

## CHAPTER II - THE DAY OF THE SCORPION



This article looks at chapter two. Titled Sādhana Pādaḥ, its 55 verses reflect the theme of self responsibility in cultivating the preparatory means for accessing and maintaining mindfulness.

In astrology the sign of the scorpion has at its ruler the planet Pluto. The influence of Pluto in our chart and life is associated with the creative forces of the body, with enforced change, the unconscious and beginning and ends of phases of life. Committing ourselves to Sādhana or practice in the direction of Yoga will bring us into contact with these issues.

The zodiac sign of Scorpio is itself associated with a sense of purpose, persistence and discrimination. In chapter two of the Yoga Sūtra of Patañjali is also concerned with these aspects from the viewpoint of developing these qualities through doing something ourselves. So that what is not possible becomes possible.

This is Sādhana, providing the means to reach somewhere we haven't reached before. How to proceed?

**Firstly by examining our daily attitude with the practice of Kriyā Yoga**

C2 v1

‘The practice of Yoga requires temperance, self-inquiry and a special attitude towards the divine.’

**Kriyā Yoga can support mindfulness on the ways the process of the mind expresses itself.**

C2 v2

‘It is for the purpose of cultivating integration and reducing the afflictions (kleśā).’



## **What are the Kleśā?**

They are the basic emotional and mental responses which constantly affect the clarity of our actions. The Kleśā provide the dynamic framework for the relative self which is activated by the emanation from the absolute self within. It is the Kleśā activated by this emanation, which urge the organism to respond though it acts with apparent clarity and wisdom.

C2 v3

‘The afflictions are illusion, egoity, attachment, aversion and survival.’

**We experience the Kleśā within the finite self in terms of I know, I am, I want, I reject, I fear.**

Furthermore.

C2 v4

‘Illusion is the field for the others whether they are sleeping, weak, intermittent or aroused.’

**Having described the Kleśā and the ways they can distort our view of reality Patañjali suggests a core means to harness their potential power.**

C2 v11

‘Their activities are overcome by meditation.’

Through Dhyāna the energy of the Kleśā can be transformed firstly by becoming aware of the Kleśā process, our own process. Whether what emerges is beneficial or causes problems is dependent upon our being conscious of the motivational forces which impel us through the mind and emotions.



The power of the ways they can affect us within our daily life can have adverse effects. As such the Kleśā are the seeds from which Duḥkha or a feeling of restriction in the mind and emotions manifests. Duḥkha is the feeling which arises when the absolute self is surrounded by something undesirable within the finite self.

Yoga is an investigation of Duḥkha and its effect within our life and relationships.

**However Patañjali reminds us.**

C2 v15

‘Indeed for the discriminating person all is suffering, due to the suffering from change, craving and tendencies and the opposition in the activities of the forces of nature.’

**So where do we start?**

Here Patañjali proposes four steps for our Sādhana. One can parallel these to Four Noble Truths of Buddhism or the Four Therapeutic steps of Āyurveda.

**The first step is to become sensitive to the symptom which is experienced as Duḥkha.**

C2 v16

‘The suffering yet to come must be overcome.’

**The second step is to realise that this symptom has a cause which is Avidyā or an illusion around what is real.**

C2 v24

‘Its cause is illusion.’



The third step is to appreciate that a solution is possible, Kaivalya or freedom from the effects of our past.

C2 v25

‘The absence of that is the giving up of the illusion; that giving up is the Seer in its purity.’

The fourth step is the refinement of clarity as the means towards the solution.

C2 v26

‘Unwavering discriminative awareness is the means for freedom from illusion.’

**What tools can we use in this process?**

C2 v28

‘Following the limbs of Yoga the impurities diminish and Understanding illuminates up to discriminative awareness.’

**What are the eight aspects of Aṣṭāṅga Yoga?**

C2 v29

‘Personal restraints, Social observances, Meditational posture, Breath Extension, Not overindulging the senses, Concentration, Meditation and Integration are the eight limbs.’

Aṣṭāṅga Yoga involves a deep enquiry into the relationships we have with ourselves, our social interactions, our body, breath, senses and our mental patterns.



This investigation, moving from the gross to the subtle aspects, from what is external towards what is internal, bring a sense of Viveka or discernment in to the way we interact through the energies of speech, body and mind. Viveka is a spontaneous discrimination in action rather than reflection through Aṣṭāṅga Yoga.

So Patañjali has presented a preliminary process by which we can move away from a state of distraction towards one of clarity. In this process the starting point is Kriyā Yoga by laying a foundation for our enquiry and practice.

This base or preliminary practice prepares us psychologically for the more intensive demands of Aṣṭāṅga Yoga. Without this base we are building a structure without an understanding of our inner climate and the vagaries of the mind.

It is through the roots of Kriyā Yoga that Aṣṭāṅga Yoga can grow. From Aṣṭāṅga Yoga comes the refinement of Viveka or the ability to see both sides of a situation whilst acting. The psyche (Citta) is ready to be engaged in the practice of meditation or dhyānam.

Thus the second chapter of the Yoga Sūtra of the Patañjali has presented the nature of the forces which impel, compel and repel us through the process of the mind. With the means to appreciate where are coming from we are given tools to work with our process to help prepare for the meditational practices in Chapter Three.

This article is a brief introduction to the profound wisdom and insight within this chapter. The next article introduces Chapter Three Vibhūti Pādaḥ or the book on extra-ordinary meditational practices and its proposals for the means to direct a focused mind.