

EDITORIAL

The term Yoga can be viewed from various perspectives. It shall be studied as a system of philosophy, popular, non-systematic yoga and non-brahmanic yoga. It can also refer to any ascetic technique and any method of meditation. In all its understanding, yoga implies two things: a preliminary detachment from matter and an emancipation from the binding forces of human existence. This number of the *Journal of Dharma* focuses on one of the essential aspects of Yoga, i.e. Yoga and Search for Holiness.

Yoga is the corpus of means for holiness. Abstentions and observances (*yama and niyama*), postures and rhythm of respiration (*āsana and prāṇāyama*), withdrawal of the senses and fixed attention (*pratyahāra and dhāraṇa*), contemplation and concentration (*dhyāna and samadhi*) are the ways for exterminating suffering, the means of realizing the Being and the techniques for attaining liberation.

Medical Science has enormously contributed towards alleviating the pain and suffering of contemporary human beings. Will it ever totally eradicate the excruciating pain from this globe? Suffering is an eternal reality and it will ever remain so. What we can do is to lessen its severity. *Sarvam duhkhem, sarvam anityam* - all is suffering and all is transitory - was the philosophy of Buddha. According to Patanjali *Duhkameva sarva vivekinah* - everything is suffering for the man of spiritual discrimination (*Yoga-sutras*; II.15). Indian Philosophical Schools (*darsanas*) in general, agree on the universal suffering and pain. According to these philosophical and religious traditions freedom from suffering was the ideal of human life. The practice of Yoga can lead one to a state beyond suffering and this state is the condition of happiness, joy, bliss and perfection.

One who experiences the above state of life is a yogi. He always holds on to non-attachment which gives him freedom from desire for what is seen or heard or done. He is an integrated person who can control the wandering thoughts of his mind and free the self from false identification. As a man of wholeness, he integrates every aspect of human existence into his being and perceives things

as they really are. As *Yoga - sutra* says he is a person of faith (*śradha*), energy (*virya*), recollectedness (*smṛti*), absorption (*samadhi*) and insight (*prajñā*) (1:20).

Yoga's search for holiness is a quest for integration and wholeness. The practice of yoga equips one for overcoming the dualities of the phenomenal world and it will induce him for contemplative ascent towards unification and totalization. It is a state of inexpressible happiness where mind will be transformed into infinity.

In our search for holiness there is a death and a re-birth. It is a death to all our 'limiting' forces of life. Death leads us to a re-birth and our re-birth is a new life of freedom, integrity and wholeness. Thus we are reborn to a non-conditioned mode of being which is absolute freedom and total liberation.

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