

2003 Geeta Convention Sydney - Lecture

Friends, lovers of yoga, yoga practitioners. Before I start, let me offer prayers to Lord Patanjali. If you want to join in then just say the prayers.

*Yogena cittasya padena vacam
 Malam sarirasyaca vaidyakena
 Yopakarottam pravaram muninam
 Patanjalin pranjaliranato'smi
 Abahu purusakaram
 Sankha cakrasi dharinam
 Sahasra sirasam svetam
 Pranamami Patanjalin*

You just heard a few words in Sanskrit but years ago the subject of yoga was virtually unknown. It was known only among a few scholars who had learnt Sanskrit. They knew that yoga was one of the six schools of philosophy, but there were very few who really practised or looked into the subject. The scholars treated the subject only on a scholarly level, having a dialogue about the intricacies of the subject and finding out how they could refute it. So in that manner, it was just introduced on a scholarly level.

Right from the beginning, arguments were going on about whether to accept God or not, whether Patanjali was talking about God or not, and whether he was following the Vedic testimony or not. Such philosophical arguments are never ending. But the practical part which is very useful for the general public was totally forgotten. Having a simple dialogue with the subject and introducing that subject to the general public was kept to a great extent in the background, and that is why very few people knew about it.

We have to be very grateful to Guruji, who really brought this subject to the general public. It is true that in the very 1st chapter, Vyasa says that the subject of yoga is meant for people who have got *ekagra citta*, powers of concentration, strong one-pointedness in their approach and who are in a completely restrained state. This one sentence was picked up to say that the general public hasn't got this one-pointed attention or a restrained mind and, for that reason, the subject was kept aside; forgetting that in the 2nd chapter, Vyasa says that if you haven't got these two characteristics of consciousness, it says how to build yourself up in order to be on the path of yoga.

(Vyasa was a sage, the author of Vyasa Bhasya, the oldest and first commentary on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.)

This is how Guruji has helped us to a great extent to be on the path of yoga and we have to be thankful to him, just not for the props etc, or for simplifying it for people, and showing how they can derive the effects of it. Having a different kind of approach towards it, Guruji tried to establish the system into society and this is where we come to our topic: how he has systemised yoga in a manner where any person can pick it up, do it and be in it.

The word yoga indicates that we have to bring our presence, our existence to the very core, in order to understand subjectively what we are. As a human being, we have our body, with our muscles, bones, joints etc, which are expressed as *annamaya kosa*. We have our organic body inside with our heart, liver, intestines, lungs, and all our systems of the body. We have to think about what goes on in a systematic way in order to keep this machine going and about each organ having its own vital energy. It's not that we do something for the heart to get it pumped properly or we do something for our stomach and intestines to digest our food. The machine is going on because basically it has got this pranic energy. The vitality inside is *pranamaya kosa*.

Then along with that we have the senses of perception and our organs of action, our arms and our legs, and at the same time we have the mind. The mind, the senses of perception, along with the organs of action connect us to our body, and our body connects itself to the mind. There is an interaction that keeps going on, which is *manomaya kosa*. The mind has its own willpower, its instability as well as stability. It expresses liking and disliking and this is *manomaya kosa*. *Kosa* is the sheath - that is how the human being is made.

Then we have *vijnanamaya kosa*. We have our own intelligence. We are aware of our 'I' ness, our presence, our individuality. We have our consciousness there, *citta* which is called *vijnanamaya kosa*.

And finally, we have *anandamaya kosa*, the very being within, with which we connect ourselves to the outer world as well as the inner world; that is how we feel our presence - our liveliness and our presence. Yoga is the link between all these sheaths within us, from *annamaya kosa* to the *anandamaya kosa*. It gives us the method as to how we can correct ourselves from inside to the outside, and from outside in. Yoga is union. We know very well that there is so much dis-union within ourselves, when we cannot decide many times exactly what we need to do, what we want, what we don't want. Yoga is the subject which brings us the union, which brings us near to ourselves.

There are so many subjects to study, so many objects outside to learn about, but in spite of learning all these things, we are not able to reach within ourselves to find out what we are and why very often we don't live with us, we are not with us. Yoga is the subject which tells us how to be with us and fortunately, even if we are an absolute dullard with no intelligence, the subject will still offer us a great deal so somewhere the light will be ignited.

To be in yoga is not a subject that first we have to know from the outside or discuss and listen to lectures on in order to find out about the subject matter. It rightly deals with ourselves, therefore we have to start straight away penetrating, dissecting ourselves from within, to find out what we are, and that is what yoga teaches.

I was asked to speak on living yoga. You have to be living in yoga. You have to be with yoga and in yoga. That is the subject of this lecture. It's not that this subject was thought over and discussed (in Pune) that it should be given here but still there are quite a few things we need to know.

Patanjali says what is yoga, *yogah cittavrtti nirodhah*. We have five kinds of mental modifications. Again it is the scientific word "*cittavrtti*". It refers to the five mental modifications. We must learn to restrain and bring these under control. Once you control the waves of these thoughts and restrain your consciousness, that becomes yoga. When we don't understand the modifications, when we don't understand their ruffledness, their vibrations, their fluctuations and their movements, and we don't understand where that consciousness is - because it's not something like the concrete body which presents itself to say 'Here is the consciousness', obviously, the definition remains far from us. But there is a method to discover it. That methodology is called *abhyasa* and *vairagya*.

After explaining in the first 10 aphorisms the subject of yoga, Patanjali says in the 12th aphorism: *abhyasa vairagyabhyam tannirodhah*, and this is where our understanding of the practice for the general public begins. *Abhyasa vairagyabhyam tannirodhah*. When we don't know what *citta* is, when we don't know what the *vrttis* are, when we don't understand the mental modifications, the only way is to practise and understand. Normally people ask what is going to happen to them by practising yoga and obviously we have to answer them. Yes, you get good health, your mind remains intact, you feel fresh, you feel peaceful, you get quietness, you get a good sleep and that is why you do yoga. It is fine to explain this to the general public.

