

# SUMMARY OF THE SYSTEM OF RĀJA YOGA AS OUTLINED BY PATAÑJALI IN THE FIRST BOOK OF HIS YOGA SŪTRAS (sūtras 1–51)

1) **Nature and purpose of yoga** (1–4). Yoga is the stopping of the automatic and mechanical activity of envelope consciousness. The aim of the yogi when doing so is to attain samādhi, the highest stage of the process, that stage for which the seven preceding ones are to be regarded as mere preparation, for “yoga is samādhi” (from Vyāsa’s commentary on YS 1:1). When the envelope activity has thus been stopped, the seer (the monad) remains in himself; otherwise he is identified with envelope activity.

2) **Five kinds of envelope activity** (5–11). This envelope activity, which is to be stopped, is of five kinds and is connected, or not connected, with certain factors that limit consciousness and curtail the individual’s freedom. Those five kinds are right knowledge, erroneous objective perception (false perception), erroneous subjective conception (false conception), dreamless sleep, and memory. There are three sources of right knowledge: experience, reliable authority, and correct conclusion from the aforementioned two. Erroneous perception is false knowledge that does not correspond to its object. Erroneous conception depends on mere learning of words and has no basis in reality. Dreamless sleep is envelope activity the object of which is a state where the conceiving consciousness is absent. Memory is the preservation of experience had.

3) **How the yogi should do it** (12–16). He should stop the automatic and mechanical activity of the envelopes through exercise and non-identification. When he does the exercise for a long time without interruption and devotedly, it gains a firm foundation. Non-identification is the yogi’s empowering awareness of not thirsting after sensuous objects, whether those which he has experienced himself or those mentioned in the scriptures. There is a highest kind of non-identification, namely absence of thirst after the objects of the three guṇas (the three guṇas are the sum total of material energies in worlds 45–49).

4) **The two main kinds of samādhi: samprajñāta and asamprajñāta** (17–20). Samprajñāta (or samādhi “with seed”) is the kind of samādhi that is accompanied by mental, causal, essential (46), or superessential (45) consciousness expression. Asamprajñāta (or samādhi “without seed”) is the kind of samādhi that is obtained when all envelope activity has ceased and only latent impressions remain; the yogi reaches that kind of samādhi by constantly exercising non-identification, by faith, energy, self-remembrance, (successively higher kinds of samprajñāta) samādhi, and insight. Others have this kind of samādhi as a state conditioned by their being (since they lack envelopes of lower kinds of matter).

5) **Individual differences as to the intensity of the will to liberation** (21–22). Samādhi is attained in the quickest way by those who have an intensive will to liberation, but even within this group of intensive ones there are differences between weak, average, and exceedingly strong individuals.

6) **Devotion to the Lord as a means to the attainment of samādhi. About the Lord** (23–29). The Lord is a particular (puruṣa =) monad, who is unassailed by suffering, bad sowing and reaping, and the latent impressions thereof. In him exists the supreme seed of omniscience. Thanks to his unceasing presence he is the teacher of the earlier teachers. His designation is the sacred syllable AUM, which the yogi should repeat and on the meaning of which he should meditate. From his devotion to the Lord the yogi obtains individual (causal) consciousness and the removal of the hindrances.

7) **Nine kinds of envelope distractions as hindrances to samādhi and the means against them** (30–39). Disease, inertia, doubt, negligence, laziness, identification, false views, inability to reach higher states, and inability to maintain oneself in them – these distractions by

envelope consciousness are the hindrances. Grief, despondency, restlessness of the body, inhalation and exhalation accompany these distractions. The following means of counteracting these distractions are indicated: Concentration on one single principle. By cultivating shared joy with others in their happiness, compassion with them in their suffering, delight in their virtues, and disregard of their faults and failings one reaches peace and serenity of mind. Mental consciousness is stabilized in the following six ways: by exhaling and holding one's breath; by activating higher objective consciousness; by that higher state of consciousness which is free from sorrows and is called "resplendent"; by that higher state of consciousness which is free from desire; by directing attention at a state of consciousness which has been obtained in a dream or in dreamless sleep; by directing attention to whatever one has found suitable.

8) **Results of successful stopping of envelope activity by means of samādhi "with seed"** (40–41). When mental consciousness has once been stabilized, its control of attention extends from the smallest to the greatest things. When mechanical envelope activity is reduced, consciousness assumes, like a transparent jewel, the qualities of that which it is observing, whether this is the observer, the observation or the the object of observation.

9) **Different kinds of samādhi with seed** (42–50). There is a kind of samādhi where the word, the object, and the knowledge of it are united. This meditation is called savitarkā samāpatti. When memory is purified, consciousness is emptied of its own nature (of mirroring what it observes), as it were, and only the very object remains in consciousness. This is called nirvitarkā samāpatti. Through this (nirvitarkā samāpatti), such savicāra och nirvicāra contemplation is explained as is directed to objects of subtle matter. And when meditation on objects of subtle matter is extended to such of ever higher kinds, it reaches the undetermined (or the unmanifested). Only these kinds of contemplation are such with seed. According as one acquires skill in nirvicāra, one partakes of that stillness and serenity which result from the contact with ātma. The insight attained in that state is truth-bearing. And that insight differs from such knowledge as is obtained by hearsay or inference, since it concerns the objects in their concrete reality. The impression which is received through such an insight and becomes latent counteracts the production of other impressions.

10) **Samādhi without seed** (51). When even this activity has been stopped, all envelope activity has been stopped, and samādhi without seed is obtained.

#### Certain terms used in rāja yoga and their hylozoic equivalents

citta, kāma		48
citta, manas, (sa)vitarka	}	47:4-7
(sa)vicāra, nirvitarka		47:1-3
ānanda, nirvicāra, buddhi		46
asmitā, ātma		45
	asamprajñāta, nirbīja (without seed)	44 and higher

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