



Although the mind has many states, according to Raja Yoga, they fall into five broad categories: *mudha* (dull), *kshipta* (distracted), *vikshipta* (partially gathered), *ekagrata* (one pointed) and *niruddha* (controlled). The study of these five states is very important for all aspirants.

The lowest state of mind is *mudha* or dull state. In this state mind is dominated by gross impurities and increasing *tamas* (inertia).

The next state is the *kshipta* state, in which mind is distracted under the sway of attachment and hatred (*raga* and *dvesha*) and is constantly fluctuating under the influence of *rajas* (restless externalization). The mind in this state is full of desires and ideas that make the personality ostentatious.

Truly great accomplishments in the spiritual as well as practical realms are not possible in this state, because in order to handle any work successfully, your mind has to be free of the turmoil of likes and dislikes. If your mind is agitated, you won't even be able to do gardening. When you want to sow potatoes, for instance, you'll end up sowing turnips. A distracted mind wastes a lot of energy.

Vikshipta is the state of mind that is partially concentrated and partially distracted. It develops as *sattwa* (purity) begins to dominate *rajas*. *Vikshipta* implies that the mind is being gradually disciplined. People who belong to this category in society are considered well-cultured. However, they are not fully matured Yogis, because even though they may be good and virtuous, they behave this way only in a conditioned environment. If they are placed in a situation of great provocation, they will lose their patience. Since they have a limit to their patience, they have not really accomplished mastery over themselves.

When *sattwa* completely dominates *rajas*, one develops the fourth state of mind—*ekagrata* (one-pointedness). *Sattwa* increases and begins controlling *rajas* in the *vikshipta* state, but the process has not become complete. In the *ekagrata* state, the mind is permeated by *sattwa*. This is the sublime state of mind in advanced aspirants. When you enter into the *ekagrata* state, you begin to experience higher states of meditation and lower *samadhi* (superconsciousness), a realm that is most fascinating and inspiring. However, it is not easy to enter into *samadhi*. Your whole personality must change in order to prepare

the mind to be tranquil, thereby enjoying what is beyond the mind.

The fifth and highest state is known as *niruddha*, the enlightened state of mind that belongs to the fully realized Yogis. In this state, the mind is absolutely controlled because the spirit has transcended the mind, becoming completely established in the transcendental plane.

MUDHA STATE

The lowest state of mind or *mudha* implies that the mind is overcome by *tamas*. A person possessing such a mind is given to laziness, dullness, sleepiness and mental perversions. In this state the unconscious is laden with impressions of gross impurities, such as *kama* (lustful desire), *krodha* (anger) and *lobha* (greed). There are many ramifications of these such as pride, sizzling jealousy in the heart, and a sense of revenge. All of these constitute demoniac qualities.

If the mind were to stay in *mudha* state, it would become more and more inclined toward negativity. There would be a process of increasing abnormality that would lead to various psychological ailments, possibly culminating in psychosis. The *mudha* state is the source of all that is ugly and criminal in society.

When the Power of Intellect Is Restricted

The power of the intellect to discriminate becomes restricted when *mudha* impressions predominate. Intellectual power is of two types. One is the power to know or gather knowledge (*Jnana Shakti*), and the other is the power of discrimination (*Viveka Shakti*). It is important to know the difference between the two. There are many people who are bright in intellect and amaze others by the capacity of their erudition, but they do not have the capacity to discriminate.

Viveka Shakti is the power that helps you to control your mind. What would you do if you were to encounter a situation of great adversity? School books and a college education would not help much. *Viveka Shakti* would help you in such a situation. You may be a great intellectual, a great scientist, or a very successful personality in the eyes of the world, but when you encounter a frustrating situation, you may collapse, not knowing how to handle your mind.

If you look back through history, you will see that most tyrants and dictators had tremendous intellects,

and at the same time they were nothing but demons. Hitler is a prime example of such a personality. In Raja Yoga philosophy, that type of personality is considered to be in the *mudha* or dull-wit state. In the philosophy of the masses, anyone who brings a big title from the university is a great man. But what is great about knowing so many things if you cannot even control yourself?

In contrast, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, the great *bhakti* saint of the nineteenth century, was not educated in a university. If he had been asked even the simplest scientific question about what combinations of hydrogen and oxygen atoms are found in water, he would not know. To university students, he would seem to be a dull-wit. However, he was a fully enlightened sage. *Viveka Shakti*, the power of discriminative knowledge that shows that the Self is eternal and the personality is perishable, was at its zenith within him.

Understanding this, learn to value and promote control of the mind and senses. Strive to be unaffected by pleasure and pain, gain and loss. Be a master of your own self.

