

8



373en08

SPIRITUAL ASPECTS



Note

We have discussed about physical, psychological and social dimension of physical education and Yog in last few lessons. In this lesson we will come to know about spiritual component of physical education and Yog. Spirituality is the basic and subtle dimension of personality as is a root for the tree. When spiritual awareness grows, thoughts, concepts and values also change. So in this lesson we are going to study the concept of spirituality and how to transform this in our life. Mantra chanting is very ancient technique to maintain inner strength and tranquillity. So Raj Yog and Mantra vibration will also be the focussed in this lesson. We are also going to discuss how one can develop inner awareness and its importance. Without spiritual aspect life is incomplete and it is yogic philosophy which first purifies body discipline, mind and growing in spiritual life. The concept of Ashtang Yog or Raj Yog is very practical for Poorn swasthya (complete health). At last we will also know about the concept of meditation.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- explain the spirituality;
- understand the inner awareness & develop inner awareness of life;
- learn the impact of Mantra chanting;
- explain the philosophy of Ashtang Yog & eight steps of Ashtang Yog and
- know the concept of Meditation & learn a few meditative techniques.



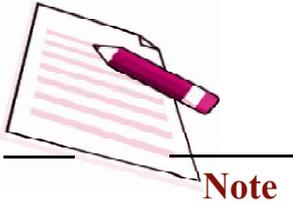
8.1 SPIRITUALITY

The definition of Spirituality as per oxford dictionary is ‘the quality of being connected with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material and physical things’. One cannot equate spirituality with self-realization, or Moksha (salvation). The moment one negates the negativity and associates with positivity one becomes spiritual. The moment you stop perceiving yourself as an individual unit and begin to experience yourself as a part of greater system, you become

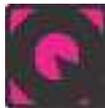
Physical Education and Yog



Dimension of Physical Education and Yog



more spiritual. Spirituality is connecting with the positive and the creative aspect of life, not self-realization, but becoming good, doing good, softening the sentiments, feelings and thoughts. Spirituality is the antidote to materialism. Yogic philosophy teaches us to make a balance between them to complete human life. If they do not go together hand in hand then there are always conflicts, confusions, destructions and deviations in human life. Swami Sivananda said that if anything which can save humanity, it is spirituality. The influences of the materialistic life can be managed better through spiritual awareness. We start our life to fulfil needs and during achievement of fulfilling the needs we are not aware that when this need becomes greed. Greed leads to manipulation. Manipulation leads to altering the natural law of nature and human beings. With spiritual awareness, the greed is observed and it is converted into a positive need. Spiritual life leads you to contentment while materialistic life leads you to greed.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.1

Fill in the blanks with appropriate word:

1. The quality of being connected with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material and physical things is called
2. Spiritual life leads you to while material life leads you to greed.

8.2 INNER AWARENESS (A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO SPIRITUALITY)

The practical way to become spiritual is not by thinking of God, going to church, going to temple or to do Namaz but by connecting with inner self which is pure and positive. Spirituality is closer to one’s own spirit. The word ‘Adhyatm’ is Adhyan + Atma. The components of inner awareness are inner or self-analysis, to develop human qualities and at last to experience presence of God, grace of God in life. Yoga practices are not only for physical fitness but also to reduce stress, anxiety, high blood pressure, high blood sugar level etc. We have to refocus on our energies, intention and commitment to the cultivation of spiritual awareness and the development of the spiritual qualities within ourselves. In this refocusing first we should cultivate three attributes:

- i. We have to be sincere
- ii. We have to be serious and
- iii. We have to be committed.

These are the qualities that allow the individual to grow in spiritual life.



Inner awareness is the most important aspect to be developed in these days. In this modern life style most of the time we remain under external inputs by different gadgets. Our thoughts, actions, behaviours and the whole life are under external influences. To develop a balance between inner self and outer world we have to adopt yogic teachings. Inner awareness is the outcome of the yogic practices if practiced sincerely & seriously. It is a subtle experience and influences through subtle body - Vigyanmaya kosha (intellectual body) and Anandmaya kosha (body of bliss). If one is able to become aware of oneself in the body that is called meditation. Meditation is not necessarily concentration on God, but it is realization of the inner dimension of one's own personality. We have much more to know within our body. The individual awareness is potentially cosmic. Dhyana, Zen, meditation, total attention, total awareness; all are the same things. Therefore, it is very important that everybody should devote ten minutes of each day to discover his inner self.



