

Yoga Sutras of Patanjali – Narrative Translation

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The sole purpose of this narrative translation is to make it easier to get an overview of the entire Yoga Sutra. By clustering the 196 Sutras together into 39 groups, and presenting them in paragraph format, most readers can study this in a familiar way that is more like the many other books or papers we have studied. As you come to understand the Yoga Sutra in this way, your further studies of more detailed commentaries and Sanskrit translations might come more smoothly, especially when done in conjunction with oral guidance and personal practices of meditation.

This is an interpretive translation of the Yoga Sutra, expanding the number of English words, so as to allow the practical instructions to be clearer. For example, Sutra 1.2 defines Yoga with some 25 English words, rather than only 4 Sanskrit words. The practices of the Yoga Sutras are extremely practical, though it can seem quite complicated when trying to sort through the language. By providing expanded, interpretive translations, the practical meaning of the suggestions more easily comes through.

Chapter 1: Concentration (Samadhi Pada)

What is Yoga? (1.1-1.4): Now, after having done prior preparation through life and other practices, the study and practice of Yoga begins. Yoga is the control (nirodhah, regulation, channeling, mastery, integration, coordination, stilling, quieting, setting aside) of the modifications (gross and subtle thought patterns) of the mind field. Then the Seer abides in Itself, resting in its own True Nature, which is called Self-realization. At other times, when one is not in Self-realization, the Seer appears to take on the form of the modifications of the mind field, taking on the identity of those thought patterns.

Un-coloring your thoughts (1.5-1.11): Those gross and subtle thought patterns (vrittis) fall into five varieties, of which some are colored (klisha) and others are uncolored (aklisha). The five varieties of thought patterns to witness are: 1) knowing correctly (pramana), 2) incorrect knowing (viparyaya), 3) fantasy or imagination (vikalpa), 4) the object of void-ness that is deep sleep (nidra), and 5) recollection or memory (smriti).

Of these five, there are three ways of gaining correct knowledge (pramana): 1) perception, 2) inference, and 3) testimony or verbal communication from others who have knowledge.

Incorrect knowledge or illusion (viparyaya) is false knowledge formed by perceiving a thing as being other than what it really is. Fantasy or imagination (vikalpa) is a thought pattern that has verbal expression and knowledge, but for which there is no such object or reality in existence. Dreamless sleep (nidra) is the subtle thought pattern which has as its object an inertia, blankness, absence, or negation of the other thought patterns (vrittis).

Recollection or memory (smriti) is mental modification caused by the inner reproducing of a previous impression of an object, but without adding any other characteristics from other sources.

Practice and non-attachment (1.12-1.16): These thought patterns (vrittis) are mastered (nirodhah, regulated, coordinated, controlled, stilled, quieted) through practice (abhyasa) and non-attachment (vairagya).

Practice (abhyasa) means choosing, applying the effort, and doing those actions that bring a stable and tranquil state (sthitau). When that practice is done for a long time, without a break, and with sincere devotion, then the practice becomes a firmly rooted, stable and solid foundation.

When the mind loses desire even for objects seen or described in a tradition or in scriptures, it acquires a state of utter (vashikara) desirelessness that is called non-attachment (vairagya). Indifference to the subtlest elements, constituent principles, or qualities themselves (gunas), achieved through a knowledge of the nature of pure consciousness (purusha), is called supreme non-attachment (paravairagya).

Types of concentration (1.17-1.18): The deep absorption of attention on an object is of four kinds, 1) gross (vitarka), 2) subtle (vichara), 3) bliss accompanied (ananda), and 4) with I-ness (asmita), and is called samprajnata samadhi. The other kind of samadhi is asamprajnata samadhi, and has no object in which attention is absorbed, wherein only latent impressions remain; attainment of this state is preceded by the constant practice of allowing all of the gross and subtle fluctuations of mind to recede back into the field from which they arose.

Efforts and commitment (1.19-1.22): Some who have attained higher levels (videhas) or know unmanifest nature (prakritilayas), are drawn into birth in this world by their remaining latent impressions of ignorance, and more naturally come to these states of samadhi.

