

# Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali as translated by BKS Iyengar\*

## Chapter I Samādhi Pāda

śrīmat Patañjali mahāmunaye namaḥ  
atha Pātañjala yoga sūtra pāṭhaḥ  
atha samādhi pādaḥ

I.1. atha yogānuśāsanam  
atha yogānuśāsanam

*With prayers for divine blessings, now begins an exposition of the sacred art of yoga.*

I.2. yogaḥ cittavṛtti nirodhaḥ  
yogaścittavṛtti nirodhaḥ

*Yoga is the cessation of movements in the consciousness.*

I.3 tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpe avasthānam  
tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpevāsthānam

*Then, the seer dwells in his own true splendour.*

I.4. vṛtti sārūpyam itaratra  
vṛttisārūpyamitaratra

*At other times, the seer identifies with the fluctuating consciousness.*

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- I.5. vṛttayaḥ pañcatayyaḥ kliṣṭā akliṣṭāḥ  
vṛttayaḥ pañcatayyaḥ kliṣṭākliṣṭāḥ

*The movements of consciousness are fivefold. They may be cognizable or non-cognizable, painful or non-painful.*

- I.6. pramāṇa viparyaya vikalpa nidrā smṛtayaḥ  
pramāṇaviparyayavikalpanidrāsmṛtayaḥ

*They are caused by correct knowledge, illusion, delusion, sleep and memory.*

- I.7. pratyakṣa anumāna āgamāḥ pramāṇāni  
pratyakṣānumānāgamāḥ pramāṇāni

*Correct knowledge is direct, inferred or proven as factual.*

- I.8. viparyayaḥ mithyājñānam atadrūpa pratiṣṭham  
viparyayo mithyājñānamatadrūpapatiṣṭham

*Illusory or erroneous knowledge is based on non-fact or the non-real.*

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I.9. śabdajñāna anupātī vastuśūnyaḥ vikalpaḥ  
śabdajñānānupātī vastuśūnyo vikalpaḥ

*Verbal knowledge devoid of substance is fancy or imagination.*

I.10. abhāva pratyaya ālambanā vṛttiḥ nidrā  
abhāvapratyayālambanā vṛttirnidrā

*Sleep is the non-deliberate absence of thought-waves or knowledge.*

I.11. anubhūta viṣaya asaṁpramoṣaḥ smṛtiḥ  
anubhūtaviṣayāsaṁpramoṣaḥ smṛtiḥ

*Memory is the unmodified recollection of words and experiences.*

I.12. abhyāsa vairāgyābhyām tannirodhaḥ  
abhyāsavairāgyābhyām tannirodhaḥ

*Practice and detachment are the means to still the movements of consciousness.*

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I.13. tatra sthitau yatnaḥ abhyāsaḥ  
tatra sthitau yatno<sup>1</sup>bhyāsaḥ

*Practice is the steadfast effort to still these fluctuations.*

I.14. sa tu dīrghakāla nairantarya satkāra āsevitaḥ dṛḍhabhūmiḥ  
sa tu dīrghakālanairantaryasatkārāsevito dṛḍhabhūmiḥ

*Long, uninterrupted, alert practice is the firm foundation for restraining the fluctuations.*

I.15 dṛṣṭa ānuśravika viṣaya vitrṣṇasya vaśīkārasamjñā vairāgyam  
dṛṣṭānuśravikaviṣayavitrṣṇasya vaśīkārasamjñā vairāgyam

*Renunciation is the practice of detachment from desires.*

I.16. tatparam puruṣakhyāteḥ guṇavaitrṣṇyam  
tatparam puruṣakhyāterguṇavaitrṣṇyam

*The ultimate renunciation is when one transcends the qualities of nature and perceives the soul.*

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I.17. vitarka vicāra ānanda asmitārūpa anugamāt saṁprajñātaḥ  
vitarkavicārānandāsmitārūpānugamāt saṁprajñātaḥ

*Practice and detachment develop four types of samādhi: self-analysis, synthesis, bliss, and the experience of pure being.*

I.18. virāmapratyaya abhyāsapūrvāḥ saṁskāraśeṣaḥ anyaḥ  
virāmapratyayābhyāsapūrvāḥ saṁskāraśeṣo ṅyaḥ

*The void arising in these experiences is another samādhi. Hidden impressions lie dormant, but spring up during moments of awareness, creating fluctuations and disturbing the purity of the consciousness.*

