

Chapter 1

On Trance

1. Now a revised text of Yoga.

Much had been written about yoga before Pātanjali, and in his first verse he acknowledges that this is his revised text.

2. Yoga is the restraint of mental modifications.

As the sutras unfold we will see that Pātanjali is saying that our “mental modifications” are the subjective interpretations that we make of our observations. Yoga is restraining these modifications so we see things in a true unmodified way.

3. Then the seer stands *in his own nature*.

Our modifying thoughts are our personal interpretation of our reality. We think the world is what we interpret it to be, and not what it might be independent of our interpretations. Can we observe our world without interpreting it? Yes, Pātanjali will explain in these verses that our innermost Self is the All-Knowing, and that it’s our subjective mind that creates these subjective modifications that obscure the truth. That’s what Pātanjali means by “the seer stands in his own nature.” Our own Soul already knows the truth, so it’s a question of restraining our subjective thinking process to allow us to experience an awareness that’s independent of our subjective thought process.

4. Identification with modifications elsewhere.

Otherwise, if we do not restrain our interpretations, we identify with our impressions based on our thought process, and we are usually unable to see things the way they really are.

5. **The modifications are five-fold, painful and not-painful.**

There are five modifications that our subjective thought process makes, and some cause us pain and some do not.

6. **Real Cognition, Unreal Cognition, Imagination, Deep Sleep and Memory.**

These modifications that we make to an objective consciousness include valid reasoning or perception (this is our interpretation of reality but it happens to be accurate), invalid reasoning, imagination, deep sleep, and memory. Pātanjali is going to establish a very important point here. This verse addresses the question posed in verse 3; is there any such thing as a correct or valid observation or perspective? Some people argue that everything we perceive is based only on our own personal individual perceptions and associations that we have formed, and that there is actually no “correct” perception. This is true most of the time, however, Pātanjali is going to eventually explain that there is a correct perspective because there is a consciousness deep within us that is beyond any subjective process. When our subjective modifications stop our consciousness experiences a spiritual awareness, and this awareness comes from our own inner Soul. This is what Jesus meant when he said, “the Kingdom of God is within us.”

7. **Perception, Verbal Cognition and Inference are real cognitions.**

By virtue of our Soul we can know what is ultimately true. And our own direct perception of something can be in the form of a valid observation that is true and isn't based on a bias or prejudice. Whatever inference we make is also valid if our reasoning is correct and not illogical. And, if someone else has made a valid observation, we can also accept this knowledge as “real” provided the accuracy of the source.

8. **Unreal Cognition is the knowing of the unreal, possessing a form not its own.**

By the same token, there is false information. Some reasoning is wrong or there can be false understanding that isn't grounded in reality (possessing a form not its own).

9. **Imagination is followed in sequence by verbal expression and knowledge, and is devoid of objective substratum.**

Sometimes it's just our imagination taking over when our thoughts don't correspond to reality. This is when we're making a false assumption about something because we imagine something that's different than the actual underlying facts (objective substratum).

10. **Sleep is the mental modification which has for its objective substratum, the cause of non-existence.**

Sleep is a mental modification, and it includes both dreaming and deep sleep. Dreaming is like the previous verse and the next verse together, because it involves our imagination and elements of our memory. In this verse he's referring to sleep as producing a state where "non-existence" results. During dreaming we still have thoughts, but of a non-existent nature, and in deep sleep our underlying thoughts (objective substratum) are also non-existent.

11. **Memory is not stealing away along with objective mental impressions.**

Memory is remembering previously perceived things, but it's a modification because it isn't the act of direct perception. It's bringing something remembered back (not stealing away) into our conscious awareness.

12. **They are restrained by practice and desirelessness.**

Control of our mental processes comes about through practice. Here "desire-less-ness" means that we don't have a personal preference to see something a certain way, and we are more apt to see things objectively. In other words, this is when our emotions, motives, and desires stop and don't cloud our judgment.

13. **Of these, practice is the effort to secure steadiness.**

Like the old saying, "practice makes perfect."

14. **And this is firmly rooted, being well-attended to for a long time without interruption and with devotion.**

And mental control and dispassion becomes firmly grounded when carefully practiced for a long time without interruption.

