

Towards a Harmonious Balanced Being

Hatha Yoga tries to find out the state of the body, in which a particular mental pattern is formed, and expresses itself. That appears to be a very little thing, but it is in fact vast. It is so, according to Hatha Yoga, that, if we restrict ourselves to only the so-called mental area, in relation to the investigation into it, there will be no whole picture of the thing coming to us; it will be very partial, and it can happen, that we get it in a distorted way. This is simply so, because our mind at a particular phase became associated with the physical aspect of our existence. And unless this aspect is rightly understood, it will not be possible for us, to know exactly, what the significance of a mental pattern, or the extra-physical, really is. That is why, in Hatha Yoga, the body is considered such an important factor to study, and to regulate in such a way, that it will not so much twist that mental pattern, which is, or can only be seen when one has climbed high through the physical level.

On the other hand, if we know the mental aspect of our physical existence, and will try to restrict ourselves merely to the body, then we will get a very narrow, gross picture of our being. Here Hatha Yoga discourages a having of that partial, narrow, restricted view of ourselves. For Hatha Yoga neither overlooks, nor disregards; nor concentrates energies solely on the body. Even for muscular movements (exercises) Hatha Yoga describes a correct technique, but never restricts its view-points solely to the body. It looks through it and, passing the body, it takes us somewhere, - even to the extraphysical, where we will know and experience the far-reaching effects of physical exercise. But if we undertake the physical occupation, so as to evaluate it, and exercise

from a purely physiological point of view, it will only take us to our body, and perhaps indirectly to the emotional or volitional aspects. That's why physical exercise - unless one is specially prepared to undergo it for physical excellence - usually does not become a vital part of our living, thinking, our very existence. If we only take to physical culture for the improvement of the body (the muscular and organ-development), if the aim is only, to develop the muscles and organs through movement, then we soon shall find ourselves crippled to one-sidedness, and hopelessly tied down.

For man is not only a physical phenomenon, and therefore cannot take onesided gymnastics. It can never be really satisfying to him even in old age. Yoga can of course be degraded to mere physical movement. But it has also its spiritual and mental aspects. And if these are not recognized, one will surely leave it all after a time. Therefore Hatha Yoga teaches why its system of physical exercises is taken. And if rightly understood, it will rightly develop the physical aspects of our being. But if we also know, how the various states of the body influence the various mental patterns, then it will be much more far-reaching. For it is not enough to do the exercises correctly. By exclusively concentrating on them regularly, it is possible to attain to perfectness of these exercises, - and yet be ignorant as to their effects on the mental and spiritual aspects.

People may think that these are not at all important for the mind. Brain-men have often such a bright intelligence anyhow, though their body is seen to be weak and not under their control. If we then carefully analyze them, we will find, that - except for a few exceptional cases, in which the physical foundation is sound, healthy, vital - this part is often overlooked, even where some care and exercise is taken, with the idea of keeping up the body. As for the rest - all is for the brain only. But if one fails the body, then sooner or later the price has to be paid. In brilliant persons, with great power, when the body at last fails them because of negligence

their brightness does fail them in the end. Such a brilliant person, who has concentrated on a particular line, and also became efficient in it, will not fail there. Yet the mental life will then often be like a limited zone in his mind, with the failures by the sides of it, at the ground-level, or at the peaks.

All elevation becomes thus very limited in comparison with the rest. His technical and special knowledge may still be good in him, and also his charm extraordinary. But analyzed, the mental life will show an extreme one sidedness, lack of control, and very meagre and small in the many other areas, - though that aspect still may be hidden, until the whole mental life is exposed to analysis. Therefore that one-sided way offers no solution. What is it we want?

A harmonious, balanced being; - a mental height, not depending on a particular aspect, factor, phase; - to establish a harmonious condition in mental life, in which the intellectual aspect will grow high and even, in conformity with the contemplating and volitional aspects of our mentality. That will give us more stability, happiness, satisfaction, than to be a one-sided being, intellectual in one aspect, and blind as to the others, like by those circus-feats, which require so much training, sacrifice etc., but will at length not give much pleasure or satisfaction, in their one-sidedness. Or those geniuses, and mentally brilliant people, who will not be able either, to try, or understand that which Hatha Yoga teaches us.

One can read through the body and get an answer about a person. For one cannot ignore, or restrict oneself only to the body. Hatha Yoga teaches one about the right use of the body, but also, how to reach rightly and correctly to what lies beyond its boundaries. For there is always this interrelation. We can see this from a few great examples, for instance Gautama Buddha: if we study his life, we find a fine body, well developed, hardened, vitalized by various types of exercises. He commenced his spiritual life with an exceptionally well developed, strong body. To him the

body thus was not a dream, but a fact to be faced. Also Jesus Christ used his body a lot, by which it was strengthened and hardened. Indeed mountain-climbing was one of his exercises.

Hatha Yoga says that many exercises are of a useful type for bodily strengthening.

It is possible to vitalize the body by any good system of exercise. In the Hatha Yoga system all the parts, single or in groups, are developed, strengthened and fully controlled. We have here a system, by which we are given the possibility to mould the body into a pattern, which will be dynamically giant, and statically too, as it will simultaneously the motional and the non-motional aspects of the body.

Therefore Gautama Buddha also undertook Yoga-practices. He underwent Hatha Yoga training. Jesus maintained his vitality and efficiency by various exercises, but it is not known yet, whether he actually practised Hatha Yoga. As for Shri Krishna his teachings are presented in the Bhagavad Gita (which is of the giant book: "Mahabharata"). He was a great, physically highly cultured teacher, extraordinarily strong, and he also regularly practised Pranayama and Samadhi. He was known as a great philosopher and spiritual teacher. So Hatha Yoga cultures the human body and, going beyond it, tries to establish harmony between the mental and physical life.