Others follow a five-fold systematic path of 1) faithful certainty in the path, 2) directing energy towards the practices, 3) repeated memory of the path and the process of stilling the mind, 4) training in deep concentration, and 5) the pursuit of real knowledge, by which the higher samadhi (asamprajnata samadhi) is attained. Those who pursue their practices with intensity of feeling, vigor, and firm conviction achieve concentration and the fruits thereof more quickly, compared to those of medium or lesser intensity. Because the methods may be applied in slow, medium, or speedy ways, even among those who have such commitment and conviction, there are differences in the rate of progress, resulting in nine grades of practice.

Direct route through AUM (1.23-1.29): From a special process of devotion and letting go into the creative source from which we emerged (ishvara pranidhana), the coming of samadhi is imminent. That creative source (ishvara) is a particular consciousness (purusha)

that is unaffected by colorings (kleshas), actions (karmas), or results of those actions that happen when latent impressions stir and cause those actions. In that pure consciousness (ishvara) the seed of omniscience has reached its highest development and cannot be exceeded. From that consciousness (ishvara) the ancient-most teachers were taught, since it is not limited by the constraint of time.

The sacred word designating this creative source is the sound OM, called pranava. This sound is remembered with deep feeling for the meaning of what it represents. From that remembering comes the realization of the individual Self and the removal of obstacles.

Obstacles and solutions (1.30-1.32): Nine kinds of distractions come that are obstacles naturally encountered on the path, and are physical illness, tendency of the mind to not work efficiently, doubt or indecision, lack of attention to pursuing the means of samadhi, laziness in mind and body, failure to regulate the desire for worldly objects, incorrect assumptions or thinking, failing to attain stages of the practice, and instability in maintaining a level of practice once attained.

From these obstacles, there are four other consequences that also arise, and these are: 1) mental or physical pain, 2) sadness or dejection, 3) restlessness, shakiness, or anxiety, and 4) irregularities in the exhalation and inhalation of breath.

To prevent or deal with these nine obstacle and their four consequences, the recommendation is to make the mind one-pointed, training it how to focus on a single principle or object.

Stabilizing and clearing the mind (1.33-1.39): In relationships, the mind becomes purified by cultivating feelings of friendliness towards those who are happy, compassion for those who are suffering, goodwill towards those who are virtuous, and indifference or neutrality towards those we perceive as wicked or evil.

The mind is also calmed by regulating the breath, particularly attending to exhalation and the natural stilling of breath that comes from such practice. The inner concentration on the process of sensory experiencing, done in a way that leads towards higher, subtle sense perception; this also leads to stability and tranquility of the mind. Or concentration on a painless inner state of lucidness and luminosity also brings stability and tranquility. Or contemplating on having a mind that is free from desires, the mind gets stabilized and tranquil. Or by focusing on the nature of the stream in the dream state or the nature of the state of dreamless sleep, the mind becomes stabilized and tranquil.

Or by contemplating or concentrating on whatever object or principle one may like, or towards which one has a predisposition, the mind becomes stable and tranquil.

Results of stabilizing the mind (1.40-1.51): When, through such practices, the mind develops the power of becoming stable on the smallest size object as well as on the largest, then the mind truly comes under control. When the modifications of mind have become

weakened, the mind becomes like a transparent crystal, and thus can easily take on the qualities of whatever object observed, whether that object be the observer, the means of observing, or an object observed, in a process of engrossment called samapattih. One type of such an engrossment (samapattih) is one in which there is a mixture of three things, a word or name going with the object, the meaning or identity of that object, and the knowledge associated with that object; this engrossment is known as savitarka samapattih (associated with gross objects).

When the memory or storehouse of modifications of mind is purified, then the mind appears to be devoid of its own nature and only the object on which it is contemplating appears to shine forward; this type of engrossment is known as nirvitarka samapattih. In the same way that these engrossments operate with gross objects in savitarka samapattih, the engrossment with subtle objects also operates, and is known as savichara and nirvichara samapattih. Having such subtle objects extends all the way up to unmanifest prakriti. These four varieties of engrossment are the only kinds of concentrations (samadhi) which are objective, and have a seed of an object. As one gains proficiency in the undisturbed flow in nirvichara, a purity and luminosity of the inner instrument of mind is developed. The experiential knowledge that is gained in that state is one of essential wisdom and is filled with truth. That knowledge is different from the knowledge that is commingled with testimony or through inference, because it relates directly to the specifics of the object, rather than to those words or other concepts. This type of knowledge that is filled with truth creates latent impressions in the mind-field, and those new impressions tend to reduce the formation of other less useful forms of habitual latent impressions. When even these latent impressions from truth filled knowledge recede along with the other impressions, then there is objectless concentration.