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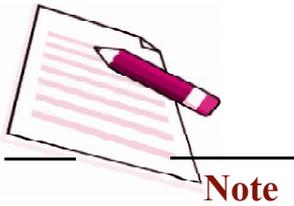
8.3 MANTRA CHANTING

A mantra is a sacred word, sound or phrase, which is believed to have a spiritual and psychological power. Mantra is often used in meditation as a way to harness and focus the mind. The word mantra consists of two roots '**Man**' and '**Tra**' where '**Man**' means profound meditation and '**Tra**' means releasing. In Hansha Upanishad mantra is defined as '*Mannaat Trayete iti Mantra*' which means "by contemplating upon which, the mind is freed from obsession."

Chanting is a process of repeating mantras, special vibratory sounds to heal one's inner being, to rejuvenate, to purify and to transform every aspect of life including mental, emotional, spiritual and physical bodies.

Mantra is not merely a holy name or a divine sound. It is the basis of yoga and spiritual life. Mantras are Vedic in origin. The teachings of the Vedas consist of various Mantric chants or hymns cognized by different seers from the cosmic mind. Mantras are used in many religions and schools of thought, including Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Christianity. The use, structure, function, importance and types of mantras vary according to the school and philosophy of Hinduism and Buddhism. Mantras come in many forms and are typically melodic, mathematically structured meters, believed to be resonant with numinous qualities. As its simplest, the word P (Aum, Om) serves as a mantra. In other words, mantras are melodic phrases with spiritual interpretations such as a human longing for truth, reality, light, immortality, peace, love, knowledge and action.





8.3.1 Impact of Mantra Chanting

Different sounds have different effects on human psyche. If a soft sound of wind rustling through leaves soothes our nerves, the musical note of running stream enchants our heart, thunders may cause awe and fear, so like the Mantra which is also a sound, a vibration which alter the frequency of brain emotion and mind. So mantra is to free the mind. Once the mind is freed, other problems are automatically resolved because the greatest problem is the mind itself. The mind is restless and constantly occupied with many thoughts. Mantra gives the mind peace and guides our thoughts.

Mantra works differently on different kinds of personality and the result will be different. The emotional personality when performing the mantra and concentrating on their Estha Devta then mantra take the form of Bhakti and connect the Bhakta with Estha Devta. The mantra when practiced by intellectual type of personality it will lead that kind of personality on the path of Gyana by analyzing, by knowing, by realizing different transformation the Sadhak goes through. Mantra becomes part of Gyan yoga the journey from gross to subtle. For a psychic personality the effect of mantra is to harmonize inner vibrations, and the movements of Pran shakti and chakra and for the dynamic kind of personality mantra will provide you with an inner conviction, strength, stamina, clarity of mind, purity and feeling so that the energy and blocks transcendent, and one can live ordinary life with divine awareness. Mantra japa can give contentment and can influence ones character and personality.

Mantra vibration can influence the brain, body, subconscious and unconscious realms.

There are different kinds of mantras. Individual Mantra given by guru as initiation is '*Guru Mantra*'. Other type is general mantra like the '*Mahamirtunjaya*', '*Gaayatri*', etc. which everybody can chant i.e. these are common mantras.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.2

Marke the following as True/Flase:

- Inner awareness is a subtle experience and influences through subtle body - Vigyanmaya kosha (intellectual body) and Anandmaya kosha (body of bliss). (True/False)
- Mantra vibration can influence the brain, body, subconscious and unconscious realms. (True/False)



8.4 PHILOSOPHY OF ASHTANG YOG

The first yogic text ‘Yog sutra’ is written by Maharishi Patanjali. Yoga Sutra were written to explain the process and practical methods of raising levels of awareness, gaining deeper wisdom, exploring the potential of the mind and eventually going beyond the mind. This system of yoga progressively attempts to transcend the outer environment of the physical body, and directs the awareness of the inner awareness. Ashtanga yog or Patanjali yog is identified by Maharishi Patanjali. It is the path of yoga in which we attempt to explore our consciousness. Specifically, Patanjali Yoga system consists of eight steps or limbs on which the aspirant must progressively master on the path of self-realization; they are - Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. Hence, this is called Ashtanga yoga (the yoga of eight stages). Raj Yoga (including Patanjali yoga or Ashtang yoga) is the science of the mind. It is the science of mental discipline and includes various methods of making the mind one pointed.

