

Module 2 : Swami Vivekananda

Section 5 : Ways Of Liberation

Self-realization, which has been the ideal of Indian philosophy, can be brought about by various ways. Ancient Indian seers have enumerated different methods to achieve liberation or mukti. It can be achieved through disinterested action, as propounded by Gita. Vivekananda called it *Karma Yoga*. It can also be brought about by constant worshipping of the Absolute in the form of personal God or Ishwar. This method is called *Bhakti Yoga*. Another method is attaining knowledge which Vivekananda calls *Jnana-Yoga*. It can be achieved by concentrating mind so that it delves on its true nature. Vivekananda called it *Raja Yoga*. Yoga is thus the generic name of all those methods which bring about realization, which leads to liberation in the end.²⁶ But, at the same time, he maintains that these are not rival ways, rather all the complementary to each other. Different people have different temperaments; these different yogas cater to these different temperaments.

Yoga means union as well as discipline. It is the, “method of joining man and god” and is the practical side of religion.²⁷

²⁶ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 8, p. 152

²⁷ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 6, p. 41

Karma Yoga

Karma yoga is doing actions in disinterested way so that soul does not cling to fruits of actions. When we do some action, it invariably produces its consequences which are either pleasurable or painful. To avoid pain, we strive to do only those actions which bring more and more pleasure. But, like sides of a coin, pleasure always comes with pain. This leads us on the path of actions till we die. Whatever actions we did, we have to bear its consequences. If we do not reap all the fruits of our actions in one life then we have to reap them in another life. Life, bear those consequences. But in the next birth new actions are performed. Thus, the actions lead to births, and births lead to further actions. This goes on like a cycle, and the soul, once trapped in this cycle, cannot achieve liberation. Atman, once veiled by bad karmas, gets engaged in fulfilling desires of the body – striving for pleasure and avoiding pain. It forgets its essentially divine nature. This is ignorance which is brought about by the karmas. Even good karmas do the same thing as bad karmas. Good karmas which bring happiness goad Atman to do those actions which bring pleasure. But, since, all pleasure and pain concerns properly with body only, and not Atman, the soul unnecessarily becomes slave of the body. This is the essence of Karma Theory. To enable the soul come out of this trap, Gita proposed doing actions in a disinterested way, i.e. *nishkama-karma*. Since, it is not possible not to do any action, Gita proposed doing actions in a disinterested manner that the fruits of the actions cease to influence the doer. That is why, Krishna tells Arjuna in the Gita – do your Karma, and do not worry about its fruit.

Doing karmas in disinterested way, enjoins the doer to do actions like a duty and not to seek the fruits of those actions. The doer always relegates the fruits of those actions to god. It enables the doer to adopt a dispassionate stance to worldly temptations like wealth, power, beauty, happiness etc. The temptations of life cease to allure him thereby diverting him from his path. Once this dispassionate stance is achieved, *Gita* maintains that the soul attains liberation here and now that is *jivanmukti*. Vedas maintained that liberation can be attained only after death. This is because all the actions and their temptations are tied to this body. As long as soul is within this body, it will never be liberated. The separation from this body is necessary to achieve *mukti*. This is called *videhmukti* – *mukti* from the *deh* or body. Once soul has realized its true nature, which is divine, what else is remained for it to achieve? *Gita* for that proposed doing actions in disinterested way so that no fruits are there to be borne by the soul and therefore, no ignorance that veils Atman of its true nature. Such a possibility of attaining liberation while living is called *jivanmukti* – *mukti* in this *jeevan* or life only.

Bhakti Yoga

Another path is through devotion, or constant worshipping of the lord. It is, “systematized devotion for

the attainment of union with the Absolute.”²⁸ It consists of love for the object of devotion, which is none other than God himself. Since, love, by nature needs reciprocation by the beloved, God in its abstract form is hardly to be loved. He can be loved in its more humane form, consequently, the thrust upon worshipping of Personal God or *Ishwara* than the Absolute per se. Suitable to his temperament than every man worships his personal god or *Ishta*. *Ishta* is basically that ideal (or ideal lord) that man chooses to worship according to his nature. We can't love the infinite God; such is beyond the limitations of our finite mind. As of limited mind, we can understand and therefore love only those things which are in accord with our mind. Hence, the personalized conceptions of God. Hinduism acknowledges many *Ishta-devas* like Shiva, Vishnu, Krishna, Ram, Durga, Santoshi Maa and so on. Mythologically, these are all various incarnations of Brahman.

