

Kriya Yoga

By Gurani Anjali

One's aim in life is very important. You must have a goal in life. When you have a goal in life, like doing meditation in the morning or evening, you have a destination, a point, a goal. You say "I am going to meditate." That gets you here. The mind has to accept this. But the mind retrieves that point from desire, the desire to be free, the desire to know. So you meditate.

Meditation and *svadhyaya* (self-study) go together. Self-study, like meditation, comes by way of desire. It is also encouraged through the pain in your life. When you have pain and suffering, you have to run someplace for relief. But there is no doctor for mental, spiritual anguish. So you cannot go to a doctor and say "Give me an aspirin, I have spiritual suffering." It won't work. So turn to self-study, from desire, from all the suffering in your life, all the disappointments, disillusionments. You're alone and no one is around you and you are crying all alone. When you see that you will want to know the truth, no matter what the price is. You will say "I have to know it." Self-study.

Through suffering, desire, hearing the words of wisdom, through understanding, one reaches the shores of self-study. But study is something that one has to *do*. It is an activity. It is something that you *have to do*. It is not just something that you *take*. It is something you have to *do*. It is an activity. All of life is an activity. Without activity you cannot exist. There would be non-existence without activity. If I weren't speaking and you weren't listening, then where are you? You are where I am, really, and I am where you are. Can you see that point of consciousness? I think you can get that message. You see all of life is activity. So if I weren't speaking and you weren't listening, this activity wouldn't be. Activity is a very important part of existence, so we must act, or we die. And no one wants to die. That's where the third sutra in *Sadhana Pada* (the second book of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*) comes in. What is it? *Avidya-asmita-raga-dvesha-abhinivesha klesha* (Ignorance, I-am-ness, attraction, aversion, and clinging to life are the afflictions. YS 2.3) That's a fantastic sutra. If you get through this one, you get through everything. What are the *kleshas* (afflictions)? They are ignorance, I-am-ness, attachment, aversion and clinging. These are the afflictions, they are more dangerous than cancer, AIDS, and leprosy — worse than all of these. Worse than a terrible disease in the marrow of your bones. Only the mind can discriminate these afflictions away, and be clean. No doctor can put these afflictions under a microscope and look at them. They cannot find any cure for it. The only cure for it is meditation. *Tapas svadhyaya Ishvara pranidhana kriya yoga* — that is the cure. But how many people do *kriya yoga*? *Kriya Yoga* is action-yoga, selfless action — to do without looking for the rewards, to do without getting a thank you. To do without the fruits of one's actions. Children do that very well. They do that beautifully. Just do for the joy of doing. Do because your life can flower out of it. Don't do it for someone or something. You don't have to have a reason to do selfless work. You just do it. In that joy of doing *kriya yoga*, one becomes aware of *svadhyaya*. In *kriya yoga*, there are many benefits. There is a potent energy in that practice. This first sutra is the cure for all the afflictions. The first sutra is the cure for the third sutra. Easy, right? You must realize that you have these afflictions, *avidya, asmita, raga, dvesha, abhinivesha*. *Avidya* is ignorance. *Asmita* is self-centeredness, "me, me, mine, me, me." *Raga*,

dvesha, and *abhinivesha* are attraction, repulsion and clinging, clinging to life. Just do the first sutra and the third sutra is erased.

This is *Kriya Yoga*. To work selflessly, like a child. The laughter comes out, the joy that is there in the doing. Children love to laugh, they love to play and they love to scatter everything around. Did you ever notice that? They love to scatter everything around. They will go after one thing and a hundred things will go out of place. And we as adults, we love to do the same thing -- don't say you don't, you do. You love to scatter all over. You don't do it, you know, because you are conditioned. Some monster is sitting on you. That is why you cannot scatter things around, there is a monster sitting on you. If you had the chance, you would have the whole room a mess. But children do it with such non-attachment, non-possession, no-thing. They have no-thing. They are not attached to anything, nor can they hold onto anything too long either. Unless they are conditioned to hold. They are told, "Now, watch out, watch out, watch out." And that is how you grew to be so attached, by the conditioning that you got. But there is that other side of you. I cannot stop talking about kids, because they are the greatest, sweetest things in the world. I would love to be there again, wouldn't you? You don't have to worry about paying the bills, or paying your insurance, or your car keys, and all those little identification cards you have.