

**Yoga and Positive Psychology for Managing Career and Life**  
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**Food as the First Intervention for Managing Self**  
**Lecture - 63**  
**Spiritual Significance of Food**

[FL]. Welcome to the 14th session of this course Yoga and Positive Psychology for Managing Career and Life. Today we are going to look at very important aspect of the intervention that is Food. If you recall in the last session we discussed about three pillars of good health, those are nutrition that is ahar, sleep or swapno, brahmacharya or self-control.

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A Quick Recap: **Ashtang Yoga and Three Pillars of Health**

**The Three Pillars of Health**

- Yama: Universal laws, Ahimsa-Satya-Asteya-Brahmcharya-Aparigraha
- Niyama: Social and personal observances; Saucha-Santosh-Tapah-Svadyaya-Ishwar Pranidhan
- Asana: Physical postures
- Pranayama: Regulation of vitality through breath
- Pratyahara: Withdrawal of senses from external world
- Dharana: Effortful, focused attention, concentration
- Dhyana: Meditation, effortless, perpetual flow of attention
- Samadhi: self-transcendence and ecstasy

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We also discussed 8 limbs of yoga yam, niyam, asan, pranayam, pratyahar, dharana, dhyam, samadhi. If you look at these 8 limbs yam, niyam are psychosocial interventions; asan and pranayam are psychophysical interventions; pratyahar is also mostly a psychological intervention which has some remnants at the physical level dharana, dhyam, samadhi are predominantly psychological and spiritual interventions.

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### Quick Recap: Interventions for Managing Self and Career

Annamaya Kosh	Pranamaya Kosh	Manomaya Kosh	Vijnanmaya Kosh	Anandmaya Kosh
Ahar (Food)	Pranayam	Yama, Niyam	Purpose	Dhyan
Asanas		Chittaprasad	Karm Yoga	Samadhi
		Managing negative emotion like Fearfulness, Anxiety, Dependence, Sentimentality	Dharna Dhyan	
		Pratyahaar		

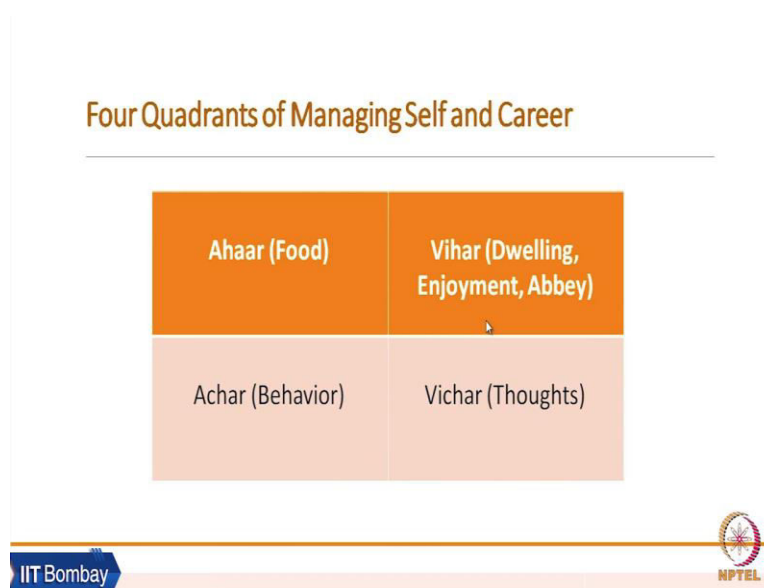
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So, based on these insights of Ayurved and notion of self and 8 limbs of yog. So, we have identified a set of interventions which we are going to look at in this course. So, on the annamaya kosh we are going to look at ahar and asanas as predominant interventions. On the pranamay kosh we will discuss pranayam, for manomaya kosh based intervention we will look at yam, niyam, chittaprasad, managing negative emotions, how to use the positive psychology and yog for managing negative emotions.

We will also look at pratyahar, prati ahar that is enjoying within going within for the true enjoyment. At vijnanmay kosh the interventions we are going to discuss are meaning and purpose in life, practice of karm yoga, dharana and dhyan. And anandmaya kosh has the interventions like dhyan and Samadhi. We are not going to discuss samadhi in this course, but we are going to have discussion up to the level of dhyan.

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A different quadrants of good life are summarized in these 4 aspects ahaar, vihar, achar, vichar. These are the two sets of the life experiences or life activity are also used as the reflection of the basic quadrants of good life or healthy life that naturally has implication on success in the career. If I have healthy body and mind naturally, I will be able to perform best in my career.

