

Antarāya-s

Besides fluctuations and afflictions there are nine *antarāya-s* or obstacles or impediments supported by four types of symptoms which do not allow the mind to understand its true functioning.

The mind normally connects itself with the body, senses of perception as well as organs of action, intelligence, ego and consciousness. It also involves itself in every action (*karma*). The mind has the habit of poking its nose in every other affair of the *citta*. It can put the person in bondage or give emancipation, and it can interfere creating impediments.

Patañjali lists them as:

*vyādhi styāna saṁśaya pramāda ālasya avirati
bhrāntidarśana alabdhabhūmikatva anavasthitatvāni
cittavikṣepaḥ te antarāyāḥ ||*

(Y.S., I.30)

*duḥkha daurmanasya aṅgamejayatva śvāsapraśvāsāḥ
vikṣepa sahabhavaḥ ||*

(Y.S., I.31)

These are the impediments, namely, disease, sluggishness, doubt, heedlessness, laziness, self-entrapment in sensual gratification, illusive notions or erroneous views, lack of perseverance and back sliding, concurrently unhappiness, dejection, unsteadiness in the body, irregular or laboured breathing. All these factors distract the mind from knowing the mind. Behind every action there are thoughts such as why we do, how we do and so on. The thought arises from intention. The intention gets polluted by *tamas* and *rajas* which express anger, desire, greed, infatuation, pride, jealousy, anxiety, worry, attachment and so on. Patañjali says,

*vitarkaḥ hiṁsādayaḥ kṛta kārita anumoditāḥ lobha
krodha moha pūrvakaḥ mṛdu madhya adhimātraḥ duḥkha
ajñāna anantaphalāḥ iti pratipakṣabhāvanam ||*
(Y.S., II.34)

These impediments get aggravated due to perverse thoughts and actions giving rise to violence, whether done directly or caused to be done or permitted to be done, due to our greed, anger and infatuation which may be mild, moderate or intense in degree. These result in endless pain, sorrow and grief. The mind intervenes in every action as per its wish. It can have a positive phase as well as a negative phase. The positive phase is *saumanasya* and the negative phase is *daurmanasya*. With impediments, the mind may develop *daurmanasya*. In order to transform the *daurmanasya* into *saumanasya*, one has to get rooted in practice (*sādhana*)

(see II.41). One should stick to this practice with a single state of mind (*ekatattvābhyāsa*).

The *antarāya*-s are the obstacles in *sāadhanā*, and they have to be eradicated by *sāadhanā* alone.

All these endless, dubious actions and thoughts depend upon the thinking process of the brain and thought process of the mind which rotate on the wheel of *guṇa*-s as *tamo-tamas*, *tamo-rajās*, *tamo-sattva*, *rajo-tamas*, *rajo-rajās*, *rajo-sattva*, *sattva-tamas*, *sattva-rajās*, and *sattva-sattva*.

With permutations and combinations, these various disturbing factors of mind have to be corrected through the instrument of yoga which shows the ways of crossing the bridge of sorrows (*daurmanas*) towards the unalloyed and untainted bliss (*saumanas*).

Transcendence

The yoga *sāadhanā*, undoubtedly brings the transformation of an individual mind (*vaiyaktika manas*) to cosmic mind (*viśva manas*). As the journey of the mind is from a weak mind (*daurmanas*) to cosmic mind (*saumanas*), this indicates how the mind has to undergo the process of evolution in evolution (*prasava*) and involution in evolution (*pratiprasava*).

In the Yoga *Sūtra*, the 'mind' occurs at five places. First, Patañjali speaks of *daurmanas*:

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*duḥkha daurmanasya aṅgamejayatva śvāsapraśvāsāḥ
vikṣepa sahabhuvāḥ ||*

(Y.S., I.31)³²

Then, he speaks of how to make the mind to get saturated in an interesting thought for it to get absorbed for *manaḥ sthithi* or stability of the mind:

*viśayavatī vā pravṛttiḥ utpannā manasaḥ sthiti
nibandhanī ||*

(Y.S., I.35)³³

The word *saumanas* appears in the following *sūtra*:

*sattvaśuddhi saumanasya aikāgrya indriyajaya
ātmadarśana योगyatvāni ca ||*

(Y.S., II.41)

The practice of *niyama* makes one eligible for 'ātma-darśana' since the practitioner's mind is charged with *sattva*; the *buddhi* gets cleansed, the mind gets purified and the senses of perception follow the purified mind. In short, he assures that the opposing forces can be brought under control.

