

THE LAWS OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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Today we are going to deal with the laws of yoga formulated in part by our predecessors and in part - in the process of work of our school.

But first about what yoga is. In the last decades of the deepest spiritual depression in this country (Russia), the word "yoga" was understood at best as hatha-yoga and at worst as occultism and magic. The imagination of our average man formed the image "yogi" standing on his head or sitting in the "lotus" pose, who is also capable of lying on broken glass or nails, drinking acids and so on in this vein.

But in reality yoga is in first and foremost Love. The word "yoga" is translated from Sanskrit into English the same as the Latin word "religion" -that is merging, union of man with God. Yoga is movement towards God. The basis of this movement, of yoga is Love. Love with capital "L". Love in that sense in which Jesus Christ, Krishna and other spoke of it.

Love is that which unites man with man, allows to find harmony with the whole of the environment in the multidimensional space, that which being fully developed, allows to reach the union with God.

Man has no other possibility to realize the supreme religious tenets expounded both in the New Testament and in Bhagavad Gita, other than through the developed Love.

That school is the school of true yoga which professes Love.

"God is Love" said Jesus. What does it mean? It means that if we are intent to fulfill the principal commandment of the New Testament: "Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect", we must here, on Earth, in these bodies, master the Divine Love. We have to learn to love each other, all beings, the whole of the Creation. We have to learn to love in such a way as God loves us, God Who is Love.

The same ideas of Love-bhakti are expressed in Bhagavad Gita. Here there is the same concept of Love as in the New Testament. That is one has first to master Love through interaction with elements of the Creation, with elements of the Absolute, in order to redirect later this Love to the Creator.

So yoga is the Path of Love, treading which we can reach the merging, union with God.

Both Krishna and Jesus spoke of this merging, blending. Bhagavad Gita, in particular, bears such words of God : "Direct your mind to Me, submerge your consciousness in Me - and you will then live in Me". Jesus told the same to his disciples (recorded in the "Book for the perfect" of the Apostle Thomas): through our religious endeavors we have to merge with the King (that is God-Father) forever.

So the teachings of Jesus Christ and Krishna are in full concord concerning both the final Goal that they determine and the methodology of spiritual progress. The New Testament and Bhagavad Gita complement each other perfectly. The same truths are stated in them in slightly varying words, which just helps us adopt them.

So what is the Divine Perfection that we are to achieve? It comprises three major aspects: Love, Wisdom and Power. These three qualities are inherent in God. That is why, striving to the Divine Perfection we have to develop ourselves along three aspects.

There is a very nice image, presented in Bhagavad Gita: man is likened to a field covered with sprouts. These sprouts are our qualities. Man is the whole of the field consisting of qualities. And the number of these sprouts-qualities is enormous, on his Path to the Divine Perfection man is to achieve maturity by all these sprouts of precious cereal plant, each of them is to be nurtured to become mature. And vices-weeds must be rooted out.

It is most essential to understand that we are developed not by a single particular feature but by a number of them. This should be emphasized whereas some religious trends simplify to a great extent the understanding of the essence of human spiritual development. In reality we undergo development along many directions: sport is important (especially for children), so that to lay a foundation for the development of power, education must be wide indeed so that in future there are conditions for forming Wisdom on the basis of vast specific knowledge and developed system of thinking, and the sphere of reproductive activity is needed as well, especially child-rearing as conducive to laying a foundation of that same love which later is to grow into the Divine Love. No one can become perfect without having mastered all of this. And the Creator is our life experience of trials, errors and victories the closer we are to Perfection. And the whole of spiritual experience - both positive and negative - of other people is also useful for us; we can learn not only from our own achievements and mistakes but from someone else's as well.

In keeping with the three major aspects of Perfection there exist three directions of spiritual work in yoga. The first one is ethical line, represented by two stages: karma-yoga - a teaching of ethically correct action, and bhakti-yoga a teaching of Love. The second line is intellectual: jnana-yoga. The third one is psychoenergetic represented by hatha-yoga (preparatory stage), raja-yoga (work with organism energies) and buddhi-yoga - the stage where the work with the energy of consciousness is performed. Buddhi-yoga is the highest stage of yoga, on it, in particular, are realized the words of Jesus: "God is Spirit and those worshipping Him must worship in spirit and truth". What is meant here is that man having mastered the faculty of acting not through body but directly as energy of consciousness, should aspire to the Divine Consciousness. Methodology of buddhi-yoga is set forth in Bhagavad Gita.

Now we can pass to considering laws of yoga.

The first of them is THE LAW OF LOVE. We have to endeavor to master Love from the very beginning and till the very end of our spiritual advancement. It is not enough to learn tenets of Love by heart. There is love "from mind" and there is love "from heart". The former is the necessary stage on the Path of mastering Love: we have to develop a strong desire to be able to love and first we should comprehend this intellectually. But the love "from heart", that is an emotion born in the anahata chakra is that basis on which the Divine Love can be nurtured - that is the Love Divinely subtle, wise and powerful.

