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**Topic Name - Niyama**

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**Lecture No. – 10**

## **Lecture Title**

### **Niyama**

#### **Niyam Script**

Welcome to the lecture of physical education and fitness in Yoga. In this lecture I will be talking about the second important part of ashtang yog that is niyam. In last episode we discussed about the first part of ashtang yog i.e Yam

#### **Niyama**

Niyama is the second constituent of Ashtanga yoga. They are the rules for inner purity and the foundation of yoga practice. These are the self-disciplinary qualities which controls the modalities of chitta and helping the aspirant on their spiritual journey. They are the fixed rules one should follow in order to do the practices of meditation and to reach Samadhi.

According to Maharishi Patanjali in yog-Darshan. There are only five types of Niyamas, and they are:-

“Shauch Santosh Tapah Swadhyayeshwara Pranidhanani Niyamah”. These are the main Niyamas:-

- Shauch ( Cleanliness, purity)
- Santosh ( satisfaction , contentment)

- Tapah ( Austerity, Discipline)
- Swadhyaya ( Self analysis, self – study)
- Ishwar Pranidhan ( Self surrender to God)

### **Saucha:- ( Cleanliness, Purity)**

Shaucha, cleanliness is the first Niyama.

Shaucha or Purity is of two types – External and Internal.

Manu says the body is purified by water, mind by truthfulness, and soul by knowledge and intellect by true knowledge devoid of viparyaya and vikalp.

Yogic purification means the maintenance and transformation of body and mind in such a manner that they can serve to bring about unification of body and mind. And super power. Some of the important yogic techniques for purification are: - Neti, Dhauti, Basti, Nauli, Kapalbharti and trataka.

The other method of purification are: - Sattvic Food, Prayer, Mantra Jaap, Bath, Morning walk, Pranayama etc.

These are the various practices or exercises which are needed to be performed every day. With the ordinary purification of the physical body we save ourselves from various types of physical illness. A strong physical body is required for performing all types of responsibilities. Mental purity develop the quality of deep understanding, cheerfulness, concentration, control of the senses etc.

Shaucha has three aspects:-

- Intellectual Purity
- Purity of speech
- Physical Purity

Purity of intellect is achieved in a variety of ways- by giving up evil desires, anger, greed, attachment, misconception and imaginations, by negation of jealousy, hatred, evil thoughts and by the practice of compassion, humility, straight forwardness, repetition of OM, or gayatri mantra, non- violence, truthfulness etc.

Speech is purified by renouncing harsh, false and hypocritical words and by the practice of true, sweet, affectionate and consoling speech and also by breathing exercise (Pranayam)

The body is purified externally by bathing accompanied by the use of soap, gel, etc.

This is external purity. Internal purity is achieved by the use of Neti, Dhauti, Basti, Kunajl, etc.

### **SANTOSHA:-(Contentment)**

The second Niyama is contentment or satisfaction. It is described as not to desire more than what one has earned by his honest labour. One should not feel disappointed if less than what was expected comes, nor one should feel happy if more than what was expects is earned. We should not day dream about the future not should your mind linger in the past. Be content with where you are, or you will never be happy or feel true satisfaction because without it there is no possibility of keeping the mind in a condition of equilibrium. We should not have exploitative feelings. The methods and techniques of bringing contentment are meditation, limiting the needs, controlling the mind activities, comparing oneself with those who are at lower level in terms of socio-economic status and standard of living etc. The Yoga practitioner aims of attaining a condition in which we remains perfectly calm in all the conditions. But it does not mean inaction or laziness or in anyway, negation of the theory of the Karma. It is an extremely positive condition of mind .It cannot be acquired only through Karma(action) without any worry about its result.

Three aspects of contentment are;-

- Intellectual contentment
- Contentment in speech
- Bodily contentment

**Intellectual contentment:** - One should not complain against God or society if what one gets is insufficient, rather we should be prepared to part with what he does not need. This is intellectual contentment. It comes only when mind has given up the desire for enjoyment, as enjoined by the Vedas and other scripture. The Vedas say that a man should not covet others' prosperity and one should give up greed. A man in every stage of life should be contented; otherwise many troubles may arise. Contentment is the root of happiness according to yoga philosophy.

- **Contentment of speech** is to give up talkativeness. Bitter words, insults or loss should not anger a man and he should not employ harsh words. He should talk little, avoid controversy and should observe silence. This is called contentment of speech.

