

# Gems from the MASTER



*A Compilation by :*  
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## **Pranam Prashant Sir**

I started attending your classes about 2 years ago more from a curiosity quotient, only to realise within a week that the curiosity had killed the cat, as the cat got hooked to your teachings. I studiously started taking notes during the course of your classes which we're just points and pointers to your precepts. But later when I revisited my notes, I could not relate the context in which you had mentioned certain aspects. Those notes just seemed like a heap of words. It's then I decided that these notes which had been jotted down needed to be expanded the way you had articulated them anecdotally with clarity.

I then decided to expand the notes immediately after the classes on my way to work and the Delhi metro provided a perfect setting for me to expand the notes into meaningful blogs. I took your precepts and added my own thoughts within the framework of your context.

These blogs helped me in re-vesting your teachings as I made it a point to go through all the blogs whenever I needed clarity on certain subjects that you had taught us. This helped me to integrate your teachings into my daily practice.

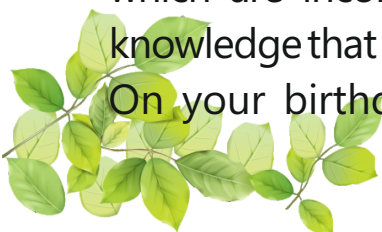
These metro musings soon found its way to a blog site of mine named 'Iyengar snippets'.

This small booklet is our humble submission of what we have assimilated and gained by your teaching. It's changed me completely and as a token of our reverence, we conceived this idea of a small book as a token of our appreciation of your selfless teachings and the transformation that it has brought into us.

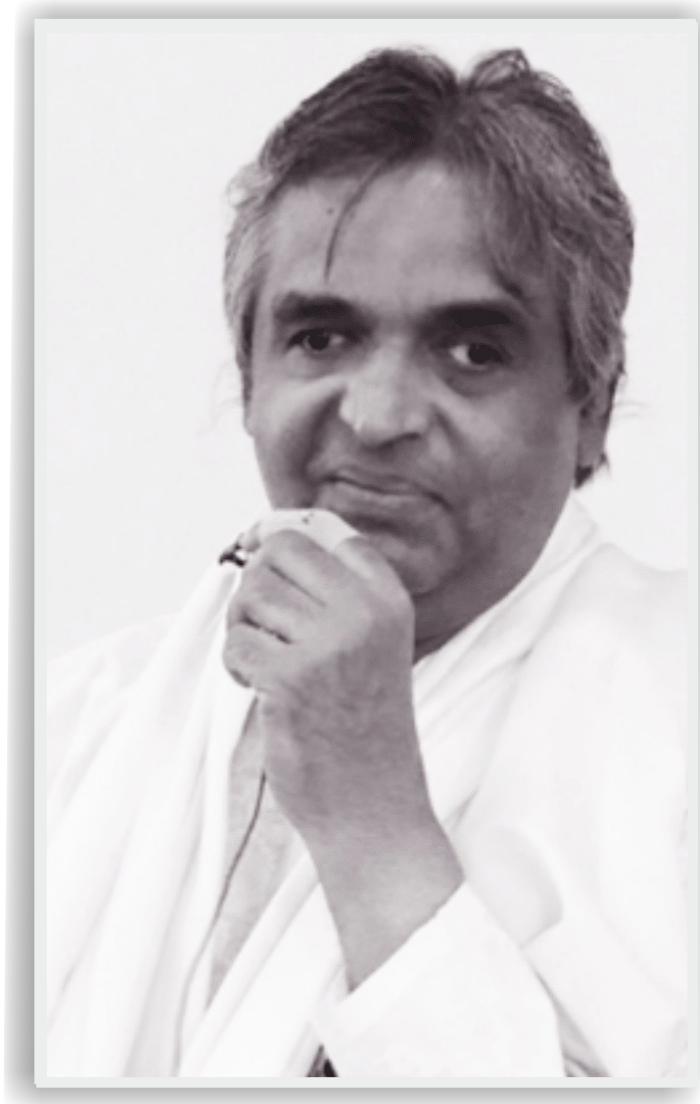
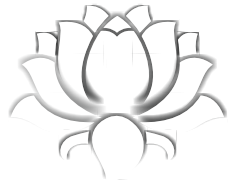
The seventeen chapters which I have picked are from a repository of 40 odd blogs that I had penned.

Pardon me if there are portions which I could have misunderstood and which are incorrect. I am just a speck of sand on the beach of knowledge that you expound and educate us.

On your birthday we seek your Ashirwad.







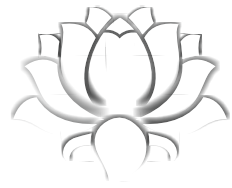


## **Sanity**

Sanity is one of the attributes I gave in a long list of tranquillity, neutrality, virginity, sublimity, purity, piety, sanctity, sanity, equity, equanimity, equilibrium. This is meaning of word relaxation. In different hierarchies that will again change. If you are at a lower hierarchy you won't circumscribe so many things. If you are at a higher hierarchy you will circumscribe all that.

Prashant Iyengar







### **Prayer invocation - Chanting**

The prayer invocation at the beginning of an Iyengar yoga , yoga session is a signal to the body mind and breath ,

“ Atha Yoga Anushasanam. I hope that you can enjoy this journey with me as we explore the richness of what yoga has to offer, which is, of course, the richness of life itself. Let us begin together.”

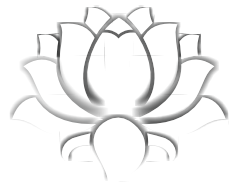
The prayer invokes in us the awareness of Body Mind Breath , that would as a triumvirate unify in the yoga session to follow , to explore ourselves . It's a trigger of the memories of the previous yog sessions , what was learnt , and what was achieved , and what you are about to learn and achieve more than the previous session . It's a catalyst to the mind to remember the previous learnings and drawn upon them to continue the learning process as initiated by the prayer .

The Invocation ought to ignite the Chiita in us , and make us more aware , and open our minds to the new learning that the current yog session is supposed to bring us . Its a Viragya process that is supposed to set in our minds , drawing us out of the our worldly life and escorting us to the realm of the spiritual world of yog . It's a process of detachment of the body and mind from the living world into the world of Patanjali's yog . Like a snake sheds its old skin , the invocation sheds our worldly shell to draw us into the shell of yoga . Its sets our body mind and breath ready to be for asana - state of being .

