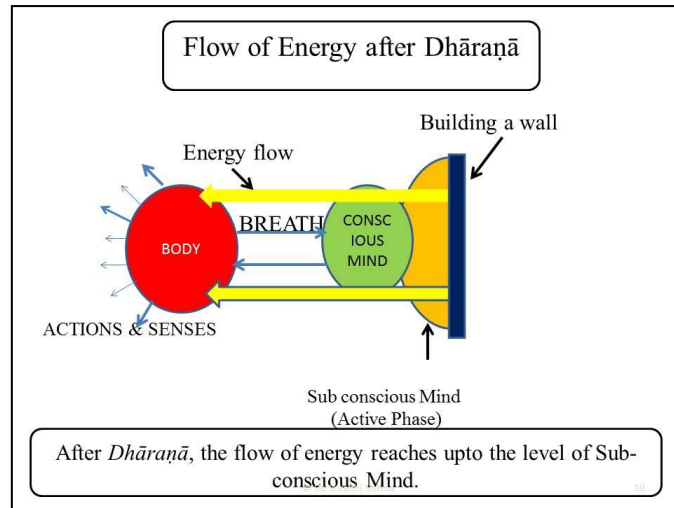
EIGHT LIMBS OF YOGA

Yoga consists of eight parts categorised as *yama*⁸, *niyama*⁹, *āsana*¹⁰ and *prāṇāyāma*¹¹, *pratyāhāra*¹², *dhāraṇā*¹³, *dhyāna*¹⁴ and *samādhi*¹⁵. Pure Consciousness manifests itself in the gross forms. So it is present in unconscious, sub-conscious and conscious mind. Also resides in the body, breath and our action & sense organs. The reflected Consciousness present in all the gross forms transcends back to the Pure Consciousness step by step. This journey is just the reversal of manifestation. Yoga becomes the means of journey because in yoga, each aspect of the Gross Form gets trained in different stages of yoga. The **complete purpose of yoga is the realization of Pure Consciousness. Constant Practice & Detachment are the two supportive means to stop all the fluctuations of consciousness.** Yoga consists of eight parts- **Yam, Niyam, Āsana, Prāṇayama, Pratyahara – 5 External Parts and Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna & Samādhi – 3 Internal Parts.** The five parts of yam regulate the energies of body, which results in a surplus of energy, and can be used for the spiritual transformation of the personality. These five rules harmonize the relationship with the other beings. The five rules of *niyama* harmonize the relationship to life and to the transcendental reality. *Āsanas* give the body a much comfortable and stable posture, which gives immediate change in the mood and facilitates their endeavour to concentrate the mind. A certain group of posture – known as seals (*mudra*) are especially potent in altering one's mood because they have a more intense effect on the endocrine system of the body. *Prāṇa* is the vehicle for the ascent of attention within the body, the focussing of awareness along the bodily axis towards the brain. In

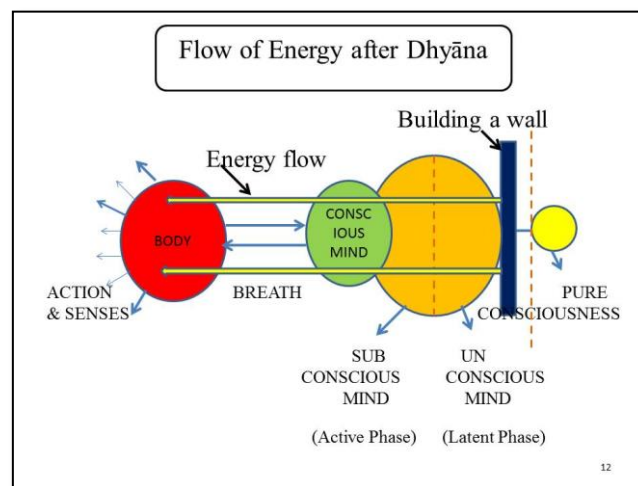
Prāṇayama, attention ascends and leads to more and more subtle experiences. In the final stage of this process, the *prāṇic* energy is guided into the topmost psycho-energetic system (*cakra*) at the crown of the head. When *prāṇa* and attention come to be fixed at that spot, the quality of consciousness may change radically, yielding the ecstatic state (*Samādhi*). **After *Prāṇayama*, the flow of energy is maintained upto the level of Breath. If a person stops practicing further, he/she builds a wall for further advancement. The training upto this level provides body fitness.** The practice of both *āsanas* and breath control leads to a progressive desensitization that shuts out external stimuli. Now the person comes alive in the inner environment of their mind. When consciousness is effectively sealed off from the external environment, this is a state of sensory inhibition, or *pratyāhāra*. After *pratyāhāra*, Reflected Consciousness gets dissolved in Pure Consciousness at **minimum degrees** because these five external parts of yoga channelize and maintain the flow of energy at the functioning level of *mūḍha* and *kṣipta citta*.