So, the four quadrants of managing self and career can also be summarized in the form of ahaar, vihar, achar and vichar. Ahaar is food, vihar is dwelling with whom we hang out, where we go what kind of enjoyment we pursue, what are the things which we enjoy, these are the different aspects of vihar.

Achar is behavior. What should be our behavior? Our behavior also determines quality of our life and foundation of all this is vichar thoughts. So, other than the three pillars which we discussed in the previous session that is nidra, brahmacharya and ahar. These four quadrant can also referred as a quick heuristic to look at whether I am leading my life towards the nishreyas towards the preyash or towards the shreyas.

You might recall, shreyas is that path which is wholesome, which is good in the long run and preyash is that path which looks very exciting alluring or sometimes tempting in the beginning. But long term result of that path is not wholesome, not joyful for us and for the people around us.

So, these this heuristic can also give us inside whether am I pursuing the path of shreyas or path of preyash.

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**Anna (Food) in Brahman**  
**annaṃ brahmeti vyajānāt**




पञ्चकोशान्तःस्थितब्रह्मनिरूपणम्  
अन्नं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । अन्नाद्येष्वेव खल्विमानि भूतानि  
जायन्ते । अन्नेन जातानि जीवन्ति । अन्नं  
प्रवृत्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति । तद्विज्ञाय ।  
पुनरेव वरुणं पितरमुचुससा । अपौहि भगवो ब्रह्मेति ।  
ताहोवाच ।  
तपसा ब्रह्म विजिज्ञास्व । तपो ब्रह्मेति । स तपोऽतप्यत ।  
स तपस्तपवा ॥ १ ॥

इति द्वितीयोऽनुवाकः ॥

pañcakośāntahsthitabrahmanirūpaṇam  
annaṃ brahmeti vyajānāt . annādध्येva khalvimāni  
bhūtāni jāyante . anneṇa jātāni jīvanti .  
annam pravyūtyabhisamvīśantī . tadvijñāya .  
punareva varuṇam pitaramuśasaśā .  
adhāhi bhagavo brahmeti . taghováca .  
tapasā brahma vijjīṅśasva . tapo brahmeti .  
sa tapo'tapyeta . sa tapastapava ... 1. .iti dvitīyo'nuvākah ...

Bhṛigu learnt that Food is Brahman because it is from food that all these beings are born; by food when born, do they live, and having departed, into food they enter. Having known that, he approached his father Varuṇa and said: 'Revered Sir, teach me Brahman.' Varuṇa told him: 'with rigour (Tapas) seek thou to know Brahman. Tapas is Brahma. He performed Tapas and having performed Tapas...

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Today's session is primarily about food. Food in the yogic tradition and Ayurvedic tradition is not only source of energy, it is not only a means to nurture our physical body, food in our tradition has a emotional, spiritual and social significance as well. That is why in our tradition we human beings are not supposed to indulge into bakshan not just mere act of eating.

Prasad is the ultimate form of food, prasad is that which is prepared with the reverence, that which is taken after sharing with others and that which is first offered to the universal being and from there, we take our share that is prasad. So, the ideal of the food in this tradition is not bakshan, but taking prasadam.

The spiritual significance of food is very beautifully reflected in the bhrigu valli in the Taittiriya Upanishad. The story in the Taittiriya Upanishad goes that there is a very bright disciple Bhṛigu and his father is Varun. Bhṛigu apparently completed his education came back home and Varun the father asked him how was it and Bhṛigu said that was wonderful I have learned lot of things.

And then Varun asked have you learned something after knowing which nothing is left to be known that made Bhṛigu little (Refer Time: 06:47) because he said that this kind of topic did not

occur after knowing which nothing is left to be known. And then the Varun explains that in our tradition, in our family people are called Brahman, the people who understand who have experienced the brahman the ultimate reality and also you also must know that then only you will be the worthy of progeny of the ancestor who were brahma jnani in our family.

So, Bhrigu became a disciple to his own father, asked him to direct him in on the path of self-realization or brahma jnan. And father said to him that, go and follow yamas and niyamas, do tap and with the tap you will get insight. So, the first insight Bhrigu got after the tapas after the rigorous life and rigorous thinking that is reflected in the in this mantra which says that [FL].

