



IN PURSUIT OF INNER PEACE

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Abstract

The World today is in a state of chaos. We have been beating around the bush and no one has come to any logical reasoning as to why there is so much intolerance, unhappiness and destruction prevailing in spite of diligent work being carried out by International Peace Organizations. This lecture as organized by and conducted at Oriental College of Education - Sanpada, talks on the very important aspect Peace. The pursuit of peace which is within can be attained by following a few principles laid down by our old age researchers, Saints and Preachers. It touches a very delicate topic of how and where the afflictions arise and throws light on the path towards eradicating these afflictions and walking on the lane which takes one towards tranquillity and blissful life.



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What Is Peace?

For many peace is when they are around their loved ones. For some it is when they have completed their targets and can go and relax on an easy chair or beside a sea shore. For most it is when they have their own home. Friends the reality is unless one is peaceful within he cannot have a blissful life because the moment circumstances and conditions change the feel of peace, being outwardly dependant will jeopardize. Is it not?

“Home is where peace is”, friends give a thought if peace is in the home you build will it also not be in the home where your whole being resides “your very body, the home the adobe of your soul and mind”.

Where is Peace? If you have observed there is peace and calmness in the eye of the storm. So to achieve Inner peace we have to get to this eye. How?

How

Sant Dyaneshwar

Here I would like cite an example of the well-known saint, philosopher of Maharashtra “SantDyaneshwar”. SantDyaneshwar along with two brothers and sisters had to tolerate atrocities of society and were constantly humiliated by calling them children of Sanyasi.

Little did this deter the children from the path of righteousness and virtue. Rather they outshone to become renowned. Today when there is some see people performing rape/ murder/ robbery we say it is circumstances, these are all excuses. One has to have the virtues imbibed to follow the right path come what may. This state is what we say to be “Sthitapradnya”

“Nothing gives one person so much advantage over another as to remain always cool and unruffled under all circumstances.” — Thomas Jefferson, Letters of Thomas Jefferson

Tortoise

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मो ऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ २-५८ ॥ ---- Bhagwad Gita

Whenever a tortoise senses danger, he withdraws his limbs into his shell. The shell is strong enough to withstand any adverse situation. And once that situation passes, he brings his limbs back into the world. Similarly, if we detect that an object, person or situation is about to disturb our equanimity, this shloka advises us to bring our intellect into the picture, and completely withdraw our attention from that object, person or situation.

AntakaranaChatuska

इन्द्रियाणां मनो नाथो मनोनाथस्तु मारुतः ।
मारुतस्य लयो नाथः स लयो नादमाश्रितः -- Hathapradipika (SwatmaramSuri)

To train or channelize the behaviour of our indriyas we have to train our mana. Apparently when we talk about mana, we actually are talking about its different aspects i.e. Mana, buddhi, ahamkara and chitta. The mind reacts as per the Buddhi and then what comes up is the Ahhamkara or Egoism and this Ahamkara, an assertion of “I” and “I know”, which is due to previous impressions or memory storages with which there is a constant comparison going within.

The subconscious action, memory, etc., is caused by Chitta.

To get to what we call as inner peace we need to go beyond the bondages or barriers formed by Mana, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta.

How?

Yoga is the way.

Yoga

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः - Patanjali Yoga Sutra

Vritties

प्रमाणविपर्ययविकल्पनिद्रास्मृतयः Patanjali Yoga Sutra

Pramana is when we see something so it is direct evidence. Or we might say true knowledge. It can be classified as Pratyaksha, Agama and Anumana.

Pratyaksha: is that knowledge which is caused by the direct contact of any of the five senses of knowledge, viz., ear, eye, tongue, skin and nose with the objects of knowledge.

Anumana: If there is flood in a river, you infer that there ought to have been a heavy rain on the previous day. If you see smoke, you infer that there must be fire. These are all inferences.

Agama: There are times we see children are afraid of water, few are afraid of darkness and some of some other aspect. Now why this fear? This comes from some past experiences of self or other.

Viparyaya is wrong perception. When you have heard stories of snakes moving in a village even a sudden rope falling on you and one jumps thinking it to be a snake.