Dhāraṇā is the holding of the mind in a motionless state. It is the focussing of attention to a given locus which may be a particular part of the body or an external object that is internalized (like the image of a deity.) **This is a type one-pointedness or focussed attention.** It is a highly intensified form of the spurts of concentration. After *Dhāraṇā*, the Reflected Consciousness gets dissolved in Pure Consciousness **more than in five external parts** because it channelize and maintains the flow of energy at the functioning level of *vikṣipta citta*.



Prolonged and deepening concentration leads naturally to the state of meditative absorption, or *Dhyāna*, in which the internalized object or locus fills the entire space of consciousness. All arising ideas gyrate around the object of concentration and are accompanied by a peaceful, calm emotional disposition. There is no loss of lucidity, but, on the contrary, the sense of wakefulness appears to be intensified, even though there is no or little awareness of external environment. After *dhyāna*, the Reflected Consciousness gets dissolved in Pure Consciousness **maximally** because it channelizes and maintains the flow of energy at the functioning level of *Ekāgra citta*. Upto the level of *dhyāna*, a person becomes able to visualise many those things and events which we cannot even imagine at normal level. He/ She becomes filled with many advancements in his/her personality but the original goal of Yoga remains unachieved. It can only be achieved after the next stage of *Samādhi*.



***Samādhi* is the only bridge to fill out the gap between the Reflected Consciousness and Pure Consciousness.** When *Dhyāna* becomes of the nature of (*dhyeya*) the object of meditation (pure consciousness) and becomes devoid of the knowledge about itself (that it has been known by me), it becomes converted into the state of *Samādhi*.

Samādhi consists of three main stages; **Samprajñāta**, **Asamprajñāta** and **Dharma-medha**. **Asmitānugata**, **Anandānugata**, **Vicharānugata**, **Vitarkānugata**- These can be said as **Samāpatti** and are the mini stages of **Samprajñāta Samādhi**. **Samāpatti** is coincidence where subject and object coincide.

1. **Vitarkānugata**- coincidence with gross form of object of contemplation.

a. **Savitarka**: with the presence of spontaneous thoughts.

b. **Nirvittarka**: with the absence of spontaneous thoughts.

2. **Vicharānugata**- coincidence with subtle form of object of contemplation.

a. **Savichāra** : with the presence of spontaneous thoughts.