The whole of the man's spiritual Path consists of mastering Love whereas it is not possible to learn to love the Creator without having the developed ability of emotional love. And I state once again - love can not be developed unless we have developed structure generating this psychic state - that is the anahata chakra. Hence the harmonious development of a disciple of spiritual school is ensured in that namely case if the psychoenergetic work is started with this chakra.

The second law - THE LAW OF GRADUAL STEP-BY-STEP DEVELOPMENT. What is that which differentiates people from each other? We are used to see the differences in age and sex of our bodies, color of skin, nationality and so forth. But all mentioned above doesn't matter in comparison, for example, with differences in

psychogenetic age - that is the age of the soul which lives repeatedly in diverse physical bodies on the way to its final and entire self-realization.

The knowledge of this was lost in Christianity though Jesus Christ did teach this. For instance, Jesus said that John the Baptist is namely Elias who came but was not recognized. To the same was devoted the gospel of the disciple of Jesus, Apostle Philip. Due to this misunderstanding modern mass Christianity lacks an integral, strictly scientific concept of man's evolution as well as serious methodology of spiritual perfection.

So the principal distinction between people along with "quantitative" characteristic is according to the soul's age. Another - "qualitative" distinction - is that how people used the possibility of self-perfection given to them in incarnations. For example, are diligent in study while others are indolent.

Owing to this knowledge we can deeply perceive the Wisdom of God, Who fosters the development of lots of various spiritual schools on Earth. The more numerous they are the greater number of people can choose for themselves that specific program of self-perfection that will be the optimum, the best one at the given moment of their personal evolution. In this they acquire both positive and negative experience. What is to be noted is that the latter is of no less importance. Let us remember: only a wise one can tread the spiritual Path at a high rate.

So each one needs his own methods at the given moment. We can cover the part of the Path all together and after that most of us will disperse to search for their own specific roads. And again we will make both correct and erroneous steps, we will suffer because of the latter, watch the errors of other people, learn from their mistakes - this is not so painful as learning from mistakes of our own. No one is entitled to coerce someone else to tread his path whereas each one has his own path.

There are diverse schemes reflecting the regularities of man's spiritual growth. There are patterns of psychotypes expounded by Gurdjieff or the pattern given by Yuktswar in his work "The Holy Science", or the stages of psychogenesis describing in our books "The Art of Being Happy" and "Raja- and Buddhi-Yoga". Incidentally the latter of these two contains the article by D.Dubrovin dealing with this subject.

Now we shall consider one of such schemes known in Hinduism.

At the beginning any person - both in his psychogenesis (development in a row of incarnations) and ontogenesis (individual development within one incarnation) is a disciple. In this state he is still unable to create anything on his own. He is learning. He is learning, in particular, by helping others in the capacity of a servant (in the widest and positive sense of this word, not just as a domestic help).

Later, having acquired a lot of knowledge and experience, having developed an intellect, one becomes a grihastha (householder). That one can be called grihastha who having reached certain age in this body, possesses his own household and family, being able of supporting materially not only himself but others as well and who has raised children. A person who mastered ability of "standing firmly on the ground" - that one is grihastha.

But grihasthas differ in scale. So Krishna can be regarded in the quality of grihastha. That is grihastha can be "minor" and "major". "Major" one is that one who, for example, heads a whole spiritual trend. For such a grihastha his "family" is all humankind on the Earth.

And only for that one who has achieved the "middle" level of grihastha there is sense (in that or another measure and for that or another period of time) in becoming a hermit, a recluse, as did, in particular, not long before his passing one of famous outstanding

grihasthas of our age - Rajneesh.

Lots of religious trends and schools lack this idea of regularity of man's development and attempts are made there to move all adepts at once into the state of "hermit" which is only detrimental for them. I shall not detail in that now because this material was already published in the books "Psychic Self-Regulation in Oriental Tradition", "Raja- and Buddhi-Yoga", "Talks with God".

In Hinduism there is one more pattern, expounded in Bhagavad Gita - the stages of varnas.

The first stage in it is analogous to the stage of disciple of the previous scheme. In the beginning man is capable of nothing on his own. His social role can be only auxiliary. Rendering help to others he learns. On this stage he is called Shudra.

The next stage is Vaishya. This includes farmers, artisans, tradesmen that is people who are successful in managing their own affairs. These ones are grihasthas.

Then they become Kshatryas - leaders. This is a still higher execution of grihastha's functions, the ascent onto the next stage of social activity. It is on this stage that such aspects of Perfection as Wisdom and Power develop best, and also prerequisites are created for expansion of Love.

