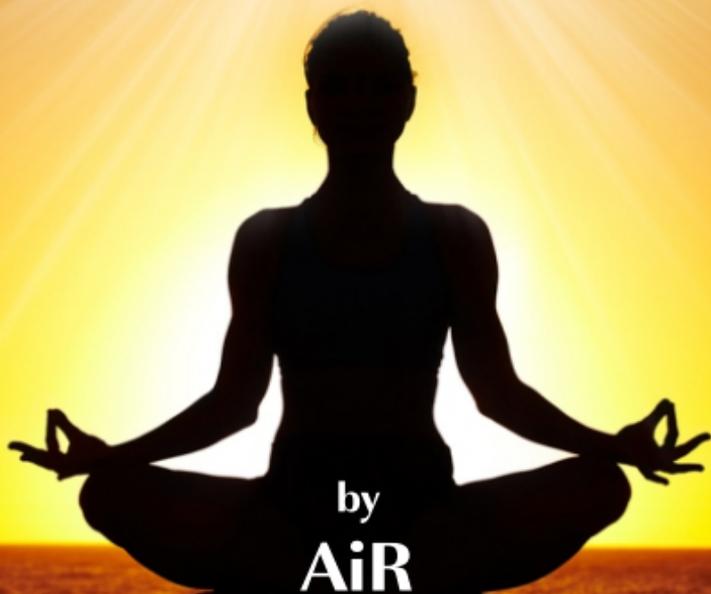


What is
YOGA?



by
AiR

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PREFACE

For many thousand years, Yoga has been a very popular spiritual exercise. It is spoken about both in the east and west.

Born in the east, it is widespread not just in India but also in the western world and in fact globally.

What is Yoga? What do we understand by Yoga?

Different people understand Yoga by different methods. For a majority of people, Yoga is just a form of exercise, to lose weight, to build a healthy body and also to build a healthy mind.

But to the spiritual aspirants, Yoga is something else. It is being in union with God.

What is the truth? What is Yoga?

It is a choice for each one of us to perceive Yoga the way we like. But the true meaning of Yoga has a powerful spiritual significance. The Yogis of the past, the true spiritual aspirants or seekers were able to live a life of renunciation and discrimination. They were blessed by the super Power because their life was at all times a life of Yoga, a life in union. And this helped them to live a life of bliss, joy and connectivity with God.

What is **Yoga?**

The modern world thinks of Yoga to be only physical gymnastics. Yoga is considered to be some kind of exercise; some magical way of maintaining the body, health and well-being. It is supposed to be a traditional secret way of using postures and exercise for physical health and well being.

But is Yoga just an exercise? Is Yoga some kind of physical gymnastics? Of course not!

Yoga comes from the word 'Yuj' which means 'Union'. Therefore, Yoga is in

reality 'Union with God' - YO (Union), GA (God). Actually Yoga means being connected to God all the time. Yoga is that craving of body, mind, heart and soul for God. When one is deeply connected with God, one can be considered to be in a state of Yoga.

Life is meant to be lived with God; being constantly connected with God. Sadly, most of us are disconnected! The world/Samsara has distracted us. So, we do not connect with God. In fact, we have forgotten God. Many kids today do not even know the meaning of God. However, one is often compelled to think of God at times of misfortune or death.

How is a constant connection or union with God possible?

Yoga or Union with God is possible in four ways -

Karma Yoga : Action - Working for God

Bhakti Yoga : Devotion – Love for God

Jnana Yoga : Education – Acquiring knowledge of God

Raja Yoga : Meditation – Silence and Introspection

Karma Yoga: Action - Working for God -

The attitude of surrender to the Lord whilst performing action and the cheerful acceptance of results is called Karma Yoga. A Karma Yogi is one who works for God. His Karma/work is an offering to

God. There is no selfish objective in his work. He lives as God would like him to. He surrenders like a flute to God to play His music through him. He considers himself to be God's instrument. God works through him. Thus his actions are not his actions, but actions that are inspired by God and build a connection with God.

Bhakti Yoga: Devotion – Love for God -

A Bhakt is one whose life is full of love and longing for God. His devotion and dedication are seen through his prayer. A Bhakt sings Bhajans and dedicates himself to God, never forgetting God. Meera Bai achieved a very high status of being a yogi through bhakti. She was

madly in love with her God. It meant the most to her, more than anything else. In a temple, when we receive Prasad, our feeling is “I am a devotee”, not “I am an Engineer”, but as soon as we come out, we forget our relationship with God. We must make our relationship with God stronger and consistent. But because of samsara or the world, we forget about God.

Jnana Yoga: Education – Acquiring knowledge of God - Jnana Yoga is gaining union with God through acquiring knowledge and wisdom. A Yogi who is all the time reading, searching, learning and contemplating for answers is a Yogi of Jnana. It is due to such Yogis that today so much knowledge of God is available. This

Yogi is always connected to God through the intellectual channel. Though the Yogi knows much, he understands that he is nothing, God is everything.

Raja Yoga: Meditation – Silence and Introspection - Raja Yoga like the name suggests is the ‘King of Yoga’ and is all about Meditation and Silence. It includes the popular Patanjali Yoga or Hatha Yoga. However, meditation means focus of body and mind. If the mind is wandering while the body is in *Asana*, it has no meaning. This is another Yoga method that connects to God. Raja Yoga is also known as Astanga Yoga, *Dhyana* Yoga or simply Yoga. Sage Patanjali propounded the 8 fold path of this yoga which includes –

- *Yama* - Practice of values
- *Niyama* – Disciplines
- *Asana* – Postures
- *Pranayama* - Control of breath
- *Prathyahara* - Withdrawal of senses
- *Dharana* - Concentration of mind
- *Dhyana* - Meditation
- *Samadhi* - Total cessation of all thoughts

The third and fourth – *Asana* and *Pranayama* are commonly practiced, but true union through Raja yoga needs a practice of all the 8 forms or path.