15. **Desirelessness is the consciousness of supremacy in him who is free from thirst for perceptible and scriptural enjoyments.**

Here he says that "supremacy" is when we no longer crave material things, or even rewards in heaven. If we still want material things but we deny ourselves, this is not being free from a "thirst" for things. Sometimes a

person has to pursue material things to find out that once they have them it doesn't satisfy a true spiritual need. And you are desire-less about material things and heavenly rewards when you are truly no longer attracted to them.

16. **The same is Higher, when there is indifference to the “qualities,” due to the knowledge of the Puruṣa.**

Here it must be explained what the “qualities” are, and the “Puruṣa.” The yogis explain that our lives are composed of three different qualities: a desire for truth and wisdom, a desire to act and accomplish things, and a lack of motivation for either (described sometimes as; illumination, active and inert). All behavior is comprised of these three characteristics, and all three in varying degrees are present in all things. The Puruṣa is the Soul, and ultimately is above these three. So when you realize that you are the Soul, you are “indifferent” to these qualities of life.

At this point in introducing the Soul, it might be helpful to explain a little more about yoga and its understanding of the Spirit. First of all, that which is undifferentiated, absolute, formless, and infinite is what yoga calls the “Self.” The Self has no attributes, qualities, categories, or definable features—it is non-dual and beyond thought. When the Self is conscious of itself, this is the Supreme Consciousness, and this is what Patanjali calls God or Īśvara. As the Self differentiates itself into the multiplicity of separate beings, this is what is called the Soul or Puruṣa. In Christian terminology the Eternal Spirit is the Self, God the Father is Īśvara, and the Soul is Puruṣa. These three, just like in the Christian Trinity, are all ultimately the same.

For example, just as I might not know much about my next-door neighbor—perhaps only that he is an electrician—this doesn't mean that there isn't a lot more to know about him. My limited knowledge of him doesn't change who he is. In the same way, just because my Soul doesn't realize it's the Self, doesn't change the Self, or mean that my Soul isn't the Self. Another example: when I'm asleep it is still me. When I wake-up it is still me—I haven't changed—I'm just awake now. When the Puruṣa realizes its true identity, it sees that it is the Self. The Self, Īśvara, and Puruṣa are all ultimately the same, just like “the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

17. **The Cognitive Trance is accompanied by the appearances of philosophical curiosity, meditation, elation and egoism.**

When a person experiences a trance it's as if the dialog in their head has stopped, and their thoughts fade and disappear. In this state you see just before and after that moment that you aren't your stream of thoughts or

what you usually identify with. The moment thought returns, it's that feeling as if you are watching a movie of your life, and you're not playing yourself at that moment. There is a feeling of elation that accompanies a trance; a joy from being separated from your limiting thoughts and any worry that might normally be in our mind. This Pātanjali says brings about philosophical curiosity, meditation (reflection), joy, and self-interest (egoism).

18. **Preceded by the constant repetition of the notion of cessation is the other; in which the residual potencies only remain.**

Here the “other” means achieving a consciousness that has no object awareness, only subconscious impressions (residual potencies). This results through this continual practice of detaching ourselves from our experience, and eventually realizing that we are not the body or our personality. According to Pātanjali both the Self and our individual nature are both real, and both exist for us. The Self is Omnipresent, limitless—the essence or cause of existence—and he says that it's the true inner nature of each one of us spiritually speaking.

We are all ultimately this Self, so the fully realized Purusa (Christ) sees that it is the Spirit. That is what Jesus meant when he said that God was in each of us. The Spirit or Self is modified through nature. For example, you have all sorts of processes occurring through nature all the time; such as the formation of a person's personality over time, weather patterns, ocean currents, movement of the stars, and so forth; but all these events are the Spirit modified by nature operating through its natural laws. Through constantly reminding ourselves that we are not our body or our mind, we realize that we are the Self and untouched by any of these laws, limitations, and reactions. In the beginning we see that we have, however, “residual potencies” that bring us back to a state of duality. This is both the case when we wake up in the morning from deep sleep, and the reason why after death we reincarnate into another body.

19. **Is caused by Objective Existence for the Videhas and Prakṛitilayas.**

When we die if we still have a desire to experience a separate existence—which most people do—then we don't remain in an undifferentiated state. By “Objective Existence,” he means we exist as a separate entity, and this includes even very spiritually advanced disembodied Souls (Videhas) in heaven. The essence of nature is also a part of Objective Existence, so even highly evolved Souls whose consciousness has merged with the essence of life (Prakritilayas) retain an existence separate from the Self. Both must still transcend Objective Existence to dissolve into Oneness and merge with the Self through future incarnations.