Chapter 2: Practice (Sadhana Pada)

Minimizing gross coloring (2.1-2.9): Yoga in the form of action (kriya yoga) has three parts: 1) training and purifying the senses (tapas), 2) self-study in the context of teachings (svadhyaya), and 3) devotion and letting go into the creative source from which we emerged (ishvara pranidhana). That Yoga of action (kriya yoga) is practiced to bring about samadhi and to minimize the colored thought patterns (kleshas).

There are five kinds of coloring (kleshas): 1) forgetting, or ignorance about the true nature of things (avidya), 2) I-ness, individuality, or egoism (asmita), 3) attachment or addiction to mental impressions or objects (raga), 4) aversion to thought patterns or objects (dvesha), and 5) love of these as being life itself, as well as fear of their loss as being death. The root forgetting or ignorance of the nature of things (avidya) is the breeding ground for the other of the five colorings (kleshas), and each of these is in one of four states: 1) dormant or inactive, 2) attenuated or weakened, 3) interrupted or separated from temporarily, or 4) active and producing thoughts or actions to varying degrees.

Ignorance (avidya) is of four types: 1) regarding that which is transient as eternal, 2) mistaking the impure for pure, 3) thinking that which brings misery to bring happiness, and 4) taking that which is not-self to be self.

The coloring (klesha) of I-ness or egoism (asmita), which arises from the ignorance, occurs due to the mistake of taking the intellect (buddhi, which knows, decides, judges, and discriminates) to itself be pure consciousness (purusha). Attachment (raga) is a separate modification of mind, which follows the rising of the memory of pleasure, where the three modifications of attachment, pleasure, and the memory of the object are then associated with one another. Aversion (dvesha) is a modification that results from misery associated with some memory, whereby the three modifications of aversion, pain, and the memory of the object or experience are then associated with one another. Even for those people who are learned, there is an ever-flowing, firmly established love for continuation and a fear of cessation, or death, of these various colored modifications (kleshas).

Dealing with subtle thoughts (2.10-2.11): When the five types of colorings (kleshas) are in their subtle, merely potential form, they are then destroyed by their disappearance or cessation into and of the field of mind itself. When the modifications still have some potency of coloring (klisha), they are brought to the state of mere potential by meditation (dhyana).

Breaking the alliance of karma (2.12-2.25): Latent impressions that are colored (karmashaya) result from other actions (karmas) that were brought about by colorings (kleshas), and become active and experienced in a current life or a future life. As long as those colorings (kleshas) remains at the root, three consequences are produced: 1) birth, 2) span of life, and 3) experiences in that life. Because of having the nature of merits or demerits (virtue or vice), these three (birth, span of life, and experiences) may be experienced as either pleasure or pain.

A wise, discriminating person sees all worldly experiences as painful, because of reasoning that all these experiences lead to more consequences, anxiety, and deep habits (samskaras), as well as acting in opposition to the natural qualities. Because the worldly experiences are seen as painful, it is the pain, which is yet to come that is to be avoided and discarded.

The uniting of the seer (the subject, or experiencer) with the seen (the object, or that which is experienced) is the cause or connection to be avoided. The objects (or knowables) are by their nature of: 1) illumination or sentience, 2) activity or mutability, or 3) inertia or stasis; they consist of the elements and the powers of the senses, and exist for the purpose of experiencing the world and for liberation or enlightenment. There are four states of the elements (gunas), and these are: 1) diversified, specialized, or particularized (vishesha), 2) undiversified, unspecialized, or unparticularized (avishesha), 3) indicator-only, undifferentiated phenomenal, or marked only (linga-matra), and 4) without indicator, noumenal, or without mark (alingani).

The Seer is but the force of seeing itself, appearing to see or experience that which is presented as a cognitive principle. The essence or nature of the knowable objects exists only to serve as the objective field for pure consciousness. Although knowable objects cease to exist in relation to one who has experienced their fundamental, formless true nature, the appearance of the knowable objects is not destroyed, for their existence continues to be shared by others who are still observing them in their grosser forms.

