

# The Yoga & Peace of Mind: An analysis of Sri Aurobindo

Srijani Ray

Assistant Professor

Department of Philosophy

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Satabarshiki Mahavidyalaya

**Abstract-** There is a deep connection between Yoga and peace of mind. This connection is also mentioned in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy. The theory of Yoga of Rishi Aurobindo is unique in concept. His Integral Yoga is the union of all the reputed yoga systems of Indian Philosophy. This paper emphasized that the Integral yoga system of Sri Aurobindo can help the mankind to overcome from all the miseries and sufferings also. Not only can that it also transform a person to be a divine person and to help the people to establish the divine life in the world.

**Key Words-** Introduction, Definition of Yoga, Definition of Peace of mind, Significance of Yoga, Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga, Conclusion

## I. Introduction

When we are going to discuss the word Yoga, there are two applications behind it. One is the theoretical approach and the other is the practical outcome. Yoga means the theory we want to follow. Similarly it is the continuous practice to achieve something. Now the question is what is the relevance of Yoga? Why this word is so much the burning issues in today's life? Why are we so much conscious about the implications of Yoga? How can we know about Yoga? There are so many questions for discussions about Yoga.

According to the philosophical point of view Yoga means a lot of guidelines which we have to follow for the betterment of our soul. According to the scientific background yoga means some techniques which we have to practice for the improvement of our body and mind.

We observe international Yoga day on 21<sup>st</sup> June every year. Why is the day celebrated in every year? Why do the people feel the importance of Yoga now a days? For the first time, it was celebrated on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2015. This initiative was taken by the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi by giving an impactful speech related to yoga on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 in the United Nations General Assembly and for this reason on 21<sup>st</sup> June. From that very day it was declared as "International Yoga Day".

## II. What is Yoga?

In Indian philosophy Yoga is a system of philosophy, where the founder of Yoga philosophy Patanjali had expressed that there are two implications of the word Yoga. One is the union or connection between the individual and the eternal soul and the other is Samadhi. In Yoga sutra Patanjali had said that Yoga is the process in which one can destroy all the different waves of mind. According to the Yoga system of Philosophy there is a ladder by which one can attain the ultimate goal of life. That is the union between the individual soul and the eternal soul. The ladder is the eight steps or ways. These are Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Dhrana, Dhyana, Pratyahara and Samadhi. Like the waves of sea there are different waves in our mind. Our mind is surrounded by anger, love, desire, sorrow, joy etc. These are the waves of mind. If our mind is bounded by these waves it can't be connected with the eternal soul. Therefore we have to remove these waves from our mind. To remove these hazards the Yoga system of philosophy had suggested to practise the eight

ways which are called Astangayoga. Here Yama means some rules of prohibitions. Niyama means injunctions to follow some habits and rituals. Asana means postures to control the body. Pranayama means to control the mind by breathing control. Pratyahara means sense withdrawal from its objects. Dharana means concentration of mind to a particular object. Dhyana means meditation. Samadhi means absorption of the self with the object.

According to Yoga system when the different modifications of mind are totally abolished by practise, the process is called Yoga. We can say that it is the union or connection between the individual soul and the eternal soul. Let's explain this. In our daily life we can connect with the different advertisement of worldly affairs. There is a connection between us and the advertisement. But we can't say this is Yoga. Any type of connection or union can't be explained as Yoga. It is the connection of controlling something. When our individual soul is controlled by the eternal soul, we can say that we are in the states of Yoga. When we say that Yoga is Samadhi, we want to focus on the eight ways, by which one can attain the highest goal of life.

There is no controversy between the two implications of the word Yoga. Because when we say that Yoga is union between the two souls, it means the theoretical aspect to reach the ultimate goal of life. And when we say that Yoga is Samadhi, it means the practical aspect to reach the highest goal of life.

