

YOGA VS YOGAM

First of all, let us differentiate between Yoga and Yogam. Now a days the word “YOGA” is mostly used for ‘yogam’ also. YOGAM is a supreme state of well-being, which is a state of reunion between individual Soul (Jeevatma) and universal spirit (Paramatma). To achieve this we have to make an effort, which is systematic and scientific. With this, the individual soul gets liberated from worldly and bodily miseries thereby uniting again with the original Paramatma, calling it as Salvation. (Mukti or Moksha). In fact, this is not reunion, but it is getting rid of from the untrue world and becoming Brahman as it was. This could be achieved by practical wisdom or knowledge derived out of doing Pranayama. Pranayama is otherwise called Yogabhyasam, basically which is the important effort among other 7 parts of Ashtanga Yogam.

**Yogat sanjayathe Jnanam
(Knowledge is born out of Yogam)
(Trisikhi brahmanopanishad)**

**Nahi Jnanena sadrusham pavitram iha vidyate
Tat swayam yoga samsiddhaha kalen atmani vindathi
(Bhagavad-Gita 4th chapter)**

This is very confidential and it is the topmost of all the spiritual practices.

**Rajavidya Raja Guhyam
(Bhagavad-Gita 9th chapter)**

This confidential Yogam should be taught by a learned Guru (preceptor), who should be well versed with both theory and practice.

**Tadviddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya
Upadekhyanthe te jnanam, jnaninaha tattva darsinaha
(Bhagavad-Gita 4th chapter)**

**Yasyadeve parabhakthihi yadha deve tadha gurau,
tasyeyte kadhita hyardhaha prakasnte mahatmanaha
(Swethaswetharopanishad)**

So, a truth seeker fundamentally should have devotion towards God and Guru. This relationship is an everlasting for births together, if not achieved in this birth and Yogam should be continuously practiced for hours together.

Tasmat sarveshu kaleshu yoga yuktobhavarjuna
(Bhagavad-Gita 8th chapter)

Whereas the word Yoga is injudiciously used for Yogam as a physical postural exercise (Yogasanas) along with external nadi sodhana using the finger tips to close and open the external nostrils alternatively drawing external atmospheric air. Mind you, this so called Yoga is quite distinct and different from internal pranayama, which is real Yogam.

In order to distinguish between these two, we should have a clear cut Idea about Pranam (vital force).

We believe that we are living and our body physiology is carried out by external atmospheric oxygen which is 20.1% in the air. CO₂ and O₂ exchange is being taken place in the alveoli of lungs. This oxygen is always available throughout the ages of time, but yet we are dying. If you keep two bodies aside on the ground, i.e. one dead body and another living body which is in deep sleep. For both the bodies oxygen is available in the atmospheric air. Living body which is in deep sleep is effortlessly taking the air, whereas the dead body cannot take it. Why? The reason being that, there should be another force that is present in the living body, which is responsible for in drawing of external atmospheric air, which is lacking in dead body. This in-drawing or sucking force is 'Pranam' or 'Vital Force'.

This 'Pranam' is quite distinct from atmospheric oxygen, being an inorganic gas which can be collected in cylinder where as we cannot collect the Vital Pranam which is there in the body. This internal vital pranam is being regularly exhausted outside through our expiration. In every living being, the expiration is more predominant than inspiration. Even in a healthy individual, the inspiration is 8" (inches) i.e. taking external air from 8 inches and expiration is 12" (inches) i.e. expelling air from lungs to outside. It indicates that some extra force (4" inches) is driven out

during every expiration. That extra force is Vital prana sakti, which when continuously driven out, death takes place and we call it as 'EXPIRED'. This indicates that there is no inspiration because there is no in-drawing force inside the body.

So, it is our duty to see that the in drawing vital force is not thrown out side during expiration. This can be achieved by reversing the respirations i.e. increasing the length of inspiration and reducing the length of expiration. If you churn the vital force by catching the respiratory movements in opposite directions, you will get sound and heat due to friction.

Guruvakyat sushumnayam viparito bhavej japah
(Yoga Shikhopanishad)

Ulat pavan ka tokar mara
(HH Sri Shyamacharana Lahiri)

The heat evolved during this process will dissolve and burn the impurities, thereby reducing the heaviness (gravity) at the umbilicus and lower part of abdomen i.e. anus. When the heaviness is reduced, the inspiration will be much easier and it will be prolonged in phase and time.

This upward increased phase of inspiration is 'Pranayama' which is coined out of Prana + Ayama. Ayama means increasing or lengthening. So Pranayama is lengthening of one's own inspiration by churning of one's own life force, which is inside. So, Pranayama is purely an internal process, which in no way connected with external atmospheric air.

Since we are taking respirations with the external atmospheric air, this communication will be gradually reduced proportionately to the increased inspiratory phase and at one stage there won't be any communication with the exterior, which is called Samadhi. During pranayama, not only the vital force is concentrated, but also the divine knowledge, divine light, and divine happiness.

So, I want to make it clear, that during Pranayama the mind and Vital Prana Sakti are becoming one and are going deeper and deeper into interior of the body, the so called 'BUDDHI GUHA'. Anatomically, we can say that the life force goes upwards through the central canal of the spinal cord, Fourth ventricle of Medulla Oblongata, Aqueduct of Sylvius and finally after passing into the Third Ventricle of the brain, which is situated at the level of eye brows externally, behind the pituitary and hypothalamus and in front of Pineal gland internally. During this process, enormous heat and mental energy is generated, which will evolve spiritual wisdom or knowledge, only through which the yogi can practically understand that I am Brahman (Aham Brahmasmi).

Without knowing the practical aspect of Pranayama, most of the people are taking much more external air. Basing on this only external nadi sodhana is taken place by using finger tips on to the nose. If you churn out or rub your palms outside, you will get physical energy. Likewise if you churn inside, you get mental energy. Due to friction, the sound which we are getting is 'Om'. Where as in all external nadi sodhanas, you are not at all getting any sound. The process that which generates mental energy is Pranayama or Yogam whereas the external efforts are called as 'Yoga'. Yoga is for health and yogam is for both perfect health and salvation.

One thing I want to make it clear, that I am not discouraging or criticizing external nadi sodhana and yogasanas. They are also helpful but at the same time we should know that there is purely an internal Pranayama which will clean all the 72,000 nerves in the body.

We can compare the ordinary bodily exercise as positive degree Yogasanas & external nadi sodhana as comparative degree and internal Pranayama as superlative degree which can only be the resort for salvation.

This internal Pranayama is very easy to practice when compared with other spiritual practices provided if it initiated by learned Guru, who can clarify all doubts and who can convince the subject scientifically correlating with ancient scriptures like Bhagavad-Gita & Upanishads.