

ITS NOT YOGA
apparently by godfridev

Because the misunderstandings of yoga go back millennia, it is extremely difficult to undertake its practice authentically. So many of the practices, and their applications, that have accrued to yoga are at odds with the nature of life and consciousness themselves. At the heart of this problem is the notion of control. Only too often yoga has been mistakenly undertaken as a process of developing total control over body, breath and mind. This misconception peaks in the notion of eliminating the mind. At its wildest extremes it proposes not only the dissolution of the human bodimind but also, supposedly, the entire universe. To ascribe to the method of yoga the notion of control is to project a dualistic mode of being onto a nondual system and situation.

Control as an impulse, motive and process is fundamentally dualistic. It is based on the anxiety inevitably arising within a sense of separate, autonomous self. Within this sense, the separate, autonomous other becomes a threat. To minimise this threat the other must be brought under control: nature, nations, tribes, societies, families, individuals: even desires, impulses, feelings. This creates a culture of alienation, manipulation and conflict: us against them. In effect a psychological, social and political dualism. This is a condition to which all individuals and groups are subject, to one degree or another: at least to begin with. It is a condition based on the nature of perception itself. A condition which is at the root of all psychological, social, economic and political suffering. A condition which is in effect a disease: that of dualism.

Yoga, and life, has been distorted and misrepresented through the inadequate and distorting prism of dualistic thinking. A prism within which nature and spirit, energy and consciousness, the observed and the observer are set against each other on the lever of control. This rests on the experienced separation of a perceiving subject from perceived objects. A separation that is upheld by the scientific and academic modes of enquiry, which are by nature opposed to the mode of enquiry that yoga inherently is. By applying this separatist prism to yoga it has been reduced to yet another mechanism of psychological and social control.

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The dualistic packaging of yoga has led to endless confusion and suffering: denial of the validity of feelings, sensations, desires and emotions; resentment of the body; aversion to nature: in effect to fear of life itself. This amounts to an existential schizophrenia reflected in and supported by a cultural worldview wherein conflict is the engine of society. This divisiveness is extremely hard to dislodge as it rests on the innate dualistic mechanism of perception itself and is supported and expressed by innumerable cultural and social power mechanisms.

Yoga as honest, open enquiry is an opportunity to go beyond the perceptual dualism underlying our collective nightmare of culturally endorsed anxiety and conflict. It is not about exerting ever more refined and potent control over ever more subtle and elusive phenomena. It does not require the powers of a superbeing. In fact the reverse. For yoga is nothing other than coming back to who, what and where we most fundamentally and meaningfully are. It is a return to the very heart of being human. This does not require that we develop superhuman physical or mental powers. It does not depend on our manipulating our consciousness into ever more subtle states. It does not require that we repress or deny our senses, our emotions, our feelings. We do not have to transcend our bodies and dissolve the universe back into 'Pure Consciousness'. We do not have to impose, by the might of our will, our conditioned ideals on the unconditional nature of that which actually is.

This is all the stuff of fantasy. All we have to do is look. To look in such a way that we finally begin to see. We have to begin to see through cultural distortions that we take to be real. This looking is what yoga is. An enquiry into what is actually happening, that reveals and releases imposed interpretations and power mechanisms into the wisdom of life itself. This enquiry is conducted within the bodimind, through conscious action. It is not an intellectual enquiry: although the mind will enjoy and reflect it with conceptual observations. It is based directly and primarily on sensation. Sensations which are being continuously generated by organic

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and mechanical processes. Sensations which are in effect the innate language of life speaking through the genetically imprinted and functioning wisdom of the human body.

This is a wisdom that no mind, book, library, university or system can ever equal. The human design contains the fruits of 3,500,000,000 years of research and development. Nothing has been overlooked or forgotten. Every cell of the human body is encoded with the most sophisticated intelligence available. An intelligence that speaks directly and continuously through sensations. By becoming intimate with these sensation the experience of being human is totally transformed. This intimacy necessarily includes an intimacy with the mechanism by which sensations are interpreted (mind) and the context within which they arise (consciousness). The transformation that it brings about is as profound and priceless as it is subtle and satisfying. The need to control is replaced by an irreducible willingness to enjoy. An enjoyment that rests fully and irrevocably on a deep trust in the intelligence of life functioning as both body and mind within which the subordinate, though crucial, role of mind has been recognised beyond any doubt.

This is not a perspective that the mind can talk itself into. It is a disposition that rests on profound experience of the innate relationship between body, mind and consciousness: having been revealed clearly enough to not only be experienced fully but also clearly understood. This is a far cry from yoga as it is proselytised today. Yet it is far more accessible and satisfying than the dualistic and destructive propositions with which yoga has been lumbered for millennia.

We need make only one very simple enquiry: can life be trusted? This enquiry can not be given to any cultural authority. It must be given to life itself, by accessing its wisdom in and as the human design. A wisdom that speaks through the binary simplicity of sensations with neither the desire nor capacity to distort or to deceive. Intimacy with sensation becomes possible through seetling into a comfortable stability (stillness) or the

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systematic application of conscious movement and sensitive action. This may begin as a cultural project. But if it is to succeed it must be given over to the wisdom of life as quickly as possible. Then the intrinsic relationship between body and mind will soon become clear, and eventually the relationship that they have to consciousness (spirit) also.

Within this revelation the need to control, and its subsidiary need to know, dissolves into the unified flow of life. Neither the knower, nor the controller have any further authority, no matter that they continue perhaps to claim attention. External circumstances are met with the organic unity of body, mind and consciousness functioning effortlessly and spontaneously, through all the suala modes and moods. What actually happens is responded to organically without any further need to establish permanent ascendancy of pleasure over pain, certainty over uncertainty, spirit over matter, good over evil, right over wrong. The natural flow of life as an endless rhythm of changing circumstance, mood and sensation then provides a satisfaction and delight that knowledge and control never can, while relieving them permanently of their mistakenly assumed authority.