
The Gift of Consciousness



The Gift of Consciousness:
Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras*
(Book One: Samādhi Pāda)

By

Gitte Bechsgaard



The Gift of Consciousness:
Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras* (Book One: Samādhi Pāda),
by Gitte Bechsgaard

This book first published 2013

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-4762-3, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-4762-9

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my Guru, Krishan Mantri.

Praise for *The Gift of Consciousness*

“Gitte Bechsgaard has made a substantial and significant contribution to the field of Yogic studies with *The Gift of Consciousness*. The work will be of great value to anyone interested in this Eastern Tradition, including the novice looking for an accessible introduction to Yoga as well as the scholar, contemplative, and teacher. The clarity of the author’s writing and her skill in communicating difficult and complex concepts attests to her mastery of the *Yoga Sūtras* and its profound psychology.”

(Dr. Tony Toneatto, Psychologist, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry;
Director, Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health Program, University of Toronto)

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“Gitte has written a thought-provoking book that will help turn today’s Yoga students into true Yoga practitioners.”

(Joan White, Senior Iyengar Yoga Teacher; Director, B.K.S. Iyengar Yoga School of Central Philadelphia)

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“The work *The Gift of Consciousness* is the result of over twenty years of study, practice, and teaching in the field of Yogic studies by Gitte Bechsgaard. As a result it is a masterful overview of the *Yoga Sūtras* and their meaning for us today. Bechsgaard’s holistic approach includes a thorough grounding in the Sanskrit original accompanied by a clear-eyed understanding of how these ideas can be applied within a very different society and at a different cultural moment. It is to the author’s credit that she is able to do this with great fluency and ease rendering complex concepts both intelligible and useful. Bechsgaard’s background in Western psychology allows for an intriguing comparison between South Asian and Western schematas of the human psyche. This work will appeal to a broad audience including scholars of religion, Yoga teachers and practitioners, and any general readers who have an interest in Eastern religion and philosophy, meditation and psychology.”

(Gillian McCann, Assistant Professor, Religions and Culture, Nipissing University;
author *Vanguard of the New Age*)

• • • • •

“I highly recommend this work on Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtras* to all who are seekers in the art, science, and philosophy of Yoga. Bechsgaard’s overview and organization of Patañjali’s work is of great benefit to students of Yoga, and her expressive commentary is especially wonderful in linking Patañjali’s teachings to our own lives.”

(Gloria Goldberg, Senior Iyengar Yoga Teacher; Director, B.K.S. Iyengar Yoga Center of La Mesa)

• • • • •

“A classical interpretation though with a modern language, this commentary, simple and at the same time profound, is easy to follow for beginners but also useful for mature practitioners. This book will help with your understanding of the sūtras as well as give you enthusiasm and practical guidance for balancing your time and energy in order to become steady in your practice. Only then the practitioner becomes ‘dr̥ḍha bhūmiḥ’, which means literally solid and unshakable like the earth.”

(Gabriella Giubilaro, Senior Iyengar Yoga teacher; Director, Centro Iyengar Yoga of Florence)

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“As Gitte’s first Yoga teacher I am very proud of this work! I have taught many yoga students, but few who shine through in the way that Gitte did when I first met her and still does today. I am convinced that her book *The Gift of Consciousness*, will end up on many bookshelves around the world becoming a new classic in Yoga literature. It is an amazing book—all yogis around the world should read it!”

(Jette Berring, Intermediate Junior Level III Iyengar Yoga Teacher;
Director, B.K.S Iyengar Yoga Center Copenhagen)

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“Although the self is considered a central feature and ultimate mystery of human life in the Eastern Yogic traditions, Western thinking has largely avoided facing the challenges that its exploration inevitably entails. Although some philosophers and psychologists have made significant beginnings, the full scope of the subject has been outlined only in a sketchy way. Gitte Bechsgaard’s *The Gift of Consciousness* is a brilliant tour de force linking the best of Eastern and Western thought on the nature of the self and methods for its exploration. She has chosen for her approach to the subject an examination of the first book of Patañjali’s Yoga Sūtras. The clarity of her writing makes this rich exposition of a very important subject delightfully accessible to the Western reader.”

