

Yoga – The Eight – Fold Path To Bliss

It needs to be understood that Yoga is not just a form of physical exercise. Exercise is a vital part of it though not the main part as commonly misunderstood. Yoga, if viewed from the eight-fold path is a way of life.

It was the great Indian Rishi Patanjali who brought to us the eight-fold path over 1,000 years ago. Let's take a look at the eight-fold path:

1. **Yamas** (what needs to be avoided) violence, dishonesty, stealing, Covetousness and over-indulgence in sense pleasure.
2. **Niyamas** (what needs to be done): Saucha (hygiene of the body, Mind and spirit), Santosha (cheerful acceptance of every situation In life), Tapa (fortitude), Svadhya (studying the scriptures), Ishvapranidhna (accepting the will of a higher power).
3. **Yoga Asanas**: physical postures to streamline the functioning of The body.
4. **Pranayamas**: controlling the breath in order to calm and develop The mind and body. Pranayamas have tremendous therapeutic Benefits.
5. **Pratyahara**: a process of paying attention to an external object With the idea of going within. For example, listening to music With your eyes closed for paying attention to sound of birds While in the woods where you become one with the sound.
6. **Dharana**: A step deeper on the path of meditation. Here you Focus more on the breath.
7. **Dhyana**: You go still deeper within. You could focus on the Names and forms of the divine while keeping the breath steady.
8. **Samadhi**: The ultimate in the practice of Yoga. With consistent And dedicated practice of the above seven steps along with Meditation a person reaches a state of thoughtlessness. That is when you experience Bliss.

Aum Sai Ram