But when Patanjali says, *abhyasa vairagyabhyam tannirodhah*, the *abhyasa* (practice) and *vairagya* (renunciation) are two things like a track on which we need to move. To have health of the body and serenity of the mind, and the realisation of the soul we have to be with *abhyasa* and *vairagya*. The bird has two wings to fly, that is its vital energy. In a similar manner a practitioner of yoga requires the two wings of *abhyasa* and *vairagya* to fly in the sky of the soul.

Abhyasa; the word simply means practice. You have to practise, you have to put in effort. It's a practical subject. It has to be realised only with practice, done in that manner, in that method, and only then can it reflect something. For the *abhyasa*, later in the 2nd chapter Patanjali says, have *anusthana* (devoted practice). Whatever you practise, either in a small way or a big way, even if you might be just a beginner, to say 'I am a beginner' or 'I don't know still', indicates some doubt that as a beginner you are not sure whether you will be on this path or not.

"Take a trial" - this is what it conveys, but let me take a trial by doing yoga and see if something happens should not be the approach. Here he says *anusthana*; it requires from the inside a complete spiritual platform. What kind of spiritual platform? *Anusthana* is to have the religious mind which is full of dedication and devotion to do the practice, and this is what I very clearly perceive when Guruji talks of practice.

Many of you might have read how the subject was unknown to Guruji when he started. His Guru just said to him "From tomorrow you are going to be demonstrating on the platform, so you have to practise these asanas". Not knowing the 'a b c' of it, not knowing which way it helps, he started. He never questioned which way *Trikonasana* or *Parsvakonasana* was going to help him, not knowing the technique of the *asana* except that, yes, spread the legs, turn the leg, take the hand down, the other hand up and look at

the palms. You can read these stories in the book *Astadala Yoga Mala* where Gurujii talks about the days he spent with his Guru and the way he later progressed. I would say his innocent devotion helped him to a great extent.

He didn't question (like we do) whether it is harmful or not harmful. Will it help me here or not help me there? Am I going to break my knee or shoulder? He never questioned that. He just went on doing, and tried to find out himself how to work with this body, how to adjust oneself if the body is getting dislocated or broken somewhere, how to go about it. And that journey has brought him to this stage. All of you know about the medical cases that he handles sometimes. I don't think anybody else would take those kinds of risks.

It is his devotion and dedication, that's the first lesson we need to learn. Now the book (Light on Yoga) is available, so you know the effects of the *asanas* and *pranayama*. When you are doing yoga, you, yourself are realising to a great extent the effects. But Gurujii discovered it through his own practice, this very *abhyasa*, a testimony, the words of experience which we can now use in our efforts to understand. This is how the *anusthana* has to be.

We are not very sure how to relate this to today's modern world, because now there are varieties of the *asanas*, the varieties of the yoga classes are open. Somebody says we teach this yoga, we teach that yoga. Somebody says we teach hatha yoga; somebody says we teach Raja yoga; somebody says we teach kundalini yoga; somebody says we teach elemental yoga, and so on. Thank god, even in that innocence, Gurujii never expressed himself, saying I am doing this yoga or I am doing that yoga, even when Patanjali's yoga was not much known to him. It is later when he started reading, discussing, thinking about it - only he knew in those days that yoga had been given to us by Lord Patanjali, who is the father of yoga. What he himself was doing was the yoga explained by Patanjali. From that he built up this 'empire of yoga' so that now for us the question doesn't arise about what we have to practice. He has not only given us the direction but also many facilities to practise. He has opened different doors for our practice so that we can enter from any side, just to peep in and begin our practice. And that is how the *anusthana* has to be. There has to be total dedication, understanding - or not understanding (in case we don't have that much intelligence), but that basic dedication has to be there to go further. That is how the *anusthana*, the *abhyasa*, is built up.

The mind, the *citta*, the consciousness, expresses itself in five types which all of us experience once in a while. If we go on watching then we know that it is not only the mental modification which brings the ruffledness, but also our state of consciousness that plays a great role. We need to know these five types or kinds of consciousness, the characteristics of consciousness in order to relate them to our practice.

Mudha means dullness, slowness, laziness. Especially if the body is always in a *mudha* state, it doesn't want to come to the surface to do. This morning when you were doing the *asana*, perhaps you might have realised that. When I was asking you to stretch your knees, or calf muscles, or shin bones, or thigh bones, thigh muscles etc, you might have realised it. Let us take just one part of the body, the legs. Today to a great extent I dealt

with the feet, knees, legs, and later with the arms. You might have realised that you all stretched your legs, it is true that if we are asked, we stretch our legs, we don't keep our legs bent, and in spite of that when I was asking you to stretch the legs, the depth of stretch in the legs were quite different in that stretching process. You could feel that you can still go further in penetrating your legs, and that is the practical part of it. I asked you to work from different areas, it could be the front of the knee, it could be the back of the knee, the calf muscle, the shinbone etc, and you felt your legs were not the same legs as you kept earlier. The very characteristic of that leg changed as you were proceeding with other *asanas*. The *mudha* state of consciousness, where we have less sensitivity, was brought to the surface so the dull mind begins to feel the legs in a total sense.

The *mudha* consciousness has less sensitivity so you lack thinking. The *mudha* mind thinks that it has done but doesn't do, doesn't catch. When you did it I certainly did not use the word "consciousness". I did not say see how your *citta* has opened, because it would make you search for it, as you searched for your knee or your shin. At least you know where they exist. But if you had searched the whole body, you won't have found this *citta* anywhere because it is everywhere.

This consciousness touched the areas which were unconscious, which were not touched by you, in the very process of doing. You touched those areas and that is what you expressed as some new extension came, a new stretch came, or something got elongated. These are the words you use. But what happened? What was the process? It was not as if I operated on your muscle fibres to get extended, I did not even touch your muscle fibres, but your consciousness worked on those areas and you found your length of the legs. So this *mudha citta*, which is dull, first has to be brought to the surface so that it begins to get some sensitivity. That is one characteristic of consciousness.