### III. What is peace of mind?

Now the question is what is called the peace of mind? It is also may be asked what is the relation between Yoga and Peace of mind? When the mind is free from all the desires of life and also from the worldly affairs we are in the state of peace of mind. In this state there is no desire in the mind. Mind is like the condition of Sthitadhi which is expressed in Srimatbhagabatgita. Mind is full of joy and happiness. We can say we are in the condition of peace of mind. In the Indian system of Philosophy it is believed that Yoga can help us to achieve the peace of mind.

According to most of the Indian systems of philosophy it is believed that the life is full of pain and sufferings. Everyone needs to overcome from this sufferings and troubles. How can we get relief from this sufferings? Actually it is believed in Indian philosophy that the soul is originally free from this troubles. But by the ignorant nature we can forget our originality. If the bondage of ignorance is being removed we can realise our true nature and the soul is getting free. From this analysis it is understood that the individual soul has to free from all the sufferings and to be identical with the eternal soul. How is this possible? This is possible with the help of Yoga.

### IV. Significance of Yoga

I think we are very much aware about the significance of the Yoga. It is not only the way to lead the ultimate destination, but also is important for the total upliftment of an individual in his or her day to day life.

According to Sat Bir Khalsa, assistant professor of Medicine of Harvard Medical School has suggested that Yoga develops our brain functions, our physiological structures of body, breathing capacity, reduce stress, enhance our energy level, work capacity, and maintain well balance throughout our body and mind. Acharya David Frawley, an International Vedic teacher Yoga can help our perception to realise who am I and the nature of ultimate reality. Today we are in the complex situation as because of various diseases such as diabetes, osteoarthritis, cardiac troubles, neurological disorder etc.

To get rid of these diseases we have no permanent solutions except the ancient path of Yoga. Our life can be transformed by the continuous practises of Yoga. There are top nine Yoga Centres and Ashrams all over the India who can teach Yoga as the physical, mental and spiritual well-being. The name of those are Iyengar Yogasraya Mumbai, the Yoga Institute, Mumbai, Kaivalyadhama Yoga and Health Research Center, Lonavala, Ananada in the Himalayans, Uttarakhand, Paramartha Niketan Ashram, Uttarakhand, Isha Yoga

Center, Tamilnaru, Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Dhanwantari, Kerala and Astanga Yoga Research Center, Mysore.

From this analysis it is proved that in the present scenario most of the people are aware about the implications and importance of Yoga. Why it is? As because they have to aware about his self, consciousness and the ultimate reality of the world. Each and every professions like soldiers, doctors, engineers, teachers, management employees, service holders have felt the importance of yoga to achieve success in life.

The question is what is the reason behind this? To discuss this I want to focus the bases of Yoga according to Sri Aurobindo. Actually I want to establish that all the journeys of observations regarding Yoga end to the innovative thoughts of Sri Aurobindo.

## V. Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga

Sri Aurobindo says, "All life is Yoga" in the book Synthesis of Yoga. Modern life says that Yoga is for all the lives. Why Yoga is for all and all life is Yoga? As because according to the Indian philosophical perspectives every individual soul is Sat-Chit and Ananda by its nature and is identical with the eternal soul. But by the domination of ignorance He /She has forgotten its original nature and feel discrimination from the eternal soul. As a result they have lost their identity and mental peace also. They have to bring back their mental peace.

How will it be happen? What is the process by which one can attain his/her mental peace? I want to analyse this questions and come to the conclusion by analysing the Yoga theory of Sri Aurobindo.

At first I have to set the goal of my observations. That is to understand the aim of Yoga. First of all the aim of Yoga is to open the consciousness to the divine and to realize the inner consciousness more and more. We have to focus the inmost psychic so that it can be transformed and getting united with the divine knowledge. The second aim is to develop the Yogic consciousness. It means to become aware of the cosmic being and cosmic forces and be in union with the Divine on all the planes. The third aim is to come into contact with the transcendent Divine beyond the over-mind through the supramental consciousness. It means to make oneself an instrument for the realization of the Divine truth. These aims of Yoga are be described by Sri Aurobindo. To understand His thought we have to analyse the above mentioned observations.