So, [FL] I know ann as brahma. [FL] because through the ann only all bhuthas, all organisms originate. [FL] and they are able to sustain their life only with the ann. So, that was his first insight. So, this is also a sutra where the notion of panch kosha is established, human self is nothing but the encased aspect of brahman and that encased is of ann, of man, of vijijan, of pran.

So, we discussed about the panch kosha model of self earlier. This is the sutra from there the origin of panch kosha model happens. And ann is identified as the first layer of self. Physical body we all know is made up of ann. So, naturally that is accepted as the first layer of self.

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## Relation with Food is Sacred in Yoga



ओम् यन्तु नदयोः वर्षन्तु पर्जया सुपिप्पला ओषधयोः भवन्तुः ।  
अन्नवताम् ओदनवताम् मामिक्षवताम् एशाम् राजा भूयासन् ॥  
ओदन् मुत्स्रवते परमेष्ठीवा एषः यदोदनः । परमाभेवेनम् त्रियंगमयति ॥ May the rivers flow and the clouds give rain. May the plants yield good harvest. May I become the king of all those having plenty of food, boiled rice, curd and milk. Food is praiseworthy. This food is verily Brahma the creator. This will lead to the greatest prosperity in the form of health and wealth.

ब्रह्मर्पणं ब्रह्महविर्ब्रह्मार्ग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् । ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥१॥ (भगवद् गीता)  
This ladle (used for offering ghee in Havan Kund) is Brahma; the offering is Brahma. It is being offered by Brahma in the fire of Brahma. The destination to be attained through this Brahma Karma Samadhi is also Brahma.

Bhrigu actually went on doing tapas and keep on coming with the newer new insight and that is how the other layers of the self are identified in this Upanishad. We are going to talk about those other insights in the in the later sessions. Coming back to our discussion with the food there is a clear understanding and appreciation in the Vedic literature that ann what we are eating is result of the whole cosmic system operating in certain way.

So, the food on my plate is not only my earning or my catch, food in my plate is given by the universal order, it is universal order through which food is made available to me. And that is beautifully captured in the bhojan mantra. I learned this bhojan mantra in my school in (Refer Time: 10:22) mandir.

And this bhojan mantra goes like [FL], may the rivers flow and clouds give rain that is the first source of aan, may the plants yield good harvest then the plant it is only through the rivers and with the through the clouds, plants, get nourishment and they give good harvest. So, may I become the king of all those having plenty of food boiled, rice, curd and milk. Food is praiseworthy.

[FL] this food is verily brahman the creator. This will lead to greatest prosperity in the form of health and wealth. So, before taking food we invoke gratitude to the whole universe because it is because of the river, clouds, rains, plants and people working to harvest all that we are we have got food in our plate.

Spiritual aspect of food is also reflected in Bhagavad-Gita where Sri Krishna explained that [FL]. This lately used for offering ghee in the yagna is brahma, offering is brahma, it is being offered by brahma in the fire of brahma, the destination to be attained through this brahma karm samadhi is also brahma.

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## Relation with Food is Sacred in Yoga

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।  
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ 14॥

It is I who take the form of the fire of digestion  
in the stomachs of all living beings, and combine  
with the incoming and outgoing breaths,  
to digest and assimilate the four kinds of foods.

ॐ प्राणाय स्वाहः Om Praanaaya Swaha  
ॐ अपानाय स्वाहः Om Apaanaaya Swaha  
ॐ व्यानाय स्वाहः Om Vyaanaaya Swaha  
ॐ उदानाय स्वाहः Om Udaanaaya Swaha  
ॐ समानाय स्वाहः Om Samaanaaya Swaha

[FL] that is the next verse in the bhojan mantra which says that it is I who take form of fire of digestion in the stomach of all living beings and combined with the incoming and outgoing breath to digest and assimilate the four kinds of food. And after that in the bhojan mantra it is said [FL] om praanaaya swaha, om apaanaaya swaha, om vyaanaaya swaha, om udaanaaya swaha, om samaanaaya swaha. Praan, apan, vyaan, udaan, samaan these are the five dimensions of pranam.

We are going to talk about pranamaya kosh, we have already have some discussion about the pranamaya kosh. We can have some interventions at pranamaya kosh and there again we are going to talk about these five types of pranas, what this shloka suggest? It is the universal power which is behind the power of digestion of food, that is vaishwanar agni. So, this is the reflection of notion of food in yogic tradition and in the Indian tradition.