

PRACTICE OF "YOGA IN DAILY LIFE" CAN HEAL HUMANKIND

**Attaining physical, emotional and mental balance
as we strive for Self Realization**

शुभं करोति कल्याणमरोग्यं धनसंपदाः ।

शत्रुबुद्धिर्विनाशाय दीपज्योतिर्नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

दीप ज्योति परब्रह्म दीपं सर्वे मोहनं ।

दीपं ना सजते सर्वं सन्धया दीपं सरस्वत्यम् ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

"I greet the light of the universe. May it shelter us, lead us to health, peace and harmony and liberate us from all pain and suffering caused by ignorance. The light of the universe is divine, it is the Lord himself. This light lives in all hearts. May it bless us and inspire our mind, so that we can understand and realize the science of Yoga."

Blessed brothers and sisters, I would like to share this divine message of Yoga with you. YOGA is a science - a science of body, mind, consciousness and soul. Yoga is a teaching of wisdom and knowledge which has been transmitted to mankind from the great Yogis and Rishis of ancient times, though its geographical origin lies in India, it is universal, all-valid, eternal knowledge.

Divine consciousness, that is eternal, omniscient and omnipresent and resides in each and every particle of the universe, can be realized through the ancient, immortal science of Yoga. Yoga stands above all religious dogmas and fanaticism. Yoga itself is love and bliss, pure and divine. It is the principle of balance and harmony in the entire universe, the principle through which Creation took place – the first movement of the divine consciousness as *nada*, sound. That is the power of Yoga.

"YOGA IN DAILY LIFE" simply means: To live Yoga in daily life. It is a system which offers help and prevention from many diseases and illnesses and shows a way to attainment of spiritual balance and harmony. It supports purification of consciousness and displays higher spiritual levels in which finally the knowledge about our real self and God is revealed. All religions and many philosophies deal with God - they all have their roots in Yoga.

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।

सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥

The one, who practises Yoga, whose soul is pure,
who has mastered his senses and controls his mind,
whose Self has become one with the Self of all beings,
remains unaffected even though performing actions.

Bhagavad Gita 5/7

The fundament of Sanatana Dharma is YOGA. Yoga means UNITY, that is the union of the individual with the universal consciousness, and to practise Yoga means to tread the path to reunification of the individual with its origin – God.

Besides, Yoga leads to full harmony and oneness between body, mind and soul. Through Yoga the perfection of the human life will be achieved.

Yoga began with those basic questions which have been on the mind of mankind since ancient times:

*"Who am I? Who is God? Where do I come from? Where am I going?
Why am I here? Am I fulfilling the duty for which I have come here?"*

The Yogis and wise men who were engaged with these questions developed the Vedanta-philosophy, the highest philosophy in the world. Its main statement is the non-duality: we are all *One*. It is not easy to understand, and still much more difficult to put it into practice.

अहेयमनुपादेयं मनोवाचोमगाचरम ।

अप्रमेयमनाद्यन्तं ब्रह्म पुणंमा महः ॥

That can neither be left nor taken, that is no object of mind or speech;
immeasurable, without beginning and end, the absolute Eternal,
of infinite glory, one's very Self.

Shri Adi Shankaracharya, Vivekacudamani, v. 240

How can we now understand: "We are all one" ? A picture shall illustrate it:

Take twenty bowls and fill them with water. Put them on a full moon night in the garden and look into them. You will see the moon in every bowl. But there are not twenty moons, only one, and it is reflecting now in all the bowls. That is meant when one says: "All in one and one in all".

In all living beings, humans and animals, lives a soul - and it is light from God. God is reflecting in all living beings, like the moon in the water bowls. If the water is dirty, so the reflection is unclear and blurred; the reflection is distorted by troubled water, moved by waves. But the moon itself is of course completely untouched. It is always the same, only the reflection shows differences. The water is a symbol of the human mind. If this is impure or restless, then it certainly influences the reflection of the divine light, but not God himself.

The Atma, the soul, lives in humans and animals equally. It is eternal, undestroyable and divine. It is neither sinful nor guilty.

The first step to self-realization therefore is to be aware that you are divine, pure and indestructible. Only the bowl can be destroyed, not the moon. The vessel is finite, the essence is infinite.

To see no dualism in reality - that is the second step of realization. What is reality? Only that which is never changing. Dualism however is the appearance of the world which is steadily changing in its wide variety. It has only a time related reality and therefore is unreality. Change always concerns only the material form, but not the consciousness. God is eternal, pure, blissful consciousness, and only that is reality.

The third step is, being able to see God.

Can we see God, and with which eyes? God has two forms: Nirguna and Saguna. Nirguna is its universal form. It cannot be seen with outer eyes. We only can see this form with our inner eye or senses as transcendental stream of light and sound and recognize it with our mind as divine knowledge and wisdom. Do you want to see God in Saguna-form, then look into the Creation; discover Him in every living being. He is reflecting in every bowl of life.

Respect for Creation is Respect for God.

