

UNDERSTANDING THE MORAL VALUES THROUGH SRIMAD BHAGWAD GITA AND YOGA

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Abstract

The practice of yoga originated in India approximately 5000 years ago. Over this vast period, yoga has proven positive benefits through the people and groups who practice sincerely. Systems were developed and refined from true masters of yoga and brought to the people worldwide.

We continue to explore and discover the many benefits from yoga in wellness and natural remedies from the Yama, Niyama, and Right Action (**Dharma**) From Gita. These modalities have all been proven to be an effective method for improving the moral values in human beings. Practicing The First two Moral Principal of Yoga and following the Dharma reduces and eliminates stress, mood disorders, anxiety, anger, negative emotions and thoughts by bringing clarity for mind for decision making and maintaining a calm behavior.

This study explores the relevance of Yoga and Dharma (moral values) in promoting Human values.

Yoga

Yoga is translated from Sanskrit as union of the body, mind and spirit. As well as the union of the individual behavior with the transcendental self, being in a state of yoga requires going beyond literal thinking to knowledge, the opposition between mind and heart.

Yoga is the integration of one's thoughts, words and deeds. Thinking one thing and saying another, you are not in a state of yoga; there is disharmony that may wreak havoc at some point or another, and which is internally unsettling. As a human being, we have a sense of inner knowing, a sense of our **dharma** (what we are meant to be doing on this planet) the path of yoga is a process of getting in touch with our higher self, recognizing that this witness consciousness, this higher knowing, is our ever present true nature, and is the essence of what the body/mind is made of. Living in a state of yoga "is" the integrate of this ancient knowledge into ones daily life. In the Bhagwad Gita; Krishna tells Arjuna that "yoga is balance",³"yoga is skill in action", and that it are the end of attachment to ego, identity, and suffering.

The yoga sutras of Patanjali by Alistair Sheerer Chapter 4 Sutras 1-3

1. The perfections may already be present at birth, or they can be developed by herbs.
2. Any change into a new state of being is the result of the fullness of Nature unfolding inherent potential.

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³ Bhagwat Gita :2/48

3. But the apparent cases of a change do not in fact bring in about. They merely remove the obstacles to natural growth, as the farmer clears the ground for his crops.¹

Moral Values

Moral values is the determination of different qualities of **Dharma**, first for the “self, and then for all others. The determination of Dharma is based on what faith is understood and applied in our thoughts, words and actions. We can be guided and surrender to all Yamas and Niyamas (Moral principles of yoga) to find the state that is undeniable in clarity and truth which helps us to avoid all sufferings which in the root of poor moral values.

“The Bhagwadgita give the way to resolve Moral dilemmas that one faces in life.”

Krishna explains Manav Dharma to Arjuna: - Dharma sustains the society, Maintains Social Orders and ensures well being for process of Humanity.²

“Dharma is the law of Universe.”

In Patanjali Yoga Sutra Chapter 2 Sutra 29³

- Yama is the law of life
- Niyama is the rules of living

Yama & Niyama

These two limbs constitute yoga main moral principles and codes of conduct. They first appeared in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras as the first and second “limbs” of yoga. “Limbs” here means integral parts of the Raja Yoga system as outlined by Patanjali. As these principals follows the Qualities of Manav Dharma.

Yamas

Ahimsa: - Non -harming in thought, word and deed is perhaps the most well known ethical principle of yoga due to the life and teaching of Gandhi, and his philosophy of non violent resistance of oppression. Vegetarianism and other non- harming or less harming actions such as recycling, organic farming, riding bikes, and walking more often than using a car and proper use of resources is part of ahimsa. Non- harming through words is thought to be even more of a challenge, and involves constant mindfulness over one’s speech, such as avoiding gossiping, back biting, and judgment of others that are so common. For this reason, yogis may economize their speech and find great peace in daily periods of silence.

Satya: - Satya is truthfulness. This would seem to be fairly straight forward, except in practicing satya, one must also do the least harm therefore, and we need to find a compassionate way of telling

¹ The yoga sutras of Patanjali: 4/1-3

² Karna Parva Ch-69 Verse 58

³ Patanjali Yoga Sutra 2/29

the truth. If there is bad news, it should be conveyed slowly to let the persons mind adjust. In some cases also, silence may be preferable, over being blatantly honest in order to spare the others feelings. Truthfulness in thought, word and deed reminds us of the integration of the head, heart, and hands.