The second characteristic of consciousness is called *ksipta* (neglected or distracted). *Ksipta* is a word which indicates vibration, whereas *mudha* has no vibration, *mudha* just remains static. To further penetrate this *ksipta* state, you came to a stage where you said 'I think I am stretching', and at the second moment you thought, 'No, I didn't stretch'.

When I called some of the students on to the platform specially to feel, you saw that first in the beginning stage, when I asked certain parts of the body to move, they were just standing there like a log of wood which did not move at all, and this is what happens to us all. You think you have done it but nothing happens, and that is the because of *ksipta* consciousness, which vibrates and shows its presence.

When Guruji began teaching 60 years ago, people knew nothing about yoga. I saw for myself that people in those days knew nothing. If I had to write in school the occupation of my father (because it's always asked when children go to school, you are to fill out certain forms, you are to mention what your father does, what his occupation is), others would write service somewhere in the office or whatever business they were doing, somebody would write doctor, engineer, contractor etc, but if I wrote down yoga teacher they used to ask 'What is your father doing exactly?'

And from that I learnt one lesson, I won't write yoga teacher. I will just write teacher, and that made sense. What he teaches was irrelevant to them. OK, he is a teacher. They could not accept yoga teacher, but they accepted teacher. And that is how it was and it is true that nobody knew much about yoga, not even in Western countries.

When he first travelled - and all of you know that Sir Yehudi Menuhin invited him and that is how he started travelling, even at the first meeting of Guruji and Menuhin there were so many obstacles. There were quite a few doctors, great people nearby, who wanted this yoga teacher kept away. They were saying 'What nonsense, why should Menuhin go to a yoga teacher?' That shows the innocence of people. They did not know the subject, and now you find the same subject introduced in schools and colleges. It is recognised for research purposes, which is a great change. From society's state of *mudha* and *ksipta*, Guruji brought the subject to the level it is now, where it's recognised for the level of doctorate for research purposes. Not only that, teachers have now become choosy about saying they are a yoga teacher as a profession. In my day, they did not recognise it as a profession. So this *mudha* and *ksipta* state has changed in society as well as in our own practice.

The third stage is *viksipta* (oscillating, agitated or scattered), and this is the threshold where everyone gets caught. Somehow as a beginner you can change the *mudha* and *ksipta* states. Vyasa has explained in the 2nd chapter, in the very first sutra - *tapah svadhyaya isvarapranidhanani kriyayogah* - that for those who have this *mudha* or *ksipta* states of consciousness (dull but with some vibrancy), you can pick up the practice of *tapah svadhyaya isvarapranidhanani* in order to proceed further. Because the *viksipta* state is kept in the middle like a threshold, if you conquer that and cross it, you can go further. You are either inside the threshold or outside the threshold in the state of *viksipta*. The threshold demarcates in that manner creating a compartment. Either you can be on this side or on that side. And that is the time of test. *Viksipta* is the state of consciousness which often shows the oscillation of the mind - should I do or not do, is it right or wrong, is it necessary to do yoga or not necessary to do yoga? - and if that state is there, it means that you are still undecided, and when you are undecided you can be pulled downwards once again and when determined you can go further.

This is very relevant for us to know since we are on this border of *viksipta*. We question that in the olden days life was simple. They had no telephones, TV, radio. They were staying in one town or village. There was less communication. People around you were known to each other since it was a single community. But now all these channels are open, you just switch on the TV and there are so many channels, what to choose? A to Z - everything is available, whether it is wanted or unwanted. Telephone from one end of the world to the other, you can just communicate straight away. In the olden days when Guruji used to fly, we used to wait for 10 days for his letter to come from Switzerland to India. I often describe how my mother used to wait in Bombay until she knew the plane had landed in Switzerland, which meant that everything was fine, and then she used to come back to Pune. And now, even on the way, you can telephone and say I am here.

People say to me that in spite of this improved situation of modern days, where there is so much communication, yet there is a tension. We appreciate that it's so fast we have

the communication, yet the mind is not quiet. It is restless. A time comes when you feel it is better to keep the telephone off so that you can practice, otherwise moment to moment it will be ringing. That means that even with all these facilities it has not helped us. On the contrary, it is adding to the problem that our mind cannot remain quiet. In fact it's more oscillating, and that is what we need to know as far as *viksipta* is concerned. With more outside attractions than we had in earlier days, how do we still live in this state of consciousness? We are full *rajasic*. How do we bring the *rajasic* consciousness under control, and how do we bring the *cittavrtti nirodhah* (to restrain the movement in consciousness)?

For Patanjali there is only one answer; *abhyasa*, practice. In this *viksipta* state, the practice has to be stronger and decisive. When you are shown all the so-called different types of yoga, which were unknown in those days, obviously the mind gets allured - shall I go to that yoga or this yoga, and you become choosy even if you know nothing about it. Fortunately Guruji never said that he does any particular kind of yoga. He just said that he does yoga. His students may call his method as 'Iyengar yoga'. They labelled it Iyengar yoga, just to identify it in a good sense, but he never called it Iyengar yoga, he called it Patanjali's yoga.

In this *viksipta* state, when the mind or the consciousness oscillates, we are duty bound to stick to *abhyasa*, to practice.

The two further states of consciousness, which are called *ekagrata citta* and *niruddha citta*, are higher states where the consciousness has come under control, and has achieved one-pointedness and restraint. These are considered the highest states of consciousness, and Vyasa says in the 1st chapter that the advanced stages of yoga are meant for those who are clear as far as doubts are concerned, because these two states of consciousness will never question, "What I am doing, is it right or wrong, am I to choose another path?" These questions will not come to these two stages of consciousness. These questions arise in the earlier states, those who are in *mudha*, *ksipta* and *viksipta* states.