²⁸ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 6, p. 90

Vivekananda conceptualizes three visions of God in this context – first when God is seen as corporeal, viz. having body like us. This was exemplified in old Byzantine civilization where Gods were typical humans; second higher to it is, when God is invested with human qualities (like the various *ishtas* of Hinduism); and third, God as such, the Vedanta conception of Absolute.²⁹ One thing however to remember is that all these are various ways of seeing one ultimate reality and on neither level, is there any illusion or error. It is just like a man seeing sun from various different angles. The third conception of seeing God is the ultimate destiny of the human soul which comes about by self-realization, seeing Atman as Brahman. It unifies again the soul to the divine and brings liberation or *mukti*. Yoga is a way to that self-realization, and *bhakti*-yoga, is the easiest which involves unconditional devotion to God.

Devotion to Absolute in every religion, according to Vivekananda, is either achieved through performing ceremonies or rituals or through recital of the sacred texts of that religion. Vivekananda takes a psychological stand when he speaks about the significance of chanting hymns. He says that words have a psychological impact on mind. This is possible because body and mind are not distinct entities; rather body is only mind in “grosser form”. Words are directly related to our thoughts in this way. Each word of sacred hymns represents one ideal. Worshipping through words, or say, recital of sacred scriptures thus brings us closer to those ideals which have been realized by our sages. Sooner or later, when we fully understand the import of those texts, we may come to realize those ideals ourselves. Yet, Vivekananda warns that merely reading those words will not yield anything until these are fused with spirit. And this can be done by only that person who himself has experienced the ideals behind those words and can successfully impart them to us. Only such a person is worthy of being a Guru. Thus, we find that though worshipping is easiest form of realization even that is not so easy for want of a proper Guru.

²⁹ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 6, p. 139

But, it could be asked that if Guru is necessary for the realization, could it not be possible that whatever the seeker learns in the end is properly Guru's experience, and not seeker's himself? Anticipating this query, Vivekananda answers that to avoid that although formal worshipping like that is necessary, gradually it needs to be transcended by the seeker. He gives the example of a tree blossoming under a hedge. When young, hedge gives shelter to the tree, but when the tree grows old, hedge needs to be removed for until and unless it is removed, tree will not be able to grow.³⁰ Similarly Guru is necessary in the earlier stages, but then seeker needs to go beyond that. When worshipping is transcended, love begins. By then, we have already known the God, and start admiring us. But since even love can't be possible without human attributes, we being humans, Vivekananda gives five stages of love with God.³¹

1. Love of Father – God is seen as a father – caregiver, protector, provider of all our wants, desires and so on. At this stage, we see God as the provider of our needs, as father is provider of needs of a child.
2. Love of Master – God is seen as a Master whom seeker wishes to serve. Many of ancient hymns eulogize the servant-master relationship with God. Seeker comes to realize that all the universe but belongs to God, and he is nothing but a straw in it. He wishes to serve the master of the universe at this stage.
3. Love of a friend – This stage dawn, when God is not put on the stage higher than our own, but on par with us. The seeker gets friendly with the God and sees in him a constant companion.
4. Love of Mother - In this stage, God is made more accessible and seeker loves him as a child.

God is seen as a child, and seeker fondles him as a mother fondles her child. Lord Krishna is famously worshipped in child-incarnation than adult one.

5. Love of husband and wife – This is the highest stage when seeker loves god as one would love his spouse. Vivekananda called it perfect love since this involves love not for the sake of benefits or enjoyment, but love for the sake of love. Meera is the epitome of this kind of love relationship with God.

