

Sūtra 1 अथ योगानुशासनम् ॥ १ ॥

Atha yogānuśhāsanam

Now the teachings of yoga are being explained.

अथ	<i>atha</i>	now, at an auspicious moment of transition
योग	<i>yoga</i>	of yoga (yoga is <i>samādhi</i>)
अनु	<i>anu</i>	within
शासनम्	<i>śhāsanam</i>	discipline or teaching

In Sanskrit, the two words Om and *atha* are the sound of creation. Therefore, these two words are auspicious, and are used in the beginning and end of any spiritual teaching. The word *atha* invokes a blessing merely by its pronunciation.

The word *anuśhāsana* is derived from the prex *anu* (within) and the verb root *śhās* (to impart a discipline or a teaching).

The word “yoga” is derived from the Sanskrit verb *yuj* (to join or to restrain). The English word “yoke,” which means to join, is also derived from *yuj*.

Yoga means *samādhi* (super-consciousness). There are two kinds of *samādhi*: *samprajñāta samādhi* (super-consciousness with knowledge) and *asamprajñāta samādhi* (super-consciousness beyond knowledge). In *asamprajñāta samādhi* all the *vṛittis* (thought waves) have ceased. It is the kind of mental control wherein only the *saṃskāras* (prints) remain as a residue in the mind. *Asamprajñāta samādhi* is only the Self dwelling in the Self.

Yoga is *samādhi*. *Samādhi* is an attribute of the *chitta* (mind) and has the following characteristics:

1. *Mūḍha* (stupefied); it is dominated by *tamas guṇa* (quality of inertia) and is a state of stupor.
2. *Kṣhīpta* (restless or disturbed); it is dominated by *rajas guṇa* (quality of activity) and is totally unsteady.
3. *Vikṣhīpta* (distracted); *sattva guṇa* (quality of consciousness) begins to rise but *rajas* and *tamas guṇas* do not want to let go. The mind is fit for concentration, but is still subject to distraction.
4. *Ekāgra* (one-pointed); *sattva guṇa* predominates. *Samprajñāta samādhi* develops.
5. *Niruddha* (controlled); the *guṇas* dissolve. It is a state of *asamprajñāta samādhi*.

The states of *mūḍha* and *kṣhīpta* are not useful to yoga because they are dominated by *tamas* and *rajas guṇas* respectively. However, in the *vikṣhīpta* state there is a mixture of *rajas* and *sattva guṇas*, which is conducive to *yoga sādhana* (spiritual practice). *Rajas* and *tamas* try to overpower *sattva*, but *sattva* pulls the mind toward concentration and the mind is fit to begin *dhyāna*

Five Conditions of the Mind				
Mind Field	Predominant <i>Guṇa</i>	Conducive to <i>Samādhi</i>	State	Relationship to <i>Viveka khyāti</i> (discriminative wisdom)
<i>Mūḍha</i> (dull & preoccupied)	<i>Tamas</i>	No	Unnatural	Opposed to <i>viveka khyāti</i>
<i>Kṣhipta</i> (restless or disturbed)	<i>Tamas / rajas</i>	No	Unnatural	Opposed to <i>viveka khyāti</i>
<i>Vikṣhipta</i> (distracted)	<i>Rajas / sattva</i>	No	Unnatural	Opposed to <i>viveka khyāti</i>
<i>Ekāgra</i> (one-pointed)	<i>Sattva</i>	<i>Samprajñāta</i>	Natural	Cause of <i>viveka khyāti</i>
<i>Niruddha</i> (controlled)	Dissolved	<i>Asamprajñāta</i>	Neither	Effect of <i>viveka khyāti</i>

(meditation). The mind begins to find some concentration, but is pulled back to the *kṣhipta* (restless) state due to former habits.

In the *vikṣhipta* state, nine *vikṣhepas* (distractions to concentration) arise. These nine obstacles to yoga are listed in Sūtra 30: Disease, dullness, doubt, carelessness, laziness, worldliness, delusion, non-achievement of a yogic state, and instability.

The *vikṣhepas* are accompanied by five companion symptoms and listed in Sūtra 31: Pain, depression, nervousness, disturbed inhalation, and disturbed exhalation. In the *vikṣhipta* state, *samādhi* occurs periodically for a short time, but it is not powerful enough to eliminate the *kleśhas* (afflictions), which are the root causes of the mind's bondage in the cycle of *samsāra* (suffering). These five afflictions, which are innumerable in Sūtras II:3 – 9, are: *Avidyā* (ignorance), *asmitā* (egoism), *rāga* (attraction), *dveṣha* (repulsion), and *abhiniveśha* (clinging to life or fear of death).

Yoga is a prescription for liberation from the cycle of suffering. It can be likened to the fourfold exposition used in medical analysis:

1. Illness or disease in yogic terms is *samsāra* (the cycle of suffering).
2. Cause of illness in yogic terms is *avidyā* (ignorance).
3. Cure of illness in yogic terms is *viveka khyāti* (discriminative wisdom).
4. Health in yogic terms is *kaivalya* (liberation).