Vikalpa is imagination is an idea that we create in our minds. We actually can convince ourselves of a truth when in fact it is not true at all!

Nidra is sleep. Well if a lecture does not interest you, one either goes into thoughts of some correlated word (vikalpa) or gets into sleep mode. Remember the famous story of the “Hare and the Tortoise”?

Smriti is memory or remembrance of past occurrences. Remembrance is a function brought entirely by the residuum or impression due to former experience. Every memory creates an impression in the mind and these impressions, whether they lead to suffering or freedom need to be channelized in order to abide in our own true nature- in the state of yoga.

To get over these Vrittis Maharshi has showed us a very easy path.

Towards Peace

अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः Patanjali Yoga Sutra

Abhyasa: Abhyasa means having an attitude of persistent effort to attain and maintain a state of stable tranquillity. To become well established, this needs to be done for a long time, without a break.

Vairagya: The word Vairagya is derived from the word Raga which has been defined as the attraction which arises due to pleasure derived from any object. Thus the absence of any attraction towards objects which give pleasure is Vairagya. The other aspect to be considered to be detached from is ‘dvesha’ (dislike) which arises as a result of repulsion from any object.

Raga and dvesha are strong disturbing forces which create disturbances in the mana. To achieve a state of vairagya, constant practice (abhyasa) is needed.

We have to seize the unstable mana and drag it from its wanderings and fix it on one idea. By power of will we must get hold of the mind and stop it from reflecting the seeded impressions. Get it to the seedless state i.e. remove the samskaras.

“An ounce of practice is better than tons of theory.” – Mahatma Gandhi

We are going to practice and take a step towards attaining inner. We will be listening, feeling, counting our breath and following the depth to which it goes.

So Hum Jaap

Sit in the meditation posture and relax yourself physically and mentally for a few minutes. Make yourself as light and relaxed as possible. Put aside all worries and problems. Feel the calmness.

Step1:

To relax we will fix our mind on our breath, this process is also termed as **pranadharana**. Count the breaths. One inhalation and one exhalation is termed as one complete breath.

Step 2:

Start deep, rhythmic breathing. Be completely aware of the movement of breath. The ingoing breath moves downward from the throat to the navel and the outgoing breath moves upward from the navel to the throat. The breathing is not automatic it is conscious, deep and relaxed. Do not produce any sound while breathing. Feel the breath flowing in and out.

Step 3:

Synchronize the mantra Soham with the breath. The sound So joins with the inhalation and the sound Ham joins with the exhalation. There should be no mental pause between So and Ham, let the flow of breath and mantra be continuous. Do not think on the meaning of the mantra, just recite it mentally with full faith and awareness.

Step 4:

Whilst you are practicing there is a possibility of your mind going away from the breath. Gently get it back. Feel the vibrations whilst still having slow, steady, rhythmic and continuous breathing integrated with So-ham

How Long

I have heard this question quite often. How long do we practice so as to attain enlightenment. Let us watch a small clip from a very famous film “The karate Kid” and it will guide to answer your own question.

What do we learn from the movie? To Believe and follow the practice as told by the guru. Do it with perseverance and religiously. Practice till you can no more do it wrong.

There might be a few here who would say, well the guru showed him the further steps only because the disciple got annoyed. This thought comes due to Kleshas.

Pancha Kleshas

Kleshas are a result of our own responses. Under similar circumstances two people can have entirely different responses and based on their responses one might be happy and other might suffer.

These sufferings are Kleshas The great master Vyasa defines the kleshas as the five forms of viparyaya (ignorance, misconception).

Due to these kleshas we cannot see the jewel within us.

Avidya :Not knowing this jewel within us or wrong knowledge of

Asmita: The Sense of 'I' When one asks 'Who am I?' What comes to mind?

First we point to our body and think: 'I am "xyz". I am a yoga teacher. I am another...a wife...' But in reality I am none of those. None of us are truly the labels we or others give us. They are useful forgetting around and communicating in this world .

Raga- Dvesha:Any intense like or intense dislike is called passion, something that simply throws us out of gear, like a whirlwind or a tempest or a cyclone. That is called passion. It could be anger, it could be intense **like**, it could be intense **aversion** of any kind. Inasmuch as likes and dislikes, Raga and Dvesha, arise due to a misunderstanding of the nature of the objects of like or dislike, ignorance forms the base of Raga and Dvesha. Avidya, is the root of likes and dislikes.