20. For others it is preceded by faith, energy, memory, trance and discernment.

For others Oneness is preceded by faith (belief in the truth), energy, memory (mindfulness), trance (transcendence), and discernment (insight).

21. Proximate for those whose consciousness of supremacy is keen.

“Proximate,” meaning success is very near for those whose consciousness of the supreme is strong or “keen.”

22. A further also differentiation by mild, middling and intense.

There are differences in regard to our degree of intensity or effort, from mild, moderate (middling), and intense.

23. Or, by feeling the omnipresence of God.

Here it's important to understand what patanjali means by “God.” As explained earlier, the yogis would experience absorption in an undifferentiated consciousness, a complete Oneness beyond any sense of duality. Here there is no personal God or soul, because that would require two things, God and something else that isn't God. It takes something besides God—which is everything—to experience some-thing. For example, if I'm sitting in a dark room without any light, then blackness is my only reality, and there is nothing but blackness. If I turn on a flashlight and I have a circle of light on the wall, now I have something other than just darkness. In the same way, if everything is ONE, it takes two (duality) to have something else, even a God.

For the yogis when the Undifferentiated Consciousness first splits from Oneness into that which is conscious of itself; in other words, besides undifferentiated consciousness alone, but that which can reflect upon itself; this is what is referred to as God. In contrast to the Old Testament Bible this consciousness or Supreme Being is not jealous, condemning, or judgmental; it is just pure consciousness. This is what Pātanjali refers to as “Īśvara.” The Absolute Reality, devoid of any duality or personality, is what he simply refers to as the “Self,” with a capital “S.” Pātanjali is saying that success can also be achieved through contemplation of this Self or “omnipresence of God.” In the next verse he actually uses the name “Īśvara” for the personal God.

24. Īśvara is a distinct Puruṣa, untouched by the vehicles of affliction, action and fruition.

Īśvara (God) is a distinct Soul, and is the Supreme Soul of the universe. God is the Self or Spirit seen within the universe. God is the ruler of the

cosmos, and therefore “distinct.” While we are subject to the laws of nature and karma, God is “untouched” by affliction, action, and a desire for accomplishment. When we achieve a state of union with the Self, both God and this universe are transcended, since both are actually manifestations of the Self.

This is the same as what Buddha taught. Buddha spoke of an ultimate state called *Nirvāna*, which was beyond God and duality; therefore he was labeled an atheist.

25. **In Him the seed of the omniscient is not exceeded.**

In God, knowledge is infinite and unsurpassed by our scientific understanding. While our scientific knowledge is amazing, it’s nothing compared to the knowledge of God.

When we meditate on the Self—a dimensionless, formless consciousness—the verbal intellectualization of this concept lacks any actual awareness. But when you realize the “seed of the omniscient” you see that when you are actually nothing you are everything; and when you are nowhere you are everywhere. After this experience all you can say is: “I am.” You see that you are really nothing but pure awareness. To realize this is the end of all seeking. You realize that all you thought yourself to be is really just a fleeting image when you see with a pure non-attached awareness.

26. **He is the Teacher of the Ancients too, not being limited by time.**

God is the consciousness that is aware of all things. Therefore, God was the teacher of even the earliest teachers. Since God is infinite and timeless “He” existed before the Ancients.

27. **The Sacred word connotes Him.**

One of the sacred words that express God is “OM.” Pātanjali and other yogis realized that the essence of creation was a vibration. This is the same as what scientists are saying today; that all matter is just a fluctuation or vibration of energy. The yogis realized that there was a vibration that preceded other vibrations. In other words, when God created the universe there was a vibration that all other vibrations sprang forth from, and it is known as the “Sacred word.” This vibration is represented by a certain sound. By making this sound with our voice, we can most closing experience this vibration in our body. You can experience a wonderful vibration by singing (chanting) the sound made by the word “OM.” It’s chanted as AUM, and the A and U sounds blend in the letter O. When chanted it sounds like; “AAAAAAUUUUUUUMMMMMMM.”