The chant ensues memories to the surface and prepares us for the asana session . Chanting helps to regulate the hypothalamus of the brain, which is the control centre of emotions and chanting also helps to calm down the anger centre of the brain., preparing the mind into a state of chitta vritti nirodha.

It signals the mind to live in the present during the yoga session.









## LEARNING

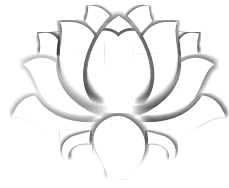
Learning is a process . For some it's a process involving partaking knowledge, for some it's an intuitive process . Since its a process, it's on going and acquired, chiselled , polished over a period of time . So is learning in yog, it's a process of acquiring knowledge and not acquired instantaneously.

Learning involves, knowledge skill being partaked in a class under the guidance of a teacher who has acquired a certain level of knowledge, which can be imparted to a student starting ab initio. Hence such a student cannot claim to have learnt in a class what has been taught during the period of class .

A Yog student cannot claim to have learnt what has been taught in the class. Learning is a process , and in the process , we assimilate, what has been taught, we explore what has been taught , we practice what we have been taught . This process can continue for a few days of a few months or a few years. It depends on your assimilation, exploration and practice.

On attaining a certain maturity in the practice, you may claim that you have learnt it, and during the interim period , you are in the process of learning , hence the correct expression to be used is .." i am learning , and not ...I have learnt . 'There has to be a gestation period in the knowledge process very similar to that of a child birth. Child birth is a process from impregnation to pregnancy, a period of 9 months and 9 days to childbirth . This gestation period is very important for a normal delivery of a child. So does knowledge have a gestation period where one acquires the knowledge, explores the knowledge , practices , before climbing to know about it and proclaiming that I have learnt . Any short fusing of the process will lead to half baked knowledge acquired with disastrous effects.







## Samskara

According to various schools of Indian philosophy, samskaras are the subtle mental impressions left by all thoughts, intentions and actions that an individual has ever experienced. Often likened to grooves in the mind, they can be considered as psychological or emotional imprints that contribute to the formation of behavioural patterns. Samskaras are below the level of normal consciousness and are said to be the root of all impulses, character traits and innate dispositions.

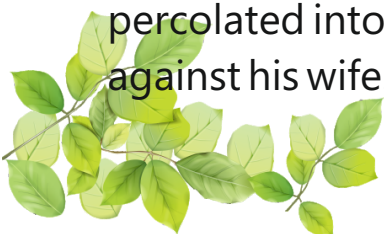
Hindu philosophy, samskaras are the basis of the development of karma, providing evidence of rebirth.

Samskaras originate when a vritti, or thought wave, arises in the mind. Once this thought wave has left the conscious mind, it sinks down into the subconscious or unconscious mind, where it remains in the form of a samskara.

Samskara are closely related to smriti ( memory). When you recall smith an incident of the past , the samsara attached to that incident also manifests itself in the recall . samskaras also serve as memory stores that hold all past experiences in perfect detail.

Thus samsara can affect a persons present and the future based on the past samsara which has left an imprint on one's self .

Hence meditation and pranayama can work on the samsara which is at the conscious level and help to work positively on the associated samsara at the sub conscious level . Suppose a person has a very strong conditioning in terms of beating his wife ..this could be the samkara that has been left in his subconsciousness , when as a child he saw his father beating his mother ..when he was a child he did not register it in his consciousness but it got ingrained in his subconscious. When he grew up , the subconscious samsara of punishing a wife is so strong that it percolated into the consciousness and he starts domestic violence against his wife. Probably a study and history of wife beaters ,





could probably find a majority of them having a bad childhood of their father's domestic violence against their mothers .

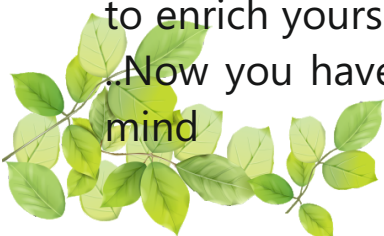
However through yog this negative samsara of wife beating can be changed when you work on the conscious level and that percolates into the sub conscious level ..thus converting negative samsara to a positive one .

Thus samsara are closely linked to karma ..The samsara that we bring along with us, is developed over a period of time , which makes us do good/ bad thing which are the basis of karma in the next birth

Samkaras are footprints that our actions leaven on our mind and psyche . They are impressions that are long lasting which shape our character and our soul . They shape our relationship with the family and friends

We inherit a majority of our samsara form our family and parents from a very impressionable and small age . A simple act of a father asking the child to answer the phone and state that he is not available , is the first step of the father leaving a samsara on the child mind — I CAN LIE . This is the first and the lasting impression on the child later when he child lies to the parents , he should not be blamed , as he has derived this trait from the Samskara imprinted on his mind by the father .

The mind plays a very important role in shaping samsara .. In childhood you have been told never to lie ..So that samsara of never to lie is frozen in your subconscious and you never lie , but years later you are in a situation where if you lie to enrich yourself to big bucks ( get paid for corruption ) , Samskara could change within oneself . Here your sub concuss tells you that my Samskaras is not to lie or be corrupt, but the mind would play games and manipulate your samsara and rationalise the act of a lie to enrich yourself. In the lust of making big money you could lie ..Now you have a changed negative samsara influenced by the mind

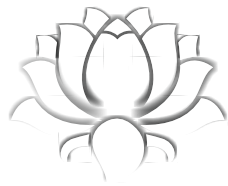




Hence it's important to practice abhyasa as its through the practice of Abhyasa that one could achieve the censing of one's mind.

Hence Abhyasa and Virgaya are two components which will strengthen your samskara.







## **PRANA / SWASA PRATISHTA**

Hindu temples in India are just not the places of worship, they are a confluence of positive energy and forces, where the devotee feels energised and rejuvenated with positivity. The sacrum sanctorum where the murti (idol of the lord is placed) is the epicentre of positive forces that converge, and the location of the sanctum Santorum is chosen with great mathematical / spiritual care, to ensure the maximisation of positive energy in that specific area.

The idol which has to be consecrated is placed in the sacrum sanctorum with a great religious fervour which could last a few days. The religious ceremonies and rituals which include singing of hymns, bathing the idol with ghee (clarified butter), sandal wood paste, honey and milk. It's a process to infuse force into the idol that has been installed. Its Pratishta, a ritual of consecration or breathing life force, and it's with the consciousness or power, the deity is brought into the image of the Lord worshiped. Its only after the Pratishta is performed properly that worship can be offered to the murti, and deemed to be infused by Prana or life force.