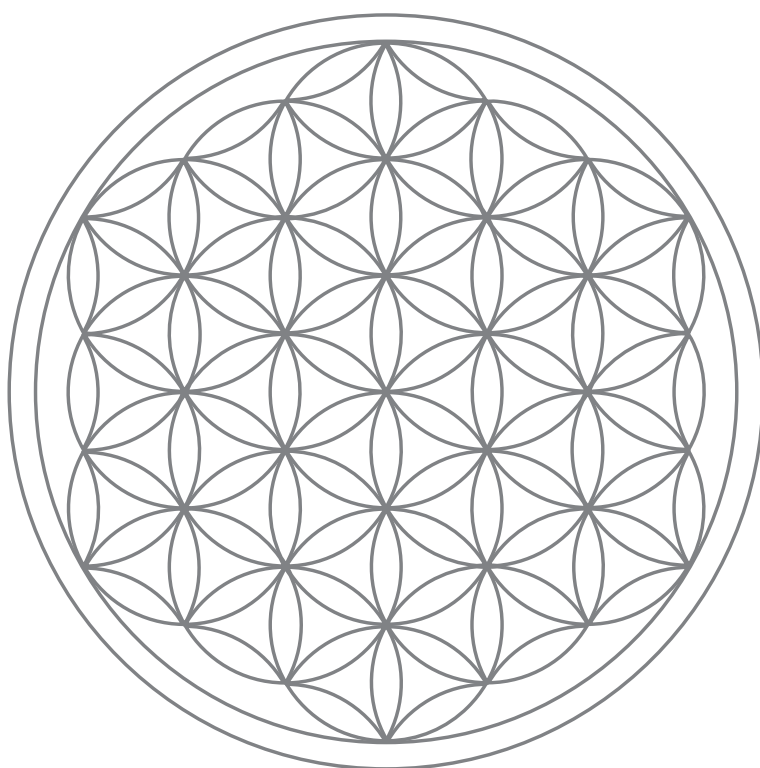
(Adam Crabtree, Ph.D; author of *Trance Zero* and *From Mesmer to Freud*)

• • • • •

“Books are in a certain way like people—there are two kinds: those you tend to forget and those few that actually makes a difference in your life. *The Gift of Consciousness* is of the latter kind and may actually make an important difference for you. This book on the *Yoga Sūtras* is filled with insight and important guidance about the dynamic relation between the Yogic journey and life as such. Read it!”

(Claus Wittig, Intermediate Junior Level III Iyengar Yoga Teacher;
Director, B.K.S. Iyengar Yoga Center Copenhagen)

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The flower of life is a symbol capturing the most important and sacred patterns in the universe. This is the source of all that exists; it is called the Fruit of Life.

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INVOCATION TO PATAÑJALI

ॐ

श्रीमत् पतञ्जलि महामुनये नमः ॥

योगेन चित्तस्य पदेन वाचां

मलं शरीरस्य च वैद्यकेन।

योऽपाकरोत् तं प्रवरं मुनीनां

पतञ्जलिं प्रञ्जलिरानतोऽस्मि ॥

आबाहु पुरुषाकारं

शङ्ख चक्रासि धारिणम्।

सहस्र शिरसं श्वेतं

प्रणमामि पतञ्जलिम् ॥

OM

Śrīmat Patañjali mahāmunaye namaḥ.

Yogena cittasya padena vācām

malam śarīrasya ca vaidyakena

yopākarottam pravaram munīnām

Patañjalim prāñjalirānato'smi.

Ābāhu puruṣākāram

śaṅkha cakrāsi dhāriṇam

sahasra śirasam śvetam

praṇamāmi Patañjalim.

I salute Patañjali, the greatest of all sages.

With hands folded in heartfelt prayer, I salute him who

by the practice of Yoga removed impurities of mind,

by Sanskrit grammar and sound those of speech, and

by (Āyurvedic) medicine those impurities belonging to the body.

I bow down to that Patañjali, strong in action and deed, of human form.

He who holds a conch-shell (for awakening), a discus (for the removal of ignorance),
and a sword (representing the development of the discriminative mind).

Our homage is to this thousand-headed being, white in colour.

He who is the master of the pure spiritual energy and the giver of the ancient
teachings which awaken its dormant force.