³⁰ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 6, p. 142

³¹ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 6, p. 142-143

Jnana Yoga

Another path is through knowledge. But it can be asked, knowledge of what? Vivekananda answers that it is knowledge of essential divinity and freedom of the Atman. It is knowledge of the freedom from worldly miseries which are caused due to bondage which in turn is due to our ignorance. Thus, it is all a cobweb of ignorance leading to bondage, bondage leading to misery and hence, no freedom. Once soul realizes its true nature, which is of perfection and freedom, all the cobwebs are shed. Jnana Yoga is the path towards that self-realization through knowledge. Though, the objective of both Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga are same, viz. self-realization, latter is for the strong, who are not mystical, but of rational mind-frame.³² Self-realization and consequently knowledge about Absolute is achieved here through pure reason. But, it can be asked, self-realization consists of what? Vivekananda answers that self-realization consists of knowing the immortality, divinity and freedom of the soul or Atman. Once we realize that we are beyond birth and death, our fears subside; we become more pronounced and confident in our dealings; once we realize that we are essentially of divine in nature, we get more closer to the Divine; once we realize that we are essentially free, our webs of bondage are cut. But, the ignorance about all these things makes us trapped in false delusions about ourselves, which brings bondage and misery. The aim of Jnana Yoga is to dispel this ignorance.

³² Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 8, p. 3

First thing required of Jnani, according to Vivekananda is expulsion of fear. It is to know and believe that soul is immortal, and is beyond birth and death. The Jnani must not identify himself with what he is not under fear of death which is the greatest fear according to Vivekananda. A jnani must meditate only on what he is – which is the Atman – the Self which constitutes of *satchitananda* – existence (immortality aspect), knowledge (no ignorance) and bliss (no misery). When everything related to not-I is shunned by *jnani*, what remains in the end is, the Self – the real I. True *jnana* consists in complete separation from matter and in its falsity. The only reality is that of Brahman. Vivekananda sums up the entire *jnana yoga* in, “Brahman alone is true, all else is false, and I am Brahman.”³³ This needs a little elucidation. Its first clause – Brahman alone is true – maintains the unique existence of the ultimate reality, which is Brahman such that beside Brahman, there is nothing else. Its second clause – all else is false – maintains everything except Brahman as non-real as far as Brahman is concerned, and third clause – I am Brahman – maintains the Atman equal to Brahman stand of Vedanta according to which Atman is no different from the ultimate reality Brahman. Thus, Vivekananda beautifully captures the gist of the Vedanta and *Jnana Yoga* both in one strand. Only by meditating and realizing this truth that soul can rise above the contradictory life found because of *maya*, and consequently, rise above bodily pleasures and sorrows. Constant meditation, much like the military drill, is a must for *jnani* – for only through constantly meditation on the eternal truth that ‘I am Brahman’ the duality would be transcended and *jnani* would be able to realize the Divine in him.

³³ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 8, p. 5

Vivekananda here maintains one more aspect of *jnana-yoga*, which especially Vedanta taught. He says that *jnani* should not mere think or realizes the spark of divinity in him. He is rather the whole of Divinity. Atman is not mere spark that got detached from the divine Brahman; that would mean that

Atman and Brahman are two realities, which goes against the one, unique ultimate reality stand of Vedanta. To make Atman and Brahman one, it is necessary therefore that the two should stand on equivalent relation. Therefore, Vivekananda asserts that not just a spark, but the whole of Brahman exists in Atman just like the whole of sun is reflected in each dew drop, and not just one or two rays of it. A *jnani* thus realize that he is no different from Brahman, and therefore, all the immortality properly belongs to him. With the dawn of this realization, fear of death will go away, and he would realize his true self. The moment these self-realization dawns, man becomes liberated. Vivekananda called such a man *jivanmukta* – one who is liberated while living, in this very life.

Vivekananda found the great lesson of *jivanmukti* taught in *Gita* who he called a commentary on Vedas. That great lesson is that the, “battle of spirituality must be fought out in this life; so we must not flee from it, but rather compel it to give us all that it holds.”³⁴ A *jivanmukta* in this spirit is one who has fought the battle and has won it; the battle of rising above the senses, attaining knowledge of his essential unity with Brahman, and self-realization in the end. In the same spirit, *jnana* condemns renunciation or ascetism – we cannot realize our true self by migrating to forests and doing penances. This will only inflict pains on our bodies, but that way, too, we would be *still* sticking to our bodies and *jnana* is about rising above our bodily pleasures and pains, which can be done while living in domestic life also. The trick is to live in the world, but in detached way such that outer elements, actions or events have no effect on us. Vivekananda gives the marks of a true *jnani* as – sense-control, patience, courage to suffer anything without complaints, an intense longing for freedom, knowledge that reality is only one and ‘rationality. A *jnani* not just meditates blindly on any truth, he critically reflects on it and then accepts it as truth. He denies everything but his Self which he realizes as no different from Brahman. By his will and reason, he attains knowledge and liberation in the end. The nature of self that *jnani* realizes is *satchitananda* – existence, knowledge and bliss.