The rituals of anointment of ghee, milk, sandal wood paste, honey is carried forward on a daily basis, a process which ensures that the blemishes or cracks on the idol (stone) is repaired via this anointment process. It's this very process that has ensured that the idols in many of the Hindu temples have withstood the vagaries of time, climate, and seasons over a few thousands of years.

In Yog we perform Pratishta with the preparatory asanas, which prepares our body and mind to an eventful yog session. Similar to the anointment process of the murti in a temple, the body needs to be anointed – anointed by breath. During the preparatory, we need to ensure that we anoint the different parts of the body, through breath and move the prana to areas in the





body which need to be awakened and infused with energy. The preparatory asanas need to carried out with the breath traversing across the body to awaken the body to yog . The breath that we infuse into the different parts of the body is swasa Pratishta or loosening / warming of the body and converging the body and mind in preparation to the Yog that is to follow.

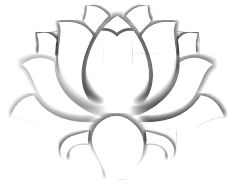
The breath infuses and lubricates the parts of the body to an awaken state in preparation for yog . The Breath infuses Prana into the different cells of the body making them vibrant and rouse the body and mind to a enlightened state. The breath traversing through the body act like the elements that are used to anoint an idol as they lubricate the different parts of the body infusing the trillions of cells within and sealing cracks and fissures within, through prana

The process of Swasa Prathista and Prana Pratishta are processes to crank the body to a become a spirited entity before the yog practice and ensuring that the body and mind are ready as an entity.











## Parinama

Parinama is a Sanskrit term describing transformation or change, on both a philosophical and practical level. It is one of the most important ideas in "The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali" and is described as the transformation which takes place when one is leaving a period of suffering or dukha.

Parinama applies to you too as we mature in our yoga practice, our results & progress of our practice of yoga bring forth things, feelings and attitude which were already unseen and hidden deep inside us. As we delve deeper into practice of yoga , we undertake a discovery process of ourselves and unearth layers of cobwebs which engulf our mind and thinking process . The clearing of our mind is transformational and hence parinama .

Yog is parinama and a transformation of not only the mind but also of the body and the vehicle of transformation of the mind and body is the breath . It's a parinama of all the 5 senses within us . The unification of the triumvirate of BODY MIND BREATHE can happen only through the practice of Yog , hence you are the transformational vehicle , taking us to higher planes of living as a human being

A diseased ( dis-eased ) body is healed through which is a transformation of the body .

An unstable and troubled mind which has been subjected to meditation and pranayama , finds its serenity , tranquillity , sobriety, sublimity, purity , sanctity, leading to the parinama of the mind .

The Parinama of the body & mind cannot be achieved without the BREATH , as when the breath is regulated , and controlled , it brings in serenity in the asana , which has its parinama in the body addressal . The same BREATH when modulated in meditation and pranayama has its parinama in the serenity of the mind addressal .





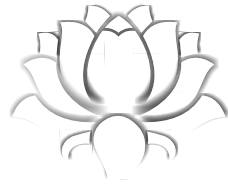
A quite mind quietens the breath and a quite breathe quietens the mind . A disturbed mind in a state of distraction forces the breath to be irregular and our asana unbalanced . Hence for a parinama to happen we need to have a serene state of mind devoid of wonderings , without questions , and hence without fear , which could be termed as a state of Chita virodha which is a real parinama which we all yearn for

Parinama is a process of transforming our BODY MIND BREATHE and is achieved through a regular serious practice of yoga through self-realisation . By sustained yoga practice, we extend the time of attention and focus, we acquire awareness of what we are capable of doing but also be aware of the distractions and interruptions as reality

The transformation is from within and it's a Parinama of the Body Mind Breth.









## Duality in Yog

The concept of duality pertains to entity , thought, process, situations on the opposite sides of a spectrum which could be diametrically opposites and two opposing parts in conflict with each other . They are the counterbalances on a weighing scale , with the lever indicating if the scale is in balance or not . They are 2 forces on the opposite sides where in one cannot live without the other . It' can be termed metaphorically as two sides of a same coin

Examples of duality are

- a) Night and Day
- b) Love and Hate
- c) Dr Jekyll and Hyde

Like in a rope tug of war, two teams are pitted against each other in a test of strength: teams pull on opposite ends of a rope , with the goal being ,to bring the rope a certain distance in one direction against the force of the opposing team's pull. It's the red piece of cloth , in the centre , which determines if the teams are in balance or if a team has more strength to displace the other . The red piece of cloth in the centre denotes the balance of the tug , and when it does remain in the centre it symbolises parity of strength of both the teams and the middle path .

Duality in life relies on the concept of dualities that exists and to know ourselves and the complexities of life . The opposite forces balance your life and counteract each other if required . The extremes and polarity of each side once known , and the way you adroitly harmonize the two sides and steer a path for yourself , after analysing all the challenges from all perspectives instead on taking sides of what is right or wrong . What you have done is cantered yourself based on these perspectives and live in neither extremes .





In Yog the first two limbs of astanga yoga lay the ground rules of the middle path that a yogi needs to take in his yogic journey . They are the foundational building blocks of the Tree of Yoga as enunciated by Guruji . Yama the root of the tree, comprising of the 5 principles of Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Bramacharya, and Aparigraha , along with the trunk of the tree which is Niyama comprising of 5 principles of Saucha, Santosa, Tapas, Svadhyaya and Ishwara Pranidhana , sets the tone and guiding principles of leading a middle path in the yogic journey .

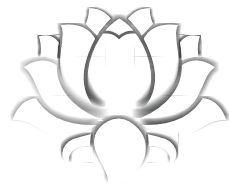
Yoga teaches us to maintain duality in our asana practice too. During the execution of Veer Bhadrasana 2 , the trunk needs to be centered going down in a cylindrical manner , the torso in alignment with the chest facing the front , the hands stretched on either side . The tendency for the trunk to move forward needs to be worked upon by counter action of the outstretched hand counteracting this by pulling the trunk to the other side so as to align the trunk in the center . This sideways pull and push needs to be aligned with the downward pull of the gluteal muscles to ensure that the bent leg attains a perfect 90 degree bend . What we have done unconsciously is to attain duality of the asana .

The counterbalancing of pulls and pushes of different bones and muscles in an asana needs to be worked upon to achieve the bodily balance in an asana . Once the bodily balance has been achieved , one needs to work on the collective dynamics of the Body Mind Breath to attain the state of tranquillity of the pose to steady the mind . Once this is achieved , we can assume that the asana is in a state of Duality.