Śrī Mahārṣi Patañjali



FOREWORD

The Gift of Consciousness: Patañjali's Yoga Sūtras by Gitte Bechsgaard, Ph.D., is to be read by those who love Yoga in general and by practitioners of Yoga in particular. This book acts as a guide book to take a journey from the bank of mundane life towards the bank of spiritual life. The author has held to the basics of Yoga which act as a foundation for her to explain the importance of each sūtra. She has divided the book into two tomes. The first tome deals theoretically as a valuable piece of work, while tome two covers in full the translation of each sūtra along with the sūtras in Devanāgarī script with transliteration.

I have not grasped why the author like others term Patañjala Yoga as a Royal path of Rāja Yoga, while Patañjali has not used such a terminology. It may be one's assumption or a presumption to call this a Royal path or Rāja Yoga as Patañjali in Sādhana Pāda (sūtra 2.23), speaks of the action and conjunction of one's own power (sva-śakti) with the power of one's Lord (svāmi-śakti)—the real Self. In order to discover the Core of Being, each sādhanika has to work with sva-śakti to experience svāmi-śakti. This sūtra may be the reason to coin the word—the “Royal Path” as this explains the means and ways to experience the King of this body—the Self.

In short, submerging the small self that impersonates the True Self is the essence of Yoga.

Patañjali's aphorisms consist of four pādas or legs or chapters. The author has fully focused emotionally as well as intellectually covering the gamut of both theory and practice in the first pāda.

Here, she deals with the guṇas of nature, the five elements with their atomic infrastructure, outer mind and inner mind for Westerners to grasp the subject with ease, whereas we Indians are accustomed with such terminologies in our day to day conversations.

Regarding the guṇas, elements, atomic structure of elements, individual mind and cosmic mind (cosmogony- see 2.17–23), Patañjali explains why they are there and how they may be used for pleasure-seeking or for the realisation of the Self. The author explains how all these have to be co-ordinated in order to decondition all the conditions (1.50).

If we use the outskirts of the mind, we lose the Royal Path of Evolution. If the same outer mind is made to take a “U” turn, then this mind moves from the outskirts towards buddhi and ahamkāra. Then it is possible for one to reach the ultimate goal- the consecration of the Self. This is aiśvarya or spiritual wealth.

The theme of Yoga is to sublimate the ego which impersonates as the true Self, refuel the intelligence of nature (svabhāva buddhi) and get transformed to reach the purity of the real Self so that the innate intelligence is cultivated to be on par with the illuminative light of the SELF.

The author explains that the end of matured psychology is the beginning of spiritual life. She has explained *Samādhi Pāda* dealing with mental fluctuations, afflictions and obstacles or impediments that come in the way of sādhanā. I want to bring the attention of the readers to read and re-read these and use the two pillars of Yoga- practice (abhyāsa) and renunciation (vairāgya) to counteract them (determination).

Finally, charts and maps certainly help the Western student of Yoga as a study guide. I hope she brings out the other three pādas with the same spirit and zeal so that readers and practitioners gain full spiritual knowledge and divine wisdom.

B.K.S. Iyengar
Pune, India

PREFACE

It is my pleasure to write a few prefatory words to this volume of thoughts, connections, and practices on the *Yoga-Sūtras* by Dr. Gitte Bechsgaard, a native of Denmark, now living in Toronto. Dr. Bechsgaard is a long-time practitioner of yoga whose strong academic interests resulted in her Ph.D. in 2011. Her interests in the practice of yoga and other Indian branches of knowledge, particularly astrology (jyotiṣa), led her to the doorstep of Śrī Krishan Mantri, a long-time, and now retired, resident of Toronto, who happens to be one of the world's foremost authorities on jyotiṣa. But he also has a longstanding interest in Indian knowledge systems or śāstra beyond jyotiṣa, notably, in the last decade or so, in yoga philosophy. The book presented here on the first pāda or chapter of the *Yoga-Sūtras*, and the volumes to follow on the remaining chapters, were to a great extent inspired by Mantri-ji's extensive, intensive, and personal teaching to Dr. Bechsgaard over a period of ten years. She will describe this further in her own introduction. Suffice it to say here that Mantri-ji is one of the hidden gems of the Indian community in Toronto, having served as mentor to many of the most knowledgeable practitioners of Indian astrology in North America.