28. **Its repetition and the understanding of its meaning.**

Here Pātanjali is referring to the repetition of the mantra “OM.” Most of us have seen images in the movies of someone sitting cross-legged chanting this mantra. This is actually a very ancient mantra handed down by the yogis over the ages. Pātanjali is saying in this verse that the understanding of OM is realized through its repetition. In other words, someone can try and explain to you what chanting this mantra means, but until you practice using it you won’t actually experience its true meaning. Om is not specific to any language. It is a very powerful mantra, and with just a little practice you’ll see for yourself. You breathe deeply and slowly while chanting the mantra. On the exhalation you sing A-U-M with a low and constant sound until your lungs are completely emptied. It is like a train that is passing you—the sound increases in the beginning as if the train is approaching—and then the sound fades as if the train passes you and goes into the distance.

In the west we also have very popular mantras that are used with prayer beads. The Christian beads consist of 33 beads to represent the number of years of Jesus’ life. One popular Christian mantra is, “God is love, love one another.” You slip a bead through your fingers each time you say the prayer to keep track of how many you have said. The Catholics use a necklace of 58 beads called Rosary Beads.

29. **Thence the understanding of the individual self and the absence of obstacles too.**

Consequently through chanting the mantra there is an understanding of our individual self, and the disappearance of obstacles as well. Pātanjali and other yogis have discovered that by chanting “OM” it has silenced their internal dialog, and reunited them with what lies behind all our programming. Here the yogi sees directly what “is,” rather than what his subjective intellect has told him to make of his experience. He understands his “individual self” by this reflection, and sidesteps all the obstacles that our mind usually creates due to it being clouded by our own subjectivity.

30. **Disease, languor, indecision, carelessness, sloth, sensuality, mistaken notion, missing the point, instability--these causing distractions are the obstacles.**

The obstacles to achieving this pure awareness are:

Disease or sickness

Languor (dullness)

Indecision or doubt

Carelessness or lack of enthusiasm

Sloth (laziness)
Sensuality
Mistaken notion or false perception
Missing the point or unable to grow
Instability or unsteadiness in concentration

31. Pain, despair, shakiness, inspiration and expiration are the companions of these distractions.

Here he is saying that we experience pain, despair, shakiness, and irregular breathing due to the distracting obstacles mentioned previously.

32. For their prevention, habituation to one Truth.

To counteract the distractions to pure awareness, we should concentrate upon the “one Truth” of God’s existence, and use routine practice to center our attention on this Truth.

33. By cultivating habits of friendliness, compassion, complacency and indifference toward happiness, misery, virtue and vice the mind becomes pure.

Calming and purity of the mind is brought about through the cultivation of friendliness, compassion, and indifference toward happiness and virtue or vice. Most of us are taught to avoid pain or unhappiness at all costs. Therefore, when pain comes we are usually upset and troubled. What if instead you welcome it, or at least accept it as an opportunity to learn detachment (indifference)? If we’re attached to things like our youth, receiving favorable attention, good health, etc., then as soon as you no longer experience these things you’ll be unhappy. Good and bad fortune is a part of life, and any amount of frustration, denial, or worry isn’t going to change these things. Whether things are going well or bad, we must learn acceptance. It is through complete acceptance of everything (complacency and indifference), that our mind is broken of its strong attachment to what we want rather than what is, and “the mind becomes pure.”

34. Optionally, by the expulsion and retention of breath.

In addition to this (optionally), studies of breathing have shown that deep breathing calms and relaxes the mind. The yogis used deep breathing exercises and the regulating of the inhalation, retention and exhalation of the breath to calm and relax the mind to reach deeper levels of awareness and acceptance.

35. Or, Higher sense-activity appearing, causes mental steadiness.

The yogis also taught that if you concentrated your attention on a part of the body you could heighten a sensation. For example, if you concentrated on the tip of your nose you could smell things much more intensely, and this results in a greater mental stability. Our attention is usually busy with so many thoughts that we aren't really fully aware of anything. Patanjali is going to explain that by completely concentrating on something, the nature of the "sense-activity" is revealed through a "mental steadiness."

36. **Or, the state of painless lucidity.**

Within us there is a lucid state that is beyond pain or confusion. It's painless, joyful and illuminating. This state the yogi's taught is revealed when we turn our attention within, and the mind lets-go of its constant stream of thoughts running in all directions, then this painless state of lucid awareness is experienced.