³⁴ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 8, p. 8

Raja Yoga

Next path is Raja Yoga, personally favored by Vivekananda. It consists of the art of concentrating mind by purifying it of all the distortions or *vruttis*. Once mind is thus purified, it is easy to make it concentrate on self-realization which leads to liberation in the end. Rather than just a meditative practice, Vivekananda called it a science whose, “chief parts are the *Pranayama*, concentration and meditation.”³⁵

The aim of this kind of yoga comes from disciplining that energy inside us which is the core of the every element of this universe – *prana*. *Prana* is controlled by mind in human beings which in turn is controlled by Atman. Both body and mind are mortal, but the Atman is immortal, driving *prana*. But since, “forces require matter for manifestation”, *prana* requires “fine matter” like mind to manifest itself.³⁶ Raja Yoga is disciplining this *prana* – the vital force of life. The entire Yoga is about going beyond the mind. Mind functions, according to Vivekananda, on three planes – subconscious, conscious, and superconscious. Only yogis are able to be super-conscious, rest of us lie on the second plane. Our thoughts, which are vibrations in *prana*, too have a beginning, rising and vanishing stage. When thought arises in our mind, we are not conscious of it, we are conscious of it only when it comes to surface. Yoga is about disciplining the mind, Vivekananda lays down certain conditions for the yogi. A yogi, for instance, must not overtax his body or pamper his body. Love for body is necessary, but limited. Love is rather the highest manifestation of *Prana*, but it must properly be directed to the mind. So Vivekananda instructs the yogi to keep his mind joyful always, shun melancholy thoughts, avoid overeating and fasting too much alike, avoid sleeplessness and oversleeping alike, and so on. A yogi must adopt golden mean in all practices. Likewise, the best time to practice yoga is the mid-time between full day and full night – like dawn or dusk, when whole world is calm. To discipline this *prana*, is the discipline of *Pranayam*.

³⁵ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 8, p. 154

³⁶ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 6, p. 128

Pranayam

It is a set of physical exercises aimed at controlling *prana* – or the breath we take. It consists of, drawing in, holding and exhaling the breath. *Pranayam* has three main stages³⁷:-

1. *Puraka* – Inhaling the air
2. *Kumbhak* – Holding the breath
3. *Recchak* – Exhaling.

This helps in controlled breathing, but it must be done rhythmic regularity while chanting Om as this is easier than merely counting. This helps in increased mental concentration and consequently cures it of various distortions or *vrittis*. In this, rousing of *Kundalini* has great significance. According to Vivekananda, the product of nerve-currents in the body, namely *ojas* is the distinctive factor between different men. It is made from the sexual energies in the body. If these are not wasted, these can be turned into *ojas*. "The two great nerve centers of the body start from the brain go down on each side of the spinal cord, but they cross in the shape of figure 8 at the back of the head.... At the lowest point of the circuit is the sexual centre, the sacral plexus."³⁸ This sacral plexus stores the sexual energies; the energy flow in this figure 8 is symbolized as a serpent. Though the spinal cord is closed at this point, it can be opened to form a passage for *ojas*. "As the current travels from one centre of the spinal cord to another, you can travel from one plane of existence to another... when the *ojas* has gone from centre to centre and reaches the Pineal Gland (a part of brain to which science can assign no function), man becomes neither mind nor body, he is free from all bondage."³⁹ Because the traveling of *ojas* through figure 8 feels like in a spiral, it is called serpentine. This snake rests on a bone or triangle. When it is roused, the *ojas* travels from centre to centre opening up a whole new world within us. At that point, *Kundalini* is roused. Just before doing *Pranayam*, one should try to imagine the *Kundalini* at the base of the spine and while holding breath, one should forcibly drop it on the head of the serpent to rouse it.