For a Seeker of Enlightenment, Yoga is the very basic foundation. It is through Yoga that one can be constantly connected to God.

How is this possible?

Its best understood by imagining one to be a sim card always seeking the satellite, pinging for the connectivity at all times. Without the satellite connection, the sim card is useless. So are we without the connectivity with the 'God satellite'. But we all don't seem to understand this. To most of the world, being connected to the world and to friends, family is what matters. They don't get into that questioning mode of - Who am I? Why am I here? They think that the purpose and goal of life is happiness. They seek pleasures. They live they die, only to be born again and again in this world of suffering. It is the true yogi, one who is

ever connected to God, who achieves 'Satchitananda' - the ultimate bliss that comes from the realization of the truth.

Somehow, the world has understood Yoga to be a lifestyle solution for good body and mind. Sure, Yoga is good for the body and mind, but the bigger question is – Are we the body mind? To one who is on the quest, he knows that he is not the body or the mind. He realizes the deeper meaning of Yoga and uses it as the foundation for Liberation and Enlightenment.

A true Seeker, a jigyasu who wants the ultimate answers knows that there is a Power, a Power that created this whole universe, a Power that's responsible for its

preservation, a Power that manages the sun, the moon, the stars, the birds, animals, flowers and us human beings. This is the work of a creative Power, a Power beyond human imagination and beyond human comprehension; a Power we call God. For one who seeks Liberation and Enlightenment it becomes imperative to be in Yoga.

Since Yoga is union with God and there are four ways to build this union through Karma, Bhakti, Jnana, or Raja. It does not matter what form of Yoga we use, the objective of Yoga is to be in union with God, to be ever connected. Therefore, one need not specifically separate the four forms of Yoga. Bhakti Yoga can lead to

Karma Yoga just as Raja Yoga or Silence and Meditation can lead to Jnana Yoga. The four different forms of Yoga together must create an uninterrupted, continuous, ongoing connection with God. If this happens, one is on the path of Liberation and achieves the final goal of life.

While spiritual aspirants continue to remain in Yoga, building union with God, living with faith, hope, enthusiasm, worldly people don't use Yoga but rather live in Bhoga which means they live with desires, cravings, expectations, and passion. This is the opposite of the path to spiritual enlightenment and this makes one sink into the world of pleasures and possessions. But it is finally a choice for us

to choose Yoga (union with God) or Bhoga
(to live with desires).

About AiR

While the dictionary may define air as an invisible gaseous substance surrounding the Earth, AiR – the author of this booklet – is spiritual seeker who has set out to find the truth about life. The name AiR came about because AiR transformed from Ravi V. Melwani to RVM and then metamorphosed into “Atman in RVM”. The acronym of Atman in RVM is AiR, and thus he is called AiR.

Born as Ravi V. Melwani, he was a very successful businessman who revolutionized retailing in India with the stores – Kids Kemp, Big Kids Kemp and Kemp Fort. After making millions, he

realized that life is not just about making money. He shut down his business, transformed his life to RVM and started making a difference with H.I.S work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work.

His objective was to “Make a Difference” in this world before his journey was over. He was the happiest man on Earth living the RVM Philosophy of “To Rejoice, Value Life and Make a Difference”.

However, one day, several questions and thoughts flashed in his mind: What is the purpose of life? Is life just meant to seek happiness and to live and die without any purpose? What happens after death? Will

we be reborn? Where is God? Where is Heaven? Are we the Soul? What is Enlightenment? Several questions like these took him on a Talaash, or a search for the truth.

After a few years of intense search in silence, deep in the mountains, he realized that we are not this body, but we are the Atman, the Soul. Thus he changed his name for the second time from RVM to AiR – the Atman in RVM (the Soul in RVM) – as realization dawned upon him that we are not this physical body, but we are the Atman. He metamorphosed to AiR and gave up his entire life of RVM. He started the study of Atman, God and life. This led to several realizations that formed

the mission of life – to realize God and to help Seekers realize God.

As RVM, AiR had built a Shiva Temple in the year 1995, which attracts millions of visitors all around the year. As AiR, he now believes that Lord Shiva lives in the temple of our heart. The temple in Bangalore is now called Shivoham Shiva Temple. Being a devote believer in Lord Shiva for long, he now believes that religion is just a kindergarten of spirituality, and we all have to go beyond religion to truly realize God.

AiR BOOKLETS

AiR booklets are small, easy-to-read booklets for Seekers who want to realize the truth about God, life and themselves.

Who are we? Where did we come from? What is the purpose of life? Where is God? Where is Heaven? Is Rebirth real? Does the Law of Karma exist? What about the Soul? What is Enlightenment?

These AiR booklets attempt to clear such doubts and answer questions about God and life that many people have in their mind and also help Seekers to move forward on the path of self-realization.

WHAT IS THE TRUE MEANING OF YOGA?

Just doing some breathing exercises – Pranayama, or some physical exercises and postures – Asana, is not Yoga. Yes, they are part of the overall Yogic experience, but Yoga means something entirely different. Yoga is ‘Union with God’. It is the ability to detach from the world and connect with God.

Discover what Yoga is and the true joy and bliss that comes from this magic called Yoga!

**For more information on AiR booklets
and AiR, please visit www.air.ind.in
or  9739522222.**