



## Modern balanced lifestyle with classical Yogic texts

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**Abstract:** *Life balance is one aspect of a happy life. It's not about spending equal time, but quality time in each area of your life. A balanced life requires self-discipline. You have to divide your time so you aren't neglecting family, friends, or self. Since you can't be in all places at once, you limit your time in one area to grasp more. If you neglect one area for too long, it becomes a problem, may you get sick.*

*If you feel happy and healthy most of the time, and your family agrees, you probably balance life well. Even so, it never hurts to consider how you may do better. Ultimately, you need to make time for the people and the things you enjoy, but there is more to it. You need to balance how you spend time on yourself. You are more than a body. You have mind, and soul; they all need equal time.*

*Yoga is a spiritual discipline that brings out harmony through the union of mind and body. Yoga is a solid structure that supports every human to accept nature in mind and adapt to the body. On a scientific perspective, Yoga is proven to bring health benefits to the mind and body in multitudes when performed on a routine basis. In simple words to say, Yoga is more about observing and responding to the cyclic changes that take place in the body due to the internal and external causes.*

*Do you care for your self? Day to day, do you consider your physical health, sleep, nutrition, the air you breathe, and anything you put in your body? You don't have to consume about it; just take care.*

*Here we have few classical yogic texts like Ptanjali Yoga Sutras, Hata Yoga Pradeepika, Bhagavad Gita, Geeranda Samhita. These texts teaches how to maintain balance between body, mind and soul for ULTIMATE.*

### Bhagavad Gita

Gita has cautioned that excess of everything is bad. Extremism is abhorred in Gita. Lord Krishna in shlokas 6.16 and 6.17

*nātyaśhnatastu yogo 'sti na  
chaikāntam anaśhnataḥ  
na chāti-svapna-śhīlasya jāgrato  
naiva chārjuna  
yuktāhāra-vihārasya yukta-  
cheṣṭasya karmasu  
yukta-svapnāvabodhasya yogo  
bhavati duḥkha-hā*

States that those who are in the habit of eating or sleeping too much, or too little, cannot succeed in the practice of yoga. All sorrows of those who are regulated in eating, sleeping, waking and recreation; and perform their duties diligently, are mitigated by the practice of yoga.

Though these two shlokas are placed below the shlokas dealing with the meditation, they are certainly relevant for the yoga as a whole i.e. all the paths of self-realization. Thus, it is



clear that Krishna has recommended moderate approach in every sphere of life — a balance in activities such as eating, sleeping and recreation. As far as action is concerned, it has already been stated in shloka 2.47

*karmany-evādhikāras te mā phaleṣhu kadāchana*

*mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo 'stvakarmaṇi*

that one should never be attached to inaction. What is suggested here in shloka 6.17 is 'yukta cheshtasya karmasu' i.e. making appropriate effort to accomplish work. In other words, making all possible effort but within one's physical and mental capability and also keeping the prevalent circumstances in view. All the sorrows of those who adopt such a regulated life-style are destroyed by such discipline.

Further, Bhagavad Gita has warned that self-discipline should not be confused with self-torture. Krishna has strongly condemned those who harm themselves and others around them, physically and mentally, by torturing their own bodies under the misguided notion of devotion, faith and attaining liberation etc.

In shlokas 17.5 and 17.6

*aśhāstra-vihitam ghoram tapyante ye tapo janāḥ*

*dambhāhankāra-sanyuktāḥ kāma-rāga-balānvitāḥ*

*karṣhayantaḥ śharīra-stham bhūta-grāmam achetasaḥ*

*mām chaivāntaḥ śharīra-stham tām viddhy āsura-niśchayān*

it has been stated that those who are full of hypocrisy and arrogance and who, impelled by the force of lust and attachment, practice

severe austerities not ordained by the scriptures; and thus torture all the physical elements present in their bodies and also the Supersoul, dwelling within the body such men of misled mentality should be known to be the demons. In other words, hard penances conducted with some ulterior motive, under some mistaken belief, as a show off; and without the sanction of the scriptures have not been approved in the Bhagavad Gita. Rigorous austerities such as incessant fasting, walking on burning coals or piercing the body with sharp spikes have strongly been condemned.

#### **Sattvic, Rajasic, and Tamasic Foods**

You are what you eat. If you are free to live a quiet, contemplative life, a sattvic diet is perfect. For those who wish to maintain a meditative mind, but also must live and work in the world, a diet consisting of sattvic and some rajasic foods is best. For those who practice demanding disciplines, like Kundalini Yoga or marital arts, rajasic foods are necessary, along with sattvic foods. For all these lifestyles, tamasic food is best avoided. Sattvic: "Foods dears to those in the mode of goodness increase the duration of life, purify one's existence and give strength, health, happiness and satisfaction. Such foods are juicy, fatty, wholesome, and pleasing to the heart." Bhagavad Gita Those foods which are fresh, whole, natural, of good quality yet mild, neither over nor undercooked are experienced as lending a calm alertness and at the same time a state of quiet energy. Such foods are called sattvic. They are said to nourish the consciousness. They not only provide nourishment for the body, but they do not adversely affect the overall energy state. They add vitality to the total



system by bringing a perfect, harmonious balance of energy states in the food itself. They don't pull energy from the body, they don't weigh it down, they don't make it heavier; neither do they irritate it nor push it beyond its capacity. Rather, they provide a precise balance of nourishment and create no undue experience as sattvic. They are the ones which are likely to give the body lightness, alertness and energy and create a keener consciousness (13, 14). Clarity and lightness Graceful, peaceful, disciplined, intuitive, sensitive. More fruit and vegetables, sun foods, and ground foods

Gita recommends that one should establish a balance between severe asceticism and uncontrolled indulgence. Thus, according to the Bhagavad Gita, the middle path is the golden path.