## **Composite Dynamics**

The anatomical body is made up of Body Breath & Mind .

Prashanth sir ,explains that each part of the body , every limb, every organ has its own anatomical body mind and breath

Every organ is a breathing organ , every organ is a thinking organ with its own mind and every organ is a breathing organ

Similarly every part of the body since its capable of reasoning , we have psychological body , psychological breath , psychological mind

The anatomical body can influence the anatomical mind , the anatomical mind works on the body and the anatomical breath works on the body , All three are capable of interacting with each other and influencing each other both in the anatomical & psychological realm . Its best that they work in unison like a triumvirate ( Brahma Vishnu Mahesh is the famous triumvirate ) . It's also referred to as a triad .

So when the anatomical BMB works in unison that the best thing that can happen in Yog So the collective action of the anatomical BMB is COHESIVE DYNAMICS OR COLLECTIVE DYNAMICS .

The dynamics ( strengths) of each is united / combined/fused together in COMPOSITE DYNAMICS

COMPOSITE - meaning coming together of 2 or more entities to form a union ..It could be 2 metals ..like when you make a gold ornament , you use gold and some alloy ..so that's composite compound So when sir uses terms like composite / collective/ cohesive Dynamics , its the same .

When the Body Mind and Breath are working in composite dynamics , your practice is intense and you attain a pranic mind during the practice of Yog . The pranic mind being devoid of all gratifications and gravity of perversions is able to transude the mind from a chaotic vasanic state ,to a tranquil Pranic state





,keeping the gravity of the vasanic mind at bay, This is how when Yog is practiced ,to address the infrastructural level of the mind , with tatva / prana kriya , the mind is altered .This altered state of mind is able to influence the mind when you are not in a yogic / pranic state , during your normative period of the day .

The mind that has been altered is sharper with the brain calibre having increased , due to a more responsive and active & vibrant mind. This enriched and vibrant mind is increasing your perception, imagination, cognition, sensation , creativity, thought process and inference , resulting in a shining new personality in you .

During the practice of intense Yog the EDO motor function are kicked off and the electrical connections resulting in the brain getting charged leading to a better quality of life .

The mind transformation also depends on the quality time spent in the pursuit of Yog . When you are practicing Yog , you are in a Yog state , while not practicing Yog you are in the Bhog state . While in the Yog state your mind is in a transformed state and while in Bhog its in a normative state ( normal state ) . So you have the Yog time and the Bhog time of the day when the mind is acting differently in these 2 states ( in the ratio of lets' say 10:90 ) . Yog & Bhog go hand in hand .

With this high ratio your mind will not transcend to the Yog site while being in Bhog . But if you increase the Yog period to denote a 30:70 ration between they of and Bhog state , chances are that with the increased Yog period that the mind is in yog state , it could influence the mind to remain in that same state even during the Bhog period . This is the transformation that you can do to your mind and improve the quality of your life as stated above. While in the normative Bhog state your mind is not being utilised to its full capacity , hence you have distractions , energy levels dropping

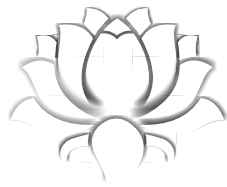




(coz of a tired mind), concentration, inferences, analysis functions, cognitive functions, not being utilised to its full capacity. If the same mind while in the Bhog stays energised and charged like it was in the Yog state, it would improve your life with a better sharper mind

Yog & Bhog are 2 different things and exist in different dimensions in the same mind, Yog is for rising above Bhog and as you practice Yog intensely which would address the infrastructure layer, you find that the Bhog which are grosser, leaves you and you continue to remain in a Yog state even during normative periods.







## **Purvauttankriya and Sankochak kriya**

Purvauttankriya is a kriya of the Purvottanasana where we need ensure the opening of the chest , thoracic and the neck region . So in all back bends or back arches we need to take the imprint of Purvottanasana and apply the kriya in our back bends with udyan kriya and bandha and it assists in uniting the BBM in an asana

Any activity can be articulated but Yog is beyond articulation as it needs to be experienced and assimilated . It's a journey which one needs to explore

Any literature which goes beyond what's actually written on it becomes a great literature as it conveys more than what has been written . The writer has to be very strong in conveying what is not actually written. That' makes a great literature The writing should go beyond the written worlds hence Yog is similar to a great literature. It cannot be articulated , it needs to be comprehended beyond the corporeal realm of asana

Nomenclature is the name given of a thing or person Prakash / Krishna / Rama / Suraj.

This nomenclature ( name ) is given to a person ( like I have been named Ravi )

So Ravi the name is a nomenclature and the person to whom this has been given ( me ) becomes the nomenclatured . So Ravi ( sun ) was given to me assuming that I would shine as bright as the sun and illuminate .. the nomenclature ( me ) may not live up to the nomenclature ( sun - brightness ). I may remain dull and an idiot .. here is the concept of naam and nami

Container and contained - if a water is filled in a bucket then the bucket is the container and the water is the content. Nowhere any context can the container and the content be the same. Air in a balloon. Air is the content balloon is the container .





It's only in Yog that we can have the container and the content the same

The mind - the mind is a container and the mind is a content ( thoughts / Sankalp / smriti) they are all part of the mind and they reside in the mind Hence the container and content are the same .

A unique case of metaphysics and psychophysics coming together Urdhmukha asana and salabhasan should be done after all the back bending and back arching poses have been completed . This ought to be a conclusion poses of your practice. At the beginning of the practice perform the 2 poses and carry the impression and at the end of the back bending exercise, do it again and notice the difference on the back and para spinal muscles. The breath itself would be totally different

Sorrow less sorrow. We have a habit of thinking ahead into the future and assuming a lot of issues coming up and in the process we bring in sorrow / anxiety / depression even when the event has not been triggered

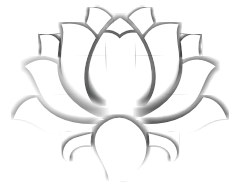
In the habit of being proactive we actually bring sorrow to our present state where there is no sorrow. It's sorrow less sorrow state of the present where we bring in sorrow thinking about a future event which may not even occur.

Where we ought to be happy we intrude sorrow without a reason.