Sri Aurobindo has believed that there are four stages or planes to reach the supermind from mind. These are higher mind, illumined mind, intuitive mind, over-mind and supermind. What is meant by it? The first stage is higher mind. From this stage man can ready to reach the supermind. The second stage is illumined mind. It is a greater force than the higher mind. It is full of spiritual light and power. To reach the divine we have to clean our mind at first. It means we have to remove all the untidy objects like anger, jealousy etc. First of all we have to clean the place to establish the highest good. The illumined mind is such a place which can function accordingly. Next stage is intuitive mind. It is something like "gut instinct", which is itself, a subliminal perception that discriminates itself as a sense that prods one into action. It is the action of the intuition that guides the logical intellect in its steps. The fourth stage is over-mind. Here the consciousness is called cosmic consciousness. People in this stage feel a harmony between the opposites. They can feel the union with the divine God in this stage. It is the highest that man has been able to attain in illumined consciousness. But it is not the place of truth consciousness. It is the direct descent of the supramental consciousness and power. It is the border line between the higher and the lower. Actually it is the intermediate step between the mind and the true divine. The highest stage is called supermind. Supermind in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of integral yoga is the dynamic manifestation of the Absolute. This stage is responsible to transform a man into a divine being. The supermind is the Truth-Consciousness itself. When one can enter into Supermind only at the very end of the sadhana, all the difficulties have disappeared in this stage of realisation.

To understand these stages of mind I want to establish a suitable example in my paper. When I feel an urge to develop my spiritual character I am the stage of higher mind. When I would like to prefer to go to a perfect person who can enlighten me for the spiritual journey, I am in the stage of illumined mind. After the connection with the ideal person I can develop my logical intellect, my creative mind and the sense to perceive the thing as a whole, I am in the stage of intuitive mind. After developing the intellectual perception I am feeling identical with the cosmic world, getting united with the divine God, I am in the stage of over-mind. After feeling united with the divine God and the cosmic world I am totally transformed to the Gnostic being or Divine man, then I am in the stage of supermind.

To establish this journey from mind to Supermind, Sri Aurobindo establish a new theory of involution and evolution process. When the psychic being or lower mind try to reach the supermind or the gnostic being – this is the ascending movement or the process of evolution. Similarly in which process the gnostic being or the transcendental consciousness come to the lower level even in matter, is called the descending movement or the process of involution. There are some steps between this involution and evolution process. These are existence, consciousness-force, bliss, supermind, mind, psyche or soul, life and matter. When the Divine man or the gnostic being starts his journey from existence to matter, it is the process of involution. Similarly when the lower mind or matter try to reach the highest level of consciousness and starts its journey from matter to existence, it is the process of evolution.

Sri Aurobindo is unique to establish the new theory of involution and evolution process and the concept of divine man. He has believed that the lower mind and the matter can be transformed to be a divine man or gnostic being or superman. He also has believed that the superman with his transcendental consciousness has established the divine life in the world in future. When this dream of Sri Aurobindo will be fulfilled, all the problems of world will be solved and discriminations between the individuals will be abolished totally, all the individuals will be united with the superman and the happiness, bliss and mental peace of mind will be flourished throughout the world and the nature of universe.

To incorporate the highest good of mankind and for the sake of universe Sri Aurobindo has introduced his new Yoga system which is called integral yoga or the yoga of transformation. He has believed that with the power of integral yoga the psychic being can bring the transcendental consciousness and gnostic being to the lower level of consciousness and to the matter and be transformed to the superman. Thus the individuals help actively to the nature to establish the divine life within a stipulated time bounding. Therefore they cannot be depend to the nature to establish the divine life. Sri Aurobindo has admitted that yoga is needed to establish the divine life. Here the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo connects with His theory of Yoga. In His book Savitri Sri Aurobindo has proved the interrelation between His philosophical thought and his theory of Yoga. Savitri is the story of conjugal love conquering death. Here Sri Aurobindo has glorified Satyavan as the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself but descended into the grip of death and ignorance. But Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the supreme Truth who comes down and is born to save. Here Satyavan is the symbol of lower level of consciousness who has an urge to reach the highest level of consciousness. Savitri is the symbol of highest level of consciousness who comes to the lower level to transform the lower mind to a superman.