Abhinivesh:Love of life and fear of death follow as a natural corollary to this love of bodily individuality. We dread death, because we love life. Dread of death is the same as love of life.



- SantKabir

Kriya Yoga

तपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः ॥ १ ॥ Patanjali Yoga Sutra

Kriya Yoga—which aims to neutralize the causes of sorrow that are rooted in self-ignorance and lead you to self-realization. Tapah, Swadhyaya and Ishwarpranidhana are the limbs of Kriya Yoga.

Tapah :to heat; to glow; to shine; to purify; to transform.

Swadhyaya:study of the self; study by oneself; understanding each and every chapter of life separately, as well as in relation to each other; a thorough study of oneself.

Ísvarapranidhāna refers to having complete faith in the guiding and protecting power of the Absolute Reality.

SantTukaram'sin his abhanga describes what one means by Ishvarpranidhana:

"ThevileAnanteTaisechiRahave, ChittiAsuDyaveSamadhan"

The meaning of this is that in what level you are by Gods Grace, be happy / content in that state. May it be in rains or storms or in palaces.Work for better living, but with happiness in what you are today. Be grateful for where and what you are today.

Together, kriyāyoga means an action plan for acquiring a calm and tranquil mind; an action plan for reaching an absolutely still state of mind.

Ashtanga Yoga

Kriya Yoga is also a sub part of the 8 fold path for yoga as stated by Sage Patanjali. The ashtanga yoga as a few of us know about.

यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयो ऽष्टावङ्गानि Patanjali Yoga Sutra

Of the Ashtanga yoga, most of us have heard and have been practicing Asana, pranayama and dhyana (meditation) with consciousness. Yama and Niyama are being followed since childhood, only we are unaware that these form the basis of being in Yoga.

Yama – Universal Morality

1. Ahimsa – Compassion for all living things
2. Satya – Commitment to Truthfulness
3. Asteya - Non-stealing
4. Brahmacharya - Sense control
5. Aparigraha - Neutralizing the desire to acquire and hoard wealth

Niyama - Personal Observances

1. Saucha : Purity
2. Santosha: Contentment
3. Tapa: To glow, Disciplined use of our energy.
4. Swadhyaya: self study
5. Isvarapranidhana: Total Submission to super consciousness.

Practice

वितर्कबाधनेप्रतिपक्षभावनम्॥

-----Patanjali Yoga Sutra

Ahimsa is one of the yama, Himsa is the vitraka of ahimsa and it is viparitbhavana to get over this Sage Patanjali asks us to follow Pratipakshabhavana.

Do not suppress, cultivate.

If the thought of hatred is in the mind, cultivate the thought of love. For example, while the husband and wife are arguing about something, if their young child crawls up to them, their anger instantly melts away and converted to love for the child. They even forget their own argument. Change of environment can help in controlling negative thoughts. When you are angry, take a walk in the park and try to bring about positive thoughts.

When you dislike a person and/ or are angry on him/ her one should look into those aspects of his which are good either for you or society. This way one can overcome the thought and feeling of hate and/ or anger.

Let us now conduct a yogic practice for Pratipakshabhavana and to channelize our thoughts. This is a combination of Sakshibhavana, i.e. witnessing of your thoughts which acts as a mental catharsis and another practice where we show love gratitude and hence get over the feeling of hate/ anger which have been in our chitta for long.

First look at these beautiful roses. Close your eyes can you still see them. If not open your eyes and again have a look at these roses. This is one of the very effective practices in which we detach ourselves from our thoughts by not passing any judgement. Here we train our mind to get detached and hence from the process of action and reaction.

Universe is our teacher. We all know that we breath in oxygen and breath out carbondioxide. So there is exchange of gases. Unconditional give and take is law of nature.

The trees shed their leaves and the earth turns them to manure/ coal i.e useful form for human. Let us learn to be compassionate like nature. Strong like nature. To convert hate into love and have a peaceful life.

This is also achieved by forgiveness, gratitude and love for self and universe.

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