Now it becomes our duty - if you have understood these five characteristics of consciousness - to watch ourselves day to day; that is, the character of the consciousness at that moment of day, whichever language you use.

The days that you don't feel like doing yoga, you have to question why you don't feel like practising because that reveals the state of your consciousness. As Lord Krsna in the Bhagavad Gita says: *Yuktahara viharasya, yukta cestasya karmasu, yukta-svapnavabohdasya, yogo bhavati duhkha ha*. Yoga will not rid you of pain and sorrow (*duhkha*) but these will go if you keep balance and control yourself. Those who are regulated in diet and recreation, regulated in performing actions and regulated in sleep and wakefulness will be accomplished in yoga with ease. They won't feel the discipline torturous.

It is important which way you control yourself (*yuktahara*) - the food that you intake, if it is well balanced (*yuktahara viharasya*). If your movements and activities are well balanced your leisure time is also well controlled and balanced. If your activities are

balanced, your sleep is balanced, the path of yoga is not all painful or difficult. It is not that you practise yoga and then suddenly you say, oh let me enjoy and have *bhoga*. He says yoga and *bhoga* - even there have a balance, but he says that knowing very well that your movements, your contact with the external world, with your friends, families, in your office, even there you have to have *yukta vihara*; it should be a proper one, a balanced one, where you should not show your imbalance. Not too much attached, and not completely detached. Even the food intake in that manner should be a proper one, not over-eating, not under-eating.

Yukta cestasya karmasu - the actions that you do, the movements of the actions, have to be totally in a balanced state, not overdoing, not underdoing. The intention has to be pure and clear. Not over involved, not under involved. Even in that involvement, you have to have a good balance. *Yukta-svapnavabohdasya* - even your dreams have to be balanced, because even dreams sometimes imbibe you in that manner - it becomes a habit of the mind. The mind which keeps on brooding, which keeps on experiencing only the sorrows etc, will also be inviting dreams of that type. If the mind is all the time seeking enjoyment, dreams will also be invited in that manner by our consciousness. In those days the modern psychology was unknown but Lord Krsna knew the deeper psychology which is beyond the modern one. I hope you understand what I am saying. It means that your behaviour, your character, your involvements all have to be kept in a balanced state so that you don't invite this kind of *svapna*, dreams.

Even wakeful states, *jagratavastha* have to be balanced. When you are in wakeful state, it should be a proper one. You are in a wakeful state but then you go into a dreamy state. While doing an *asana*, if Geeta shouts three times; to stretch the leg, then the arm, you do it, and then if she doesn't repeat it the fourth time, you don't know where the knee is sinking, where the arms are sinking. That *jagratavastha*, the wakeful state, goes, and during the practice you need to bring that wakeful state. *Yukta-svapnavabohdasya* - you have to see how you remain wakeful even if it is a question of staying in that posture for 30 seconds. Even if we limit it for 30 seconds, *yogo bhavati duhkaha*. You can overcome the painful and difficult path of yoga. When you practise yoga in that manner, then you find you are out of these sorrows or pains. That is what Lord Krishna is saying, and Patanjali is showing us the way with *abhyasa*.

With yoga it is first the practice, and that practice too is *asana* and later *pranayama*. Guruji has often said keep the practice of *asana* and *pranayama* in the boundary lines of *yama* and *niyama*, still no one immediately catches on. If you come today to practise yoga and I tell you to follow the principles of yoga that from now on you are going to practice non-violence, you are going to be truthful, these terms undoubtedly are very good, but heavy. You are unable to adopt them at once. How can you be suddenly non-violent when you haven't got the understanding of what non-violence is? That is why Guruji says that while doing the *asanas* and *pranayamas* have an open mind, open eyes, watch every action of yours. Are you cheating yourself? You may be thinking you are doing it but you may not be doing it. You might be thinking you are in it but you are not in it. You think you have done it but you have not done it. You think you can do only *that* much as that is your capacity, but perhaps you can do more than that.

This objective understanding of our own consciousness comes through the practice of *asanas* and *pranayamas*. When we practise them it gives a good foundation for *yama* and *niyama*. These words are fairly hefty - *ahimsa*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacharya*, *aparigraha* - and definitely not applicable to the general public in the sense that when you think them over, they are great principles, which is why they are called *mahavratam*. But as you begin to walk on the path of yoga adopting the practice of *asana* and *pranayama* you begin to understand the principles of *yama* and *niyama*.

We need to have at the background of our mind the imprints of non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-holding, non-storing. The mind has to open to that great extent and that is why *asanas* and *pranayamas* have to be practised by one and all. Those who practise the *asanas* and *pranayama* - those who have done for years perhaps understand that there is a different approach to life. Our approach to life changes when you compare the approach of others who have not practised. You understand the change that occurred in you compared to what you were earlier.

If you decide to practise for two hours in your house, imagine you just decide that you will practise in the morning for one hour and in the evening for one hour. Then for that one hour of practice, before the practice you need to get yourself prepared, apart from preparation for the actual practice. When you are a householder you have to look after certain things, finish with your responsibilities, and you see that those things are done earlier so that this one hour is available to you. Or in the evening you have other things to do, which need to be done as family members, so you do those and then you keep one hour free. That means the mind is again concentrated to make sure that the one hour which you have fixed and preserved for your yoga practice is available to you. And that is how by adjusting the other things you reserve that one hour. The discipline begins there.

Suppose you decide that today you are going to do one hour in the evening but earlier to that you will go to the cinema. Then the mind that looks at the picture doesn't go with that mind which wants to do yoga. The mind clashes, changes, the track changes. If your will is strong enough to do yoga, it won't think of seeing the picture and that is how with the practice the qualities of *vairagya* also come. Ultimate *vairagya*, ultimate detachment, might be different (and is where we have to proceed to undoubtedly), but we have to see that if we really decide to practise, then we keep our mind fresh for that reason. Finishing other activities, finishing other responsibilities, makes us to be on the disciplined path. This is how we keep *bhoga* aside and adopt yoga. And with the *abhyasa*, the practice first, we find that disciplined path which Patanjali has described. So we have seen that there has to be devotion, dedication, *anusthana*, for the practice, *abhyasa*. We need to give importance to our practice. Practice has to become the first priority. As the depth in practice increases, the other activities of life become less important. And there begins the discipline, *anusasanam*. It might only be one hour of practice. But the discipline begins. Yogic practice automatically disciplines the way of life.

