

MINDFULNESS, MEDITATION *and* RAJA YOGA

A SEMINAR AT THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS

SATURDAY 25TH JUNE 2016

3pm - 6.15pm



"Let us meditate on that which is in us as the Highest Self, concentrate upon it, and will to work for it as dwelling in every human heart."

~ **William Q. Judge, "Meditation, Concentration, Will"** ~

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Raja Yoga's Preliminary Training

In order to understand the system expounded in this book it is also necessary to admit the existence of soul, and the comparative unimportance of the body in which it dwells. For Patanjali holds that Nature exists for the soul's sake, taking it for granted that the student believes in the existence of soul. Hence he does not go into proof of that which in his day was admitted on every hand. And, as he lays down that the real experiencer and knower is the soul and not the mind, it follows that the Mind, designated either as "internal organ," or "thinking principle," while higher and more subtle than the body, is yet only an instrument used by the Soul in gaining experience, just in the same way as an astronomer uses his telescope for acquiring information respecting the heavens. But the Mind is a most important factor in the pursuit of concentration; one indeed without which concentration cannot be obtained, and therefore we see in the first book that to this subject Patanjali devotes attention. He shows that the mind is, as he terms it, "modified" by any object or subject brought before it, or to which it is directed.

William Q. Judge, Preface to the Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali, p. xi

Concentration, or Yoga, is the hindering of the modifications of the thinking principle. . . .

The practices which are conducive to concentration are eight in number: Forbearance, Religious Observances, Postures, Suppression of the breath, Restraint, Attention, Contemplation, and Meditation.

Forbearance consists in not killing, veracity, not stealing, continence, and not coveting.

These, without respect to rank, place, time, or compact, are the universal great duties.

Religious Observances are purification of both mind and body, contentment, austerity, inaudible mutterings, and persevering devotion to the Supreme Soul.

*The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali, Book I:2, II:29-32
(William Q. Judge rendition)*

Who is Meditating? And Why?

Meditation is silent and *unuttered* prayer, or, as Plato expressed it, "the ardent turning of the soul toward the divine; not to ask any particular good (as in the common meaning of prayer), but for good itself - for the universal Supreme Good" of which we are a part on earth, and out of the essence of which we have all emerged. Therefore, adds Plato, "remain silent in the presence of the *divine ones*, till they remove the clouds from thy eyes and enable thee to see by the light which issues from themselves, not what appears as good to thee, but what is intrinsically good."

H. P. Blavatsky, "The Key to Theosophy" p. 10-11

We would say that the lower man [i.e. Physical Body, Astral Body, Life Principle, The Passions and Desires] is a composite being, but in his real nature is a unity, or immortal being, comprising a trinity of Spirit, Discernment, and Mind which requires four lower mortal instruments or vehicles through which to work in matter and obtain experience from Nature. This trinity is that called *Atma-Buddhi-Manas* in Sanskrit, difficult terms to render in English. *Atma* is Spirit, *Buddhi* is the highest power of intellection, that which discerns and judges, and *Manas* is Mind. . . . The *Real Man* is the trinity of *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*, or Spirit and Mind, and he uses certain agents and instruments to get in touch with nature in order to know himself. These instruments and agents are found in the lower Four - or the Quaternary - each principle in which category is of itself an instrument for the particular experience belonging to its own field, the body being the lowest, least important, and most transitory of the whole series.

William Q. Judge, "The Ocean of Theosophy" p. 32, 34

Manas - a dual principle in its functions. Mind, Intelligence: which is the higher human mind, whose light, or radiation links the MONAD [i.e. Atma-Buddhi], for the lifetime, to the mortal man. The future state and the Karmic destiny of man depend on whether *Manas* gravitates more downward to *Kama rupa*, the seat of the animal passions, or upwards to *Buddhi*, the Spiritual Ego.

H. P. Blavatsky, "The Key to Theosophy" p. 92

Some men by meditation, using contemplation upon the Self, behold the spirit within, . . ."

Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, Ch. 13, p. 97
(William Q. Judge rendition)

Theosophical & Buddhist Meditation Samatha, Metta, Vipassana

"Esoteric philosophy reconciles all religions, strips every one of its outward, human garments, and shows the root of each to be identical with that of every other great religion. It proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in nature. . . . Indeed, the secret portion of the "*Dan*" or "*Jan-na*"* ("*Dhyan*") of Gautama's metaphysics - grand as they appear to one unacquainted with the tenets of the Wisdom Religion of antiquity - are but a very small portion of the whole.

* *Dan*, . . . is the general term for the esoteric schools, and their literature. In the old books, the word *Janna* is defined as "to reform one's self by meditation and knowledge," a second *inner* birth. Hence *Dzan*, *Djan* phonetically, the "Book of *Dzyan*."

H. P. Blavatsky, "The Secret Doctrine" Vol. 1, Introductory, p. xx

. . . the lofty ideal of primitive Buddhism . . . this ideal is identical with that of the T.S. [i.e. Theosophical Society] The very essence of the position taken up by the T.S. is that it asserts and maintains the truth common to all religions; the truth which is true and undefiled by the concretions of ages of human passions and needs. But though Theosophy means Divine Wisdom, it implies nothing resembling belief in a personal god. It is *not* "the wisdom of God," but *divine* wisdom. The Theosophists of the Alexandrian Neo-Platonic school believed in "gods" and "demons" and in one *impersonal* ABSOLUTE DEITY.

H. P. Blavatsky, "The Theosophical Society: Its Mission and Its Future" (article)

The height of concentration is possible to us, but not on a selfish basis. . . . True concentration is, first of all, a position assumed out of regard for the end in view of union with the Higher Self. That is the highest *Yoga*. Concentration upon the Self is true concentration. And concentration must be attained before we can ever reach that stage where eternal knowledge of every kind is ours to the last degree; before we shall once more resume and wield those powers which are the heritage of all.

Robert Crosbie, "Culture of Concentration" (article)

Mindfulness: A Modern Term for an Ancient Practice

Vigilance is the path to Life Eternal. Thoughtlessness is the path to death. The reflecting vigilant die not. The heedless are already dead.

The wise distinctly understand this. Therefore they delight in wakeful watching.

Buddha in the Dhammapada, Chapter 2 ("Vigilance") 1-2

For mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy Mind and Soul.

*"The Voice of the Silence" p. 28, translated by H. P. Blavatsky
from the Book of the Golden Precepts*

The condition of the soul when it lives for the life of sensation as distinguished from that of knowledge, is vibratory or oscillating, as distinguished from fixed.

"Light on the Path" p. 47, recorded by Mabel Collins from an Adept

Just as a fletcher makes straight his arrow, the wise man makes straight his crooked thinking. This is difficult to guard. This is hard to restrain. . . .

Thinking is difficult to discipline. Mind is flighty, alighting where it listeth. Good is to tame it. The tame mind is the bearer of happiness.

Buddha in the Dhammapada, Chapter 3 ("Mind") 1, 3

Thou hast to reach that fixity of mind in which no breeze, however strong, can waft an earthly thought within. Thus purified, the shrine must of all action, sound, or earthly light be void; . . . Have mastery o'er thy thoughts, O striver for perfection, if thou would'st cross its threshold. Have mastery o'er thy Soul, O seeker after truths undying, if thou would'st reach the goal.

*"The Voice of the Silence" p. 67, 64 translated by H. P. Blavatsky
from the Book of the Golden Precepts*

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RECOMMENDED READING

The Voice of the Silence - translation by H. P. Blavatsky - £7.50 (hardback), £1.25 (paperback)

The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali - rendition & commentary by William Q. Judge - £5.00 (hardback), £2.00 (paperback)

The Bhagavad Gita - rendition by William Q. Judge - £8.00 (U.S. edition), £2.25 (Indian edition)

The Dhammapada - £6.00 (U.S. edition), £2.00 (Indian edition)

Mind-Control - ULT Pamphlet #12 (articles by Damodar & William Q. Judge) - 50p

Culture of Concentration - ULT Pamphlet #18 (articles by William Q. Judge) - 50p

Universal Theosophy - 30 articles by Robert Crosbie - £2.25

HELPFUL HINTS

Beware of taking the exoteric works on Yoga literally. They all require a key.
(H. P. Blavatsky, "Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge" p. 141)

Raja Yoga encourages no sham, requires no physical postures. It has to deal with the inner man whose sphere lies in the world of thought. To have the highest ideal placed before oneself and strive incessantly to rise up to it, is the only true concentration recognized by Esoteric Philosophy which deals with the inner world of *noumena*, not the outer shell of *phenomena*.

The first requisite for it is thorough purity of heart. Well might the student of Occultism say, with Zoroaster, that purity of thought, purity of word, and purity of deed - these are the essentials of one who would rise above the ordinary level and join the "gods." A cultivation of the feeling of unselfish philanthropy is the path which has to be traversed for that purpose. For it is that alone which will lead to Universal Love, the realization of which constitutes the progress towards deliverance from the chains forged by Maya around the Ego.

(Damodar K. Mavalankar, "Contemplation" article)

Raja-Yoga (*Sanskrit*). The true system of developing psychic and spiritual powers and union with one's *Higher Self* - or the Supreme Spirit, as the profane express it. The exercise, regulation and concentration of thought. Raja-Yoga is opposed to Hatha-Yoga, . . .

(H. P. Blavatsky, "Theosophical Glossary" p. 275, entry for "Raja Yoga")

Real ecstasy was defined by Plotinus as "the liberation of the mind from its finite consciousness, becoming one and identified with the infinite." This is the highest condition, . . . but not one of permanent duration, and it is reached only by the very *very* few. It is, indeed, identical with that state which is known in India as *Samadhi*. The latter is practised by the Yogis, who facilitate it physically by the greatest abstinence in food and drink, and mentally by an incessant endeavour to purify and elevate the mind.

(H. P. Blavatsky, "The Key to Theosophy" p. 10)

By setting aside a *particular* time for meditation, a habit is formed, and, as the time comes round, the mind will after a while become trained, so that meditation at the particular time will become natural. Hence, it will be well for you to keep to the same hour as far as possible.

(William Q. Judge, "Letters That Have Helped Me" p. 121)

I advise you to discontinue concentration on the vital centres [i.e. the chakras], which again may prove dangerous . . . You have learnt, to a certain degree, the power of concentration, and the greatest help will now come to you from concentration upon the Higher Self, and aspiration toward the Higher Self. Also, if you will take some subject or sentence from the Bhagavad Gita, and concentrate your mind upon that and meditate upon it, you will find much good result from it, and there is no danger in such concentration.

(William Q. Judge, "Letters That Have Helped Me" p. 115)

Dharana is the intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon some one interior object, accompanied by complete abstraction from everything pertaining to the external Universe, or the world of the senses.

(H. P. Blavatsky, footnote on p. 1 of "The Voice of the Silence")

You cannot develop the third eye. It is too difficult, and until you have cleared up a good deal more on philosophy it would be useless, and a useless sacrifice is a crime of folly. But here is advice given by many Adepts: every day and as often as you can, and on going to sleep and as you wake - think, think, think, on the truth that you are not body, brain, or astral man, but that you are THAT, and "THAT" is the Supreme Soul. . . . By persistence in this, by submitting your daily thoughts each night to the judgment of your Higher Self, you will at last gain light.

(William Q. Judge, "Letters That Have Helped Me" p. 116)

In regard to the pictures which you see [i.e. pictures, colours, images, which some people see during meditation], observe them with indifference, relying always on the Higher Self, and looking to it for knowledge and light - pictures or no pictures.

(William Q. Judge, "Letters That Have Helped Me" p. 122)

NOTES

Please use this space to take notes or write thoughts or questions during the seminar.

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