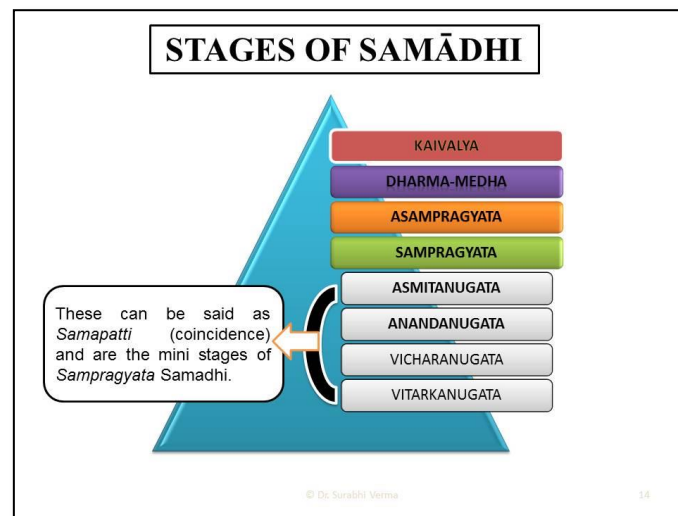
b. **Nirvichāra** : with the absence of spontaneous thoughts.

3. **Anandānugata**: a. **Sānanda** : coincidence with bliss.

b. **Nirānanda** : coincidence with beyond bliss.

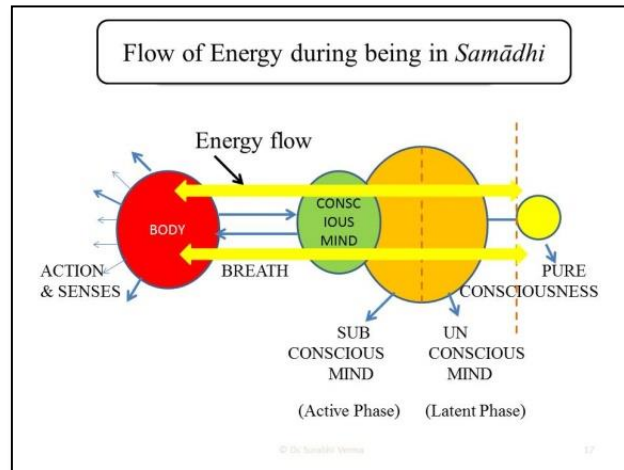
4. **Asmitānugata** : a. **Sāsmitā** : coincidence with I- am- ness.

b. **Nirāsmitā** : coincidence with beyond I- am- ness.