Even watch the intake of food. Because when you are practising, when you know a certain type of food is not suitable for you and it affects your practice you avoid it. You are compelled to avoid it because it affects your practice. Then you need to have control over the food; whatever is suitable to you, digestible by your system, you need to eat. But

here again I want to say that you need to come to a certain level of your practice. Your efforts and respect to your practice have to be intensified. Suppose you are able to do 10 minutes of *Sirsasana* and you have taken a very heavy food - then you cannot do for 10 minutes. You might say, "Yesterday I did it for 10 minutes but today I have taken heavy food, so I am not able to do those 10 minutes". You begin to find out the cause behind it. You logically apply your mind to see what you ate, why you are feeling heavy, why the food which was taken is not digested, why it is coming up, why you are getting a vomiting sensation. So these are the things one has to study; if the question of just 10 minutes in *Sirsasana* bothers you this much, if you are really practising it, you realise that if certain things don't make you feel right, then your way of living affects your practice, and you know that you have to cut out those things which are bringing obstacles in your practice, and that is called *anusasanam*, a disciplined practice. But this analysing process will happen only if you are keen about your practice, if you are regular in practice. If you treat your practice lightly then you are not respecting it. You need to practise yoga with reverence.

The first aphorism is *atha yoganusasanam*. *Anusasanam* (instructions or guidelines) - the words show that yoga is a disciplined way which has been taught by earlier practitioners. It's a disciplined way and not something that you pick up and do according to your taste. Another question often asked is how many days will it take to get my Introductory Level 2? So how many years will it take till I can become a teacher? That is clearly saying your intention. Why do you take to yoga with the intention of becoming a teacher? You need to respect the subject, adore the subject. Do not bring it to the professional level. Yoga is not a time bound subject. One has to be established in it. You have to establish it with effortful endeavour. You cannot say that you are established in yoga so now the practice is not needed.

Patanjali says *tatra sthitau yatnah abhyasah* while explaining the *abhyasa*. The first sutra is *tatra sthitau yatnah abhyasah*. You have to be absolutely stable and steady. *Sthitau* (constant, steady) is the word; you have to do the practice with full effort. Don't question, he says. Do *abhyasa*, that is why first the consistency in *abhyasa*, second is *vairagya*. He never said if you practise yoga, first give up everything and come to me. The first priority is to the practice.

First *abhyasa* and then *vairagya*. Practise - be in it. *Tatra sthitau*, be in it, be constantly in it. I think they are very weighty words. *Yatnah abhyasah*, to practise with full effort. It might be routine work, a mechanical job, yet do it. You have to do every day your standing poses, you have to do it right from *Tadasana*, to begin your mechanical work, but in the process of mechanical practice, you have to be in it. Being in that practice, he says you will reach a certain stage which is called *vivekakhyati*. Some intelligence will come along with wisdom.

How long it will take to become a yogi is another question often asked today, because everything these days is measured like a course. People are in a hurry so they say, "First give us an idea of how long it will take. Is it 10 days, 15 days, a one-month course to become yogis?" This is the psychology of today. All are in a hurry to become a yogi and think that it can be structured like any educational course. Patanjali has given the

duration of the course. Patanjali says *sa tu dirghakala nairantarya satkara asevitah drdhabhumih*, and that sutra is indicating correctly how long and how a practitioner has to be. If you have to live in the practice of lively yoga then you have to be in it, then this is the main sutra you have to remember, *sa tu dirghakala nairantarya satkara asevitah drdhabhumih*.

First *dirghakala* - long procedure, long time. *Dirgha* means long and *kala* is the time, so he hasn't given the time or duration that you have to practise, but says you have to practise for a long time, *nairantarya*, without any break in between. Not doing it today, and then tomorrow switching over to another type of yoga, then again coming back to this. You cannot keep on changing according to your choice or whims and wishes. This is all fickleness of the mind that Patanjali does not tolerate. He says *nairantarya*, without any break. You have to continuously practise with that effort.

Satkara means to practise having full respect to the subject. In other words have trust in what you practise. Whether it is difficult, painful, torturous, or not giving a result, have the trust and practise. If you haven't got the trust in it then you won't respect it. Any doubts, saying should I do this or do that, then you are not trusting it, that is why your mind is fickle, the state of *ksipta*. It wants to be choosy. If somebody says that in Iyengar schools it takes five years for you to reach Introductory Level 2, but if you come to our school for one year you will be a teacher - then your mind is caught. You say okay, why should I spend five years when I can become a teacher here in one year? It's like a business now, alluring the mind, if you get caught in it. Patanjali says *satkara*, have respect towards it. Do not doubt and do not hate. It is not a question of a difficult or easy path. It is not the question of result - oriented or futile efforts. It is the self discipline and self control. Yoga is not meant for the achievement or recognition from the public.

Asevitah, and that is the word, the soul of the whole sutra. *Asevitah* (zealously practised, performed assiduously) means to dwell, completely remaining in it, getting completely absorbed in it. It's a beautiful word. When we worship the Lord and offer to the Lord food, fruits, water, flowers, and receive whatever is offered which is graced by the Lord it is called *prasada*. This *prasadam* is tasted with pleasure. The word *asvada* indicates flavour, taste. It means to relish, to propitiate. To have *prasadam* with *asvada*, means to have that devotion from inside and take it. The word *asevita* is indicating that you have to practise with love and affection, with regards and respect. You have to be in it. Not to have the attitude of disliking, hate. You have to cherish and relish even if it is painful, hard and difficult to digest. You have to eat, drink and digest. Then the foundation becomes firm - *asevitah drdhabhumih*. So the word indicates that you have to be in it, you have to drink it. You have to eat it, you have to be in it with respect, that is made very clear.