8.4.1 Importance of Patanjali yog in context of Swasthya

The world health organization defines swasthya (health) as “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”.

The spiritual movement starts from the gross to the more subtle. Now it is very clear that we can attain a state of social, physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Yama and Niyama are for social well-being, asana and pranayama are for physical well-being, pranayama, pratyahara and dharana are for mental well-being, dhyana and Samadhi are for the spiritual state of well-being.

According to the yogic concept and Indian concept the word Swasthya means—Swa (self) & asthya (established). So we can say health is a self-established state. Now we have to understand ‘self’. Yoga believes five levels of bodies. These five bodies are called Panch Kosha, which all together represents whole being or self.

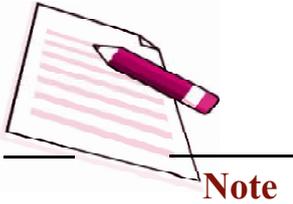
Panch kosha are mentioned as below-

1. Annamaya Kosha - Physical body
2. Manomaya Kosha - Mental body
3. Pranamaya Kosha - Pranic body (the dimension of energy)
4. Vijnanamaya Kosha - Intuitive body
5. Anandmaya Kosha - The body of bliss



Note



Dimension of Physical Education and Yog

We can see that health or Swasthya is a very subtle thing; to maintain a healthy state of being we need to perform some techniques which can influence these subtle bodies. In ancient Indian teaching it is one's moral duty to maintain Swasthya. Yoga provides us opportunity to influence all five bodies and to be aware about it. We should know about holistic health and motivate people to adopt yogic technique in their life style.

8.4.2 Eight Steps of Ashtang Yog & Spiritual Nourishment

Patanjali yoga provides us a wide range of techniques that slowly harmonised the mind and develop more subtle awareness. However, the main path of Patanjali is combined within eight fundamental stages. The first four stages are the Bahiranga (external) practice of yoga and the last four stages are Antarang (internal) practices of yoga. This scripture is also called Yoga Darshan – a method of attaining higher perception; it means ‘to see the invisible things’ or ‘to see with spiritual insight’.

Let us briefly discuss each steps of Patanjali Yoga:

1. Yama (social code)
2. Niyama (personal code)
3. Asana (posture)
4. Pranayama (control of prana)
5. Pratyahara (sense withdrawal)
6. Dharna (concentration)
7. Dhyana (meditation)
8. Samadhi (super consciousness)

Yama- The first aspect of Ashtang Yoga is known as Yama. Social code means yogic self-control. The five yamas are – Satya, Ahimsa, Asteya, Aparigraha and Brahmcharya. These are described as follow:

- **Satya** (truthfulness): It refers to awareness of what is correct, right and true, as it is manifesting from within, and the ability to express it. In higher level it is complete control over speech.
- **Ahimsa** (non-violence): It is not an external act of eliminating violence from our action but elimination of violence from our attitude.
- **Asteya** (non-stealing): It means that one must not steal, nor have the intent to steal another's property through action, speech and thoughts.



- **Aprigraha** (non-possessiveness): It means that we should not collect things without requirement. It also means non attachment.
- **Brahmacharya** (celibacy): It is a form of self-restraint regarded as a virtue, and an observance recommended depending on an individual's context. Self-control in all things is the direction of true growth.

Niyam- It literally means positive duties or observances. These are also five in number. According to yog sutra these are fixed discipline necessary for the practice of meditation and Samadhi. These are described as follow:

- **Shaucha** (cleanliness, purity): It is the first Niyam. It refers to purity of mind, speech and body. It does not mean only physical cleanliness but also environmental cleanliness and cleanliness of one's living area.
- **Santosha** (contentment): It means to be happy with present moment without craving and without complaining. A sense of satisfaction in spiritual life is a necessity.
- **Tapas** (austerity): It means following a process of change and transformation for the better. It is also defined as seeking out the pure essence of matter. According to yog sutra, it involves subjecting the body to hardship so that it can endure heat, cold, poison and so on.
- **Swadhyaya** (self-observation/ introspection): It means the self-study and recitation of the Vedas and other sacred books/ scriptures.
- **Ishwara Pranidhana** or cultivation of faith or to believe in higher reality.