Having an alliance, or relationship between objects and the Self is the necessary means by which there can subsequently be realization of the true nature of those objects by that very Self. Avidya or ignorance (2.3-2.5), the condition of ignoring, is the underlying cause that allows this alliance to appear to exist. By causing a lack of avidya, or ignorance there is then an absence of the alliance, and this leads to a freedom known as a state of liberation or enlightenment for the Seer.

Reason for the 8 rungs (2.26-2.29): Clear, distinct, unimpaired discriminative knowledge is the means of liberation from this alliance. Seven kinds of ultimate insight come to one who has attained this degree of discrimination. Through the practice of the different limbs, or steps to Yoga, whereby impurities are eliminated, there arises an illumination that culminates in discriminative wisdom, or enlightenment.

The eight rungs, limbs, or steps of Yoga are the codes of self-regulation or restraint (yamas), observances or practices of self-training (niyamas), postures (asana), expansion of breath and prana (pranayama), withdrawal of the senses (pratyahara), concentration (dharana), meditation (dhyana), and perfected concentration (samadhi).

Yamas & Niyamas, #1-2 of 8 rungs (2.30-2.34): Non-injury or non-harming (ahimsa), truthfulness (satya), abstention from stealing (asteya), walking in awareness of the highest reality (brahmacharya), and non-possessiveness or non-grasping with the senses (aparigraha) are the five yamas, or codes of self-regulation or restraint, and are the first of the eight steps of Yoga. These codes of self-regulation or restraint become a great vow when they become universal and are not restricted by any consideration of the nature of the kind of living being to whom one is related, nor in any place, time or situation.

Cleanliness and purity of body and mind (shaucha), an attitude of contentment (santosha), asceticism or training of the senses (tapas), self-study and reflection on sacred words (svadhyaya), and an attitude of letting go into one's source (ishvarapranidhana) are the observances or practices of self-training (niyamas), and are the second rung on the ladder of Yoga.

When these codes of self-regulation or restraint (yamas) and observances or practices of self-training (niyamas) are inhibited from being practiced due to perverse, unwholesome, troublesome, or deviant thoughts, principles in the opposite direction, or contrary thought should be cultivated. Actions arising out of such negative thoughts are performed directly by oneself, caused to be done through others, or approved of when done by others. All of

these may be preceded by, or performed through anger, greed or delusion, and can be mild, moderate or intense in nature.

To remind oneself that these negative thoughts and actions are the causes of unending misery and ignorance is the contrary thought, or principle in the opposite direction that was recommended in the previous sutra.

Benefits from Yamas & Niyamas (2.35-2.45): As a Yogi becomes firmly grounded in non-injury (ahimsa), other people who come near will naturally lose any feelings of hostility. As truthfulness (satya) is achieved, the fruits of actions naturally result according to the will of the Yogi. When non-stealing (asteya) is established, all jewels, or treasures present themselves, or are available to the Yogi. When walking in the awareness of the highest reality (brahmacharya) is firmly established, then a great strength, capacity, or vitality (virya) is acquired. When one is steadfast in non-possessiveness or non-grasping with the senses (aparigraha), there arises knowledge of the why and wherefore of past and future incarnations.

Through cleanliness and purity of body and mind (shaucha), one develops an attitude of distancing, or disinterest towards one's own body, and becomes disinclined towards contacting the bodies of others. Also through cleanliness and purity of body and mind (shaucha) comes a purification of the subtle mental essence (sattva), a pleasantness, goodness and gladness of feeling, a one-pointedness with intentness, the conquest or mastery over the senses, and a fitness, qualification, or capability for self-realization. From an attitude of contentment (santosha), unexcelled happiness, mental comfort, joy, and satisfaction is obtained. Through asceticism or training of the senses (tapas), there comes a destruction of mental impurities, and an ensuing mastery or perfection over the body and the mental organs of senses and actions (indriyas). From self-study and reflection on sacred words (svadhyaya), one attains contact, communion, or concert with that underlying natural reality or force. From an attitude of letting go into one's source (ishvarapranidhana), the state of perfected concentration (samadhi) is attained.

