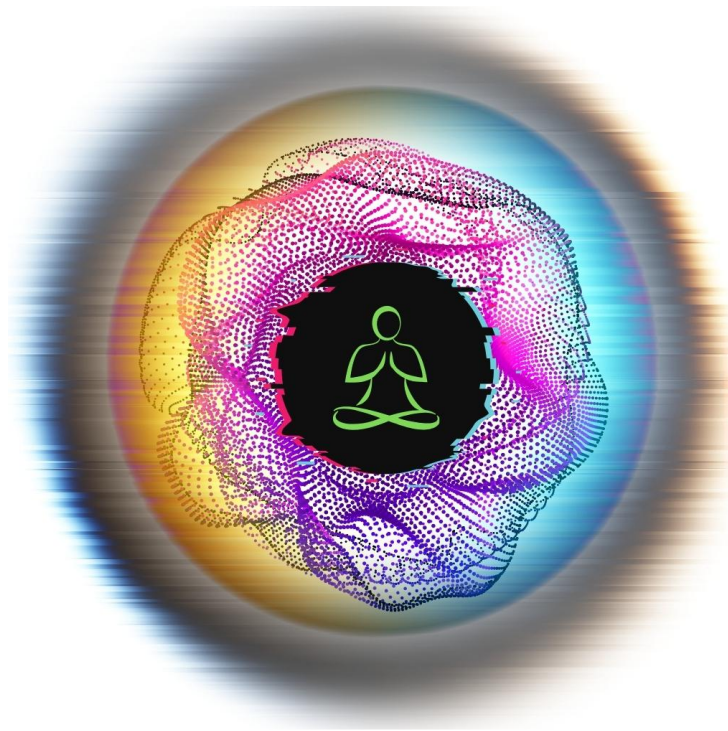


The Perception Glitch

& Yogic Code of Debugging the Mind



Vol.1: On Attainment

(Patañjali Yoga Sutras: Samādhi Pāda)

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The book is dedicated to my revered Guru

Master. E. K.

who is ever present in my heart!

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Preface

‘Yoga-sūtras of Patañjali’ is one of the foremost spiritual works that has received extensive commentary from the greatest stalwarts throughout the world. Why is it so revered? It seems that the instructions given are simple, yet profound, concise, yet exhaustive, logical and yet mystical. Thus, the world’s masters at their destined time to turn world-events, expounded upon this masterpiece according to the language palatable to their era.

The advent of modern science, such as quantum technologies that delve into the atomic world and space technologies that explore the vastness of space, has had a profound impact on human attitudes. Even those who are not well-versed in modern science are now familiar with Albert Einstein and his theory of mass-energy equivalence. As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that the world is far more advanced than it was a few thousand years ago. However, this is only true in terms of mundane technology. The discovery of mass-energy equivalence has also led to the development of atom bombs, which have the potential to cause mass destruction. Bioweapons, world poverty, and global warming are just a few of the other problems that have arisen alongside these unprecedented scientific breakthroughs.

How come a so-called advanced civilisation gave birth to such an evil-twin? The reason lies in the following example: A knife when used by an expert cuts vegetables whereas when used by a novice has the danger of cutting the finger. The same is the case with the modern world. The world is currently inexperienced in how to use the knife of wisdom - The West due its spiritual infancy and The East due to its slow cultural

decay. But the East has in its womb of memories, many diamonds that could shine some light in these morally dark times.

The Patañjali Yoga-sutras is one such diamond of inexplicable merit, the nature of which will become clear to the reader as they progress through the following pages. However, the sūtras offer a solution to the world problem, in that it causes the Yogi to realize the One true Self shining through all as a common thread, leading to perceive the world as a single garland of beautiful flowers. Who would wish to pluck a flower from a beautiful garland? Thus, the causes of war and hatred would perish, and mutual trust and human bond would develop. This would give birth to the twin of ALL-GOOD, rather than the evil-twin, and the whole world would become a paradise.