It is no easy task to act decisively and intelligently when one has assumed the role of a disciple to a great and learned teacher, a position Dr. Bechsgaard has assumed with Mantri-ji. In the tradition of the teacher-disciple or *guru-śiṣya* relationship, she has embraced the responsibility of representing her teacher and acting independently based on the foundation of knowledge and wisdom he has gifted her. Dr. Bechsgaard's life, like everyone's, is a mosaic of partially overlapping social, intellectual, family, and spiritual circles. Thus, this book is an act of reaching inside her spiritual circle with Mantri-ji, and extending outward within her circle of yoga teachers, yoga students, and intellectuals. Mantri-ji has long embraced yoga in his life and comprehends instinctively the dynamics of spiritual practice. Through his own command of mantra practice and the nature and demands of deity worship, he has gained a unique understanding of the *Yoga-Sūtras*. He has now bestowed upon Dr. Bechsgaard the responsibility of translating that gift to others who may be primarily concerned with speaking the language of yoga and understanding the interior dynamics of classical Pātañjala Yoga as a long-term and evolving spiritual path. This book, then, consists of several acts on the part of Dr. Bechsgaard. It is an act of devotion, an act of personal responsibility to her guru, an act of translation, an act of graphically organizing the concepts in the *Yoga-Sūtras* (the charts on nearly every sūtra is one of the primary assets of the book), and an act of speaking to her peers, her students, and to other interested readers. In this way, she exemplifies the ideal of paramparā, the transmission of guru-śiṣya succession about which she writes so perceptively in the book.

The question that immediately arises is why do we need another long book on the *Yoga-Sūtras*, with another translation, and another interpretation and explanation? Fortunately, Dr. Bechsgaard has drawn extensively from one of the best translations, that of Swami Hariharānanda Āraṇya, first published by State University of New York Press in 1983. She builds on that with extensive citations from the commentaries by Vyāsa and Śaṅkara. Vyāsa's commentary has long been the standard work from which most interpretations flowed. Even learned Sanskrit commentators and modern interpreters who have disagreed with Vyāsa will always express their gratitude to him. Śaṅkara's commentary (vivaraṇa) is important because his Advaita Vedānta, based to a great extent on his Sanskrit commentaries on the great triad (prasthānatrayi) of Sanskrit spiritual writing, the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the *Brahma-Sūtras*, and the early *Upaniṣads*, has been highly instrumental in refashioning

both the philosophy and practice of yoga in India for more than a thousand years. It is remarkable that his commentary on the *Yoga-Sūtras* was missing, and little used, for most of that period. It was rediscovered only in the early twentieth century and published in Madras for the first time (based on a single manuscript!) in 1953.

Dr. Bechsgaard's primary authorities, then, her primary teachers, in her long process of thinking and working with the *Yoga-Sūtras* were Patañjali and Vyāsa (it should go without saying), Śaṅkara, Mantri-ji, and B.K.S. Iyengar. The latter is still alive at age 94 (December, 2012). Mr. Iyengar is the pre-eminent teacher of yoga in our time, perhaps especially in his assiduous and systematic teaching that all the goals of yoga—physical, mental, and spiritual—can be realized by moving from the body to the consciousness as readily as it can be realized through the other direction of practice. That said, the *Yoga-Sūtras* are in constant need of reinterpretation and re-envisioning. Anyone who has spent years and decades with this challenging but very open-ended text is well aware that one's own thinking about it, and about many of the particular sūtras within it, change constantly as one's knowledge, practice, and understanding change. This is inevitable. There is no single final understanding of the *Yoga-Sūtras* for one who breathes, lives, and works with the text every day for decades. Dr. Bechsgaard has isolated and explained many of the guiding concepts in the *Yoga-Sūtras*. Through her years of tutelage under Mantri-ji, years of yoga practice, and years of reading the commentaries and secondary works on Yoga, she has provided practitioners with the tools to fine tune their own understanding and practice. Any reader will be highly rewarded in their own lives and yoga practices through a careful reading of this book.