True grihastha-khastrya must possess both powers, which can't be obtained merely through weight lifting and strong intellect. Only then he can advance successfully.

Man must master all these stages without fail before he can come to know Brahman and so become in such a way a member of the Brahman varna.

There are no stages to Perfection other than these ones. That is why it is necessary to repeatedly emphasize the harmfulness of the tendency to abandon social activity prematurely. It is only in numerous quite "earthly" situations that we can acquire what is absolutely indispensable on the final stages of gaining intimacy with God.

The third law is the LAW OF THREE OCTAVES formulated by Georgii Gurdjieff. It holds that only that one can advance along the Spiritual Path at a high rate and with confidence who works along three directions simultaneously. The first one is the specific work on changing oneself. The second is spiritual assistance to other, quite concrete, people. The third one is the active role and a feeling of ones membership in life of spiritual unity of people - a spiritual school, community, group.

In case one of the "octaves" is omitted, that is in case man works along merely one of these directions, he is sure to come to a standstill in his development.

The fourth law is the LAW OF SINUSOID. It holds that each spiritual ascent is inevitably followed by the tendency of descent. Especially clearly this is manifested on the psycho energetic line of development. Soon after the next achievement we lose the attained level soon. And if this is our desire we have to make efforts and super-efforts so that to come back to the achieved height. In this way we gain a foothold on the stages we have reached. So God, taking away our attainments for the time, tests our yearning for Him. By this means He also bars us from moving at a rate too high for us so far. In other words this makes clear how much we need our last achievements at the given moment.

And let us remember that it is God Who realizes this law for us. It is He who is putting us to trial takes away from us that which He has just given us Himself. For what reason? So that we could fortify our attainments. So that we don't "break" from the burden so far beyond our capacities.

But that one who is capable and willing to advance quickly and enduringly that one being aware of this law and keeping watchfulness will conquer the descending parts of his path with more success.

The fifth law is the LAW OF MOVING INTO THE DEPTH OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL SPACE on Path to God. We already know that God is not in the sky and there is no sense in flying into space or climbing mountains in search for Him. There is no localized God. He is there but not in a greater extent than elsewhere. Divine Consciousness is present both inside of our bodies and outside of them. One can perceive Him only through mastering the ability to submerge into the depth of the multidimensional space.

This path starts with refinement of one's emotional sphere, with denial of rude emotional states, with mastering the ability of living exclusively in positive emotion, with purification of one's organism from rude energies (this is impossible without adopting a "non-killing" diet which is also in conformity with the Bible's tenet "do not kill").

To attaining refinement conducive are attunement with subtle states of nature, communication with children, with the people advanced in spiritual relation, with corresponding pieces of art.

Helpful for this are also Christian Eucharist, meditative work on the "places of power", techniques of raja - and later buddhi-yoga.

On the stage of raja-yoga, working with the anahata chakra we can perceive Atman - the Holy Spirit living in us (in words of the New Testament). In this way the state of Samadhi of which Krishna spoke in Bhagavad Gita is experienced. Further psychoenergetic perfection is devoted to penetrating into the Abode of Father-God, getting fixed there and dissolving in Him. In this way we achieve the state which Jesus described by the words "I and the Father are one".

It should be noted that only strictly monotheistic outlook comprising the knowledge of the multidimensional character of space where the Creator is the Initial Consciousness present on the subtlest plane of the Universe - only such an outlook allows to cover this Path at a high rate.

The sixth law is the LAW OF INTELLECTUAL READINESS. These high truths that we are discussing now can not be perceived by people who are just on the initial stages of their evolution in human bodies as well as by those who are moving in the "downing" stream of development. Each person should have preliminary intellectual readiness to absorb each new portion of high spiritual knowledge. What is essential is to pay attention to harmoniousness of development in the one desirous to receive new initiation into sacral knowledge, of all three principal aspects of perfection: intellectual, ethical and psycho-energetic ones. In case this harmony is violated and development proceeds only along the last line this is detrimental for a person. In particular, a weak intellect can fail to be up to the load induced by penetration into depth of multidimensional universe.

It is to be noted also that full ethical development is not possible provided the corresponding intellectual basis is absent. Otherwise only superficial understanding of ethical principles can be gotten. An example is realization of the tenet "do not kill". Whom and when is it forbidden to kill? Only I must not be killed? Or I must not kill as well? But if I am attacked? And what if a war is waged? And if my friends are attacked? And what about animals - not to kill also? Is it permitted to kill mosquitoes? And what about killing plants for feeding and other needs?

Similar list of "difficult" question can be put concerning any of 10 tenets received by Moses. And all these questions God puts to us in theoretical and practical tasks at the school called "Earth" as we are gaining maturity.