³⁷ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 8, p. 42

³⁸ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 6, p. 131

³⁹ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 6, p. 131

Pranayam is leading *ojas* through this passage by systematic controlling the breath we take, and leading it through the figure. It starts with imagining *Kundalini* whose symbol is a snake coiled on a triangular bone. The first step is to inhale air through one nostril while counting 8, holding it, and exhaling it through other nostril while again counting 8. During the holding, one has to imagine its travel down the figure 8 or *kundalini*. The breath has to be led to the triangle beneath the snake. From this point onwards, mental exercises start, and physical end. First exercise in this part is to gather the mind. One has to let the mind free and watch its goings on as an onlooker. One does not have to control its activities; just let it wander wherever it pleases. Mind bifurcates as if it is a player and a watcher of the game. Gradually, the player aspect comes more and more into control. Vivekananda remarks in this context, "Picture the mind as a calm lake stretched before you and the thoughts that come and go as bubbles rising and breaking on its surface. Make no effort to control the thoughts, but watch them and follow them in imagination as they float away. This will gradually lessen the circle [on the surface of the lake]."⁴⁰ When this is done, the mind-cum-lake is more under the control of one.

⁴⁰ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 8, p. 48

Second step is meditation. Since mind can't think without symbols, one has to find some symbol of God and meditate upon it. Third exercise is one-pointedness in which mind is fixed on a point. The result of all this is the psychic gifts what Yogis achieve, but for that great discipline and consistent hard work is required.

It can be asked at this juncture, ***how merely breathing can help attain salvation which is the aim of Vedanta?*** To answer this, one should recall Vivekananda's admission of body as a significant aspect of human being, but he gave more importance to Mind. According to Vivekananda, there two main parts of the universe – *Prana* and *Akasha*. *Prana* basically refers to force, "all that is manifesting itself as movement... electricity, magnetism, all the movements in the body.. in the mind... all these are various manifestations of one thing called *Prana*."⁴¹ The mind in human body ought to control every bit of

Prana. But, this is not so with most of us. It is the body that is controlling our minds, and that is why, we care more about our bodies, than our minds.

⁴¹ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 1, p. 503

Vivekananda wished to invert this relationship and advised therefore controlling the movements in the body or *Prana* so that mind once again has control over the body. When that would happen, mind itself would be in control of the individual. At that stage, we can see between the illusions, we can see that rope is but a rope and not a snake. All the distortions that a mind succumbs to are removed. We are closer to our own selves, and hence God. Meditation in *Pranayam* helps is turning inward, reflecting more on our true nature, our Atman, but that Meditation can not come about, until Mind is directed toward that meditation. We can not just direct our mind to think certain thoughts and not others. This is because; minds are not in our control. This is precisely what Yoga aims at – controlling the mind. Not in our bodies just, all the forces in nature are the work of *Prana* – *prana* moves the stars, makes the earth pull things towards it. These forces must be then created by one great universal mind. But, since by willing alone, we can't inverse this relationship, physical effort on our part is required; hence, *Pranayam*. In Vivekananda's words, "Control of this *Prana* that is working everything, control of this *Prana* in the body, is called *Pranayam*.... [But], what we want to get at is not the breath itself; it is something finer behind the breath."⁴² But we can't go to the finer things directly, we have to traverse and thus take help of things at material plane. "By the exercise of breathing, we begin to feel all the movements of the body that we [now] do not feel. As soon as we begin to feel them, we begin to master them."⁴³

⁴² Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 1, p. 507

⁴³ Swami Vivekananda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Publication Department, Kolkata, Vol. 1, p. 507

All knowledge is within mind only. Vivekananda asks who saw astronomy in stars or knowledge in stones. No, one. It was their mind that helped them see knowledge in those things which most of us take for granted. Knowledge is not then stuffing the mind with lot of facts. Knowledge is dispelling the illusions that we are merged in. The aim of education to cleanse and make perfect this instrument of education which is mind. If one wishes to concentrate on something, and he is able to direct his mind there, that very mind, he is the controller of his mind, and free. Free, because he is unlike other, not at the service of mind, rather a master of it. For most of us, our mind directs us to do things, directed itself by the body in turn. But, when we become masters of mind, it is we, who direct the mind, and are thus, free from its slavery. The more we understand mind, the more we become its masters. And salvation means what but knowing the truth. A distorted mind which can't come out of the illusions can't have any knowledge, and hence, no salvation. Raja Yoga aims at cleansing the mind, making it ready for knowledge and in turn, and salvation. For this cleansing of the mind, *Pranayam* is the way prescribed.