A series of single drops form an ocean. Similarly, a change in the attitude of an individual alone transforms the world into a heaven on Earth! Therefore, let us understand the Yoga-sutras at a personal level. The book is for “YOU” - the practitioner of Yoga. Expect the changes in you and let Nature (or God) take care of changing the world. If we correct ourselves, the immediate company learns from us and the sequence of chain reactions continues to rectify the whole world - if not in a day, in a few years!

At an individual level, Yoga-sūtras provide a systematic approach to identify the root cause of all our problems, which is the alterations of behavior of the MIND. It then offers a solution to eliminate these changes (*chitta-vṛtti nirodhaḥ*). This solution is not a brute force method, but rather a way of developing a habit of staying blissful, which leads to clarity of the self within. However, Patañjali warns that in the process of Yoga-path, one

may encounter so-called obstacles (Yoga siddhis or supernatural powers). These obstacles can tempt the good in us to venture into evil. Only those who refrain from heeding to these impulses can lead the life of true bliss.

In consideration of these thoughts, I have commented upon the sutras in such a manner that they are easily understood by most of us without the use of much technical jargon. An attempt is made to explain and simplify the complex Sanskrit words without destroying the original import. Ample examples, sets of practices, types of meditations, etc., are given where necessary to make the intent of Sage Patañjali sink into our planes of comprehension.

May this book serve as a guide for young people who are seeking to understand the nature of reality, college students who are struggling with everyday challenges (such as grades, relationships, and bad habits), parents who are trying to set a good example for their children, and older adults who are looking to accelerate their spiritual growth through the lens of their life experiences.

I humbly dedicate this work to my revered Guru - Master E. K, who has shown me the way to the TRUTH through his teachings, grace and conscious presence.

- Dr. Tejaswi Katravulapally, PHD.

Instructions on Yoga

1. अथ योगानुशासनम्

atha yogānuśāsanam

atha = the following ; yogānuśāsanam = instructions on Yoga.

The following pertains to the set of instructions on the path of Yoga.

The term "Anuśāsanam" is commonly translated as an explanation or exposition. However, Patañjali's perspective on this term differs as he solely provides direct and concise instructions and recommendations. Therefore, a more accurate interpretation of "Anuśāsanam" is INSTRUCTIONS. These instructions specifically pertain to Yoga, the path of Yoga to be exact. Throughout the work, numerous instructions are offered that can be implemented in daily life to assist individuals in living a genuine life aligned with the principles of Yoga.

Goal of Yoga

2. योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः

yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ

yogaḥ = Yoga; citta+vṛtti = *alterations of mind*; nirodhaḥ = *stopping*

Yoga is the art of stopping the alterations of mind.

3. तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम्

tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpeṣvasthānam

tadā = *then*; draṣṭuḥ = *the observer*; sva+rūpe = *form of the self*; avasthānam = *dwell*

Then the observer (in us) starts to dwell in the form of the self.

4. वृत्तिसारूप्यमितरत्र

vṛttisārūpyamitaratra

vṛitti + sārūpyam = *identification with the object*; itaratra = *otherwise*.

Otherwise, we get identified with the objects of senses or the associated thoughts of the mind.

The mind often identifies with what it perceives through its senses and its thoughts. For example, if we buy a new car

and it gets a dent, we may feel agitated or upset. This is because our mind has identified with the car. Similarly, if we are rejected from a job we wanted, we may feel disappointed or even depressed. This is because our mind has identified with the idea of getting the job.

Yoga can help us to stop the mind from identifying with anything other than the true self. This is done through a series of techniques that help to calm the mind and bring it to a state of stillness. When the mind is still, it is no longer able to identify with anything else. Yoga is not a set of postures or a series of exercises. **Yoga is a way of life** that is designed to help us live in harmony with ourselves and with the world around us.

The mind responds to stimuli from the environment and its own thoughts. Yoga can help us stop the reactions of the mind, making it less contaminated. This allows the perceiver within us to dwell in the true nature of the self.