Frederick M. Smith

*Professor of Sanskrit and Classical Indian Religions
University of Iowa*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my Guru, Śri Krishan Mantri, who has shared a wealth of knowledge, practices, and living wisdom with me over many years. Without his daily support, piercing insight, and kindness this work would never have been started, let alone completed. More than anything else, Mantri-ji has taught me about the transformative power of Yoga and the richness of a life dedicated to sharing with others. Words are not enough to capture his importance to me.

Also, I would like to extend special thanks to my dear friend and colleague Gillian McCann, who has been there for me through thick and thin. Her encouragement, inspiration, and fiery spirit have helped me tremendously in this undertaking. I am deeply grateful for our work together, Gillian, and I hope that we will always walk this path together.

From all of my heart, I give thanks to my husband, Dario Ruberto, for his loyal and loving support over the past twenty-four years. Without his companionship and support, Vidya Institute and the making of this book would not have been possible. Your steadfastness and commitment are truly admirable—one of the greatest blessings of my life has been your presence in my home and heart. I also wish to thank my children, Maya and Daniel, for keeping a smile on my face, my feet on the ground, and my heart wide open. You are truly remarkable kids.

I wish to express my gratitude to Guru-ji B.K.S. Iyengar who kindly assisted the last phases of this work, including the writing of the foreword. I am truly grateful for the blessings that Iyengar Yoga has brought into my own heart, mind, and body for over more than two decades. A special thanks goes to my primary teachers Jette Berring and Claus Wittig (The B.K.S. Iyengar Center, Copenhagen), who introduced me to the practice of Iyengar Yoga. The foundational teachings that I received from them, as a student and teacher of Yoga, have awakened my love for Yoga and shaped my life in many ways. The many hours and years that you have opened your home and hearts to me is very much appreciated. Through your teachings in Denmark I have felt the tremendous grace of B.K.S. Iyengar and experienced his stupendous creativity in the practice of Yoga.

I must also thank Iyengar Yoga teacher Joan White, Uma Dhavale, Abhijata Sridhar, and Professor Frederick Smith for reaching out a hand of support a crucial moment in this work. I am grateful as well to Iyengar Yoga teachers Gabriella Giubilaro and Gloria Goldberg for their generous support of the book. My gratitude also to Frederick Smith for his keen eye on the Sanskrit component of the work and for the writing of the preface. Our dialogues about sūtras, all topics Indian, as well as the many dimensions of this path, have warmed my heart and challenged my work in the best of ways. Your generosity and patience is deeply appreciated.

My appreciation must be expressed to all who assisted me throughout the lengthy process surrounding this work. It is one thing to support an endeavour for a short time and quite another to stick to the task for as long as it might take. In this context, a special thanks goes to Robin Hurlow for edits to the manuscript and also for her relentless support at Vidya Institute and in my family. I cannot think of any task, from the beginning of this project to the very end, where your dedication and devotion has not been felt. At this point in the work I know that the “Patañjali flame” is burning so brightly in your heart that it will always protect you. I want you to know that your daily commitment to this work and path is appreciated by many both near and far—thank you from all of my heart. Also, a big thank you to

Katy Curtis for help with edits and so much more. Your kindness and enthusiasm helped both Robin and I as the edits seemed many and so very detailed. I would like to thank Valerie Grieco for her supreme bhakti (devotion) and love for my family. Thanks as well to Mikkel Kristiansen for taking such good care of the āsana department at Vidya, making us all feel that you have already been with us for a very long time. I couldn't imagine being without you here with us in Canada. Also thanks to Claire Wicks and Mikkel for bringing such beauty to the daily environment at Vidya. You have all pulled in around me, allowing for this book to be completed. However you have managed to contribute to our work, in ways small or large, I am thankful.

The students at Vidya Institute must not be forgotten either—you have been one of my main sources of inspiration. Your questions, sincerity and whole-hearted seeking have paved the ways for the format of this book, together with the students at the B.K.S. Iyengar Center in Copenhagen. I hope that this is only the beginning of a longer course of study and practice that we share together.