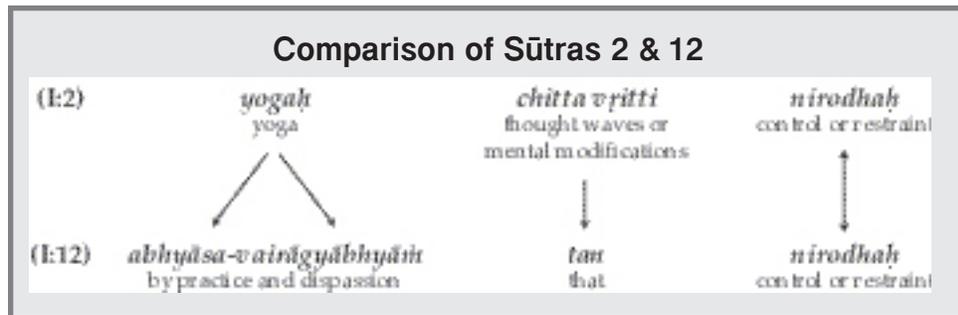
In Book I of the *Yoga Sūtras* the illness and its cure are described:

The topic of yoga is Sūtra 1, "Now the teachings of yoga are being explained." The cure is Sūtra 2, "Control of thought waves in the mind is yoga." The state of health is Sūtra 3, "Then the seer is established in his own fundamental nature."

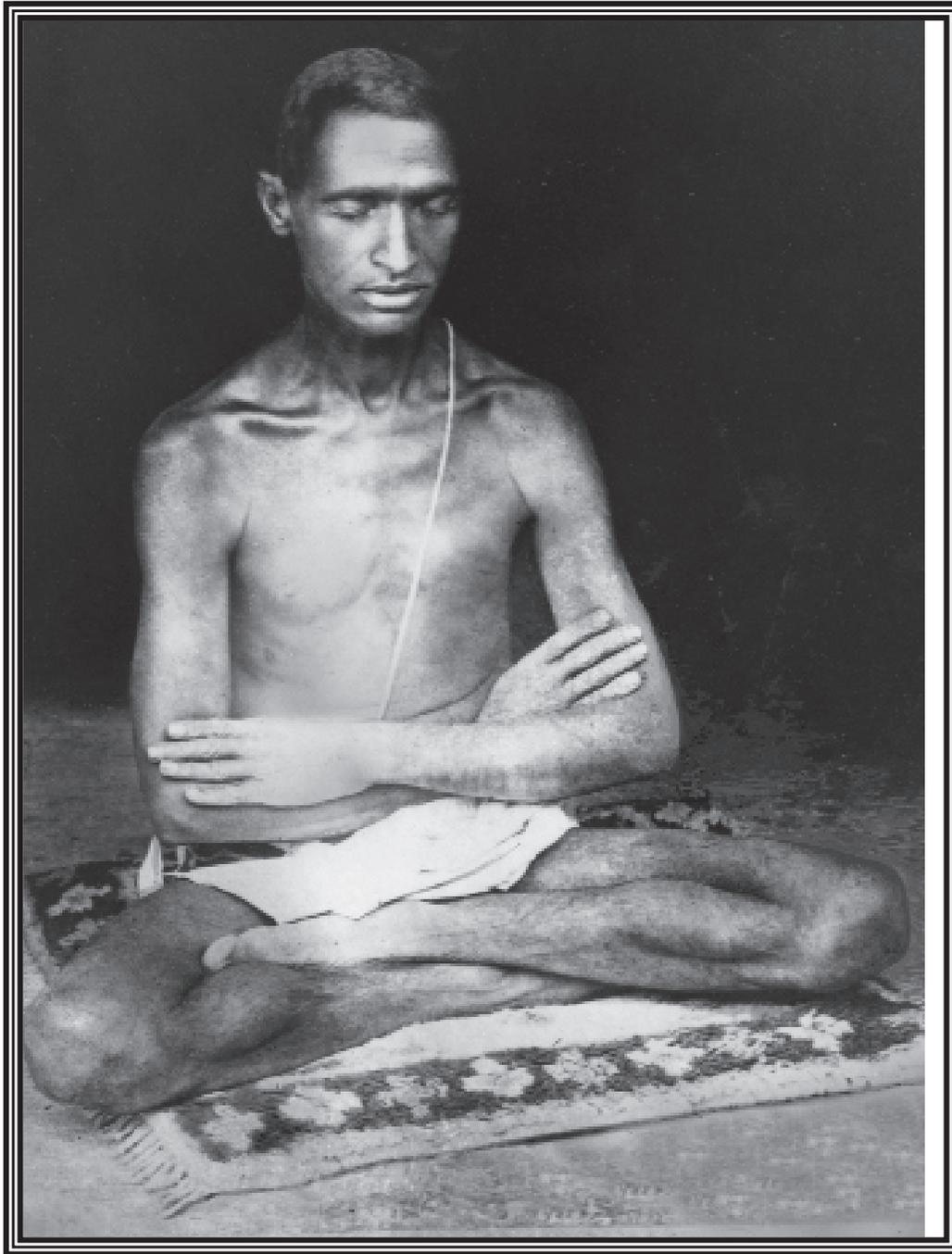
The illness is Sūtra 4, “At other times the seer is identified with the thought waves in the mind.”

The causes of the illness, the *chitta vṛittis*, are further described in Sūtras 5 – 11. The remedy for the illness, the *upāya* (means) are given in Sūtras 12 – 50. Perfect health is described in Sūtra 51 as *nirodha* (control or restraint).

Patanjali rephrases Sūtra 2, “Control of thought waves in the mind is yoga,” in Sūtra 12, “The thought waves are controlled by persistent practice and dispassion.” These two *sūtras* together define the aim and state the method for attaining yoga.



Yogaḥ means *samādhi*, or the state that occurs when mental modifications are controlled by persistent practice and dispassion.



Hairakhan Mahārāj is a mysterious saint from the Kumoun Region of Northern India. Also known as Babaji Mahārāj, he has variously appeared and disappeared over several hundred years. It is said that he has full mastery over the elements, and that he is unaffected by time and space.