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Indian philosophy  
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Maharshi Patanjali ,the author of ‘Yoga Sutra’ cleared the whole purpose of yoga in just 3 words- 'Yoga chittavritti nirodha'.

This sutra can be elaborated in this way:

Chitta in humans, which usually called as mind, is constantly fluctuating. The fluctuations in the mind are a reflection of the disequilibrium of the three Gunas –Sattva (purity), rajas (activity) and tamas (dullness), which manifest itself in the form of Vrittis.

Thus the purpose of yoga is, the cessation (Nirodha) of the fluctuations (Vrittis) of the mind (Chitta).

In order to reach a state of absolute calmness and balance, it is important to first develop an understanding of different states in which a human mind lies.

According to Yoga Philosophy there are 5 States of Mind ;

1. Kshipta
2. Mudha
3. Vikspita
4. Ekagra
5. Niruddha or fully-focused mind

In Vyasa’s commentary on yoga sutra stanza 1.1 1, he said, yoga is Samadhi .

Samadhi is a key characteristic of Chitta which pervades in all 5 states of mind at any given time. Vyasa called 5 states as 5 Bhumi of Chitta. In his commentary he describes like that :

1. Kshipta as chaotic or most fickle state of mind.
2. Mudha as dull or lazy state of mind.
3. Vikshipta as partially focused mind.
4. Ekagra as one-pointed mind and
5. Niruddha as fully absorbed mind.

Now the point should be noted down here is that , The Samadhi in the first 3 states of mind is not part of ‘Yoga Samadhi’ because their continuity is very unsteadiness or in those states, mind changes frequently. Though, Samadhi lies there for a tiny fraction.

Yoga is actually when Samadhi lies in the last two states of mind (Ekagrata and Niruddha).

Indeed, Understanding the characteristics of each state of mind helps in achieving the ‘Yoga Samadhi’.

1. Kshipta :

Kshipta or scattered is the lowest and most common state of the mind which manifests during waking hours. This state is dominated by the “rajas” guna because of the most time in waking hours involved in some physical or mental activity.

In this mental state, a person alternates between extreme states –love and hate, like and dislike, pleasure and pain, enthusiasm and boredom. The mind is totally restless as it is always jumping from one thought to another. There is a lack of clarity in vision and someone might feel anxious, confused, unable to understand and relate peacefully with others in daily relationships. Here, the mind lacks necessary cognitive abilities which reflect in the form of poor decision-making skills in the day to day situations of life.

Here in this state, managing even the mundane day to day responsibilities becomes a challenge for the wandering mind. The mind is extremely restless as it is always jumping from one thought to another.

## 2. Mudha :

The Mudha or Dull state of mind is dominated by the ‘tamas’ guna in which the mind is sluggish, sleepy and lacking vitality. Due to the sluggish nature of mind, a lack the energy observed in this state to deal with subtle and deep issues of life.

Most of us usually oscillate between Kshipta and Mudha states during the waking hours. We are impelled towards an object of sense through rajas nature of our behavior. However, if the desired result is denied to us or greater effort is required, the dull mind due to lack of concentration find excuses and entraps us into a feeling of dissatisfaction. In this case, tamas guna can drive us into a state of sadness or depression.

In nutshell, Mudha state of mind is when you are not able to hear your inner voice and communicate to your true self.

## 3. Vikspita :

There are moments in life where sattva guna starts to dominate and the mind can focus and concentrate. We feel balanced, happy and clear in all spheres and life appears to be a beautiful flow. Then, as some difficult and painful situations crop up, our mind gets distracted and we fall back into old patterns. The mind is pulled away from Sattva back to rajas or tamas.

This is the Vikspita state where the mind is alternating between moments of clarity and distraction. In this state, someone is fully in control of his thoughts. However, someone is able to be aware of the subtleties of life.

For example, in our Yoga practice when are fully absorbed into meditation, we experience moments of absolute calmness and focus. However, when there is the slightest distraction, we lose our focus. We get distracted and blame the external factors for creating a disturbance. We blame the environment and not our perception. In this situation, consistent practice of Yoga helps to understand that we can never change the external environment and enables to handle life with equanimity in daily situations.

## 4. Ekagra or One-pointed mind :

All inner noise has calmed down and the mind is now peaceful, aware and ready for focus. In Ekagra state of mind, one can bring their complete attention at one point, without affecting by any external agencies as long as a person wants to hold. It results, dies down of all confusion and anxiety of the person.

In yogic sense, what you perceive of an object is the state of Samadhi is the only “direct perception” .What is perceived through five senses is impaired and incomplete perception, because of the imperfections of senses, mind, and buddhi which are under the influence of the negative ego.

Vyasa in his commentary on yoga sutra said Ekagra or one-pointed mind erase all the afflictions which is cause of our suffering .

Mind in this state is said to be in the yoga or one can say, it's the point where one's yogic journey has started in real sense.

Through this state of mind, someone found a single-pointed focus in life which will help to filter through your experiences, dissolve your ego, awaken your intuitiveness and sense things beyond the five senses. You will feel absolutely in control of your thoughts and actions.

#### 5. Niruddha or fully-focused mind :

After passing through the state of Ekagrah (one-pointedness), one is able to hold on to a single point of focus. Here, the attention is fully arrested and concentrated on one point.

At this stage, no old or new impressions can distract the mind from point of focus and complete stillness is reached. One is able to glide through life with utmost grace. There is no reaction to life's ever-changing situations. One can soar to even higher mental states in his Yogic journey from this point.

In the state of Nirodha, the mind is now fully under the control of the yogi and all the fluctuations come under the direct control of intellect (sattvic buddhi) as opposed to being controlled by ego. When the Yogi sustains in the state of Niruddha for long periods, the mind reaches a state of equilibrium of the trigunas which leads to liberation (Kaivalya)

In our day to day life, most of us can be seen in the first three states of mind. These 3 states of mind are responsible for abiding us with the external world.

The Kishipta mind is too restless to maintain concentration and balance.

The Mudha mind lacks the energy to make an effort to focus.

The Vikshipta mind lacks consistency and is unable to maintain focus.

There will be moments of concentration and balance and at other times, the Yogi gets distracted and trapped into old habits. However, Vikshipta mind can maintain focus through determination, discipline and consistent practice.

Last 2 states of mind (Ekagra and Niruddha) helps a yogi to internalize the awareness. Hence, it helps in achieving higher states of concentration.

The above classification of mind states helps us to understand our own mental state so that we can grow in our levels of consciousness in our spiritual or material pursuits.