I am deeply grateful for the remarkable vision and creativity of Susanne Holm—your beautiful design has helped bring the teachings to life in a way that reflects the spirit of Yoga—thank you. Your spirit is so gentle and yet so vast, and it is a gift for anyone who gets a chance to see its visual expression, its artistic outlet. Also great thanks to Jill Hansen for the graphic design that was done in partnership with Susanne and for saving us when it came to the challenges of Sanskrit, computer glitches, and the likes. A further thank you to all those who contributed additional artwork for the book: Dario Ruberto, Susanne Holm, Katy Curtis, Mikkel Kristiansen, and Robin Hurlow. I also wish to express my great gratitude to the publisher, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, with a special thanks to Carol Koulikourdi, Stephanie Cavanagh, and Amanda Millar for helping to bring this work to fruition.

My thanks as well to my mentors and teachers within the world of psychology and psychotherapy: Anna Binswanger-Healy, Jim Healy, Adam Crabtree, Cathleen Hoskins, and Dorthy Gardner. Without your support, I would not have been able to bridge the worlds of Eastern and Western psychology—neither in myself nor in theory.

Due to a serious injury 10 years ago, my health has also had to be supported along the way. My “guardian angels” in this regard have been Xiolan Zhao, Vicky, and all of the staff at the Xiaolan Health Centre; Yvonne Osondu, Inger Simonsen, Bev Melunsky, Scott Darsee, Jette Berring, Shao Rong Liang, Robert Svoboda and not least, Mantri-ji. I am forever grateful for your saving grace and soulful eyes, when I have been unable to walk, sit, or even think clearly. Your work is truly remarkable. Also, my heartfelt thanks to Yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar for developing a therapeutic approach to Yogic practice that has benefitted so many, myself included. As with any big endeavor, nourishment for the body and overall health is needed; I extend gratitude to Śivaram and the staff at the Annapurna Restaurant for their ongoing support and deliciously healthy food over the years.

Last, but not least, I have to thank my family in Denmark for instilling good values and lots of love in my heart and life. Despite the fact that I live so far from you geographically, I keep you all very close to my heart. A special thanks to Helge Bechsgaard, Inga Bork, Bo Bechsgaard and family, Torben Bechsgaard and family, and Ellen Bork. Thank you all for sharing in this journey with me.

Śrī Krishan Mantri and Gitte Bechsgaard



INTRODUCTION

Most of the time we contemplate the inner Yogic journey as a return to the One from the many. We are entangled and thus completely identified with the layers of prakṛti (elemental nature), neglecting the innermost gift of consciousness, the Self. That which is veiling grasps our whole attention, leaving the essential and life-giving principle hidden away. The paradox, according to the *Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali, is that it takes many to return to the One. The “many” here refers to Yogic disciplines, complementary doorways to the Self. These doorways together form the eightfold path (aṣṭāṅga yoga) of the great sage, Mahārṣi Patañjali. We might start by opening one door that seems particularly inviting, but once the inner pilgrimage takes form we are required to go down paths unknown and possibly even unattractive. Yet somehow each and every step, each discipline of the Yogic system, holds the power to take us to the goal. Neither practical application, nor rigorous study can be left out. Just as a ladder is formed of individual rungs, so it is with Patañjala Yoga—the different aspects of the practice build upon each other, forming a sum greater than its parts.

While Patañjali’s treatise consists of four pādas or chapters, the present volume focuses on one specific part of the *Yoga Sūtras*: Samādhi Pāda, the book of concentration and meditative contemplation. The framework in this pāda represents a profound systematization and integration of ethical, physical, psychological, as well as metaphysical levels of practice. Patañjali portrays consciousness in its base and supreme forms, a spectrum, which, like a ladder, is to be climbed by the aspiring yogi. This ascent of consciousness is achieved by the ancient art of stilling the fluctuating mind, an art that lies at the heart of Patañjali’s exposition.



In the past ten years, I have come to formally study the *Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali under the guidance of my Guru, Krishan Mantri-ji. The material in this book was directly formed and inspired by our daily studies and also by my experiences teaching the sūtras along with their accompanying practices to students in Toronto and Copenhagen at the B.K.S Iyengar Center.