Asana- This is the third aspect of Ashtang Yog. According to Maharishi Patanjali Asana is "**Sthirasukhamasanam**". It means steady and comfortable posture is known as Asan.

Through the practice of asanas, we develop the habit of discipline and the ability to concentrate, both of which are necessary for meditation. We will learn more about Asanas in the lesson Yogasana.

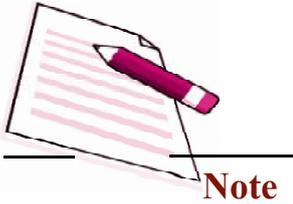
Pranayama- The word Pranayama means 'extension or expansion' of the dimension of prana. We will learn more about it in the lesson Pranayama.

Pratyahara- It is generally translated as 'withdrawal of senses' because at this stage we withdraw our mind from the external sensory objects and internalize. Dissociation of the mind from the sensory field is not a negative state, it is a very beautiful experience. **Practices of Pratyahara-** Ajapa-japa, Yoga nidra, Trataka, Antar mouna.



Note





Dharna- It means to hold or bind the mind at one point. It follows the state of *Pratyahara*, so that by internalizing the awareness the senses ultimately follow the mind. **Dharana practices** are- *Chidakash Dharana, Hridayakash Dharana*.

Dhyan- It merely an extension of *Dharana*. It arises when one is able to maintain a smooth, unfluctuating flow of concentration towards the inner symbol for a period of time.

Samadhi- This is the state where there is complete absence of both external and internal mental modifications; all that remains is awareness. Samadhi brings self- realization.

Learners as we have discussed about concept of spirituality, we are very convinced that Asthang yog is a complete package for spiritual nourishment. Yama and Niyam are to develop human quality, to be sensitive and sincere about self and surrounding. Pranayama and Pratyahara are for mental tranquillity, to develop positivity and to develop inner awareness. Dharna and Dhyan to direct attention and awareness towards discovering your inner nature, and that is where we find peace. Inner peace, satisfaction and pleasure are ultimate of spirituality.

8.5 CONCEPT OF MEDITATION

Meditation is a process of total perception, total consciousness and unconditional awareness by which we are trying to come closer to our higher self. When we are able to transcend the world of senses and when we are able to transcend the world of experiences for a short period that is called meditation. It is a state when we are able to transcend the memories of the past, the anticipation of future and the anxieties of the present, when we are able to forget for the time being; our name and form, our placement, our position, our environment. When we able to become aware of something inside ourself that is called meditation. In the practice of meditation practitioner tries to acquire complete knowledge of his mind and at the same time to acquire a system of training and regulating the infinite capacities and potential of the mind.

Dhyan yog or meditative practice of yog is not like that you close your eyes and enter into a state of total darkness and unconsciousness. Dhyan means an expanded state of mind, awakening of one's full creative potential. Meditative state does not mean switch off your mind but it is a dynamic state of awareness. With meditation or Dhyan yog we start a new chapter in our life. Once we are involve in Dhyan yog or meditative practice in the correct way our experiences and our personality will become steady and lasting. Our attitude toward life will be fantastic.



Meditation is related to the evolution of human consciousness.

The sole objective for human being should be to evolve spiritually. To evolve spiritually means to be able to understand what lies within us beyond the body, beyond the senses, beyond the mind and beyond the ordinary understanding. This is the process of expansion of consciousness. This external existence and this external experience are not the ultimate one. There is something beyond it. There are layers and layers of experiences that can be experience through the process of meditation.

Meditation should be balanced with karma yoga and bhakti yoga, we have to work on karma and samskara.

8.5.1 Some Meditative Techniques

In Ashtang Yog philosophy Dharna, Dhyana and Samadhi are called antarang yog.

Pratyahara is gateway to antarang yog, it is withdraw from external senses. It is the practice which prepare for meditation. Pratyahara practices train our mind for meditation.

Dharna means internal concentration of mind. It is the step before meditation and is concerned with fixing awareness on one object. In the very beginging it not possible. By experience one can realize how difficult it is to maintain awareness of one object without any thought intervention. The mind is full of inner chatter in the form of memories of the past and projection of the future. Various methods can be used to induce mental one- pointedness. Religions in general try to induce it through rituals, pooja or worship, chanting, prayer and so forth. Yoga utilizes a psychic symbol (Prateek) as a focal point for Dharna.