Astaya: - Astaya means literally non-stealing. This becomes more difficult when applying to the mental level, noticing how thoughts of jealousy toward another person, their possessions or happiness only cause more unhappiness to the observer. This may also apply to stealing opportunities from others. Similarly, we may engage in rescuing others feelings to attempt to protect the dynamics in our relationships. We may be preventing the other person from learning from their mistakes, growing as a person in capability and in confidence should we interfere this way.

Bramcharya: - Bramcharya is celibacy which increases one's immune power, longevity and ability to control kundalini energy, if we look openly at our lives most people have gone through periods of celibacy between relationships or in young adult ship before embarking on romantically intimate relationship. Many people report those periods of their lives as energetic and empowering. The teaching of bramcharya can be developed during times of celibacy even if we are in a relationship.

Aparigraha: - Non grasping is the practice of minimalism: high thinking and simple living. If our desk is full of clutter, it is difficult to study: physical clutter is a metaphor for the mind that jumps from one half-formed thought to the next. Often we are surrounded by too "much" – basements and storage space are full of unused items. Aparigraha can be a cue to go through our things and reuse, donate or recycle the things we needlessly hold on to.

If we are always thinking of acquiring new possessions and keeping them, or of achieving new success, it is difficult to calm the mind for meditation. When we acquire something, even a meditative state, we may immediately fear it becoming lost if we are not in a state of Aprigraha. This is how the excessive focus on possessing things, people, status, can really interrupt our peace. Consider that "Things make us hungry, love make us full".

Niyamas

Socha: - cleanness is a symbol of our goal for our bodies and minds. The body is the vehicle necessary to reach our goal; therefore we must take care by keeping it clean inside and out. Wearing light color clothing, especially white and cream as opposed to the fashionable black, uplift the spirit of those around us. Bathing in cool or lukewarm water daily is important to remove toxins that have been released from through the skin, to refresh the mind for meditation, and to remove dullness in our attention. Purity that should not be only of body and mind but should be of manner as well, only purity of body is not real purity there should be positive thoughts for others too.¹

Santosha:- seems to describe the archetypal yogi – content according to sutra II: 42, PYS, "as the result of contentment, one gains supreme happiness"¹. The secret of santosha is aprigraha; it is liberation to be content with what you have at any given moment. This does not mean that yogis do not strive to do more than just survive, or to develop themselves, but rather they cultivate the ability to enjoy each moment regardless of the circumstances.

¹ Patanjali Yoga Sutra:- 2/42

Tapa: - Tapas is the spiritual practice that evokes struggle and discipline. Tapas are the purification through the fire of determination. Sadhna another word for meditation is translated as struggle. “As the result of tapas, impurities are removed. Then special powers comes to the body and the sense organs” (Patanjali Yoga Sutras II: 43)¹. In the yoga tradition, there is a day of fasting twice a month a special day called Ekadashi. Fasting is an excellent example both of socha and tapas.

Bhagwat gita talks about the three types of tapa which are as follows: - Physical Tapa, Mantel Tapa and Vocal Tapa.²

Svadhayay: - svadhayay is the study of both yogic text, and self study of mind fullness, Swami Kirpalu called it “Self observation without judgment”. Yoga does not propose a ban on thinking, but advocates regaining in compulsive thinking.

According to bhagwat Gita, The study of spiritual texts like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Vedas, and purans etc, are come to known as svadhaya as well.³

Ishwarapranidhana: - surrendering to the divine and self with the divine. For monists, it is to recognize all of creation as a manifesting of pure consciousness. Bhakti yoga surrenders and softens around our own will. To let go of the firm idea of our own agency, the vital importance of us as doers, will make space for relationship with all that is.

Conclusion

The element of yoga, and Right Action (Dharma) has the strongest effect on improving the human moral values in those who practice sincerely. The positive effects on perspective (happiness, wellbeing, fearlessness, blissfulness, confidence, humbleness and interdependence, loving , kindness, peace) are noticed daily but changes in a person overall moral growth are through community over longer periods of time.

wisdom of yoga that transforms one from arrogant to self-confident; from meek to humble; from dependent to interdependent; from craving freedom to recognizing our fathomless depth; and from a limited ownership of the self to a oneness with the whole.”⁴

The benefits of Moral Values are experienced through practice; the vast knowledge of yoga needs to be applied in one’s life.

¹ Patanjali Yoga Sutra:- 2/43

² Bhagwat Gita:- 17/14-16

³ Bhagwat Gita: - 16/1

⁴ The encyclopedia of yoga poses