

## Empty Mind ? Open Heart

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**An Empty Mind ? The Final Transformation** In October and November, we explored *Yoga Sutra-s* (YS) I, 12-16: how to arrive and stay at a place of being centred, focussed, grounded (*nirodhah*), the precursor to experiencing that state called *Yoga*.

For the last 2 weeks, we have been exploring the step by step process of transformation (YS I, 17), leading to Self-Mastery (*samprajn?ta?*).

This week, in YS I,18, Patanjali tells us that there is something beyond this process of transformation - an empty mind.

### **Patanjali?s Yoga S?tra-s (YS) I-18**

Vir?ma(full stop)-pratyaya(contents of mind) abhy?sa(practice)-p?rva?(previous) samsk?ra(deep-seated patterns of behaviour)-?e?a?(left behind) anya?(beyond that)

Beyond that previous practice (YS I,17), you will eventually experience an empty mind though you will still retain the essential samsk?ra-s(behaviours) needed for survival.

**Beyond Practice ? Form to Formless** In YS I, 17, we learned about the steps leading to Self-Mastery (*Samprajn?ta?*). In today?s sutra, we move beyond that Mastery to *Asamprajn?ta?*. These are two stages of Sam?dhi (Enlightenment, Self-Realization): *Samprajn?ta?* and *A samprajn?ta?*

In the first stage of Enlightenment (*Samprajn?ta?* YS I, 17), we are still practicing something. We are focusing our minds on a particular Yoga practice (*abhy?sa*) be it basic (*vitarka* YS I, 17), or refined (*vic?ra* YS I, 17). We are still focusing on a form to bring us to the formless.

In the second stage of Enlightenment (*Asamprajnata*? YS I, 18), we move beyond practicing something. We start to experience an intuitive, spontaneous knowing that is not dependent on the mind but beyond the mind. This is the most refined level of practice (*abhyasa*), where all practices cease to become necessary. We rest in that joyful state of knowing that is not based on the mind and its contents.

**Beyond the Mind ? Intuition** In this state of beyond the mind, we start to experience intuition, which is not dependent on logic - the knowing of this, that, these, and those. In this state, we no longer need to concentrate the five cognitive processes of the mind (*vr̥tti-s*, YS I,2) to become grounded and centred (*nirōdhah* YS I,2). We spontaneously and effortlessly experience the non-dual (*Advaitan*) state of *Sat Cit ?nanda* ? Changeless Truth, Pure Awareness, and Endless Joy!

**How Intuition Speaks** Our intuition speaks to us in many different ways. It comes through special dreams, spontaneous insights, or experiences of synergy, beyond our control. For me, my deepest experience of this, was through a dream. I dreamt that I was at the source of the Ganges in Rishikesh, India. I was flowing down the river at a rapid rate, being flung here and there, with my arms stretched out overhead. At times, a vehicle (a Yoga practice, an idea, a situation, a person?) would come to support me temporarily only to dissolve, one after another. I held onto surf boards and boats of all shapes and sizes until I finally found myself in a paper sailboat, which quickly dissolved out of my reach. After that, I finally surrendered to the Flow of Life, the Ganges. With arms stretched out overhead, I gave up, and continued down with River (Life), without a vehicle, without a practice, and absolutely Free!

**Yoga S?tra Questions** What are you holding onto in your life that is holding you back from Freedom? What is your intuition showing you through your dreams, insights, or experiences?

**S?tra Sunday will be on holidays for the rest of December. Happy Holidays filled with spontaneous experiences of Joy!**

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