Asana, #3 of 8 rungs (2.46-2.48): The posture (asana) for Yoga meditation should be steady, stable, and motionless, as well as comfortable, and this is the third of the eight rungs of Yoga. The means of perfecting the posture is that of relaxing or loosening of effort, and allowing attention to merge with endlessness, or the infinite. From the attainment of that perfected posture, there arises an unassailable, unimpeded freedom from suffering due to the pairs of opposites (such as heat and cold, good and bad, or pain and pleasure).

Pranayama, #4 of 8 rungs (2.49-2.53): Once that perfected posture has been achieved, the slowing or braking of the force behind, and of unregulated movement of inhalation and exhalation is called breath control and expansion of prana (pranayama), which leads to the absence of the awareness of both, and is the fourth of the eight rungs. That pranayama has three aspects of external or outward flow (exhalation), internal or inward flow (inhalation), and the third, which is the absence of both during the transition between them, and is

known as fixedness, retention, or suspension. These are regulated by place, time, and number, with breath becoming slow and subtle.

The fourth pranayama is that continuous prana which surpasses, is beyond, or behind those others that operate in the exterior and interior realms or fields. Through that pranayama the veil of karmasheya (2.12) that covers the inner illumination or light is thinned, diminishes and vanishes.

Through these practices and processes of pranayama, which is the fourth of the eight steps, the mind acquires or develops the fitness, qualification, or capability for true concentration (dharana), which is itself the sixth of the steps.

Pratyahara, #5 of 8 rungs (2.54-2.55): When the mental organs of senses and actions (indriyas) cease to be engaged with the corresponding objects in their mental realm, and assimilate or turn back into the mind-field from which they arose, this is called pratyahara, and is the fifth step. Through that turning inward of the organs of senses and actions (indriyas) also comes a supreme ability, controllability, or mastery over those senses inclining to go outward towards their objects.

Chapter 3: Experiences (Vibhuti Pada)

Dharana, Dhyana, & Samadhi, #6, 7, and 8 of 8 rungs (3.1-3.3): Concentration (dharana) is the process of holding or fixing the attention of mind onto one object or place, and is the sixth of the eight rungs. The repeated continuation, or uninterrupted stream of that one point of focus is called absorption in meditation (dhyana), and is the seventh of the eight steps. When only the essence of that object, place, or point shines forth in the mind, as if devoid even of its own form, that state of deep absorption is called deep concentration or samadhi, which is the eighth rung.

Samyama is the finer tool (3.4-3.6): The three processes of dharana, dhyana, and samadhi, when taken together on the same object, place or point is called samyama. Through the mastery of that three-part process of samyama, the light of knowledge, transcendental insight, or higher consciousness (prajna) dawns, illumines, flashes, or is visible. That three-part process of samyama is gradually applied to the finer planes, states, or stages of practice.

Internal is seen to be external (3.7-3.8): These three practices of concentration (dharana), meditation (dhyana), and samadhi are more intimate or internal than the previous five practices. However, these three practices are external, and not intimate compared to nirbija samadhi, which is samadhi that has no object, nor even a seed object on which there is concentration.

Witnessing subtle transitions (3.9-3.16): That high level of mastery called nirodhah-parinamah occurs in the moment when there is a convergence of the rising tendency of deep impressions, the subsiding tendency, and the attention of the mind field itself. The

steady flow of this state (nirodhah-parinamah) continues by the creation of deep impressions (samskaras) from doing the practice. The mastery called samadhi-parinamah is the transition whereby the tendency to all-pointedness subsides, while the tendency to one-pointedness arises. The mastery called ekagrata-parinamah is the transition whereby the same one-pointedness arises and subsides sequentially. These three transition processes also explain the three transformations of form, time, and characteristics, and how these relate to the material elements and senses. There is an unmanifest, indescribable substratum or existence that is common or contained within all of the other forms or qualities. Change in the sequence of the characteristics is the cause for the different appearances of results, consequences, or effects. By samyama on the three-fold changes in form, time, and characteristics, there comes knowledge of the past and future.

Experiences from Samyama (3.17-3.37): The name associated with an object, the object itself implied by that name, and the conceptual existence of the object, all three usually interpenetrate or commingle with one another. By samyama on the distinction between these three, the meaning of the sounds made by all beings becomes available. Through the direct perception of the latent impressions (samskaras) comes the knowledge of previous incarnations. By samyama on the notions or presented ideas comes knowledge of another's mind. But the underlying support of that knowledge (of the other persons mind, in 3.19) remains unperceived or out of reach. When samyama is done on the form of one's own physical body, the illumination or visual characteristic of the body is suspended, and is thus invisible to other people. In the same way as described in relation to sight (3.21), one is able to suspend the ability of the body to be heard, touched, tasted, or smelled. Karma is of two kinds, either fast or slow to manifest; by samyama on these karmas comes foreknowledge of the time of death.