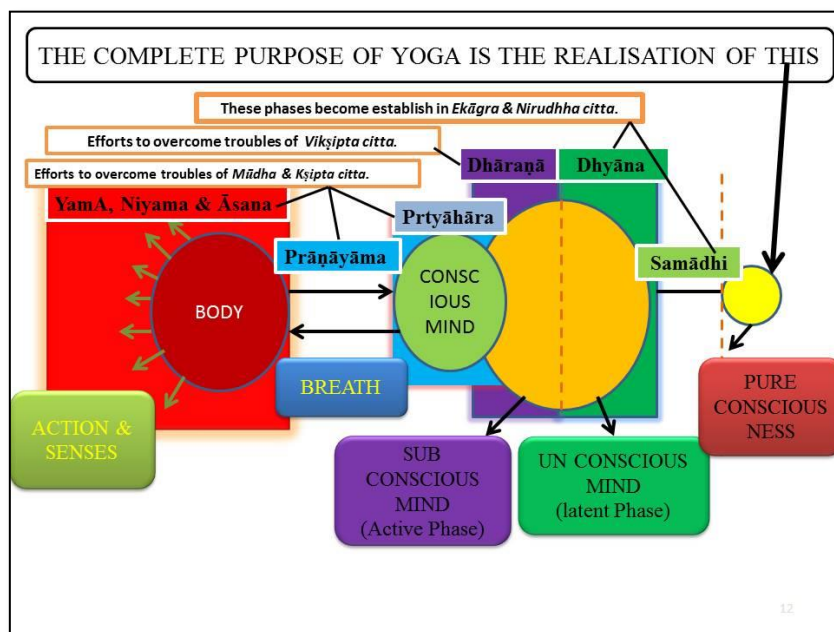


When in the state of **Niruddha citta**, the object of the meditation i.e. pure consciousness is lightened completely, all the afflictions are destroyed, bonds of actions are loosened and the state of **Nirodha** is brought in the path as the next level, it is known as **Samprajñātayoga**. Afflictions are **Pañcakleṣa**: **Avidyā**, **Asmitā**, **Rāga**, **Dveṣa** and **Abhiniveṣa**. In **Niruddha citta**, when nothing becomes known, all the fluctuations stop and citta stays as the means only, there the reflected consciousness coincides with temporary self realization or the unification with Pure consciousness. This state is known as **Asamprajñāta Yoga**. **Dharma-medha Samādhi** is a transitional phase that removes all the spiritual ignorance and

therefore all its fateful repercussions (such as karma and sufferings) and is followed directly by the event of liberation. At the peak, the reflected consciousness reaches the point of no return i.e. liberation from the cycle of actions and all the three types of sufferings. The reflected consciousness abides in perfect “aloneness” (*kaivalya*) which is a trans-mental state of Pure Awareness.



Samādhi gets established at the state of *Niruddha Citta*. Here Reflected Consciousness is **maximally dissolved** in Pure Consciousness. After this only maintenance of flow of energy remains to realize the nature of self and universe. In the state of Samādhi, the flow of Energy becomes bi-directional i.e. yogi reaches in a state of submerging with that Pure consciousness. At this level all the knowable becomes known, all understandable becomes understood and all the achievements are achieved. Thus the journey of Reflected Consciousness comes to an end and it achieves its Goal.



CONCLUSION

Yoga is the journey through which Consciousness passes through a reversal of the manifestation from gross to subtle and subtlest. It is the best method of channelizing oneself towards the pure one. The ultimate goal of yoga is the realization of pure consciousness. In this process we should understand that first two stages of yoga i.e. *yama* and *niyama* are important for becoming seated at *āsanas*. This is a sequential process and gradually channelizes the reflected consciousness towards the pure one. It is important to understand that the initial steps of Yoga are much more important for the next upper ones, so nothing can be achieved if we only practice *āsanas* and leave *yama*, *niyama* aside. It is the need of time that we should understand the real purpose of yoga and real practices. Skipping the lower level and jumping to the upper one merely can't solve the problem of today's world.

REFERENCES

¹ *Puri śārīre vasati iti puruṣaḥ.*

² *Mahat or buddhi, it is the first evolute from Prakṛti.*

³ *cittaṃ hi prakhyāpravṛttisthiṭiḥ śilatvāt triguṇaṃ*

⁴ *citiśaktiraparīṇāminyāpratisaṃkramā darśitaviṣayā śuddhā cā anantā cā.*

⁵ *sattvaṃ laghu prakāśakaṃ*

⁶ *iṣṭaṃ upaṣṭambhakaṃ calaṃ ca rajaḥ*

⁷ *Guru varṇakameva*

⁸ *Ahimsāsatyāsteyabrahmacaryāparigrahāḥ yamāḥ . 30. Pātañjalayoga Darśana, pg. 266*

⁹ *śaucasamtośatapaḥsvādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāni niyamāḥ. 32. Pātañjalayoga Darśana, pg. 273*

¹⁰ *sthīrasukhamāsanam. 46. Pātañjalayoga Darśana, pg. 296*

¹¹ *śvāsprāśvāsayorgatirvicchedaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ. 49. Pātañjalayoga Darśana, pg. 301*

¹² *svaviṣayāsamprayoge cittasvarūpānukāra ivendriyāṇām pratyāhāraḥ. 54. Pātañjalayoga Darśana, pg. 314*

¹³ *ibid, deśabandhacittasya dhāraṇā. 1. Pātañjalayoga Darśana, pg. 320*

¹⁴ *ibid, tatrāpratyayekatānatā dhyānam. 2. Pātañjalayoga Darśana, pg. 322*

¹⁵ *ibid, tadevārthamātranirbhāsaṃ svarūpaśūnyamiva samādhiḥ. 3.*