Since the beginning of creation we are rambling as individual souls through all levels of the cosmos. We are going through the painful, the always repeating cycle of death and reincarnation. But only man has the chance to escape this cycle. Human life is the river which can unite itself again with the ocean.

People who are only eating, drinking and reproducing themselves do not differ in their way from the life of animals. To be called a real human being only deserves the one who knows what God is and who has realized two qualities:

Giving - Give love, understanding, help, good thoughts, harmony, money, food, shelter, warmth, forgiveness, give all, give ...

Understanding - Have understanding for the feelings of others, for their pain, needs, problems, their situation and position.

The Supreme principle in the world is:

AHIMSA PARAMO DHARMA
The Supreme Religion is Non-Violence.

Humans should be protectors and not destroyers. As they cannot give life they also have not the right to take it. That is the reason why in Yoga the killing of animals and eating of meat is refused.

Yoga on the one side is the Divine Principle which leads the humans to knowledge and truth, also on the other side it is an effective program for maintaining good health. Those who think that the life of a Yogi means withdrawal from the world, neglect or renounce all material goods misunderstand the very idea of Yoga. Yoga is a thoroughly practical way. It means to gain and preserve health in its whole meaning: physically, mentally, socially and spiritually. It also means to get and preserve independence and self-reliance in life, physically, mentally, emotionally as well as materially. No other system is of such clearness, beauty and reliability as Yoga. Without body we cannot reach anything. As well as for our worldly and spiritual aims we need a healthy body.

"Health is not all but without health all is nothing" a known proverb says.

Therefore our first aim is to keep our body healthy. Yoga asanas cannot be compared with gymnastics or body-building, as they are exercises for the body, which are activating the Chakras, fine and highly effective energy centres of the body. They are influencing in the same way the body, the mind or the psyche. Respiration, circulation, glandular function, digestion and the nervous system are stimulated and brought into harmony. Problems are arising when we are losing our physical or psychic balance which is influenced mainly by our nourishment, environment and the use of our will.

1. Food

We are, what we eat. If we are eating sattvic, that means pure and fresh vegetarian food, then we will also develop sattvic, pure qualities in us. If we prefer rajasic or tamasic food such as meat, eggs or preserved food, then aggressive qualities arise or we become lethargic and lazy.

2. Surroundings and society

The society in which we live and behave has a fundamental impact on our character and our habits. Good friends lead us to the good, bad society on the other hand - as for instance with gamblers or alcoholics - are turning our consciousness down. Habit is the second nature of the human. It is easier to liberate himself from an enemy than from a bad habit.

3. Practice

Who is practising will realize all for which he is striving; who does not practise will achieve nothing. *"Practice makes the master"*, and *"One gram of practice has more value than tons of theory"*. The vernacular accurately says: *"On a 'painted horse' you cannot ride."* That means: Mere theoretical knowledge is like the picture of a horse, practice however is the real horse on which you can ride too. If one has only intellectual knowledge and no practice, he will not achieve his goal.

If all three principles are fulfilled - right food, good society and continuous practice - all obstacles of the body and of the mind will be dissolved.

In our times, the forms of behaviour, caused by our civilisation and technology, are endangering our environment and are bringing us many diseases and stress. This has also been proved by a scientific study in the USA on the effect of stress. Stress is the cause of many diseases: through it depressions, schizophrenia, gallstones, kidney stones, liver troubles, diabetes, high blood pressure, nervousness, migraine and even cancer can arise. Stress can come up in any area of life: by strain and troubles in the work, by family problems as well as disharmony and quarrels in partnership.

All medicines used against stress until now unfortunately showed no success. Either they are ineffective or make one dependent. Yet experiments showed that there are three practices which are very salutary: Yoga practices (*asanas* and *pranayama*), meditation and prayer.

If you are feeling nervous and stressed, sit down for a little while and pray or practise your *mantra* and meditate.

The best program for maintaining good health is the following daily exercise:

- Asanas (30 - 45 min)
- Pranayama (10 - 15 min)
- Relaxation (15 - 20 min)
- Meditation (min. 30 min).

If you are following these rules, you will have a happy and healthy life. Your whole body will regenerate, every day you will feel more balanced and fresher and you can enjoy your life more. "*Yoga in Daily Life*" has an impact on all areas of life: the physical, the mental and the spiritual and if one practises regularly he will certainly have success.

To maintain that spiritual way of living and to get Self-Realization it is advisable for all of us to follow the way of Yoga. Yoga should not be lived separately from our daily lives. And this is the very idea of the System "*Yoga in Daily Life*": to live twenty-four hours a day according to the principles, rules and regulations that were handed down to us by the Vedas, the ancient Rishis and Shri Adi Shankarcharya. These universal and divine principles are: *ahimsa* (non-violence), acceptance, tolerance and love for all living beings, to understand, forgive, love, serve, believe, worship, meditate and realize. *Yoga in Daily Life* will surely lead you to achieve the ultimate goal of Self-Realization. That is, to become one with God.

With the blessing of Gurudeva,

Vishwaguru Mahamandaleshwar Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda