

Yoga for everyone

short text



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CANOPUS
Prague 2010

Published by Canopus, o. s.
Synkovská 14, 160 00 Praha 6
The Czech Republic

www.canopus.cz/english
english@canopus.cz

Translation Danica Klemková
English Language Editor Dawn Birbeck
Cover design Richard Bergant
Published electronically in 2010 by Canopus
First edition, 5 Pages

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Yoga for everyone

We all are, and have to be, interested primarily in a way which yoga can benefit us in an improvement of our inner state. For, the problems of psyche, the soul and its condition are the very thing which nobody is protected against. The rich as well as the poor, the healthy as well as the ill, those competent as well as those incompetent, old as well as young, simply all of those who went wrong in what they expected from life, suffer. Therefore, they hope to escape personal suffering if they obtain riches, power, good health, or if they develop their mental abilities better. Not even those who are able to assume the most awkward positions of the hatha yoga teaching, are spared from that.

Then, what is the point? No matter which good book about yoga we take in our hand we will always find there instruction about “yama” and “niyama” in the fore. It is yoga of its own kind, yoga, by which everyone should begin. “Yama” and “niyama” are simply yoga for everyone; moreover, all people can have even a fantastic success in it.

When the Indian writings on yoga refer to “yama” and “niyama”, they tell what a person mustn’t do and what they must do. That is because the Indian yoga is understood there as a training system, which doesn’t take into account the so-called ‘individuality of a person’. On the contrary, a person, who wants to do yoga according to the Indian sources, has to submit to the whole educational system that has a precise plan and a specific target. That target requires a deep depersonalisation, an ability to submit oneself, without allowing a person to slide into slavery, a slavish subordination.

In relation to yoga according to Indian views, we can only sigh that we are Europeans, brought up to awareness that each person decides for themselves what they want or don’t want to do; we are people brought up to consider a lack of discipline to be a manifestation of personal freedom, a manifestation of a well developed individuality. Because of this, we cannot successfully do other yoga

than the yoga adapted to the European mentality. It cannot be based on “you must” and “you mustn’t”, but on one’s own responsibility on the way to mental and inner recovery: a halt on the way of steep decline, which leads to the deepest demoralisation.

Yoga for everyone therefore, seemingly begins from the end: we will not sit in a position to become happy and to outshine our social environment. We are going to learn how to be happy, in order to be able to sit still and thus create conditions to be able to, of our own will, enter the transcendental world, which however has to be understood in a different way than until now.

Thus, we are supposed to learn to be happy! Is it important at all and does it really belong to yoga? In the esoteric part of the teaching about yoga, we may learn that a horrific danger of the mystical heights can be neutralised by an appropriate level of optimism and joyfulness. Some writer of the so-called ‘occult novels’ has written that if people laughed more, there would be fewer wars. Through this quote, we are already finding ourselves on our ground, on the earth, in the everyday life, the problems of which we will solve aptly by this “small” yoga, too.

Its principle is very simple. We can feel happy or unhappy without an external reason, only by the power of our own will. The possibility of this is indirectly confirmed, for example by a well known fact that, when someone has some sorrow, they forget about it, if their attention is caught by something else. Based on this very piece of knowledge, a system can be created. By the power of our will, we can turn our attention away from the situations which brought us to suffering, and simply change the whole situation by fastening our attention upon things that evoke good feelings in us.

According to the yogic teaching, emotional experience is the most powerful factor in the life of creatures. It is sustained by a momentum which doesn’t only steer the being, it also categorises it. This usual emotional experience can only be counteracted by repeated actions aiming to change its quality. This means to learn to rejoice and feel happy, even without any reason, over and over again, repeating this effort for so long, till joy and happiness become the only inner states which will keep on seizing us, as soon as we stop trying to create such moods.

When we reach that far, we have in fact already changed our inner condition or, in other words, we have moved from the sphere of unhappy people into the one of people constantly being made happy via the effect of spiritual factors. This is already considered as the beginning of the path of a higher type towards the

goals of the practical yoga. For, only a happy person, an optimist, obtains from concentration an increasing clarity of the consciousness, an ability of a fine and deep discernment, a possibility of better perception and therefore also better understanding of everything; in short, all that which we may expect from yoga.

Then, it is really sufficient only to concentrate. Only a happy person is able to concentrate in the way yoga instructs, i.e. to think of objects and to observe them without sinking into a mental lethargy and without the clarity of their consciousness been decreased.

Would you like to try it, too? If the answer is yes, then stick to the following principles, which are in fact the whole of yoga in a nutshell:

1. You have to raise yourself from the state of passivity toward reflexive, i.e. automatic, unconscious reactions to the external world by a constant producing of an all surpassing joyfulness in you.

2. You have to develop and intensify self-control, and you have to do that by a persistent awareness of everything that you do, i.e. that you stand, walk, eat, act in this or that way.

3. You have to attempt concentration in such a way that you think of (concentrate on) a chosen object (your feet and legs), but only in so far as you do not dim your awareness – only in so far as you would return again and again to the normal registering of things of the surrounding world, because only in this way you will ensure the control over vigilance. This type of concentration is called by the Buddhists ‘the threshold concentration’.

4. When you will, through this sequence of steps, achieve such a high level of vigilance, that its dimming doesn’t occur – not even when you are paying attention only to a single, especially imaginary, i.e. unreal object of concentration, you may change the threshold concentration into the total one. This concentration will help you to transfer the empirical consciousness, i.e. the consciousness based on experience into the sphere of inner phenomena, without losing awareness whether you are dreaming or correctly discerning everything that is happening in this sphere. By this you have realised in yourself the state of wisdom.



KVĚTOSLAV MINAŘÍK (1908 – 1974)

Czech mystic who, in his youth, learned in the deepest detail and in himself realised, the highest spiritual and mystical ideals of the East, without losing contact with the social and the working life. Later, he has formulated his experience into an original, authentic experience-based spiritual teaching, founded on the ways of thinking and psychology of a contemporary European. The teaching leads a person through life, and perfects their

being as a whole; it does not only deal with the physical, moral or mental component, but develops all three in harmony. Out of the great spiritual teachings of the world, Květoslav Minařík's teaching is closest to the Mahayana Buddhism.