These days' common meditative practices are Pratyahara and Dharna.

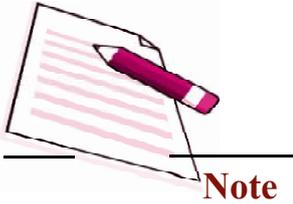
Pratyahara Practices may be done with Yog Nidra and Antar Mouna.

Yoga Nidra- Yoga Nidra means sleep with trace of awareness. It is a state before sleep and during the practice awareness remains in sub conscious level .It is an art of relaxation and more efficient and effective form of psychic and physiological rest. Through the practice of yog nidra threefold tensions can be released (muscular tension, emotional tension and mental tension). It is not a concentration practice, it is a practice of pratyahara stage. Yog nidra is the best yogic technique to manage psychosomatic disease. In the practice of yog nidra we can put on something positive, creative and we can release negative aspect of our personality as phobia, bad habits.



Note





Antar Mouna – It is also a Pratyahara practice. Antar mouna means inner silence, but in this practice we observe all sensory inputs. The most important feature of this practice is to develop attitude of witness (Sakshi Bhav). This witness attitude initially against sensory inputs then thoughts, emotions and at last for life. This practice develop mental and emotional endurance.

Dharna Practices - Chidakash Dharna, Chakra Sudhi, Chakra Dharna

Chakra Dharna- It is a very advance and spiritual practice. Some preparations and proper guidance is required for this practice. In this Dharna practice first, we have to visualize inner body as a space than visualization of different chakras its location colour with Bija mantra and then more subtle.

Dhyan - Ajapa-jap, Vipasana

Ajapa-japa- It is a very traditional meditative practice and considered as a Vedic Sadhana. There are different variations of this practice. The word japa can be define as the continuous repetition of a mantra. Ajapa is the process spontaneous process of mantra repetition. As the concentration becomes more and more focused on the japa, ones whole being starts pulsating with the mantra.

It is said that the Japa comes from the mouth whereas Ajapa comes from the breath and from the heart. There are different psychic passage for this meditation.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.3

Fill in the blanks with appropriate word:

1. In Ashtang Yog philosophy Dharna, Dhyan and Samadhi are called
2. & are pratyahara practices.



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Spirituality is connecting with the positive and the creative aspect of life, not self-realization, but becoming good, doing good, softening the sentiments, feelings and thoughts. Spirituality is the antidote to materialism.
- Inner awareness is the most important aspect to be developed in these days. In this modern life style most of the time we remain under external inputs by different gadgets. Our thoughts, actions, behaviours and the whole life



are under external influences. To develop a balance between inner self and outer world we have to adopt yogic teachings. Inner awareness is the outcome of the yogic practices if practiced sincerely & seriously.

- Mantra is not merely a holy name or a divine sound. It is the basis of yoga and spiritual life. Mantras are Vedic in origin. The teachings of the Vedas consist of various Mantric chants or hymns cognized by different seers from the cosmic mind. Mantras are used in many religions and schools of thought, including Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Christianity.

Patanjali Yoga is that system which consists of eight steps or limbs which the aspirant must progressively master on the path of self-realization; They are –

- Yama (social code)
 - Niyama (personal code)
 - Asana (posture)
 - Pranayama (control of prana)
 - Pratyahara (sense withdrawal)
 - Dharna (concentration)
 - Dhyana (meditation)
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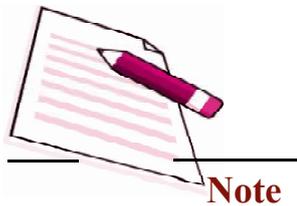
TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. What is spirituality? Explain it.
2. Explain how five bodies related to different aspect of personality?
3. Explain how eight stages of Ashtang yog related to Panch Kosha?
4. Describe Antrang yoga.
5. Explain one step of Ashtang yoga.
6. Write down different stages of Yoga Nidra.



Note





ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

8.1

1. Spirituality
2. Contentment

8.2

1. True
2. True

8.3

1. Antarang yog
2. Yog nidra and Antarmouna.