By samyama on friendliness (and the other attitudes of 1.33), there comes great strength of that attitude. By samyama on the strength of elephants comes a similar strength. By directing the flash of inner light of higher sensory activity, knowledge of subtle objects, those hidden from view, and those very distant can be attained. By samyama on the inner sun, knowledge of the many subtle realms can be known. By samyama on the moon, knowledge of the arrangement of the inner stars can be known. By samyama on the pole-star, knowledge of the movement of those stars can be known. By samyama on the navel center, knowledge of the arrangement of the systems of the body can be known. By samyama on the pit of the throat, hunger and thirst leave. By samyama on the tortoise channel, below the throat, steadiness is attained. By samyama on the coronal light of the head, visions of the siddhas, the masters can come. Or, through the intuitive light of higher knowledge, anything might become known.

By practicing samyama on the heart, knowledge of the mind is attained. The having of experiences comes from a presented idea only when there is a commingling of the subtlest aspect of mind (sattva) and pure consciousness (purusha), which are really quite different. Samyama on the pure consciousness, which is distinct from the subtlest aspect of mind, reveals knowledge of that pure consciousness. From the light of the higher knowledge of

that pure consciousness or purusha (3.36) arises higher, transcendental, or divine hearing, touch, vision, taste, and smell.

What to do with experiences (3.38): These experiences resulting from samyama are obstacles to samadhi, but appear to be attainments or powers to the outgoing or worldly mind.

More from Samyama (3.39-3.49): By loosening or letting go of the causes of bondage and attachment, and by following the knowledge of how to go forth into the passages of the mind, there comes the ability to enter into another body. By the mastery over udana, the upward flowing prana vayu, there is a cessation of contact with mud, water, thorns, and other such objects, and there ensues the rising or levitation of the body. By mastery over samana, the prana flowing in the navel area, there comes effulgence, radiance, or fire. By samyama over the relation between space and the power of hearing, the higher, divine power of hearing comes. By Samyama on the relationship between the body and space (akasha) and by concentrating on the lightness of cotton, passage through space can be attained. When the formless thought patterns of mind are projected outside of the body, it is called maha-vidya, a great disincarnate one. By samyama on that outward projection, the veil over the spiritual light is removed.

By samyama on the five forms of the elements (bhutas), which are gross form, essence, subtleness, interconnectedness, and its purpose, then mastery over those bhutas is attained. Through that mastery over the elements, comes the abilities of making the body atomically small, perfect, and indestructible in its characteristics or components, as well as bringing other such powers. This perfection of the body includes beauty, gracefulness, strength, and adamant hardness in taking the blows that come.

By samyama on the process of perception and action, essence, I-ness, connectedness, and purposefulness of senses and acts, mastery over those senses and acts (indriyas) is attained. By that mastery over the senses and acts (indriyas), there comes quickness of mind, perception with the physical instruments of perception, and mastery over the primal cause out of which manifestation arises.

Renunciation that brings liberation (3.50-3.52): To one well established in the knowledge of the distinction between the purest aspect of mind and consciousness itself, there comes supremacy over all forms or states of existence, as well as over all forms of knowing.

With non-attachment or desirelessness even for that supremacy over forms and states of existence and the omniscience (3.50), the seeds at the root of those bondages are destroyed, and absolute liberation is attained. When invited by the celestial beings, no cause should be allowed to arise in the mind that would allow either acceptance of the offer, or the smile of pride from receiving the invitation, because to allow such thoughts to arise again might create the possibility of repeating undesirable thoughts and actions.

Higher discrimination through Samyama (3.53-3.55): By samyama over the moments and their succession, there comes the higher knowledge that is born from discrimination. From that discriminative knowledge (3.53) comes awareness of the difference or distinction between two similar objects, which are not normally distinguishable by category, characteristics, or position in space. That higher knowledge is intuitive and transcendent, and is born of discrimination; it includes all objects within its field, all conditions related to those objects, and is beyond any succession.