Vivekananda describes various exercises to train the mind so that it can focus and meditate. There are some 84 exercises only for deep breathing. Purity, both physical and mental is a pre-requisite to start the exercises. Its aim is to prevent mind from clinging to any uncleanness whatsoever – be it in thought even! These unwanted clinging deludes mind into assuming false things, viz. when we think ourselves to be mortal, and constantly live in fear of dying any moment. The yoga prescribed for this is called *Ashtanga* Yoga or Eightfold Path. It consists of –

1. **Yama** – The most important of all, this has to be observed lifelong by the yogi. It prescribe the code of conduct in day to day dealings with the others, viz.
 - a. Ahimsa (Non-violence) – One should adopt a non-violent attitude to others, i.e. one should eschew from harming others by thought, word or deed.
 - b. Satya (Truthfulness) – One should stick to truth in action, and words alike.
 - c. Asteya (Non-Stealing) – One must not steal others' properties. This enables one to have an indifferent attitude to temptations of the world.
 - d. Brahmacharya (Celibacy) – A yogi must have restraint over his sexual urges. This limb of Ashtanga Yoga instructs the yogi to observe celibacy, unless the concern is for reproduction.
 - e. Aparigraha (Non-covetousness) – It instructs for non-coveting of material things. One

should have less and less urge to own and possess things. It helps in detaching from the material world.

2. **Niyama** – This limb of Ashtanga Yoga involves steps for maintaining personal or bodily hygiene. As body has been equal importance as mind by Vivekananda, bodily cleanliness and hygiene is equally necessary, since a clean mind can dwell in clean body only. Its various steps are –
 - a. *Shaucha* (Purity) – It refers to bodily purity.
 - b. *Santosha* (Contentedness) – Together with *Aparigraha*, *Santosha* leads man to be contented. A yogi must not covet unnecessary things, discontentment leads to covetousness, and that in turn leads to possession of things which clings soul to materiality of the world, bringing all the suffering in wake.
 - c. *Tapa* (Austerity) – It is the incessant effort made by the yogi for bodily as well as spiritual purification. A yogi's struggle must be relentless. He should not get fumbled by the demanding side of Yoga.
 - d. *Swadhyaya* (Study) – It involves study of sacred scriptures and critically reflecting on them.
 - e. *Ishwar-Pranidhan* (Surrender to God) – It is to surrender oneself to the divinity or God having complete faith in him.
3. **Asana** – The third limb of *Ashtanga* Yoga involves various bodily postures to be assumed while doing meditation.
4. **Pranayam** – It involves the procedure of controlling Prana or breath. It includes way of inhaling, holding and exhaling the breath.
5. **Pratyahara** – It is directing the mind inwards from outer chaos of the world, controlling its activities and understanding it. It is an attempt to control the mind. Its process is to let it drift and watch its activities like an onlooker while making no attempt to control it.
6. **Dharana** – It is making mind concentrated on one subject.
7. **Dhyana** – It is the meditation aspect achieved after mind is concentrated.
8. **Samadhi** – It is the acme of meditation, when complete union with divinity is achieved. The aim of all the yogic efforts is Samadhi.

Thus, we see that in the spirit of Vedanta, the whole ambition of Vivekananda is to enable and lead the humanity onto the path of salvation. But where Vivekananda differs and hence, unique that he chooses the way of knowledge plus physical exercises for controlling mind. Through, control of mind, he step by steps rids of its distortions, cleanses it, and makes it ready for the great dawn of knowledge and consequently, salvation in the end.

Questions:

1. Discuss Vivekananda's view on Nature of the Absolute Reality.
2. What is Maya? Elaborate and explain in the light of Swami Vivekananda's philosophy.
3. What is the real nature of man?
4. What is liberation? Discuss its significance in the scientific age.
5. What is KarmaYoga? Evaluate its role in our life.