## **Relationships and manifestation of relationship in Life and in Yog**

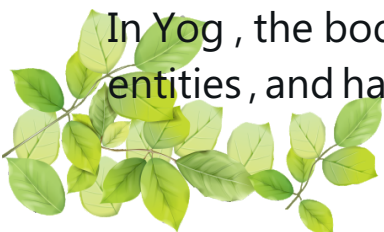
Relationships is the way in which two or more people or things are connected, or are in the state of being connected . It's an association of minds between 2 entities , which connects and leads to a state of deeper involvement . Relationships manifested between 2 entities vary from time to time and is based on circumstantial situations .

Relation is one but relationships could be manifold .

A married couple have a relation which is of a man & wife , but the relationship between them both could be far too many . A man and woman could be in a happy state, which is one state of relationship between them , the same couple could be having an intimate moment , which is a different relationship , they could be quarrelling which brings out a different dimension of their relationship . Hence relationships are subjected to the state of the mind . The two entities need to change their mental status to change their relationships from time to time . Hence relationships need compatibility for harmonious coexistence ,relationships cannot happen due to imposition , there has to be a reconciliation for a relationship .

The relationships get compounded when there third person in the relationship . The third person is an imposition on the relationship between the first two ( example a mother in law comes to stay with the couple ) . This could be termed as imposition of a relationship on the relationship of the couple . Hence there has to be reconciliation between the three of them to remove the imposition for a harmonious relations between the three of them .

In Yog , the body breath & mind have a relation as three separate entities , and have many relationships . The mind could be in one





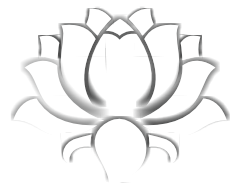
state and the body in another , and the breath in a totally different frames of their own minds . They too have multiple relationships based on the subjective circumstantial situation that each find themselves in . In the body environment there are three entities BMB , but the good part is that they are a part of the same embodiment – You . Each one is related to each other hence you don't have the concept of the odd one out ..It's all a part of you . There will be some sort of reconciliation between them hence we do not have an imposition

In different asana , each one the BMB could be in different state of mind but they all come together as one, as composite dynamics of the trad .

In Sirasan the BMB could be in different states , similarly in Badrakonasan , they could be in different states during the same asana practice session , but since they are in unison and in composite dynamics they quickly adopt to become one, .as they have the ability to quickly reconcile , adjust and affiliate as one . The conflict resolution is immediate between the three as it's a part of you working together in collective dynamics in Yog . This unison of the BMB can happen only while in Yog.









## Pranic and Vasanic Minds

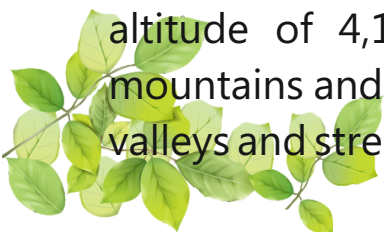
Sabari Malai in the state of Kerala, is a temple complex located at Sabarimala hill inside the Periyar Tiger Reserve in the Perinad Village, India and is the abode of Lord Ayyapan or Hariharaputra son of Lord Shiva and Mohini. Millions of Devotees throng the temple every year to have a fleeting glimpse of the Lord. One is expected to meet the Lord having cleansed oneself of all vasanic practices that adorn our daily lives and shed the 5 perversions of vasanic practices, lust, rage, greed, err.

In order to shed these perversions the devotees are expected to follow a 41-day austerity period prior to the pilgrimage. The austerity measures range from total abstinence of any form of gratification, and goes to the strictest measures of even avoiding eye contact with women. This cleansing of the body mind and soul is the essence of the pilgrimage of presenting oneself before the Lord in a state of sublimity that one is expected to live our worldly lives.

Activities during the 41 day lent (abstinence) period includes total abstinence from any type of bodily pleasures, taking a bath twice a day, performing pooja in the name of the Lord, chanting the name of the Lord at the end of the daily pooja, intake of limited food which is totally bland and just enough to subside hunger, and follow the principles of Yama, Niyama of the Ashtanga yoga.

The trek to Sabari Malai is 35 kms through the thick Periyar tiger reserve. Its completed by walking bare feet, with an offering of coconut and melted butter and rice, packed in a cloth bag, which are the offerings to the Lord, and this cloth bag needs to be balanced on the head all through the journey of 35 kms on foot (barefoot).

The temple is situated on a hilltop amidst eighteen hills at an altitude of 4,134 ft above sea level, and is surrounded by mountains and dense forests. with thick vegetation, and beautiful valleys and streams and is the abode of wild elephants and Tigers.





It requires nerves of steel , determination and fortitude to traverse the 18 hills , You need a pranic mind devoid of all 5 perversions to complete the arduous trek . This is accomplished by the 41 day abstinence period when one's vasanic mind is transformed into a pranic state of mind with the assistance of the austerity practices that are mandated of every devotee for 41 days . To undertake the trek one needs to be totally focussed with a very strong sense of determination and a very powerful mind , which assists overpowering of the body impulses by the mind when faced with severe adverse conditions in the forest . Again traversing the jungle barefoot requires a great influence of the mind over the body which can be achieved only with a very powerful developed mind which is required to feel the oneness with the Lord during the arduous jungle trek .

The 41 day austerity process , followed by the devotee , works on the yogic auspicious mind , which frees us from the gravity of perversions of the vasanic mind , Like Yog , the austerities work on the pranic mind and the mind is transmuted from a chaotic vasanic state ,to a tranquil Pranic state ,keeping the gravity of the vasanic mind at bay,

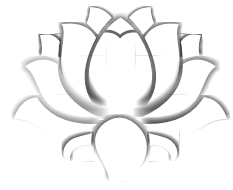
The pranic mind eclipses the vasanic mind thus counter enabling the influence of the gravity of perversions , of the vasanic mind leading us to a state of sublimity , calmness , tranquillity and serenity of the mind . The reformation and the transformation of the Vasanic mind leads to atindra sukham , which is the release of all gratification

It is with this state of mind that a devotee embarks prior and during , the treacherous jungle journey to meet the lord face to face at Sabari Mala.











## Love and disgust

Love and disgust are diametrically opposites residing on each end of a spectrum

While one can fall in love at the first sight, similarly one can acquire a feeling of disgust at the very first sight. Both the emotions being ignited at the first sight could be due to very trivial reasons or unexplained emotions. Love at first sight for a person or thing could be as inconsequential as the shine and gloss on an object of desire which attracts you at the first sight. The love at first sight could happen without one rationalising its intrinsic value or knowing anything about it other than the surface level.

Disgust for a thing or a person could be due to preconceived notions about the person or thing without knowing anything about it more than what is seen on the surface of it. Disgust at first sight could be due to the person or thing's appearance.