Another example - observance of the tenet "do not steal". We can abstain from stealing money and property of other people. But to stop stealing their freedom when we

impose our will on them - how many people reach this moral level? And if we assume the same in our relations with animals? And what about stealing bioenergy from other people when we desire something from them?

And how can we reconcile the tenet "do not commit adultery" with the commandment of the New Testament "to the one asking from you - give"?

And how difficult it is to refrain from the sin of judging others! But first of all it is necessary to understand the distinction between judging and critical evaluation of other people's actions. And what about "righteous wrath"? Or the "right expose" which the Orthodox church "made lawful" in circumvention of the prohibition to judge? Do we realize that "exposure" and "righteous wrath" lay out the road to hell in the same way as anger of judgement? Not those get into hell who committed a formal sin once or some times but those who while living in body developed a habit of gross emotional states, who did not learn to love from heart, did not refine their soul through tenderness, maybe fearing to "commit a sin".

And those who try in some Catholic countries to suppress the right of others to the sin of abortion - are not they sinners to a greater extent than the ones undergoing abortion?

All these are complicated questions of ethics to solve which developed intellect is required. And it is so easy to scare someone of weak intellect concerning his "deadly sin", plunging him into the abyss of chronic dread and thus securing him place in hell!

And lots of difficult questions arise before those who get familiar with life in other space dimensions! So easy it is to become confused and get lost here!

There is no sense in trying to teach junior schoolchildren the things that are studied at institutes. The same goes for spiritual work. So that to receive sacral knowledge the corresponding maturity of a disciple is necessary. It is necessary first he masters the things which grihasta should master. Only Kshatrya can become Brahman!

The seventh law is THE LAW OF POWER IN SUBTLETY. It is essential to understand that there is sense in developing only subtle power, not gross one. Hence the requirement on the "direct path" of yoga to teach refinement first and afterwards - power. In other words, it is better to make powerful the initial subtlety rather than rudeness.

The harmonious development of the function of power starts with making one's body strong, clean, lithe, physically strong. This can be achieved through hatha-yoga and other systems of body training.

The second stage is the development of bioenergetic structures of organism: chakras and hara. This is a stage of raja-yoga.

The third stage is buddhi-yoga where the consciousness of a disciple prepared in all relations undergoes "crystallization" and other transformations.

It is to be emphasized that it is worth while to develop the aspect of Power only if considerable potentials of Love and Wisdom are accumulated. Otherwise excess of power may turn out to be most detrimental to man.

The eighth law is the LAW OF BEING FACING GOD. Let me remind you the words from Bhagavad Gita "Direct your mind to Me, submerge your consciousness into Me - and you will live then in Me".

In Hinduism there is most valuable likening of our senses (functions of sense organs) to feelers (indryas). When we look we let the feelers out of our eyes thus touching objects with them. When we listen we do the same with our ears... Even when we think about an object we direct indryas of our mind to it.

One's task on the religious Path is to direct indryas of one's mind and later - of consciousness to God so that to merge with His Consciousness afterwards. The latter is

realized namely through buddhi-yoga methods: it is that they allow to solve this problem radically. But now there is no sense in going into greater detail concerning these techniques: they are revealed only to the ones on the "finishing line"...

The ninth law is the LAW OF DESTROYING ONE'S "EGO". The ultimate goal of man - merging with the Creator - can be attained only through destruction of one's "ego". It is not possible to intrude into Ishvara, possible only to merge with Him. This is achieved through special techniques of buddhi-yoga. Preparatory stage to this concluding act is the mastering of the state of Nirodhi - one of the steps of Nirvana when consciousness is transferred into the state of "no-I" or "total reciprocity". But there is sense in striving to realize this task from the very start of the Path by nurturing humility, humbleness in oneself.

There is a formula in the highest Tibetan yoga: first the Atman is to be expanded endlessly and destroyed afterwards. When man, having mastered the highest Love and Wisdom and having developed his consciousness up to the cosmic scale in the highest space dimensions, disappears - this means he merges with the Creator.

The tenth law is the LAW OF BREAKING TIES WITH EARTH AND THE EARTHLY. Realization of this principle results in attainment of the state of Mukti (Moksha). It is reached through denial of all "earthly" attachments, through techniques of governing indryas and destruction of one's "ego" in Nirodhi.

Let me underline that it is senseless to endeavor to realize this without having mastered preceding stages of personal growth in "earthly" affairs and on the path of spiritual ascent. The state of Mukti can be achieved only through methods of buddhi-yoga preceded by stages of raja-yoga.

The fulfillment of the tenth law must necessarily forego the merging with the Creator.

On all stages of spiritual ascent man may remain involved in social life, what was demonstrated in particular, by Krishna and after Him - by Jesus, Rajneesh and others. The social role of such people becomes more and more perfect as they go forward. They act not out of personal interests or attachment to the activity itself but for the sake of all, using thus the all-growing Wisdom.

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