37. **Or, the mind having the desireless, for its object.**

Much of our thoughts are about what we want. We are usually constantly thinking about what we want next. Whether it's to see someone, go somewhere, or have something—we are often attracted to things. Concentrating the mind on the state of being "desireless" brings about the nature of this state.

38. **Or, having the knowledge of dream and sleep as its object of study.**

Understanding what a dream is, or what sleep is, explains a lot about the nature of our consciousness. During a dream we are experiencing our subconscious thoughts. This shows us that there are layers to our mind and that these subconscious layers exist even if we're not normally aware of them. In meditation you can also experience these subconscious thoughts and feelings, and they can reveal a great deal about us. In deep sleep our mind is experiencing thoughtlessness, but we aren't usually conscious of this either. By meditating on these states we can realize what they are and what their significance is to us.

39. **Or, by meditating according to one's predilection.**

As said before, meditation is concentrating the mind exclusively on something—an object or a thought—so that all other thoughts fade into this one thought. As your mind becomes quiet you eventually no longer think about other thoughts, and your mind reflects only on the reality of your object of meditation. "Predilection" here means choosing what you are going to meditate on according to your particular preference. Yogis would sometimes suggest that students stare at a candle flame, or a rising or

setting sun. Every time their mind wandered, the instruction was to return their attention back to the object. The mind will wander endlessly at first. Eventually, while controlling the thought-waves the mind becomes still like a calm lake.

40. His power reaches down to the minutest, and up to the largest.

This means the person's mastery of the mind can reveal both the smallest most incidental detail, to the largest and most expansive understanding.

41. Becoming like a transparent crystal on the modifications disappearing, (the mind acquires) the power of thought-transformation (samapatti), the power of appearing in the shape of whatever object is presented to it, be it the knower, the knowable or the act of knowing.

There is a very important principal that Patanjali establishes here. That the same consciousness that has become each of us has become everything else in the universe. This innermost Self is the same in each of us, but we appear different through the chemistry of nature. The Omnipresent Spirit (Self) appears through matter (Prakriti) to possess different forms, such as in the form of each person, birds, trees, and so forth. Each of us, for the purpose of our existence maintains a separate ego or sense of "me." An example of this Pātanjali says is imagine a pure clear crystal that is set on top of something that has color. If you set the crystal on a blue velvet cloth the crystal then appears blue. The crystal is not blue; it gets its color from the cloth. In the same way the Spirit doesn't have any traits; we are simply seeing different characteristics of being human when we observe different people, but it's the same Spirit.

Here's another example, imagine a reel of film is passing in front of the lens of a camera. With light the image imprinted on the celluloid is then projected on a screen. When the image is absent and the celluloid is blank, only the light shines through. This is when the Soul is transcended and only pure Spirit remains. The light, or Spirit, is always shining, and sometimes it is illuminating a form and sometimes it is not. Our body and surroundings are the image. Our life is like the images that make up the story. Each frame taken together produces what appears to be a progression or movement in the story. When you take the image or physical world away, the light or Spirit remains unchanged. The light may appear to change with the image, but it is the image that is changing not the light source. This infinite Spirit also appears through nature as animals, trees, rocks, and so forth; however, it is still the same undifferentiated Self that has become everything.

42. There, the thought-transformation in which the options of word, meaning and idea are mixed up, is called Indistinct (verbal).

In the next few verses Pātanjali is going to establish the existence of a Cosmic Self and intelligence that is our inner Self, and he's going to explain that when our mind becomes calmer and our thought-waves become subtler we can begin to achieve in stages an increasingly more refined level of consciousness that goes all the way to a Cosmic Consciousness. He's going to take us from the lowest to the highest, and he explains how at each level it allows us a subtler realization, and what changes are going to occur in our perception at each level.

He says that during our normal waking state our awareness of things includes us attaching a name and certain learned characteristics to an object. For example, when I see a chair, I think "chair." Then I notice its characteristics, it's wooden, it has a padded seat, and then I may think of school and other associations. However, as explained in the previous verse—a cosmic recognition of the chair exists due to my Soul's knowledge that's independent of my present subjective perception. Pātanjali says if I can concentrate on the chair to the point where my conscious mind lets-go of any of my current thoughts, then in trance I can experience this pure perception of the chair that is known to my Soul (Purusa).