I.19. bhavapratyayaḥ videha prakṛtilayānām  
bhavapratyayo videhaprakṛtilayānām

*In this state, one may experience bodilessness, or become merged in nature. This may lead to isolation or to a state of loneliness.*

I.20. śraddhā vīrya smṛti samādhiprajñā pūrvakaḥ itareṣām  
śraddhāvīryasmṛtisamādhiprajñāpūrvaka itareṣām

*Practice must be pursued with trust, confidence, vigour, keen memory and power of absorption to break this spiritual complacency.*

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I.21. tīvrasaṁvegānām āsannaḥ  
tīvrasaṁvegānāmāsannaḥ

*The goal is near for those who are supremely vigorous and intense in practice.*

I.22. mṛdu madhya adhimātratvāt tataḥ api viśeṣaḥ  
mṛdumadhyādhimātratvāt tato ṛpi viśeṣaḥ

*There are differences between those who are mild, average and keen in their practices.*

I.23. Īśvara praṇidhānāt vā  
Īśvarapraṇidhānādvā

*Or, the citta may be restrained by profound meditation upon God and total surrender to Him.*

I.24. kleśa karma vipāka āśayaḥ aparāmr̥ṣṭaḥ puruṣaviśeṣaḥ Īśvaraḥ  
kleśakarmavipākāśayairaparāmr̥ṣṭaḥ puruṣaviśeṣa Īśvaraḥ

*God is the Supreme Being, totally free from conflicts, unaffected by actions and untouched by cause and effect.*

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I.25. tatra niratiśayaṃ sarvajñabījam  
tatra niratiśayaṃ sarvajñabījam

*God is the unexcelled seed of all knowledge.*

I.26. sa eṣaḥ pūrveṣāṃ api guruḥ kālena anavacchedāt  
sa eṣa pūrveṣāṃapi guruḥ kālenānavacchedāt

*God is the first, foremost and absolute guru, unconditioned by time.*

I.27. tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ  
tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ

*He is represented by the sacred syllable āum, called praṇava.*

I.28. tajjapaḥ tadarthabhāvanam  
tajjapastadarthabhāvanam

*The mantra āum is to be repeated constantly, with feeling, realizing its full significance.*

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I.29. tataḥ pratyakcetana adhigamaḥ api antarāya abhāvaḥ ca  
tataḥ pratyakcetanādhigamo'pyantarāyābhāvaśca

*Meditation on God with the repetition of āum removes obstacles to the mastery of the inner self.*

I.30. vyādhi styāna saṁśaya pramāda ālasya avirati bhrāntidarśana  
alabdhabhūmikatva anavasthitatvāni cittavikṣepaḥ te antarāyāḥ  
vyādhistyānasamśaya pramādālasya'virati bhrāntidarśanālabdha  
bhūmikatvānavasthitatvāni cittavikṣepāste 'ntarāyāḥ

*These obstacles are disease, inertia, doubt, heedlessness, laziness, indiscipline of the senses, erroneous views, lack of perseverance, and backsliding.*

I.31. duḥkha daurmanasya aṅgamejayatva śvāsapraśvāsāḥ vikṣepa  
sahabhavaḥ  
duḥkhadaurmanasyaṅgamejayatvaśvāsapraśvāsā vikṣepasahabhavaḥ

*Sorrow, despair, unsteadiness of the body and irregular breathing further distract the citta.*

I.32. tatpratiśedhārtham ekatattva abhyāsaḥ  
tatpratiśedhārthamekatattvābhyāsaḥ

*Adherence to single-minded effort prevents these impediments.*



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- I.33. maitrī karuṇā muditā upekṣāṇām sukha duḥkha puṇya apuṇya  
viṣayāṇām bhāvanātaḥ cittaprasādanam  
maitrīkaruṇāmuditopekṣāṇām sukhaduḥkhapuṇyāpuṇya viṣayāṇām  
bhāvanātaścittaprasādanam

*Through cultivation of friendliness, compassion, joy, and indifference to pleasure and pain, virtue and vice respectively, the consciousness becomes favourably disposed, serene and benevolent.*

- I.34. pracchardana vidhāraṇābhyāim vā prāṇasya  
pracchardanavidhāraṇābhyāim vā prāṇasya

*Or, by maintaining the pensive state felt at the time of soft and steady exhalation and during passive retention after exhalation.*

- I.35. viṣayavatī vā pravṛtṭiḥ utpannā manasaḥ sthiti nibandhanī  
viṣayavatī vā pravṛtṭirutpannā manasaḥ sthitinibandhanī

*Or, by contemplating an object that helps to maintain steadiness of mind and consciousness.*

