

Yoga and Positive Psychology for Managing Career and Life
Prof. Ashish Pandey
Management Studies and Psychology
Shailesh J. Mehta School of Management
Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay

Kleshas: The Obstacles on the Way of Attaining Wellbeing
Lecture - 50

What is Our Real Nature?

[FL]. Welcome to the 11th session of the course Yoga and Positive Psychology for Managing Career and Life. In the previous sessions we discussed about ways of attaining well being and happiness as described in the Charak Samhita and that is the also a foundation of yogic perspective.

So, we discussed about the tattva bodha, the importance of knowing, importance of winning over our senses, dharmakriya that is directing our activities, day to day activities in harmony with self and social and natural environment and sukhayu, hitayu. We also looked at that these four components are actually self reinforcing, they enforce each other, they facilitate each other.

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**Obstacles on the Way of Attaining Wellbeing and
Means to Surpass those : An Yogic Perspective**

In this session we are going to look at obstacles on the ways of attaining well being and means to surpass those obstacles. We all know that these are the four things which we discussed earlier are if followed we can get the eternal happiness, we can also attain well being, but in spite of knowing

that we many a time not able to pursue that path. Because we face obstacles and most of the obstacles are actually intrinsic obstacles. So, we will talk about what are the intrinsic obstacles and we will also look at what are the ways of surpassing those obstacles.

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What is Our Real Nature?

अथ योगानुशासनम् ॥१.१॥
अथ , योग , अनुशासनम् ॥
Now let's start the discipline of yog.
योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः ॥१.२॥
योगः , चित्त , वृत्ति , निरोधः ॥
Yoga is restraining the mind-stuff(Chitta) from taking various forms(Vrittis),modification.

तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम् ॥१.३॥
तदा , द्रष्टुः , स्वरूपे , अवस्थानम् ॥
at that time - the seer - rests, remaining in His own nature.
वृत्तिसारूप्यम् इतरत्र ॥ १.४ ॥
वृत्ति , सारूप्यम् , इतरत्र ॥
At other times, when not in the state of yoga the seer is identified with the modification.

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To understand the obstacles and ways of surpassing those obstacles in order to attain well being, we need to understand what is the nature of mind, what is our real nature? So, that is where we look at the first four sutras of Patanjali yoga sutra. Patanjali yoga sutra in the first two sentences or sutras gives the very precise definition of yog; it says that yog is anushasan, yog is a discipline and it is about restraining the mind stuff [FL] restraining the mind stuff from taking various forms or vrittis.

In the third and fourth sutra Patanjali rishi mentions what is the outcome, what is the falit of pursuing yog and what is the falit, what is the outcome. It is at that time means once the yog chitta vrittis are controlled or nirudh with the help of yog at that time seer rest remaining in his own nature [FL]. At that time the seer the one who is really performing yog get established in his own nature; what happens when myself is not established in its true real nature, it wanders around.

So, at other time when not in the state of yog it identifies itself the seer which is actually the witness identified with the various modifications. So, actually most of us are more familiar with the

modifications not the real nature of self which is equanimous, which is quiet, which is perfectly calm. So, most of us are not actually aware of it and most of us are most of the time are not in that state; so, we need to understand what are these modifications.

In order to understand the modifications, we need to understand the different states of mind and state of mind is used not in the technically perfect way according to the yogic tradition, because the real self is eternal it is nonfluctuating which is actually purusha. But here we are trying to understand ways of attaining well being; so, we are using more contemporary language, more which is actually more imperfect.

But that which that is used most of the time and that is useful for us to understand the matter. So, what it says that different states of awareness different states of consciousness and these state of consciousness is taken from the Manduk Upanishad these states are mentioned at so many plus places in Vedantic tradition and yogic literature.

So, but Manduk Upanishad very beautifully captures this and very in a very focused way explains these states of consciousness. And in the Upanishad, it says that atma the Brahman has four states, and the fourth state is the real states and that is the ground on which every all other states are reflected. But we can look at this whole aspect of functioning of mind through this perspective and hopefully as we all practice, we can experience what is being stated in the Vedant.

So, in a normal language we can say that human consciousness happens to be at different states and as it is understood in the modern psychology it is in the at the it is at three states. However, in the Vedic tradition as well as in the yogic tradition we also understand in the Vedantic tradition and yogic tradition we also talk about fourth state. So, what are the first three states which modern psychology agrees as well as the Vedantic tradition also mentions.

First state is state of wakefulness; we all are awake, we are delivering lecture or listening to this lecture this is a wakefulness state. In the Manduk Upanishad it is termed as Vaishvanar that is the state where most of the physical transactions take place between body and the world. Deeper to that awakening state is the or subtler than the wakefulness state is a state of sleep when dreams are on. The dreaming phase which is not the deep sleep state is considered to be the second stage or second state of the consciousness.

Subtler than dream state is the deep sleep, this deep sleep is where we do not have self awareness, we are not able to reflect when we are in the deep state when we are in the deep sleep. And this is also a state where Bahya Indris as well as Antarik Indris external senses are anyway closed when we are in the dream state. But in the dream state internal senses anta indriya those are also active that is why in the dream state we listen we see objects or people lot of experiences take place in the dream state.

So, it is considered corresponding to the extrinsic indriyas, external senses sense of a sense of vision or auditory sense or touch all those have their corresponding intrinsic senses as well and those are active in the dream state. In the deep sleep intrinsic senses also do not function are not active. So, these are the three states which modern conscious modern consciousness studies or modern psychology predominantly also consider.

But Vedantic tradition talks about fourth state and that fourth state is even beyond the deep sleep. In that state there is a deep relaxation as relaxed at deep sleep, but also there is an alertness that is the foundation that is the underneath consciousness that is a constant integrated equanimous consciousness which is the playground. In that playground all other vrittis all other mental fluctuations take place that state is called Turiya.

Turiya state is the fourth state, in the modern literature we look at the construct like self transcendence and flow; these two constructs in my understanding are able to indicate they may not be able to completely capture the essence of turiya. But they can indicate what turiya may feel like on a constant integrated continuous (Refer Time: 10:41)

So, turiya is the ultimate objective of yogic practices, even it is experienced for few moments, our perception about life, our approach of dealing with things, dealing with senses, dealing with world get transformed.

There are many many experiential accounts of some of the very well known people, who once have experienced the turiya state after even coming out of the turiya state they do not remain same person. And similar research findings we can see in the self transcendence literature.

In a study conducted by our team we have found that even people have slight glimpse of self transcendence states through yogic practices their helpfulness increases, their level of moral

reasoning increases, their ability to pursue things with more resilience that also increases, their happiness, well-being and flourishing increases.

So, turiya is not totally unattainable by the people the normal people like all of us, only thing is we can with the practice can have some glimpse of it. And even that glimpse even that experience for few moments can have major positive impact on our overall well-being and overall happiness levels.

There are at least three very popular meditation techniques which can help people to experience and to get glimpse of this turiya state, transcendental meditation taught by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and his organization. That is probably very widely researched techniques of the amongst the yoga practices. And the description about those that technique seems to be indicating that people are able to experience something which is deeper and more relaxing than the deep sleep.

So, I infer that that is the implication that; so, that is the glimpse of turiya state. Art of living foundation teaches Sahaj Samadhi Yog that also seems to be of the similar approach Isha Yoga Foundation teaches Shoonya meditation that also has similar experience as reported by people who are practicing TM means Transcendental Meditation and that seems to me the indication or the glimpse of the turiya state.