...And now, Yoga

BY SADHGURU

Patanjali defined yoga as Chitta Vritti Nirodha, which literally means that if you still the modifications and activity of the mind, you are in yoga. Everything has become one in your consciousness.

We pursue several things in life, going through processes of what we call achievements, but to go beyond modifications of the mind is the most fundamental and simultaneously highest achievement, because this releases a man from what he is seeking – from what is within and what is outside – from everything. Only when he stills his mind does he become an ultimate possibility. The mind becomes a plain mirror, not a wavy mirror. A wavy mirror will distort perception.

Most people use their mind only between memory and imagination. Memory and imagination are not two separate things. Memory is accumulated past; imagination is an exaggerated version of that. If you bring your mind to a state where you are neither contaminated by memory nor deluded by imagination, then it will be a truly intelligent, penetrative mind; that sees everything there is to see – life and its source. For the survival process, memory and imagination are good enough, but to explore other dimensions of life, these are insufficient because they only recycle the past. Once you recycle your past, there is a pattern to life; an unbreakable pattern. Once trapped in it, it does not matter who created the pattern, it is a kind of slavery. Realisation that one is trapped in psychological realities and missing out on existential experience of the grandeur of Creation is the first step towards liberation.

This is the reason why, of all the beautiful ways in which this can be expressed, Patanjali chose the description Chitta Vritti Nirodha for yoga – a technology that can take you towards liberation or realisation. The science of yoga is extrapolated in the form of various kinds of sUTRas. Around two hundred sUTRas make up the whole body of yogic knowledge. Patanjali did not invent yoga; he assimilated it into a system, which is why he is known as the “father of modern yoga.”

If even one sUTra becomes a reality within you, it will explode you into a completely new dimension of experience. Patanjali starts the Yoga sUTRas in a very strange manner. The first sUTra is “…and now, yoga.” That half a sentence is one chapter. Intellectually, it does not make any sense, but experientially what it says is: “If you still believe that building a new house, or finding a new wife, or getting your daughter married will settle your life, it is not yet time for yoga. But, if you have seen money, power, wealth and pleasure, if you have tasted everything in your life and realised that nothing is going to work in the real sense and fulfill you ultimately, then it is time for yoga.”

Now, yoga. Now there is a way to know. (Sadhguru is a prominent spiritual leader. www.ishafoundation.org)