Actually the aim of Sri Aurobindo's Yoga is to work out the will of Divine in the world, to effect a spiritual transformation and to bring down a divine nature and a divine life into the mental, vital and physical nature and life of humanity. Its object is not for personal Mukti, but for the liberation and transformation of the human being. It is not for the personal Ananda, but the bringing down the divine Ananda upon the earth. Actually the individual soul is nityamukta. The bondage of the soul is an illusion to all. For the magic of ignorance we forget the original nature of soul. With the practise of Sri Aurobindo's yoga we can be free and to be a divine man in future. But this is not possible only with the help of Yoga, the grace and permission of God is needed for that. Without the command of divine God no changes can be possible.

Sri Aurobindo's Yoga is Purnayoga, which is not devoted to a particular purpose, even though the purpose be Mukti or Ananda, but to the fulfilment of the divine humanity in ourselves and others. For this purpose the practices of Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga are not sufficient to see all the things as one divine Brahman. To reach this highest level of consciousness self-surrender is also needed. Therefore this purnayoga is also called the yoga of surrender or the integral yoga. This yoga teaches us to see the whole world as one supreme expression of concealed Wisdom, Power and Bliss.

Now I have to analyse the process of this yoga. The first process of the yoga is to make the sankalpa of atmasamarpana. At first we have to put ourselves with all our heart and all our strength into God's hands without any condition or expectation to Him. Then God will grace us. Those person who demand from God, He gives what they demand, but to those who surrender himself totally to the God and demand nothing, He gives everything that they might otherwise have asked or needed and in addition He gives himself and the spontaneous boons of his love.

The next process is we have to stand aside and watch the working of the divine power in ourselves. For this perfect faith is needed. In order to stand aside, we must know ourselves as the Purusha who merely watches to God's work, holds up the Adhar and enjoys the fruits that God gives. We at present are awake, jagrat, in the lower movements but susupta, fast asleep, in the vijnana and Ananda, we have to awaken these levels of consciousness within us and their awakening and unmixed activity is the siddhi of the yoga.

The third process of the yoga is to perceive all things as God. In this realisation the One may seem to be the only reality and everything else Maya, a purposeless and inexplicable illusion. This world is only a play of his being, knowledge and delight, sat, cit and Ananda. Matter is not substance but form of consciousness, guna, and the result of quality of being perceived by sense-knowledge. Matter, life, mind and what is beyond mind, it is all Sri Krishna the Ananta-guna Brahman playing in the world as the Sachchidananda. When we have this realisation, when we dwell in it securely and permanently, all possibilities of grief and sin, fear, delusion, internal strife and pain absolutely from our being.

The best foundation for the surrender of action is the realisation that Prakriti is doing all our actions at God's command and God through our svabhava determines the action. The third stage comes out of the second, by full realisation of God, or of itself by the grace of God.

I have discussed that the general concept of yoga and Sri Aurobindo's concept of yoga in a parallel way. Now I want to discuss the connection between yoga and peace of mind. Though we have discussed that yoga is the process in which one can surrender himself to the ultimate reality of God and is able to bring back the grace of God to the world for the total transformation of a psychic being, now we will see that how this process of Yoga bring the mental peace of a person? It is not possible to make a foundation of yoga, if the mind is restless. Similarly this system of yoga is capable to change the mind in peace. At first to hold the higher level of consciousness in an individual being one can keep quiet his mind. Therefore we can say that the first thing to do in the sadhana is to get a settled peace and silence in the mind. A quiet mind does not mean that there will be no thoughts or mental movements at all. Here actually individual being can feel it's true being. This is not a vacant mind without thought, it is the substance of the mental being that is still, so still that nothing disturb it. To be calm, steady and have patience this quietude of the mind, we can feel the differentiation between the inner Purusa from the outer Prakriti. The next step is to maintain silence in mind. Here one feels it coming down, entering and occupying or surrounding the personal consciousness which then tends to merge itself in the vast impersonal silence.