#### **Patanjali Yoga Sutras:**

The great sage Patanjali's reflections on the philosophy of yoga are well elucidated in the Yoga Sutras. They reveal the interconnection of the body to the mind and the mind to the self. They have a rich theoretical base and are relevant in the modern age. The mad rush and hectic life style of today seems to have distracted mankind from its roots. Man is lost in pursuit of wealth, comfort and technology at the cost of his peace of mind and health. For thousands of years, yoga has been the lighthouse for man's quest for peace and even today it is so. "Yogacittavrittinirodha" literally means the cessations of the modification of the mind/ stoppage of mental modification. Yoga is a way of life. Though it is differently interpreted, yet, in essence it aims at 'Yogacittavrittinirodha', which literally means the cessation of the modifications of the mind/stoppage of

mental modifications. The uniqueness of a human is hidden and yet it can be manifested. The ability to think, the level and state of mind determines the nature of man's life. As the mind so the man. Man has been endowed with the ability to comprehend and utilize the powers of his/her mind. The essence of the sutra is "mind control". Patanjali has clearly brought the implications of the sutras and has suggested number of ways in which the mind can be controlled. Disease of the mind or dis-ease of the mind (Mental Modifications): The very nature of mind is such that it creates confusion, indecisiveness, despairs, restlessness, unhappiness, jealousy, anger etc. These modifications arise because of desires, attachments, love, hate, strong identification with the body and ignorance. A deeper analysis reveals that these arise because of the inputs provided by the senses and a strong attachment to the psychophysical organism. Hence the need for mind control techniques. The mind can be disciplined and trained to reach a calm, peaceful, happy state. Culturing the mind / mind at ease (Cessation of Mental Modifications): The modern man need not aim at cessation of mental modifications, but rather sublimation of the same, because the prevailing conditions demand an alert, active, sharp introspection. The process of culturing the mind to stop its mental modification is very gradual. It requires determination, perseverance, conviction and commitment to achieve the goal. Patanjali's elaboration on the eight limbs of yoga provides a theoretical base as well as suggests ways to practice it. The two sutras which are very appropriate for today's life style are - 1) Sutra No. 33 2) Sutra No. 1 (Patanjali Yoga Sutras Swami Prabhavananda, Ramakrishna Math) Sutra



No.33 “Undisturbed calmness of mind is attained by cultivating friendliness towards the happy, compassion for the unhappy, delight in the virtuous, and indifference towards the wicked.” Sutra No.1 “Austerity, study, and the dedication of the fruits of one’s work to God: these are the preliminary steps towards yoga.” The balance of mind can be restored by the following-by cultivating friendliness towards the happy, compassion for the unhappy, delight in the virtuous and the indifference towards the wicked. The importance of company and man’s associates play an important role in taming the mind. The mind is a bundle of thoughts. It is necessary that it is filled with positive, relaxing thoughts. There are various sources, which provide the food for the mind. 1) Sense-experience, 2) interaction with people, 3) reading etc. The company of the happy and the virtuous and interactions with them will provide positive inputs for the mind. Positive thoughts would gradually bring about the steadiness of mind. The practices of these do not require fixed time slots. The technological advancement feeds the present man with greed and acquisitiveness. The mind is filled with desire for more and more. Unfulfilled desires, thwarted desires lead to anger, frustration and lack of peace of mind. Hence, the need for filling the mind with positive thoughts. The company of the virtuous and happy, in other words, “Satsang” – is that company which provides powerful thoughts which free the mind of confusion and despair. The inputs by means of sense experience and interactions with people can be monitored by one’s discretion. The intellect/Buddhi needs to be sharpened to make the right choice. Can we be indifferent to the

wicked? Yes and No. Yes because we can definitely be more forgiving and try to look at the root cause of such behaviour – perhaps it is unfulfilled desires. No, we cannot ignore the atrocities of the wicked. We need to take the required moral, legal, individual, social stand. The terror filled world today, needs positive thoughts like – “Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu” and “Sarve appi sukhino santu, sarve santu niramaya, sarve bhadrani pashyantu, ma kaschid dukham apnyuyat”. (May everyone be happy, may everyone be healthy, may every one see good, may nobody attain sorrow) such thoughts are possible only in the company of people who are virtuous, happy and compassionate. The mind thus can be at ease. Sutra: “Austerity, study and the dedication of the fruits of one’s work to God: these are preliminary steps towards yoga”. Again, these are integral part of human life. The study of the scriptures as well as the study of that literature which fills the mind with positive thoughts is possible everyday. The daily newspaper bombards us with thoughts which create fear, insecurity, despair, but we can make little effort to look for that which gives hope and happiness to oneself and to others in the same way. For e.g.; reading the Speaking Tree in the Times of India, The Spiritual Quotient in The Economic Times of India, etc. Study can also be interpreted as self introspection or study of oneself. Today man has forgotten himself and appears to be lost in the world of object, hence the need to look within. The moment the mind is focused on understanding oneself/ME it will definitely help one to be more at ease. By accepting oneself with the positive and the negative attributes, one can steady the mind and thereby tap one’s potential. To those who