When I am teaching, sometimes people say that I yell at them, I shout at them. You say this because you are unaccustomed to this kind of approach in teaching. Normally a person sits on the stage, talks to you, you just absorb that, you understand word by word what has been said but it doesn't mean that it goes into your system. If it has to go into your system, like the lecture I am giving, then obviously that force has to be there because it is a process of *asevan* - it has to go inside, you have to take it. That kind of force is used to bring your own mind, your own attention, your capacity of concentration in that area

where it has to reach. That doesn't come if I just say (Geeta speaks very softly): "Keep your shinbones straight, open your calf muscles, see that the front of the thigh meets the back of the thighs, keep your arms straight". Soft words are pleasing but do not reach in. If the instructions have to penetrate then the strong voice is required. Even a storyteller will not read a story in a plain voice. If you read a drama book where anger is expressed, then your words have to express that anger and where love is expressed, the voice has to express love. Then it becomes meaningful. You understand that drama. Otherwise it is not a drama at all. After seeing the drama you will go home and ask what character was that person playing? In the teaching process, all these things are required to make you go deep inside, to find out its depth, and that is how the *asevitah* has to be.

When you build up in that manner, how the *vairagya* comes is a beauty to see. How you become attentive, forgetting everything else, is a beauty to see. When I was after your shinbone and because of my force of voice you were after your shinbone, to take it to the calf muscle, you could not think of anything else except your shin and calf muscles. If at all you lost your temper it might be after you finished your work. You cannot lose your temper on me and at the same time stretch your shinbone; the two things cannot go together. So first separate that part of yoga from the teacher's attitude. In fact, I was after your shinbones so you were with your shinbones. When you do like this, the mind goes inward. In order to do certain actions (which are not outer actions) they are inner actions, when the mind goes inward to do those actions, you get that tinge of *vairagya*, of what it means. You dissociate yourself with other unwanted things and associate yourself with yourself. You associate yourself with whatever is appropriate to continue yoga.

You have to build yourself up; that little colouring of *vairagya* which you have got, the experience you got, you have to build yourself up because it cannot be taught. But *abhyasa* can be taught and that is why he puts *abhyasa* first. In the same 1st chapter he also uses for this *ekatattva abhyasah*. I am informing you of this because that is how your practice has to be. So you understand about *anusthana*, devotion and dedication; the *abhyasa*, practice; and then *anusthana*, the disciplining and establishing in the practice with religiosity, and now we are coming to *ekatattva abhyasah*.

It is very important to see in which context Patanjali says *Ekatattva abhyasa*. Prior to this sutra he speaks about the obstacles in the path of yoga. Those obstacles are, *vyadhi* (disease), *styana* (lethargy), *samsaya* (doubt), and *pramada* (heedlessness). Then *alasya* (laziness) and *avirati*, which is wavering of the mind, the mind which suddenly shifts from yoga to *bhoga*, which goes from object to object to fulfil its own allurements and desires. *Avirati* is the fickleness of the mind. *Bhrantidarsana* (delusion or erroneous views); thinking that now I have done yoga for a year and I am the master of yoga. You think you have learnt everything and you are under the illusion that you have reached, that is *bhrantidarsana*. *Alabdhabhumikatva* (an inability to hold on to what is achieved); despite doing all these kinds of yoga or all the practice, when you have no control on yourself then your practices are futile and a feeling comes that nothing was achieved - *alabdhabhumikatva*. You do for three years or five years, and then you say nothing was achieved, that is *alabdhabhumikatva*. Why was it not achieved? You won't question why nothing has come from what you did, that there must be some sort of problem, some hitch in your practice. Question that practice. Did you do it *sa tu dirghakala, nairantarya*

(without any break)?, *satkara* (with respect)?, *asevitah* (in the manner to drink it)? You won't question that; you just say, "I did it for 10 years and nothing happened, then I left off". Oh! What a great thing you did!

Anavasthitattva, shakiness. Should I do it, should I not do it? You might have reached a certain state but do not recognise that state, do not witness your achievements, your gains, which is what happens many times so I am making you aware of it. Find out how with one hour of practice the discipline is built up in you because you want to keep that one hour separate in your time. You make sure the other activities are finished and you concentrate in that one hour on your practice and witness the change. If your food habits have changed, you have to learn to witness; if it hasn't happened, you are to ask why is my life like this? - I feel like eating anything that comes in front of me. Why did I not achieve even that much of control?

Somewhere you must be lacking sensitivity in your practice that also needs to come. This morning I said the body may be elastic and just performing the *asana* without knowing what is happening. So you think that person has done very well because the body can bend easily, but nothing changes from the inside. So here comes *anavasthitattva* (inability to maintain the achieved progress) - you do but no change occurs, nothing happens. The person says I did it but oh I just can bend forward, I can bend backwards, my mind hasn't changed at all but it remains as it is. That makes you shaky and leads towards *anavasthitattva*.

These are the obstacles you have to overcome. Patanjali says *ekatattva abhyasa*, you have to aim your mind at it. Your decision and determination are important. It is a kind of oath that "I will practise to bring absolute stability in me". That is another characteristic of *abhyasa* practice; not to waver from that aim. You have to see that you remain absolutely steady with your ongoing practice. The aim might be self-realisation, which may still not be understood. What self is and what realisation is! The words are near to you but you are very far from them - but still practise and see the whole nature of you change for this reason. Stick to your aim. Adhere to your practice with single-minded effort. Another word he uses is *ekatanata*, and he uses that word for *abhyasa* in *dhyana*. What is *dhyana*? He says *ekatanata* of the consciousness; this *ekatanata* is a single flow of attention in the highest stage of meditation. Why we need to have the firm foundation - *drdhabhumi* of our belief in yoga has to be sure. We need to have firm conviction. Yoga cannot be adopted as a pastime activity. In *dhyana* if this *ekatanata* is on the single chosen content in *abhyasa* it should be stable effort. In *anusthana*, it should be religious and "duty-firm" decision.