The downside of disgust at first sight is that it could be for life. You would never want to own it or be in any relationship with that thing or person all through your life. Without evaluating the innate qualities of the thing or person we shun it and if it's for life, we stand to lose the opportunity for life by shutting the door never to be opened again.

Many a time's love at first could end as the last sight that one would like to set their eyes on especially when the gloss and glitter has left (with passage of time) the thing or person, the very thing that made one fall in love at the first sight.

On the contrary the same object of disgust could become an object of desire or love with the passage of time when one revisits the relationship with an open mind and is able to see its true value beneath the surface level.

One could draw a similar comparison to aasanas in Yoga. There are some aasanas which one gets attracted to and fall in love at the first





sight due to the asana's elegance when one performs it, or an asana which is popular or easy to perform.

On the flip side one draws an aversion to a particular asana at the first site either it does not look elegant when performed, or is difficult or one cannot execute it due to one's personal limitations in performing that asana. Hence the first reaction would be to shun it, and fool oneself that such an asana does not exist. An ostrich in the sand syndrome. The shunned asana could be the asana which could be most beneficial to your Body Mind Breathe. By shutting the doors to the asana one has lost the benefits for life.

The asana which was our first love, one keeps doing it day in and day out and it soon reaches a state of repetitive boredom, laws of diminishing returns being applied.

It's important that we take a fresh stalk of the asana of disgust and objectively analyse it and try it. Once you are aware of the benefits the disgust could turn to love.

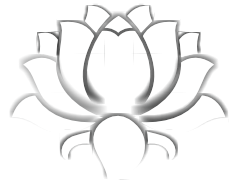
We shun an asana due to our present condition of age or disposition. We need to at least try it even if we are able to perform 20 percent of the asana. But over a period of time the balance could swing with practice until you are able to perform the asana as it's supposed to be performed.

Conditions and circumstances in life are ever changing hence it's very important to revisit relationships at every stage.

What's said of relationships is true of asana too.









## **Being trained for our next birth – karma**

As we age, the mind ages faster than the body ,in a majority of us. . We are wrongly doctored in our minds, and set patterns of actions which need to be adhered to as we age. A set of Asanas for a certain age group Muscular asansa are to be carried out between the ages of 15 to 35 , post which you need to simmer down ,as you inch towards the 50s . It's ordained that you take recourse to restorative asana as you proceed towards the 60s, and enter the world of Pranayama that is best suited for that age group. These dogmatics which brew in the mind tends to make the body feel subjectively weak, and we define shelf lives for the body to perform certain asana, during a span of a certain age group .

The mind tends to auto suggest to the body that you are not capable of performing a difficult asana and ensures that the body is not subjected to the torture of the asana as perceived by the mind. The body develops a protective shell around it not wanting to perform a difficult asana, even though its capable of performing them , as it has to follow the dictate of ' ACT YOUR AGE...YOU ARE NO LONGER YOUNG '.. When the people around you speak a similar language , the ever fluctuating mind tends to believe these myths ,and commands the body to restrain itself , from Asanas which are perceived as not appropriate for a certain age group. This is when the mind starts aging faster than the body .

As Prashant sir mentioned in a session , the body cringes at the thought of performing a hanuman Asan , as the mind forbids the body , from even trying the asana , saying that this asana is not for you as you are no longer in your prime and that this asana does not fall under the bracket of asanas meant for your age group .

Prashant sir insists that you need to try all the 200 asana which are depicted in Light on Yoga , and even if you are able to achieve a minuscule percentage of the asana . By attempting the asana , the mind within the muscular part of the body of the asana being





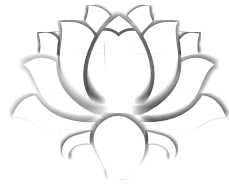
attempted ,gets activated and it gets ingrained in its muscular memory . Attempting the asana multiple times augments the muscular memory which gets ingrained in our smriti . Smritis gets added to karma of our current lives and it's the smriti and karma that alone travel with us in our next birth.

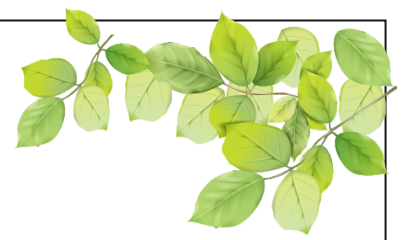
It's the yogic karma gained, in the previous birth ,that is infused into a yogic practice in the next birth , and the smritis of the asana work on the yogic practice in the next birth ensuring that the smriti and muscular memory of the previous birth are put to good use . Prashant sir further enunciates the concept of the traversing of the present day karma into the next birth. He states that his teachings, may seem vague and complicated, to many today, but he is actually training our minds and adding to the smritis of this life so that the karma of this life when transported to the next , his teaching would make more sense in our next birth He concludes by saying I am actually training you for your next birth.











## **Anxiety & Depression**

Anxiety is a constant state of mind , where the mind is put to stress , with variables that could happen in the present or would happen in a future state . It's a state where the mind is churned with various permutations and combinations of what could happen or what is about to happen , with no logic . it's a state where the person does not live in the present and either lives in the past , where past incidents drive the person to think and act as though the past incidents would be repeated , or it could be living in the future , which is full of uncertainties and these future uncertainties drive home the fear of what if ....leading to an anxious state of mind . The volume and intensity of anxiety increases exponentially as days pass by leading to a state of the mind being under continuous stress leading to severe depression and a melancholic state of Body Mind & Breath .

In this state the primary stress hormones , adrenaline & cortisol are released in a surge , and adrenaline increases the heart rate , elevates your blood pressure , Cortisol increases the sugar in the blood stream and alters the immune system which supresses the digestive system , the growth process which is directly affecting the cellular metabolism of the body .

Symptoms of being in that state are

Anxiety

Depression

Digestive system

Headaches

Muscle tension pain

Sleep problem

Weight gain

Memory & concentration impairment





So the cycle of anxiety stress depression needs to be broken . If left untreated it would lead ,to deterioration or progression of melancholia, anxiety, grief, frustration and most importantly support remission. This is a slippery road and it's a spiral . Once you get into a state without help you could slip into a state of manic depression ( needing psychiatry )

Hence its very important to sniff the tell tale signs of anxiety at the very beginning and take re-course to help in various forms

- a) Yoga
- b) Pranayam ( breath work )
- c) Disciplined life Have a disciplined routine and productive clear goals for the day.
- d) Food habits
- e) Regular sleeping habits ( going to sleep and waking up in a regular pattern )
- f) Regular exercise

All the above activities release dopamine which is a neuro transmitter which helps the nervous system and stimulates a feel good factor and pleasure which is an integral part of improving the immune system .