The clean mind can be cultivated to remain in a cheerful state. In Y.S., II.53³⁴; *dhāraṇāsu ca योगyatā manasaḥ*.

He assures that through the practice of *prāṇāyāma* the mind

³² Y.S., I.31 – Sorrow, despair, unsteadiness of the body and irregular breathing further distract the citta.

³³ Y.S., I.35 – Or, by contemplating on an object which helps to maintain steadiness of mind and consciousness.

³⁴ Y.S., II.53 – The mind also becomes fit for concentration.

gets disciplined and becomes attentive and aware for single pointed attention, and lastly in III.49³⁵ '*tatah manojavitvaṁ vikaraṇabhāvaḥ pradhānajayaḥ ca*' he concludes that the dual mind can be transformed into a single mind for it to merge and dissolve with the cosmic mind or cosmic intelligence as universal mind. Then, as Lord Krishna says, it becomes the friend of the *ātman*. Patañjali indicates a similar state indirectly, addressing the gradual progression of mind.

Patañjali shows how the mind evolves gradually gravitating from the thought of the external world towards the internal world or the kingdom of the soul using *karmendriya-s* and *jñānendriya-s* in a cultured way.

An aspirant makes a starting from *Sādhana Pāda* in the way explained from II.28 onwards.

In the first aspect (petal), *yama*, Patañjali guides the *sādhaka-s* to cultivate oneself to be non-violent, honest, not to misappropriate one's trust, chastity and non-greedy. The second aspect (petal), *niyama*, assures that by following cleanliness (*śauca*), developing contentment (*santoṣa*), doing *sādhana* with passion (*tapas*), educating oneself from the outer layer of the body (skin) towards the innermost layer (soul) with self study (*svādhyāya*), devotion to God (*Īśvara praṇidhāna*), one earns *saumanas*. Later with this

³⁵ Y.S., III.49 – By mastery over the senses of perception, the yogi's speed of body, senses and mind matches that of the soul, independent of the primary causes of nature. Unaided by consciousness, he subdues the first principle of nature (*mahat*).

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saumanas, he has to practise *āsana-s* and *prāṇāyāma-s* to discipline further so that the mind is made eligible for *dhāraṇā*.

In spite of regular, vigorous and religious *sādhana*, the obstacles come in the way. The obstacles can come at any stage of *sādhana*. Despite all the efforts, there may be failure due to one's own *karma*, ignorance, mistakes or heedlessness. When failure comes, fall comes. The mind goes under depression. This is called *daurmanas*. Therefore one needs to keep the mind open, elated, happy and yet under control. Patañjali says that the *yaugika* discipline can heal the depressed minds. *Yaugika* path is like a jack fruit. The outer layer of the fruit is full of thorns but inside, the fruit is sweet and juicy.

By accepting and practising yoga, the mind can march on to gain the state of *saumanasya* without the feel of attachment but with the feel of non-attachment. For this, prepare the mind through the observances of *yama* and *niyama* to have a favourable disposition to the *yaugika* practices. By training the mind through *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma* one learns to control the mind. *Prakṛti* (nature), without the intervention of the *mahat* as first principle of nature remains in *sāmyāvasthā* and in a stable state without alteration (*vṛtti*). The individual mind (*vaiyaktika manas*) is trained to undergo change to develop a single state of mind breaking the shackles of the dual mind. In this stage that mind becomes '*viśva-manas*'. This is how the individual

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mind (*vaiyaktika manas*) becomes a cosmic mind (*viśva-manas*).

This means the mind, which plays a double role of playing between the senses and the soul, has been transformed into a single mind by releasing itself from the magnetic force of the senses of perception to gravitate towards the consciousness and the soul. As the senses of perception are in the face, close to the brain, they keep the brain in duress, active and busy. When one reaches this level in the state of mind, the brain remains passive but alert. This is the *samāpatti* of the brain.