While these aphorisms provide the seeker with the most essential knowledge of Patañjali’s teachings, the depth of his wisdom is simply unavailable without the guidance of a teacher or, at least, a profound knowledge of the traditional Sanskrit commentaries. Sūtras are like individual pearls, brought together by applied practice and the insight of oral teachings. The binding string which holds these beads together, forming a complete necklace, is the Yoga of relationship—the connection with a teacher and living wisdom tradition. As such, Mantri-ji’s teachings, including the study of Vyāsa and Śaṅkara’s commentaries, were fundamental to my comprehension of this work. Often we would sit for hours a day, over many weeks, studying the same sūtra. A tapestry of oral teachings was revealed in each sūtra, and what first seemed very technical and terse, soon became vital and relevant to my path as a practitioner and teacher. Although I had been engaged in the practice of Yoga as well as the study of Western psychology for 20 years, Patañjali’s work aroused in me deep questions about consciousness and the journey of Self-unfoldment.

In time, I was initiated into teaching the *Yoga Sūtras* to students. While the individuals I work with are dedicated to their study of Yoga, many of them are unable to commit to hours of daily study, let alone practice. And so I began to explore and extract the most crucial points from the sūtras and classical commentaries in order to share them with students of many different backgrounds. At times, I was teaching this material to large groups and needed to consider an approach that addressed these broader audiences. This was the beginning of an ongoing dialogue between myself, the students, and Patañjali's greater work.

As we progressed in our studies, two distinct strands of exploration emerged. Firstly, we examined, in depth, Patañjali's aphorisms as well as their accompanying commentaries. This included a study of the original sūtras and also the most essential Sanskrit terms linked to each sūtra. Secondly, we explored the significance of these teachings in our lives as contemporary seekers. What is the nature of the map, the guide that Patañjali provides for spiritual practice and the inner journey? What are its cornerstones and building blocks? How can we integrate these teachings in our everyday lives? And in what ways is this ancient wisdom relevant in our modern world? As we explored these questions and others, I slowly began to present the sūtras in terms of certain prevalent themes, such as obstacles on the spiritual path, contemplative practice, a portrait of the mind and consciousness, the role of devotion, and so on. These themes became the foundation for the chapters I have included in the first part of this work (Section I). There are eleven main chapters which are as follows:

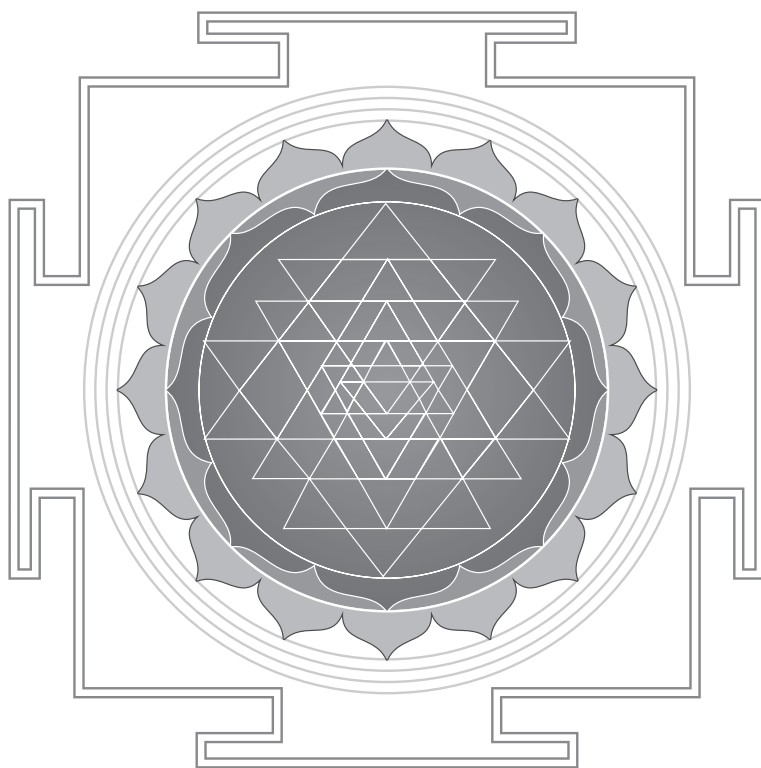
- CHAPTER 1 Yoga as Timeless Truth: Initiation and Tradition
- CHAPTER 2 Yoga as Concentration: Gathering the Restless Mind (sūtras 1.1–1.2)
- CHAPTER 3 Yoga as Purification: From Darkness to Light (sūtra 1.2)
- CHAPTER 4 Yogic Psychology: Knowing the Inner Landscape (sūtras 1.3–1.11)
- CHAPTER 5 Yogic Discipline: Transformation through Integrated Practice (sūtras 1.12–1.14)
- CHAPTER 6 The Many Faces of Detachment: Vairāgya Defined (sūtras 1.12, 1.15–1.16)
- CHAPTER 7 The Alchemy of Transformation: Developing Yogic Character (sūtras 1.20–1.22)
- CHAPTER 8 The Nine Roadblocks: Walking the Path of the Razor's Edge (sūtras 1.30–1.31)
- CHAPTER 9 Contemplative Practice: Finding Solace and Perspective (sūtras 1.32–1.39)
- CHAPTER 10 Yoga as Mystical Trance: The Ascent of Consciousness (sūtras 1.40–1.51)
- CHAPTER 11 The Inner Treasures: Blessings of Yogic Trance (sūtras 1.40–1.51)