Advaita philosophy teaches us how to intellectually separate the observer from the observed. For example, when a tree is observed - the eye becomes the observer. If the eye is observed - the mind becomes the observer. If the mind is observed, - the discriminative will (Buddhi) becomes the observer. If Buddhi is observed - the self becomes the observer. This flow of logic clearly shows how the true self

in us is the actual Draṣṭu - Observer. The yoga-sutra states that this observer is all that remains when the mind's distortions cease. This is what is meant by the observer "dwells in the form of true self" as a result of the "cessation of numerous activities of the mind."

Imagine a lake with many ripples. When the ripples stop, the mud settles and the shiny pebbles underneath become visible. Similarly, when the mind stops its "monkey-like" activity of jumping from one thought to another, the true self shines forth. By stopping the alterations to the mind, we are successful in recognising our true self. But if we do not stop the mental modifications, the mind assumes the form of the object it gets associated with - be it a sensual object or a mental thought-object. Then, the pains and pleasures of such association are felt as if real and the jīva (being) in us starts to suffer the consequences.

Consider this: While dreaming, imagine that someone has stolen our prized possession, say a gold ring. In the dream, we become agitated, and this agitation even manifests in the real world as a rapid breath and bodily movements in sleep. However, when we wake up, we realize that it was only a dream, and the agitation subsides. Similarly, when the mind is in its identified state with everything except the true self within, suffering is definitely experienced and this affects the reality of our existence. However, when the

mind turns inward, as mentioned before, none of the objects or events can affect us, and our reality becomes an unshakable bliss.

Detachment With Awareness

17. वितर्कविचारानन्दास्मितानुगमात् सम्प्रज्ञातः

vitarka-vicāra-ānanda-asmita-

anugamāt-samprajñātaḥ

vitarka = reasoning (exterior); vicāra = contemplating (interior); ānanda = (deeper) happiness; asmita = realization of self within; anugmāt = by following; samprajñātaḥ = (detachment) with awareness.

The highest form (of non-attachment) is achieved by traveling from the exterior reasoning to interior contemplating to deeper happiness to realization of self within. Having all-awareness in this journey is called Samprajñāta - Vairāgyam.

The highest level of non-attachment (vairāgya) is achieved when one begins to experience the highest consciousness. According to Patañjali, this occurs in two stages. The first stage is being described here. This process can be summarized as follows:

1. Observe the objects, people, and our relationship with them. Then, reason through (**Vitarka**):
 - All objects are made up of atoms, which are in turn modes of energy.
 - Energy is the power of consciousness.
 - Continue reasoning until we reach the conclusion that all-permeating consciousness is the ultimate substratum.
2. Hold the logical thought that the intellect has reached and push it through the limits of intuition via contemplation (**Vicāra**):
 - This contemplation should happen all the time.
 - Every act we perform and every associated thought that is germinated must have this contemplation as its backdrop.
3. After a certain stage, one reaches a state of contentment with the held-up logic. A firm belief and understanding is developed about the idea of the highest consciousness. This brings in peace and happiness (**Ānanda**).
4. This happiness leads to realization of the self within (**Asmita**) - not as an idea but as an experience.

All of these four stages occur with a sense that "I am experiencing," "I am feeling this higher consciousness," "Now I have the clarity of being," etc. The individual sense of "I am" exists, and this is the first kind of dispassion called **Samprajñāta-Vairāgyam**. Sam+Prajñāta = Having the sense of "I am" intact.

Method of Submission to The Lord

23. ईश्वरप्रणिधानाद्वा

Īśvarapraṇidhānādvā

Īśvara = The Lord; praṇidhānāt = total surrenderance; vā = or.

Or, the same (samādhi) is attained by a total surrenderance to The Lord.

An alternate method is being described by Patañjali that can help us in achieving the goal of Yoga. It is "Surrenderance to The-Lord". The moment such an instruction is given, two questions arise

- What is surrenderance?
- Who is the Lord spoken here?