Stress directly affects the cellular metabolism which affects the chemical composition of the body leading to auto immune disorders

Modern science cannot reverse auto immune disorders , its only yog and pranayama which can alter the chakras in our body bringing the cellular metabolism back to its original composite state .

In a state of stress the mind and the breath remain out of sync and this can be rectified only through paranayam . You control and moderate the breath which in turn moderates the mind and ensures that it remains in a state of calmness .





One of the biggest contributors to stress is counterfactual thinking, which plays tricks on the mind .

Living in the present is the key , which pranayama teaches you .

Pranayam and yog addresses the mind's mind , hence it's a slow process but a sure process of stabilising the mind

Counselling and psychiatry addresses the mind directly , hence it's a faster process . But chances of the mind getting back to its previous state once the counselling is over, is high, hence counselling continues for a long time even after the state of distress disappears .

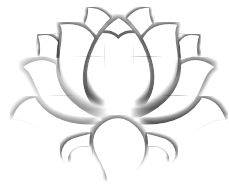
Hence its recommended that a depressed mind gets attacked on 2 fronts ...counselling and yog ( pranayama )

The mind which has been addressed by counselling can again revert to its diseased state at any psychological triggers , where as the mind's mind addressed through yog is long lasting and is a great influencer on the mind

Focusing on the present prevents the mind from wandering into the past or future and yog orients one to stay in the present and practice in the present

Accepting the present would allow you to accept the agitation , worry , angst , discomfort that one is placed under and accept and live with the conditions and slowly change the situation that compounds the stress within us







## Cells of the Body

A normal human body has 30 trillion Cells residing in it These cells are categorised into 200 different types of cells e.g. Red blood cells, skin cells, neurons ( nerve cells) , fat cells

There are 200 different types of cells in the body has a different structure, size, shape, and function, and contains different organelles.

All the cells work together to keep the human body running efficiently.

Cells are constantly dying, and new ones are being made simultaneously.

There are roughly 171 billion cells in the average male brain  
Neurons are cells that help transmit signals throughout the brain.

The average body makes about 2 to 3 million red blood cells every second, or about 173 to 259 billion red blood cells per day. An equal number of RCBs are dying every day, being flushed out of the body

Cells in the brain will stay alive throughout a person's life.

Now we need to ponder as to how does the body ensure that the balance of the cells born, and dead are in a certain optimal ratio, the ratio of the 200 different types of cells in the body is maintained. How does the body rejuvenate the 200 billion cells that perish every day and have them replaced. Cells require energy for movement, division, multiplication and other processes. They spend a large portion of their lifetimes focused on obtaining and using this energy through metabolism.

### CELLULAR METABOLISM

The answer lies in Cellular metabolism

Cell metabolism is the series of processes that take place in living organisms to sustain those organisms.





In cell biology and molecular biology, metabolism refers to the biochemical reactions that happen inside organisms to produce energy. The colloquial or nutritional use of metabolism refers to the chemical processes that happen in your body as you convert food into energy.

Although the terms have similarities, there are also differences. Metabolism is important for cells because the processes keep organisms alive and allow them to grow, reproduce or divide.

Metabolism can be classified into two processes:

Catabolism or catabolic reactions – It refers to the reactions in which larger complex molecules are broken down into simpler molecules.

- a. Protein is broken down into amino acids.
- b. Lipids are broken down into fatty acids and glycerol.
- c. Carbohydrate is broken down to glucose.

The glucose that is formed is completely oxidised inside our living cells to produce ATP.

In this process, energy is either stored in energy molecules for later use, or released as heat.

Anabolism or anabolic reactions – It is opposite to catabolism. Here energy is consumed when small simple molecules are changed into large and complex molecules like enzymes, hormones, receptors, hair, nails, etc.

The new molecules built via anabolic pathways (macromolecules) are useful for building cell structures and maintaining the cell.

Metabolism is described as the sum of all the biochemical reactions occurring in a cell and these interconnecting networks of reactions are called metabolic pathways.

## NITRIC OXIDE

Nitric oxide, also called nitrogen oxide or nitrogen monoxide, is produced by almost every cell of the human body.







It is considered a mediator of cell-to-cell communication and plays an important role in a large variety of processes in the body, including inflammation, vasodilation and neurotransmission. It's considered to be one of the most crucial molecules when it comes to the health of our blood vessels. Nitric oxide plays a very key role in an opening or widening of blood vessels that results from relaxation of the muscular walls of the vessels

Many immune system cells produce and respond to nitric oxide. It plays a key role in the immune system and helps fight off disease. Time to put the Jig saw together

- The cell balance is maintained by the cellular metabolism of the body,
- The cells of the body for a healthy life are heavily dependent on the immune system of the body
- One of the primary ingredient sources for a strong immune system is the production of nitric oxide within the cells of the body

Nitric Oxide (NO) is produced in the paranasal sinuses and carried into the lungs during nasal breathing

According to Nature Publishing Group Nitric Oxide has been recognized as the most versatile players in the immune system The most important thing about being healthy is Nose breathing which increases nitric oxide in the blood stream

During pranayama we inhale and exhale into the paranasal sinuses which in turn produces the maximum nitric oxide Gentle nasal breathing optimises NO levels in the airways and blood NO is produced in the paranasal sinuses, a group of four air-filled spaces that surround the nasal cavity Since greater amount of NO is produced during pranayama , it can be construed that pranayama increases the immunity of the body cells.