The second portion of this book (*Section II*) is meant as a text-book, a guide to practice and study for more serious students of Yoga. In this latter part I have formatted the material from the sūtras and from Vyāsa and Śaṅkara's classical works into charts, teaching graphs, succinct commentaries and relevant Sanskrit vocabulary (see the *Reader's Note* preceding Section II).



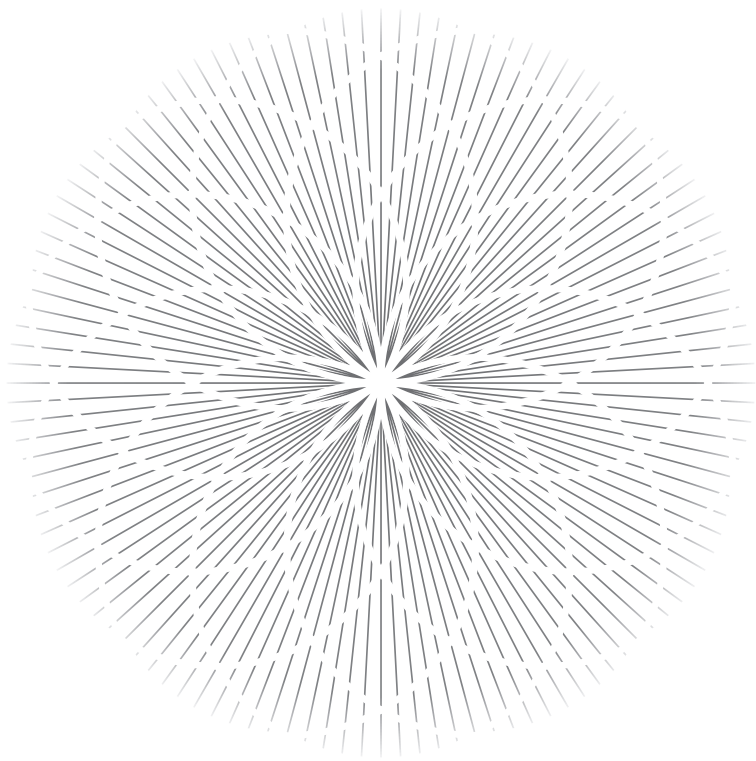
Throughout his exposition, Patañjali provides an incredible map of the potential of consciousness, a consummate guide to the inner journey, that this work seeks to explore and elucidate in a variety of ways. Yet if we are to successfully navigate this map, an understanding of the Eastern approach to consciousness and the mind is absolutely necessary. There are vast differences between Eastern and Western psychology. If we simply superimpose our Western concepts and terminologies onto Patañjali's work, we fail to grasp and properly engage with the teachings. The Self or spirit stands at the forefront of Yogic teachings, and as Westerners we would do well to remember that the fundamental orientation of Patañjali's teachings is towards the highest form of consciousness. Patañjali offers us the gift of consciousness, a truly precious and flawless jewel. However, we, as seekers, must be willing to study and examine each facet of this gem if we are to truly benefit from the ancient wisdom of his work.





SECTION I

Classical Yoga and Contemporary Practice



PART I

FOUNDATIONS: The Fundamentals of Yoga