Surrendering means to offer the sense of ownership, doership and results of an action unto someone else. This releases us from the burden of Karma and purifies every attempt of doing because the attempt of an action is now not "by" us but "through" us. Of course, a mere thought is not sufficient, but surrenderance should be inculcated and mastered by devotion and love.

We can love and be devoted if we know whom we are submitting to! Therefore, Patañjali immediately describes who this Lord is in the next sūtras, so that we do not make our own definitions and get trapped in our own thought-maze.

Who is The Lord

24. क्लेशकर्मविपाकाशयैरपरामृष्टः पुरुषविशेष ईश्वरः

kleṣa-karma-vipāka-āśayaiḥ-

aparāmrṣṭaḥ-puruṣaviśeṣaḥ-īśvaraḥ

kleṣa = complexities; karma = actions; vipāka = resultants; āśayaiḥ = intentions; aparāmrṣṭaḥ = untouched (by the above); puruṣaviśeṣaḥ = the special being; īśvaraḥ = The Lord.

The Lord is the special being - the true I AM in all - who is untouched by any complexities or actions or resultants or intentions.

25. तत्र निरतिशयं सर्वज्ञबीजं

tatra niratiśayaṃ sarvajñabījaṃ

tatra = there (in īśvara); niḥ+atiśayaṃ = nothing can surpass; sarvajña+bījaṃ = seed of omniscience.

There is the seed of omniscience in Īśvara which can not be surpassed by anyone.

26. पूर्वेषामपि गुरुः कालेनानवच्छेदात्

pūrveṣāmapī guruḥ kālena-anavacchedāt

pūrveṣām = for those who came before; api = indeed;

guruḥ = the (great) teacher; kālena = by time; anavacchedāt = indivisible.

Īśvara is indeed the great teacher for those who came before us (the ancients) because he is indivisible by time (or not affected by time).

Īśvara is said to be the one who is untouched by the following

- **Kleśa:** If we have a knee ache, we may complain about it while sitting. But when we are discussing an important topic or when we are asleep, we forget the pain. The pain resurfaces when we think about it. This shows that there is a part of us that is untouched by the pain. Extending the same logic to most of our life complexities, there is an aspect of us that is untouched by all our complexities, and that is Īśvara.
- **Karma:** Actions are the result of thoughts, and thoughts are the result of impulses from baggage of impressions from the past and present lives. When we take ownership of our actions, we are doomed to enjoy the fruits of those actions, whether they are good or bad. Either outcome will result in further entanglements, causing more impressions for actions,

and this is a never-ending cycle. However, there is an Īśvara within us who is not performing any actions (as actions are performed in the ONE, like waves occur in an ocean). He is beyond actions and therefore beyond the fruits of actions.

- **Vipāka:** We were once young, now adults, and we'll be old in future. We were once little, now strong, and will be weak. These kinds of things that result in consequent attributes are called Vipākas. In all of these changes, our body and mind have changed, but the sense of

"I am so and so" has not changed. To whom are we pointing and saying "I am"? That intent and sense has not changed. That changeless entity amidst the changes is Īśvara and therefore is not affected by them.

- **Āśaya:** The intentions that have come forth in us are called Āśaya. "I want to become a millionaire," "I want to be a scientist," "I need to change the world," etc., are all intentions that have germinated in us. They affect the sense of individuality to some extent, bringing in more pride or happy success, etc. But the consciousness is not affected by these intentions. Whether the person was a non-millionaire in the beginning of his pursuit or a millionaire after his pursuit, whom we call "Person - Puruṣa" has not changed. Only his attributed social glory has changed

in his mind. That which is untouched by any intentions is Īśvara.

