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Yoga: The best way to attain peace of mind

Yoga is about the mind remaining constantly, riveted to, hinged to what is right. And this union that does not allow the mind to go astray is yoga.

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Yoga has to do with the mind because that is where our problems are, our sufferings are. Is that not true? (Image – Unsplash)

By Acharya Prashant

No one is okay as one is. Had we been perfectly all right there would have been no need to change anything, bring in something new or exclude something.

And it is not really the body that is not all right. Given the advancements in technology, medical science and the prosperity we have today, our bodies are probably better placed and we are healthier than we ever were at any point in history. The problem is the mind. Therefore when we talk of yoga today, it must be yoga of the mind. That which we think of and talk of as yoga are just physical exercises. Much of that does not deserve to be called even the first step of yoga.

Yoga has to do with the mind because that is where our problems are, our sufferings are. Is that not true?

Are we troubled because our knees are aching and we have a stiff back? Is that really a problem and if that is a problem then medical science has answers for that. Our real problems lie somewhere else. Real yoga has to do with how the mind is placed. Unfortunately, negligible emphasis is being placed on that. The fundamental myth is that yoga has a lot to do with the body. In fact that myth is the biggest obstacle in the way of real yoga.

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When the mind is adhering steadfastly that is the state of yoga. You have to know who you are and you have to act accordingly. You have to be one in unison with that which really matters. And that union is called yoga. Yoga is about the mind remaining constantly, riveted to, hinged to what is right. And this union that does not allow the mind to go astray is yoga.

When the mind is right, the body is bound to be right.

There is not much physical trouble, yet there is a lot of trouble. And that trouble is coming from the mind. And that's why Yoga is needed.

Yoga means coming together.

What can come together? Only that can come together, that is first of all, not together. What is not together? The mind is not together. The mind runs hither-thither, randomly, sometimes this way and sometimes that way. There is no inherent order.

That lack of order is called Viyoga. That fragmentation is called Viyoga.

Viyoga, is unfortunately the usual state in which mankind exists. Viyoga, means that the parts of mind are not in touch with each other, and also not relating to any common center.

There are a thousand centers, every part has its own center. The part that relates to career, has greed and ambition and fear as the center. The part that relates to religion has tradition and difference as the center. The part that relates to family has attachment and security as the center. And all these centers are not at all, obviously coinciding. So, there is conflict.

The professional in the office is not the same, as the husband or the wife, in the home. The father in front of the kid is not the same as the man, who is talking to the neighbor. As situations change, new influences come and we start operating from a different center.

Sometimes we operate from fear, sometimes we operate from attachment, sometimes we operate from one identity, sometimes from another identity. And the identities are not something that we control. The identities are dictated by the situations.

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Once you are in your office, you have become a dedicated professional. Out of the office, you have become somebody else. That somebody else does not quite like the professional, hence conflict.

You cannot wear the same face, you cannot operate from the same center that is Viyoga.

To be living in Viyoga, is living in slavery of a thousand different forces. You are in place one, you are a slave to place one. You are in place two, you are a slave to place two. Because the place is dictating your entire personality. The place is dictating the way you would think, the place is dictating, even your core. Your very self changes according to the situation. That is Viyoga.

Yoga is to have a self that is independent of place and time. Yoga is to be firmly rooted at a point that is untouched by anything that can touch anything. So, Yoga is not at all a physical thing. And Yoga is also not about enlightenment, or other worldliness or freedom from this world, or transcendental experiences, or divine sparkle, none of that.

Yoga means, 'How do I live?'

Yoga means, 'What do I do with my relatives?'

Yoga means, 'How do I treat my wife?'

Yoga means, 'If I need to invest everything in a conflict, would I risk my son's life?'

If these questions are relevant to you, then the answer to these questions is called Yoga.

(The author is a [Vedanta](#) Teacher & founder of Prashant Advait foundation. Views expressed are personal and do not reflect the official position or policy of the FinancialExpress.com.)

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