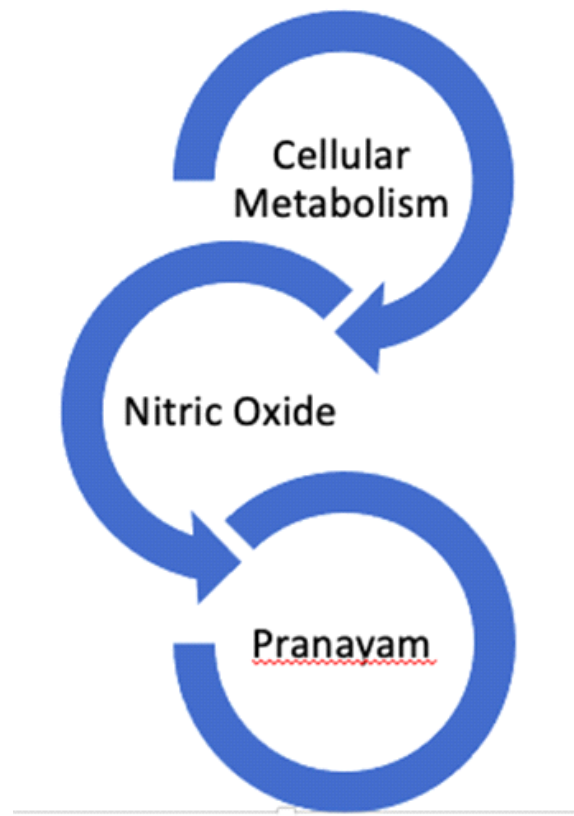
Prana kriya, Tattva kriya, practiced during the course of pranayama, creates a churn in our metabolism.

These kriya during pranayama cleanses, purifies and stimulates our energies; dissolve our blocks responsible for our stress, stagnation and diseases. As Prashant sir emphasises in all his pranayama classes , each element of these kriyas release a chemical / vitamin in our body . The chemicals that sir makes a reference to , could be nitric oxide

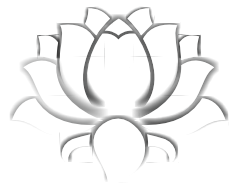
Bhramari Pranayam leads to a 15 to 20 fold increase in NO levels helping to open up the airways and kill pathogens

We can now conclude by saying that Pranayam is the key to a healthy cellular metabolism system

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## **Props are your extended Limbs**

Iyengar props are an extension of you Many years back when I started my yogic journey with Iyengar's yoga , I was introduced to props in the class of 40 students . We had been asked to select the props that one would need ,in the 90 minutes class depending on the props that you would need ,keeping your body condition and flexibility in mind . We had to neatly pile up the props , that would be needed besides the assigned mat .

One day one of the students ( Shrestha ... name changed ) moved a brick with her legs instead of bending over , lifting it and placing where she intended to place the brick . The teachers hawk eye did notice that act and for the next 20 minutes , my friend Shrestha , received the worst tongue lashing of her life . Would you kick your own leg to move it to a position that you want it to be ? She was questioned .

Props are an extension of your own body and hence they need to be accorded the same respect and care that one would accord to one's own body . Saucha ( cleanliness) is the key to one's attaining godliness. Hence the same principles apply to props . They need to be kept clean as they are a part of your body touching your body in every sense ,helping you to attain a pose which otherwise your body is incapable of attaining .

A brick is used in trikonasan because, either your hips are too tight for you to attain the sideway bend or your hands are too short to touch the floor. Hence the brick is a part of your own body assisting you to attain a certain yogic goal The blanket used in Swastik asana under your glutes is to assist you ,to keep your spine erect either due to the fact that your hip muscles are so tight that you slouch forward trying to keep a straight spine , or your knees are not facing downwards again due to jammed hip flexors . The blanket is a part of your hip flexors in this asana . The bolster spine wise during a pranayam session is used to open your chest ,





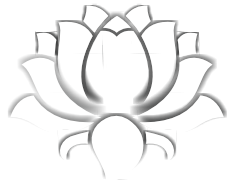
possibly due to the fact that you have a closed rib cage and are not able to open the chest fully . So in pranayam the bolster is an extension of your chest and lungs The sticky mat is a part of your feet as it helps in stability of an asan and let's your feet grip the ground for stability in a pose. Here the sticky mat is a part of the foot,

Now that we are convinced that the props are an extension of one's self , it's our alter ego and they need to be accorded the same love that we accord to our own body .

Prashant sir mentioned that on Vijay Dashmi day ( the last day of the 10 days celebration of Navratri ) , one is supposed to worship our tools of profession . A soldier worships his guns and swords , a student worships his books , an iron smith worships the anvil and each individual worships the tools that are a part of his livelihood and a part of him . At RIMYI the props are worshiped that day , indicating that for an Iyengar Yog practitioner , props are the most important tools in his yogic practice and journey So the next time you move the brick or the bolster or the blanket with your legs .... Remember respect them as they are a part of you











## Vrittis

During yog the parts of the body need to be active , activated, activating While focussing on the sternum , one activates the sternum in any asana and needs to observe how it's active ,observe the breath and in a composite dynamics realm observe how the BMB is helping in the sternum being active

Repeating the same asana , now observe how the active sternum is now activated to perform certain function on other body parts under composite dynamics . Finally observe how the sternum is now activating and influencing other parts of the associated body. This study and observation in Yog is education

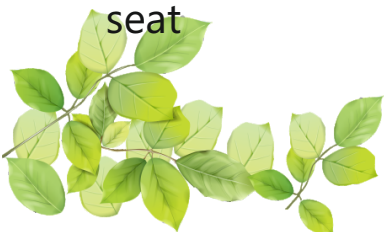
Thus in every asana one needs to ,observe how a certain body part is active activated and activating .

When an asana is done with a certain perception it activates vrittis One needs to observe, when a part is active what are the dynamics , when it's activated , what are the dynamics , and while activating what are the dynamics

Yog generates chita vrittis . Vrittis generated during a Yog session are the best as they are devoid of the worldly vrittis .During a Yog session, vrittis are erupted. One should not stop their eruption and flow as these are upadan chita vritti which are acceptable and not to be rejected . While the flow of vrittis erupt during a Yog session , the worldly vrittis will disappear and will ensure that all vrittis which are personal gravities , tendencies, vasanic vrittis and vrittis generated due of your surroundings and gravities around you , are reframed and arrested

The Yog vrittis are generated due to the education and interaction within you of the associated BMB , while the body parts have been activated and activating .

While in you are in an internal realm and have turned internal , watching yourself external vrittis penetration is minimal . While in the internal realm , during a Yog session , you are not you , you are without a name nation caste creed. As the profound I takes a back seat





The BMB interface creates these vrittis while in Yog and it's not generated by outside gravities (like the vrittis generated ,when you are not in Yog )

Hence these vrittis which are pure need to be categorised , analysed , segregated , mined , arranged ,  
A arranged vritti helps in chita vritti nirodha

Vritti is erupted by active activated activating body which ignited a process of education within us knowing more of our internal self  
The accumulated vrittis need to be arranged and while doing so many vrittis are weeded out, while certain vrittis are retained which could be most relevant to us

It's a management of the vrittis and the mind , and yourself ,which translates into chita vritti nirodha in yog