**Bodily Contentment:-** Bodily contentment consists of non-violence, non-stealing, non-enjoyment, not to injure anybody, not to be deterred by evil desire, service to the poor and affiliate brahmacharya and noble deeds.

**Tapa:-** The third Niyam is a tapasya or moderation—depending upon one's capacity. It is a very wide term which combines in itself various practices. The object of TAPA is to purify and discipline the lower nature and to bring the mind under perfect control of will. The main purpose of attaining Tapasya is to be able to meditate properly. It creates a controlled mind which will not accept any interference from the body.

**Swadhyaya:-** Swadhaya is the fourth Niyama. It is the study of self or self analysis because swa means 'self'. Through Swadhaya we can improve ourselves and guide ourselves on the right path to some extent without the help of the guru. Chanting the name of the God in the form of Gayatri mantra, the om mantra, a prayer etc helps to focus the mind which helps in Swadhaya. The study of religious books helps in controlling mind, desires, feelings and thoughts.

**Ishwara Pranidhana:-** Ishwara Pranidharan means total surrender before God. It is the last and one of the hardest Niyama. The practice of Ishwara Pranidhana begins with the mental assertion. "Not my will but they will be done." It is the time when one completely lets go of all ego and surrenders to destiny.

The yama and Niyama are all in a way inter-related, so they don't allow you to skip any of them if you are sincere in your desire to master them. They are not meant only for yogis, but for everyone to practice.

The third part of ashtang yog is Asana. Let us talk about asana

## **Asana**

The Asana is one of the most ancient yogic practices. The dictionary meaning of Asana is to sit on a seat or any particular term Asana is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Aas' means to sit.

According to Maharishi Patanjali:- "Sthirasukham Asanam" –Asana is a pose of body which not only promotes steadiness but which is also pleasant and comfortable. Asanas are not meant only for the saints or yogis but are equally beneficially for all. By practicing these postures everybody can enjoy a healthy, happy and long life.

According to the tradition there are 84 lakh asanas, but not all of these are still known. Out of these there are eighty four main asanas which continue to be taught to this day. After cleansing with the shatkarmas, asanas are practiced in order to achieve stability of the body.

Some Do's and Dont's

- The asanas should neither be practiced with full stomach nor when you are in full and tight dress.
- These asanas should be taken as a place where there is no dust, smoke, bad odour or too much wind. A room with a pleasant atmosphere or a garden may also serve the purpose it should never be practiced in an impure atmosphere because during practice one inhale fresh air full of oxygen and exhales harmful bacteria and germs
- A light mattress should be spread on the ground so that the lying postures can be practiced comfortably. The ground should be even and dry.
- To get the greatest benefit they should be practiced with Pranayama.
- The best time for the practice of Asana is the morning time. If there is time, one may practice them in the evening also.
- The asanas may be practiced by men and women of all ages without any fear of ill effects.
- Asanas must be practiced only on empty stomach, after cleaning the teeth, mouth and the evacuation of the bowels.

- One should not eat anything immediately after the asanas session, otherwise some of the benefits of the practice may be lost since the digestive system is under strain one should take breakfast at least half an hour after the asana session. It is better still, one should

- Take only hot milk.
- The beginners may feel some pain in the joints and muscles after a couple of days practice. They should not worry on account of this. It is natural and the practice must be continued.
- The asana session must be terminate with the relaxed posture i.e. shavasan, baalasan, makarasan. These postures helps very much in gaining strength through asanas.
- **Benefits:**
- Practice of the asanas make the joints flexible, stomach and waist thinned and the whole body beautiful and strong.
- It also strengthens the nervous system, improves digestion and energizes liver, spleen and intestines.
- It improves circulation of blood, cures the defects of blood and other diseases.
- The power to bear heat and cold and thunder and thirst is increased.
- The asanas should not be practiced by women during menstruation and pregnancy.
- One should never attempt difficult postures when one starts learning yoga. In the beginning one should start with light, easy postures and later on one may go on to attempt difficult ones because during practice one should inhale fresh air full of oxygen and exhales harmful bacteria and germs.
- It is not advisable to start practicing asanas from books. In the beginning one should seek the guidance of an experienced teacher.

In short we can say asanas are very important from the physical, mental and spiritual point of view.

The regular practice of asanas has proven to be of immense health and therapeutic value. In addition to their various physiological benefits, research down the decades has proven that they positively affect our minds, as well.