Puruṣa means the one who resides in the creation (pura). However, when the word śeṣa is added, a more advanced meaning is implied. Śeṣa means a remainder. Vi+Śeṣa means that which has no remainder (completeness). It appears that Īśvara is the resident of the creation who has no remainder and is complete as a totality of UNITY. In other words, Īśvara is the all-permeating and all-encompassing cosmic person. Therefore, there can never be any remainder left even after the whole creation is born or destroyed. He remains as the ONE, and in him all changes occur. And because he is the totality, he remains Viśeṣa. Viśeṣa also means unique, as in the unique background consciousness that we enter into every day when we sleep and from which we wake up as an individual entity. This unique Puruṣa is referred to as Īśvara by Patañjali here.

The Lord is Omniscient (sarvajña), meaning He knows all things. Knowledge is the perception of events that occur in time and space through the mind. Who can know everything? Only the one who is the basis of all minds and the cosmic fabric of time and space. Therefore, Īśvara is the substratum and the very thread by which the space-time-mind fabrics are woven, and hence He is All-Knowing.

If the Lord is all-knowing, then his creation, being a part of him, must also have the seeds of omniscience. Just as a banyan tree seed contains all the information necessary to grow into a tree, which then produces more seeds, and so on, even though the Lord is all-knowing, his creation also contains the seeds of omniscience. This means that we, as part of creation, also have the seeds of omniscience within us. However, it is cautioned that we cannot surpass the Lord's omniscience. As one advances in the path of Yoga, they must not develop pride in their supranatural knowledge. Instead, they must remain humble and submit to Īśvara, remembering that a part cannot surpass the whole.

In a practical sense, this means that we have the innate ability to comprehend certain things. For instance, when we learn a math problem or a complicated legal situation, we can analyze and synthesize the explanation because we already possess the required knowledge. This is not something that is taught to us; rather, it is something that we are born with. When a baby learns math for the first time, it understands the concept of $1+1=2$ even though it has never been taught this before. This is because the baby already has the knowledge of this concept, but it is dormant until it is awakened by a teacher.

This is why the word for teacher in our culture is "Guru." Guru means "the dispeller of darkness within." A Guru does

not impart anything new; he simply dispels the darkness and we begin to realize things on our own. However, this is only possible because we all have the seeds of omniscience within us which are aiding in understanding things.

It is for this reason that it is said that Īśvara is the one and only greatest guru for all those who has born before since the dawn of time. While a physical guru may begin the process of removing the veil of illusion, it is Īśvara who grants us the ability to understand, know the light within, and experience the grand truth of who we are. As already stated, Īśvara is the creator of time, he stands beyond time and hence he is indivisible by time. Therefore according to Patañjali, Īśvara is the only guru for all and he is undisturbed by the eternal unwinding serpent of time.

The Result: Power to Comprehend

40. परमाणु परममहत्त्वान्तोऽस्य वशीकारः

pramāṇu parama mahattvāntosya vaśīkāraḥ

paramāṇu = the smallest of the small; parama + mahattva = the largest of the large; antaḥ = up to the end; asya = for the yoga-practitioner; vaśīkāraḥ = mastery over mind is achieved;

For the practitioner of yoga, taming of the mind results in mastery over its capacity to meditate on the smallest of the small (atom) as well as the largest of the large.

Through the successful taming of the mind, as previously mentioned, an individual gains the ability to comprehend the Universe from the smallest atoms to the vastness of the cosmos. This understanding is possible because our minds are inextricably linked to the broader mind of the Universe.

Imagine an iceberg floating in water, seemingly separate but formed from the same water. When the iceberg melts, it becomes indistinguishable from the water. Similarly, when our minds maintain their individuality, marked by persistent alterations, we cannot grasp our place in the Universe and become entangled in life's events. However, when the mind

becomes absolutely calm, it dissolves into the Universal mind, transcending its perceived individuality.

"Paramāṇu" also represents the tiny existence of the individual within the vast Universe. In contrast, "Parama Mahattva" signifies the individual's universal existence, encompassing the vast cosmos. The yoga journey begins at the atomic state and culminates in the Universal state, undertaken voluntarily by the Yogi (through willpower) and facilitated by the newly trained mind due to the acquired power of "vaśīkāra."