live a life of activity and are attached to the fruits of one's action, life appears like the pendulum tossing one between dualities. One can control one's mind by dedicating the fruits of action to the Supreme Almighty. A constant remembrance of the Almighty at every step makes it easy to follow this path. It is also essential to have faith in God and understand the relationship between man and God to tread this path. This attitude encourages one to follow the path of right action with total responsibility. In the contemporary scenario, austerity or tapas may be interpreted as the ability to withhold oneself from under-use or over-use of the human body and mind. The stressful lifestyle demands over-use of the body as well as the mind. The required amount of rest for these is hardly available. The ambitious man is overworked and exhausted in his daily life. Therefore to restrain oneself from giving in to one's excessive a material desire is a penance as it involves self-control. For eg; to refrain from excessive talking, constantly listening to sound waves (over-use of ears). Use of discretion before embarking on an activity and choosing that which is conducive for one's progress is again a kind of austerity. Again the mind is guided to be at ease. Conclusion: Can the mind be really at ease or is it really at disease? The practice of the yogic techniques will not only help one to identify and decide the real nature of the mind but also help in keeping the mind at ease. In short, Yoga suggests a number of ways to achieve a calm peaceful mind. To get rid of the disease of the mind, one needs to cultivate the habit to culture the mind. The mind at ease is in a happy frame of mind. Happiness is that state of mind which positively brings about a change in ones

attitude towards oneself, others and life at large. In order to gain the true objective of Yoga, we need to direct the mind from the level of the senses to the intellect, moral and spiritual level. This is possible when we use the body and the mind as instruments that serve us and not be their slaves. Master the mind and be the Mastermind.

### **Hata Yoga Pradeepika and Geeranda Samhita**

What has commonly considered Yoga in the West is in actuality just one of the many paths of Yoga, and is technically called Hatha Yoga. The oldest and most widely used ancient text on the physical practices of Hatha Yoga is the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. As with all ancient spiritual texts, the writing is terse and often mystical, mysterious, and a bit cryptic. As a foundational scripture for yoga, it is important to understand the text's historical context and how it's content has informed and influence the modern practice and understanding of yoga. Many of these teachings and practices are now esoteric and strange, but they are still considered to be powerful techniques that need to be explored if one wishes to find enlightenment through hatha yoga. The Hatha Yoga Pradipika (HYP) is one of the three primary ancient texts on hatha yoga. The other foundational texts are the Gheranda Samhita and Shiva Samhita, which both predate the HYP.

The original name of the text is Hatha Pradipika. Subsequent commentaries and translations began to refer to it as the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, and this is the name it is commonly known as. Pradipika translates as "light" or "to illuminate," so the title is usually translated to "The Light on Hatha Yoga." The Sanskrit prefix "Ha" translates as





“sun”, “Tha” as “moon,” and “yoga” means “union” so the title could also be translated as “The Light on Uniting the Energies of the Sun and the Moon.”

This book was composed in 15th century CE by Swami Swatamarama and is derived from older Sanskrit texts, the teachings from well-known teachers, and from Swatamarama’s own yogic experiences.

Yogic diet is unique in itself, both in terms of quantity, quality and components. Hatha Yoga advocates the consumption of Mitahara, which is described very prominently in Hatha Pradeepika and Gheranda Samhita.

*Sūsnigdha madhurāhāra chatusthāṅśa vivarjitah |*

*Bhujyate śivasampritye mitāhārah sa uchyate ||*

Hathapradipika

#### **Yogic Diet**

*Puṣṭam sumadhuram snigdham gavyam dhātu prapoṣaṇam |*

*manobhilāṣitam yogyam yogī*

*bhojanamācaret ||*

Hathapradipika

That which nourishes, is juicy, soft and balanced in nutrients, makes one feel happy is the diet that should be consumed by a yogi. A diet, which is conducive and co-operative in yoga sadhana and personal upliftment, is yogic diet. A yogic diet helps in keeping the body light, mind fresh and soul activated and prepared for spiritual upliftment. Yoga texts have a wide array of ingredients including crops, vegetables and milk products. It also lists food items which should be prevented from consumption, in order to keep sadhana intact.

#### **Conclusion**

This article aims at enumerating the connections and correlations between

Yogic Components and principles of life style and its relevance in healthy living. It also describes the modern aspects of a balanced and healthy diet and how it is in coherence with the yogic principles of food consumption. An attempt has also been made to enumerate the traditional references and principles of Modern balanced life style.

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