But how is it applicable to a common practitioner who still doesn't know much, if I use that language? Your practice has to have one single thread of understanding, because at that stage of meditation, with single-pointed attention, there is a complete maturity of your consciousness, to have the clarity regarding the object which you have chosen and are concentrating on. Now what happens at this stage when the mind is still not mature enough? Today, even if you decide to do meditation and you sit, when you sit you begin to think, oh, should I meditate on this object or that object? I don't know, I am lost - (that is the expression) - I don't know what to concentrate on, so I am lost. That stage should

not be there in meditation. If that stage comes to your consciousness, that is the disease of the consciousness. It's like when many dishes are kept in front of you, you don't know what to eat, whether this or that.

Meditation cannot be like that. There are not different dishes in front of you. But earlier to that when you are practising *asana* and *pranayama*, due to varieties in them you can train and gather the energy of mind. Your faith, or your inner trust, by that time becomes strong enough to be one with the Lord. This morning when I spoke about the deities to whom we offer our prayers, it was meant for that purpose. Whether you accept the deities or not is not the question, but all the characteristics that we require to practise yoga were all there. And you know that these are the qualities you require otherwise you are not stable. You cannot just one day sit and close your eyes and say I will meditate.

In the practice of *abhyasa* state, you need to have that *ekatanata*; your practice has to be threaded in one single thread, in such a manner that you are with you and you are with your practice. Then even if you have to deal with your arms, legs, trunk, liver, stomach, whatever you think - you need to touch these areas, you need to feel these areas. You need to witness these areas and penetrate by watching. "What happens? What doesn't happen? Where did I touch? Where did I not do anything? Did I feel or didn't feel?" You have to ponder over it. You may do *Trikonasana* and after 30 seconds on this side and 30 seconds on that side, you may say it is over but you have to find out, "Did I feel anything? When I didn't feel anything, when I didn't touch anything, I didn't think of my spine, what happened? Oh, I didn't think of my head, whether it turned or not. Oh, I didn't think whether the spine was properly aligned or not." If that comes, that means to some extent there was single-pointed attention or at least the attention was focused to see what you got and what you did not. It means that the characteristic of consciousness is there to proceed toward *ekatanata*. Learn the art of observing; learn the art of penetrating into your self. Learn to witness your own presence within you through the practice of *asana* and *pranayama*.

Otherwise you just do it and take for granted that you have done it and just tick off; "I did *Trikonasana*, I did *Parsvakonasana*, I did *Virabhadrasana*." You may have done 40 *asanas* but you were not in it, even in a single *asana*. Then the practice is not only meaningless but a waste. That is why this mind has to be trained and developed to look into it what I did, where I felt myself, where I did not feel myself. This is the great method Guruji has given us, for which we are to be thankful.

Guruji definitely gave us eyes to look into it, he did not just accept the *asana* because it looks beautiful and you have done it very beautifully. Immediately the second question comes. Did you connect yourself inside? Because the posture might be looking beautiful but your mind might be wandering somewhere else. So he says, "Did you look at that knee, did you look at that thigh, did you feel your back, how that spine is, how your back trunk is, is it aligned or distorted?" With that methodology, you are building up yourself from *ekatattva* to *ekatanata* - the single flow. It takes a longer time for the single flow to come. In the beginning you see there are several small rivers or streams meeting that river and then somewhere that river expresses as a big river. Your attention from all sides has to come to this major river of consciousness - *citta-nadi* - so it remains as a single

flow. And after *ekatanata*, there is *ekagrata* (one-pointed attention on the indivisible self). When that single flow comes, you cannot question, "I have got a very good single flow of attention but please tell me what I have to concentrate on now." That question doesn't arise at all when there is a single flow, because it is already aiming at where it has to be.

Ekagrata is the one which points to the very soul. The flow of the single attention has to be towards the soul and that is how the *abhyasa* has to be. That is why earlier in the 1st chapter Patanjali says *ekatattva abhyasa*. What is that *tattva*? That *tattva* sense which we have inside as an in-dweller - the soul, *drsta*, *atman*. These are different words for it. Have the attention all the time that you are reaching "That" which is in you, which is you and you are not different or separate from that. When we don't know, develop *vivekakhyaati*. Awaken and recognise the conscience. Ignite it. I have already said earlier about how Patanjali says that despite having obstacles, always have this aim. From there you should not waver, and most of the time you waver in the beginning itself. That is why the questions arise in your mind; oh, I think this yoga is not suitable for me, something else is suitable for me. You go according to your suitability. After a while it does not suit. Something else crops from that and you change. Patanjali says, "There is no question of suitability, this is my method and this is how you are supposed to go." It is not the question of suitability but of stability. It has to yield *vivekakhyaati*. The conscience has to arise. The wisdom has to shine *yoganganusthanat asuddhiksaye jnanadiptih avivekakhyaateh*. How long to practise, how and in which style it has in an ascending order, and not ending abruptly, has to be thought of. As long as your inner conscience is not clear, guilt-free and attachment-free or doubt-free, you need to continue. When every time you are questioning, should I do this much? how long should I do it for? is it necessary to do one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening? if I haven't got the time, can I skip one day? does it matter? will it be harmful to me? will it lead towards self realisation?, these doubts and these questions come from the *mudha* mind, the dull mind, and the *ksipta* mind, the wavering, wandering mind. It won't come if the conscience is matured. The conscience does not cheat. It says, "When you haven't reached that state, you need to do". When your conscience is not giving a clear indication you have to do.