The words, "peace, calm, quiet, silence" have each their own shade of meaning. Peace means santi, Calm means sthirata, and Quiet means achanchalata and silence means nischala niravata. Quiet is a condition in which there is no restlessness. Calm is a still unmoved condition in which no disturbance can affect. Peace is a condition which carries with it a sense of settled and harmonious rest and deliverance. Silence is a state in which either there is no movement of the mind or vital or else a great stillness which no surface movement

can pierce. At first the peace and calm are not continuous, they come and go, and it usually takes a long time to get them settled in the nature. If we wish to have something beyond the peace and calm, let it be the full opening of the inner being and the consciousness of the Divine power working in you. The wider our consciousness becomes, the more we will be able to receive from above. The divine power or Matrisakti will be able to descend and bring strength and light as well as peace into the system.

Peace is the true remedy where distraction by hard work is only a temporary relief. To feel the peace above and about our head is a first step, we have to get connected with it and it must descend into us and fill our mind and life and body and surround us so that we live in it. For this peace is the one sign of the Divine's presence with us and once we have it, all the rest will begin to come.

At first aspire and pray to the divine mother or the universal mother for quiet in the mind, purity, calm and peace, an awakened consciousness, intensity of devotion, strength and spiritual capacity to face all inner and outer difficulties and go through to the end of the yoga. If the consciousness awakens and there is devotion and intensity of aspiration, it will be possible for the mind, provided it learns quietude and peace, to grow in knowledge. For those who wish to lead the spiritual life, the Divine must always come first, everything else must be secondary. If the person can remain tranquil and undisturbed and continue his sadhana without allowing himself to be inwardly troubled under these circumstances, it will help to give him a much needed strength, for the path of yoga is always beset with inner and outer difficulties and the sadhak must develop a quiet, firm and solid strength to meet them.

To be able to receive the Divine power and let it act through you in the things of the outward life, there are three necessary conditions. These are quietude or equality for all, absolute faith to the divine God and receptivity of the Divine force to the individual being.

Equality is a very important part of this yoga. It is necessary to keep equality under pain and suffering. The silence of the mind does not of itself bring in the supramental consciousness, there are many states or planes or levels of consciousness between the human mind and the Supermind. In the Sri Aurobindo's yoga it is the most favourable condition for the Divine power to descend first upon and then into the individual consciousness.

This Yoga demands a total dedication of the life to the aspiration for the discovery and embodiment of the Divine truth and to nothing else whatever. To achieve this integral yoga the three things are needed. These are faith, aspiration and surrender. Faith means reliance upon God. Aspiration means to keep yourself open to the Divine mother. Surrender means total self-giving to the Divine power.

In this integral yoga the whole principle of faith, aspiration and surrender is to open oneself to the Divine Influence. If the individual becomes conscious of it, he has then to call it down into you. It descends into the mind and into the body as peace, light, force, presence of the Divine and Ananda.

## **VI. Conclusion:**

Now we have to conclude at the end. There is a both side connection between Yoga and Peace of mind. Peaceful mind is needed to practise the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo and to establish the Divine life by the transformation of an individual to the Superman in future. Similarly after the possession of Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga or purnayoga an individual can achieve the mental peace by which he can be transformed to be a Divine man in future. In the contemporary age Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga is very much relevant as because the individual has lost their identity or originality and is united with the corruption and most undesirable situation. To possess the transient life they have lost their mental peace and enhance stress. Those who are conscious about the transient life, come to contact with the spiritual surrender. So I can claim Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga is capable to abolish the stress of mind and bring the mental peace to the individual and helps them to be a Divine man in future.

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