He says, however, that at the beginning stages of this trance we may still have some awareness of the name, meaning, and our ideas concerning the chair. This is what Pātanjali calls "**Indistinct.**" Here our awareness is both personal and impersonal, or "mixed." For example, as a hypnotist I would ask clients why they were afraid of something like public speaking, and they would often respond that they had no idea why? Then moments later while in a trance (under hypnosis) when asked the same question they would explain in a very clear matter-of-fact way why public speaking frightened them. It's our conscious mind that lacks this awareness and it clouds or obscures our current conscious understanding.

At the next higher stage, "**Distinctive,**" our personal thoughts have completely faded, and we now know the object through only our Soul's knowledge, which is free of our own subjective thoughts. In other words, we now know an object apart from our personal associations, and from a deeper awareness that is beyond our senses. Next, when it comes to reflecting this way on more subtle non-material things such as concepts or ideas, our mind needs to go to an even more subtle level of awareness where we can actually see the truth about a thought. When this reflection on a thought still includes some of our own personal associations this is what Pātanjali refers to as the "**Meditative**" state.

Still higher, when in a trance we transcend any subjective impressions that associate a name, characteristics, or idea to a thought this is what is called "**Ultra-meditative.**" All these levels discussed so far are called "with

seed,” or a seeded trance. The next is the highest level, which is called a **“seedless trance.”** Here any trace of personal associations, duality and separateness is gone, and we are now inseparable from the thought. The Knower and the Known are now seen as the same. Here “All is One.”

43. **Distinctive (wordless) thought-transformation is that in which the mind shines out as the object alone on the cessation of memory, and is as it were devoid of its own nature.**

In the Distinctive trance we can see things without our interpretations (memory) coming into play, this is when “the mind shines out as the object alone.” This is because the Puruṣa (Soul) sees everything as it is through a cosmic (Self) perspective, and it’s actually the modifications to this consciousness that forms our current subjective awareness. When we remove all the modifications to our consciousness, this is when we truly see, our memory ceases, and there is only existence alone without all our own associations or perspective. As a result of this continuing to decrease our thought modifications over time, we eventually see that the seer, the act of seeing, and that which is seen are all the same. When these merge and aren’t separate, we ARE that pure awareness, and the mind is “devoid of its own nature.”

44. **By this the meditative and the ultra-meditative, having the subtle for their objects, are also described.**

Here “meditative” and “ultra-meditative,” refer to the reflective and super-reflective states discussed in verse 1:42. These states of reflection are called samadhi, and they usually happen in these stages. It can also happen suddenly if someone dies briefly (Near Death Experience), or sometimes under anesthesia or drugs. However, normally it happens gradually over a period of time through the practice of quieting the mind and controlling the thought process. When we transcend our inner stream of thoughts and our internal dialog quiets, this is when we experience these more reflective states.

A sense that you are witnessing your experiences is the beginning of samadhi. It is easiest to start this practice of meditation on an object, and then move to something subtler like an idea. This is what he means “having the subtle for their objects.”

45. **And the province of the subtle reaches up to the noumenal.**

The “noumenal” means the cause or essence of all things. At the moment that you let-go of any perspective and any individual reference point, you simply just experience what IS. At this higher elevation you still see the players but you don’t see them as separate. Here you are still dealing in

duality, but now things are beyond fate and synchronization. Everything just is—it's all the same essence—but here it can still include some sequential thought at this stage. At the elevation above thought, there is ecstasy, bliss, silence, and the “peace that passes all understanding.” This can't be put into words—only experienced. Actually, at a certain point it can't even be experienced because there is no experience(r). It takes two things to exist for experience; the experience and the one having the experience. However, when these two things are the same they dissolve into non-dual consciousness. Bliss is beyond any words and duality. It's at this point that there comes an end of even the subtlest perceptibility of the undifferentiated Spirit, and all memory and all associations are transcended.

46. **They are the seeded trance only.**

The Spirit sees that nothing is truly separate. Everything is Integrated, synchronized, and interrelated. This is how we see things when we experience true Spiritual awareness. When we still see things in relation to other things, this is what he calls “with seed.” When we see that all things merge in a higher state beyond any distinction, and we can no longer differentiate things apart, this is called “without seed.” Just like in a farmer's field, if there are no seeds then no crops will grow. Likewise, in the field of the mind, if it is seedless then no thoughts arise.