Viveka (discriminative understanding) is the conscience - *antahkarana* or *dharmendriya* - and Guruji definitely uses that word. I feel proud of my father because he really coined that word as *dharmendriya* (the sense of virtuousness, the inner voice); nobody had previously referred to it as *dharmendriya*. He says it is another organ of our senses of perception although it does not objectively exist - like we have eyes to see, a tongue to taste and skin to feel touch etc - this is not that kind of sense of perception but it is the inner perception. It is *dharmendriya* - *dharma* indicates clarity and propriety. Clarity in perception, every detail and decency in direct perception, not having any tinge of what you call a blemish or wrong. In other words it is a very clear single duty of *dharmendriya*, because there are other duties we have to do in life through conscience, but it is our single duty as a human being to realise the soul, which *dharmendriya* does.

Dharma is normally translated as 'religion' - which *dharma* do you belong to, which religion do you belong to? Are you Hindu or Christian? This is how we label it as a religion, but the religion of a human being is to reach the state where his conscience has to be completely pure. Then it is above all these kinds of blemishes of emotions,

intelligence, ego. It's above all these things, and that's why Guruji picked up this word *dharmendriya* for the conscience - the sense perception which has got clarity as far as this understanding is concerned.

And this conscience has to be touched by us. That's how the yogic practice has to be. First you touch your body; you begin to understand its movements, you begin to understand deformities in it, you begin to understand disabilities in it, you begin to understand its limitations. But you need to begin to understand how to break those limitations and move ahead. The kinds of limitations are not that your leg is a certain height, and you are going to further extend your leg by one inch, that is never going to happen, but when your mind extends along with that leg, the leg shows its further length. Physically though, it doesn't lengthen more than its capacity. But what length physically it has, you have shortened because your mind is short. And if you apply that to the leg, you will apply it to the arm, the chest, the back, your spinal muscles, everywhere. The mind has to flow, to reach all the frontiers of the body. Once it reaches those frontiers then the procedure is to come back from it. As long as it's not attaching - it will be like some of the attachments we have - we get attached to things when we cannot have them. It's like a diabetic patient who is not supposed to eat sweets and chocolates, but when you keep them in front of him, he's tempted, despite knowing very well that he should not eat them.

So the mind has to spread and get decentralised and then get centralised. First it should work centrifugally and then centripetally. Those temptations do not end. When there is a freedom, somewhere the temptation ends. You now think that you don't want to eat that, as you have already eaten a lot. That's why these frontiers from inside when you touch there is a reversal process. And that is what you experienced today when you did only those three or four *asanas*. You felt that you touched all those areas where your mind got withdrawn. That moment you could not think of anything except wherever I asked you, I demanded from your attention, concentration and discrimination. And that is how this consciousness has to be trained. That *dharmendriya* has to be trained, through the practice of *asanas* and *pranayama*.

There is a vast scope for practice. You found that if you practise many *asanas*, fine. It is also good because then sometimes when you are in a state of *ksipta*, you just want to do one *asana* after the other, then just do it. You continue to do and suddenly the mind awakens to tell you that you did this and you did not do this. Some awakening comes from inside. Observe that. That is how the practice has to be. That is how one has to do it. You know how to warm up the body but here warm up your mind.

You know one of the *niyama's* - *sauca* cleanliness. In your every correction there has to be the inner penetration. But then you have to come to the point where you have to deal right at the centre where you need to reach. That is *antara sauca* - the internal cleanliness, and that takes you towards clarity inside, towards the *dharmendriya*, and that is how the practice has to be. So friends, if you understand this much, then it is not merely holding to the practice of *asanas* and *pranayama*. It's not a question of sticking to it, but the preparation of the mind, to create the firm foundation of the mind.

That is what one needs to imbibe with the practice of yoga. You may read your own book of the body, mind and intelligence. Think over it. It's a time for us to think about our own behaviour, our own character, where we did the right thing, where we did the wrong thing - for a practitioner of yoga that is important. Even if you have done the wrong thing, you should know that it was wrong. Accept the fault. It is not bad to repent. At least you begin to feel, "I should not have done this. I could have dealt with the same thing in a different way." That is cleansing the conscience. I hope you understand that.

This process has to be continuous to cleanse the conscience within which is the job of consciousness - *citta*. A time comes where the conscience before committing wrong corrects itself. No more it commits wrong - no *adharma*. The conscience is watching the consciousness. There is a part of *citta* which is *viveka citta*, which is full of conscience and which watches this consciousness. It has to become a habit for conscience to watch consciousness and that is how one has to practice yoga, one has to learn yoga. I hope you have understood this because I have put it in a slightly different way. Normally I would have explained to you *yama*, *niyama* and *pranayama* etc, but I wanted to say this to you people because many of you have now done yoga for years, and this is something that will give you more understanding for when you have to penetrate deeply, to open your book of the conscience through the *tapas* (the penance), *svadhyaya* (the self-studying process), and *Isvara pranidhana* (surrendering to God).

Just now I spoke about *ekatattva abhyasa*. It has one more meaning. *Eka* means one. *Tattva* means essence. The soul is the essence of our existence. The practice of yoga is meant for knowing and recognising the essence. The very soul is always in a pure state. The practice has to be based on that principle. To put it in a very simple word, *tapas* (austerity, penance, spiritual practice, devoted discipline) is meant to know the essence. This is the first step, nothing else. Do *tapas*, and *svadhyaya*, *Isvara pranidhana* will follow it. Practise. It's a penance, even if every day you have to do one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening, it's a penance on a small scale. If it's only once in the day, one hour there is something you have to do, you might be having very little time to practise, when so many things have to be done, it's fine, but do it as *tapas*. Do it as a penance, as rules and regulations - completely restricted for this reason, because it will change gradually your whole lifestyle.

If you don't practise then you will be out of track and will get thrown anywhere. So remember this word *tapas*, which burns the impurities. It's a fire which burns the impurities. It may be a slow process to burn the impurities but it will happen. You will begin to know your weaknesses and will begin to find ways to overcome them through yoga. One has to keep on practising, so practise, practise, practise. Thank you.