- I.36. viśokā vā jyotiṣmatī  
viśokā vā jyotiṣmatī

*Or, inner stability is gained by contemplating a luminous, sorrowless, effulgent light.*

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I.37. vītarāga viṣayaṁ vā cittam  
vītarāgaviṣayaṁ vā cittam

*Or, by contemplating on enlightened sages who are free from desires and attachments, calm and tranquil, or by contemplating divine objects.*

I.38. svapna nidrā jñāna ālambanaṁ vā  
svapnanidrājñānālambanaṁ vā

*Or, by recollecting and contemplating the experiences of dream-filled or dreamless sleep during a watchful, waking state.*

I.39. yathābhimata dhyānāt vā  
yathābhimatadhyānādvā

*Or, by meditating on any desired object conducive to steadiness of consciousness.*

I.40. paramāṇu paramamahattvāntaḥ asya vaśīkāraḥ  
paramāṇuparamamahattvānto asya vaśīkāraḥ

*Mastery of contemplation brings the power to extend from the finest particle to the greatest.*

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- I.41. kṣīṇavṛtṭeḥ abhijātasya iva maṇeḥ grahīṭṛ grahaṇa grāhyeṣu tatstha  
tadañjanatā samāpattiḥ  
kṣīṇavṛtṭerabhijātasyeva maṇergrahīṭṛgrahaṇagrāhyeṣu  
tatsthatadañjanatā samāpattiḥ

*The yogi realizes that the knower, the instrument of knowing and the known are one, himself, the seer. Like a pure transparent jewel, he reflects an unsullied purity.*

- I.42. tatra śabda artha jñāna vikalpaiḥ saṅkīrṇā savitarkā samāpattiḥ  
tatra śabdārthajñānavikalpaiḥ saṅkīrṇā savitarkā samāpattiḥ

*At this stage, called savitarkā samāpatti, the word, meaning and content are blended, and become special knowledge.*

- I.43. smṛtipariśuddhau svarūpaśūnya iva arthamātranirbhāsā nirvitarka  
smṛtipariśuddhau svarūpaśūnyevārthamātranirbhāsā nirvitarkā

*In nirvitarka samāpatti, the difference between memory and intellectual illumination is disclosed; memory is cleansed and consciousness shines without reflection.*

- I.44. etayaiva savicāra nirvicāra ca sūkṣmaviṣayā vyākhyātā  
etayaiva savicārā nirvicārā ca sūkṣma viṣayā vyākhyātā

*The contemplation of subtle aspects is similarly explained as deliberate (savicāra samāpatti) or non-deliberate (nirvicāra samāpatti).*

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I.45. sūkṣmaviṣayatvaṁ ca alīṅga paryavasānam  
sūkṣmaviṣayatvaṁ cāliṅgaparyavasānam

*The subtlest level of nature (prakṛti) is consciousness. When consciousness dissolves in nature, it loses all marks and becomes pure.*

I.46. tā eva sabījaḥ samādhiḥ  
tā eva sabījaḥ samādhiḥ

*The states of samādhi described in the previous sūtras are dependent upon a support or seed, and are termed sabīja.*

I.47. nirvicāra vaiśāradye adhyātmaprasādaḥ  
nirvicāravaiśāradye adhyātmaprasādaḥ

*From proficiency in nirvicāra samāpatti comes purity. Sattva or luminosity flows undisturbed, kindling the spiritual light of the self.*

I.48. ṛtaṁbharā tatra prajñā  
ṛtaṁbharā tatra prajñā

*When consciousness dwells in wisdom, a truth-bearing state of direct spiritual perception dawns.*

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I.49. śruta anumāna prajñābhyām anyaviṣayā viśeṣārthatvāt  
śrutānumānaprajñābhyāmanyaviṣayā viśeṣārthatvāt

*This truth-bearing knowledge and wisdom is distinct from and beyond the knowledge gleaned from books, testimony, or inference.*

I.50. tajjaḥ saṁskāraḥ anyasaṁskāra pratibandhī  
tajjaḥ saṁskāro 'nyasaṁskārapratibandhī

*A new life begins with this truth-bearing light. Previous impressions are left behind and new ones are prevented.*

I.51. tasyāpi nirodhe sarvanirodhāt nirbījaḥ samādhiḥ  
tasyāpi nirodhe sarvanirodhānnirbījaḥ samādhiḥ

*When that new light of wisdom is also relinquished, seedless samādhi dawns.*

iti samādhi padaḥ