The regular practice of asanas helps to keep us physically fit, reduces weight, normalizes blood pressure, control stress and cholesterol levels and improve overall performance of the body and mind.

Asana is the only known workout known to tone up the internal structure of the body, be it the organs, blood or blood vessels.

During the asana practice the habit of taking slow, deep breaths is developed which in turn helps the practitioner to achieve mental and emotional balance.

The first aim of asanas is relief from physical and mental distress. By creating temporary tension, which stimulates the elimination of toxins from the body, asanas makes the joints of the body flexible and improve the health of the muscles.

They also bring about co-ordination in the functioning of the nervous system and increase the efficiency of the internal organs due to their light massaging effect. Thus, with regular practice of asanas the body gradually becomes healthier.

### **Classification of Asanas:-**

Asana can be classified in a number of ways. One of the most useful classification as based on the physiological effects of different groups of asanas on the body. They are

- Meditative Asanas
- Relaxative Asanas
- Cultural Asanas
- **Meditative Asanas:** - Meditative asanas are the sitting postures with a broad base, erect spine and symmetrical arrangements of the body, in which one can, sit for a long duration and can concentrate and meditate without being disturbed by external stimuli. Asanas like Padamasana, Sidasana, Vajrasana Sukhasana etc. comes under this group. In most of those asana legs are crossed. Thus, the muscles of hip like the hip abductors, flexors and extensors of the vertebral column work to maintain the erect posture of the head, neck and trunk.

These asanas are primarily used for the practice of Pranayama, Meditation and similar higher practice of yoga.

#### **4. Relaxative Asanas:-**

These are the asanas that are designed to give complete relaxation to the entire body. The well known relaxative asanas are shavasan, makarasana, baalasan etc.

They not only remove bodily fatigue they also remove mental strain and thereby brings about peace and clarity of the mind.

However it must be remembered that even the difficult cultural Asana could and should become more and more relaxative with proper training and practice. Then only they can be called to be Asana according to the definition and procedure prescribed by Maharishi Patanjali.

#### **Cultural Asanas:**

These are the asanas meant for exercise of those muscles in the body which are not put to use in daily life .these asanas develop and maintain the muscles at their optimum level of strength and flexibility. They increase or decrease the internal pressure in the various organs like the liver,pancreas,bladder,intestines and colon of the abdomen. They are generally utilized to strengthen various neuro-muscular co-ordinations,functional efficiency of different system and organs of the body purification or better elimination of waste products from body. One main utility of these asanas is that they can be deployed as therapeutic measures in the treatment are of certain functional disorders of psychosomatic origin. For this reason they are also called as therapeutic or remedial asana. Some of the examples are- chakrasasana,trikonasana, bhujanasana,tarasan etc.

#### **Different types of Asanas:**

Asanas are also classified into different types like:-



- Standing postures- taadasana,katichakrasan,vrikshasana,etc.
- Sitting postures- vajrasana, padamasana, ardh matssyendrasana,gomukhasana, Paschimattanasana etc.
- Lying on stomach – bhujangasana, dhanur-asana, makarasan,etc.
- Lying on spine or back- uttanpadasana,matsyasan,pawanmuktasan etc.
- Topsy-turvey postures- sarvangasana, sirasana.

### **Different stage and phases while performing asana:-**

Asanas need to be understood as “programmes”. It has a pre-determined sequence of bodily actions or events and relaxation skill.

In practical terms it is easily understood as step by step procedure like first step, second, third etc. Different steps should be chained into a smooth chain progressing towards the destination in a simple economic and skilled manner.

Asanas can be thought of consisting three phases in their performance:

- Approaching phase
- Asana phase
- Returning phase

**Approaching phase-** it is like brick- by brick building up procedure, which takes the individual from the starting position to the desired asana condition within his reach and ability.

**Asana phase-** When the practitioner relaxes his mind and body as required in the practice yogic postures for a comfortable period of time. The asana is retained with total or partial relaxation of body, with necessary locks and holds required as per the technique of asana. The phase is most important aspect of yogic asana.

### **Returning phase:-**

After maintaining an asana with maximum comfort and stability, the body segments are brought back to the starting position following a step-by-step climbing down procedure like....four..three..two..one...

Conclusion- Today we discussed about the second and third part of the Ashtang Yog that is niyam and asanas. We discussed about the benefits, its use in our daily life and how it plays an important part for all of us.

Thank you