With the attainment of equality between the purest aspect of sattvic buddhi and the pure consciousness of purusha, there comes absolute liberation, and that is the end.

Chapter 4: Absolute Freedom (Kaivalya Pada)

Means of attaining experience (4.1-4.3): The subtler attainments come with birth or are attained through herbs, mantra, austerities or concentration. The transition or transformation into another form or type of birth takes place through the filling in of their innate nature. Incidental causes or actions do not lead to the emergence of attainments or realization, but rather, come by the removal of obstacles, much like the way a farmer removes a barrier (sluice gate), so as to naturally allow the irrigation of his field.

Advanced use of mind (4.4-4.6): The emergent mind fields springs forth from the individuality of I-ness (asmita). While the activities of the emergent mind fields may be diverse, the one mind is the director of the many. Of these mind fields, the one that is born from meditation is free from any latent impressions that could produce karma.

Actions and karma (4.7-4.8): The actions of yogis are neither white nor black, while they are threefold for others. Those threefold actions result in latent impressions (vasanas) that will later arise to fruition only corresponding to those impressions.

Subconscious impressions (4.9-4.12): Since memory (smriti) and the deep habit patterns (samskaras) are the same in appearance, there is an unbroken continuity in the playing out of those traits, even though there might be a gap in location, time, or state of life. There is no beginning to the process of these deep habit patterns (samskaras), due to the eternal nature of the will to live.

Since the impressions (4.10) are held together by cause, motive, substratum, and object, they disappear when those deep impressions disappear. Past and future exist in the present reality, appearing to be different because of having different characteristics or forms.

Objects and the 3 gunas (4.13-4.14): Whether these ever-present characteristics or forms are manifest or subtle, they are composed of the primary elements called the three gunas. The characteristics of an object appear as a single unit, as they manifested uniformly from the underlying elements.

Mind perceiving objects (4.15-4.17): Although the same objects may be perceived by different minds, they are perceived in different ways, because those minds manifested differently. However, the object itself does not depend on any one mind, for if it did, then what would happen to the object if it were not being experienced by that mind? Objects are either known or not known according to the way in which the coloring of that object falls on the coloring of the mind observing it.

Illumination of the mind (4.18-4.21): The activities of the mind are always known by the pure consciousness, because that pure consciousness is superior to, support of, and master over the mind. That mind is not self-illuminating, as it is the object of knowledge and perception by the pure consciousness. Nor can both the mind and the illuminating process be cognized simultaneously. If one mind were illumined by another, as its master, then there would be an endless and absurd progression of cognitions, as well as confusion.

Buddhi and liberation (4.22-4.26): When the unchanging consciousness appears to take on the shape of that finest aspect of mind-field (4.18), then the experience of one's own cognition process is possible. Therefore, the mind field, which is colored by both seer and seen, has the potential to perceive any and all objects. That mind field, though filled with countless impressions, exists for the benefit of another witnessing consciousness, as the mind field is operating only in combination with those impressions.

For one who has experienced this distinction between seer and this subtlest mind, the false identities and even the curiosity about the nature of one's own self come to an end. Then the mind is inclined towards the highest discrimination, and gravitates towards absolute liberation between seer and seen.

Breaches in enlightenment (4.27-4.28): When there are breaks or breaches in that high discrimination, other impressions arise from the deep unconscious. The removal of those interfering thought patterns is by the same means by which the original colorings were removed.

Perpetual enlightenment (4.29-4.30): When there is no longer any interest even in omniscience, that discrimination allows the samadhi, which brings an abundance of virtues like a rain cloud brings rain. After that dharma-meghah samadhi, the colorings of the kleshas and the karmas are removed.

Knowables become few (4.31): Then, by the removal of those veils of imperfection, there comes the experience of the infinite, and the realization that there is almost nothing to be known.

Gunas after liberation (4.32-4.34): Also resulting from that dharma-meghah samadhi (4.29), the three primary elements or gunas (4.13-4.14) will have fulfilled their purpose, cease to transform into further transformations, and recede back into their essence. The sequencing process of moments and impressions corresponds to the moments of time, and is apprehended at the end point of the sequence.

When those primary elements involve, or resolve themselves back into that out of which they emerged, there comes liberation, wherein the power of pure consciousness becomes established in its true nature.