47. **The undisturbed flow of the ultra-meditative causes Subjective Luminosity.**

When we experience an undisturbed flow of our inner stream of thoughts (ultra-meditative), we experience a much more self-reflective state (Subjective Luminosity). In this state you may have that feeling that a light bulb has just gone on in your head. Sometimes the answer to a question you have been thinking about will just pop into your head and you aren't even trying to think about anything at the time. Subjective Luminosity is realizing something true about yourself or your life. In the next verse, “Essential Cognition,” is realizing something that is universally true or essential about reality in general. For example, as humans our “essential” purpose in life is to realize God, but I might also realize upon reflection that my “subjective” purpose is to be an artist.

48. **Therein the faculty of Essential Cognition.**

Here “Essential Cognition,” mean realizing through this very reflective state what is most essential. In this ultra-meditative state many insights can be experienced. Deep within us we know the truth of our spiritual existence and we have simply forgotten. We are like sleeping Pātanjali's. It is beneficial, however, that in the beginning we have the truth explained to us just as if someone was reminding us of something that we have

forgotten. Since any previous recollection of this understanding is in our deep unconscious mind, all we need is to awaken this knowledge.

In the higher or more advanced stages of this process the person loses interest in material things, fame, or attention, due to an increased awareness of what is really essential. Eventually you see your character as one of the many characters in the world. At this point, you may still identify with the character that you call “you,” but you also feel like the “passerby” who is just watching your character. Beyond this elevation all the character’s lives are seen as interwoven, and you see that each person’s path is due only to the momentum that each character has created. And you see that our paths cross for a reason, and that the reactions that people have are what set into motion the future effects that determine their fate.

A simple analogy about oneness and separation: Imagine if you pour several glasses of water into a pitcher. Have you destroyed the water in each glass? Which is greater or more expansive, the pitcher of water or a single glass? When you pour the water from the pitcher into one of the glasses you have reduced and separated some of it. But if you pour it back into the pitcher—it is not reduced—it is expanded. In the same way, we are not reduced when we transcend our own mental limitations—we too are expanded.

Eventually, in this process there are moments when a person’s memory ceases, and they experience a sense of existence itself without any thought process. At these times the person might go in-and-out of this experience, or they may also have the experience of a slight duality. Pātanjali says that when finally all words, meaning, knowledge, and the imagination merge, this results in this higher form of samadhi or integration (seedless trance). This consciousness is beyond all traditions, teachings, and reasoning. This state allows for the experience of unobstructed bliss.

49. **It has different objects from those of verbal and inferential cognition, as it refers to particulars.**

This knowledge that is gained through meditation is beyond academic or even scriptural knowledge. When you study the scriptures or someone teaches you something, that is one way of knowing something (verbal and inferential cognition). However, realizing the truth of something through this inner state of knowing is completely different. Imagine if you have never been to the zoo and someone tries to explain to you what it is like. You’ll construct an idea of what you think it’s like based on what you can imagine according to your own experience (your model of the world). However, when you see it for yourself it is completely different. Now, if you have been to the zoo, and then someone describes it to you, you don’t have

to imagine what it is like, you have seen it for yourself. You KNOW what the zoo is like. In the same way when someone experiences the Self, no explanations are needed any longer.

50. **Residual potencies born therefrom impede other residual potencies.**

Results of our meditation practice allow us to avoid further delusion. When someone experiences a state of Spiritual consciousness, even mildly so, they now know that it's possible to know things for oneself. Truth that is acquired through this inner insight is self-evident and removes delusion. No one has to convince you to believe knowledge obtained this way. Let's say you went to the zoo with your father when you were very young and you have completely forgotten about the experience. Then someone starts telling you about his or her trip to the zoo. As they describe the exhibits and the animals, you start remembering your own experiences at the zoo. You know exactly what the person is talking about because you actually experienced these things for yourself. This is what remembering the truth is like. We have all experienced the afterlife before. Our souls have all been in heaven and we have just forgotten. When we remember these things for ourselves, we'll know that they are true, and we will also recognize the truth in the scriptures when it's accurately described and speaks of these states, if only we are open and willing to remember.

51. **All being suppressed, by the suppression of that too comes the seedless trance.**

When we have suppressed all thought and reflection—and even suppressed that which has suppressed these—this allows for the experience of Oneness and unobstructed bliss (seedless trance). At this point when all thought and reflection ceases altogether, then there is only Infinite Consciousness (the highest Sāmadhi).