If *Viveka Shakti* is not present, you are generating impressions of gross impurities. You may succeed in worldly fields by acquiring power and recognition, but you will not have inner peace. You will continue creating karmas that propel you from one embodiment to another.

As impressions of gross impurities develop more and more, and you become increasingly materialistic, you experience ever-widening states of ignorance. The power of your intellect becomes painfully restricted and distorted.

Kumbhakarna— The Dull-wit Demon of the Ramayana

Many stories are told about the way in which dull-wits develop perverted intellect. One is the story of the demon Kumbhakarna, a *tamasic* embodiment. Kumbhakarna, a giant who was more than a mile in height, was the brother of Ravana and Vibhishana in the story of the Ramayana. When they were young, all three brothers practiced great austerities to such an extent that Brahma, the Creator, himself came before them.

Prior to Brahma's appearance before the three, Kumbhakarna conceived the idea of asking the Creator if he could stay awake for six months and sleep

just for a single day. His hope was to devour more and more, enjoying a perpetual eating experience, unrestricted by sleep.

At this time, according to the story, gods became worried. If such an incredible boon was granted to this demon, he would surely destroy the world in a very short time. So Goddess Saraswati was asked to twist Kumbhakarna's intellect when Brahma arrived, ready to grant Kumbhakarna his boon. Saraswati Devi did so, and instead of saying that he wanted to stay awake for six months and sleep just for a single day, Kumbhakarna requested that he sleep for six months and stay awake for one day. Brahma immediately said: "Let it be so!"

This story illustrates how everyone wants something favorable for themselves, but when they promote a dull-wit mind, one that does not allow the discriminative intellect to flourish, they cause great harm to themselves. Therefore, it is vitally important to overcome this dull state, which exists in every individual in different proportions.

If you allow impressions of hatred, bitterness, frustration, and insensitivity to go on increasing day by day, your mind loses the ability to recognize challenging conditions for what they are and to face them. It develops a knack of throwing the unpleasantness

into oblivion and forgetting about it. Gradually, as a result, your memory becomes weak. You no longer can retain even the things that you would like to retain or see even the things that you would like to see.

The Man Who Befriended a Monkey

This *tamasic* process is well-illustrated by the parable about a man who befriended a monkey and taught him to be his servant. The man's friends told him that if he wanted a servant he ought to have a human being to serve him. But since he didn't have much faith in human beings, the man trained the monkey instead. This monkey became a highly disciplined and versatile servant. He could fetch water, he could sweep the floor, and he could make his master's bed, among other things.

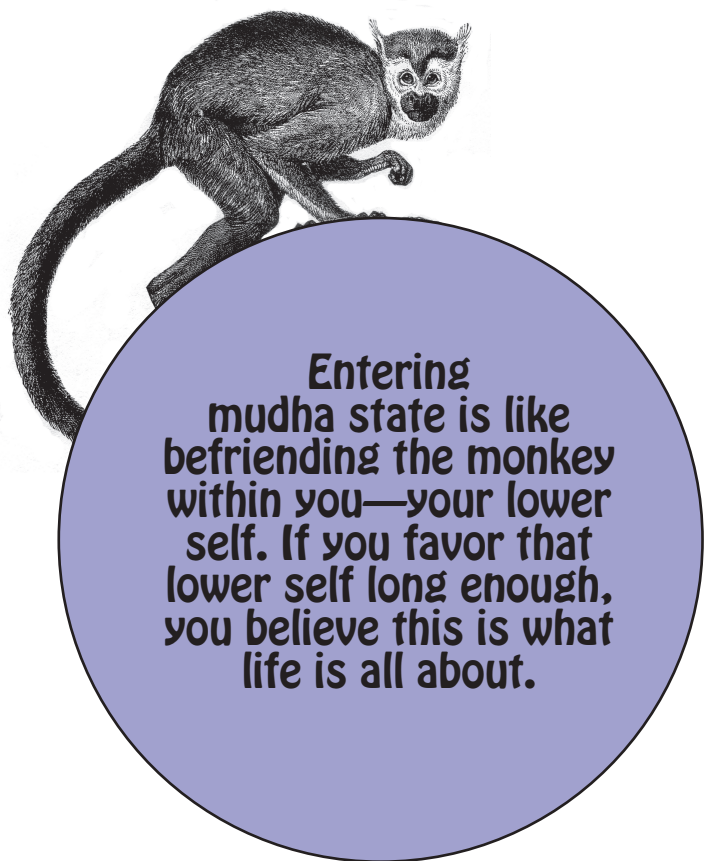
One day, in the middle of the fierce Indian summer, the man lay down to take a nap. Seeing that its master was uncomfortable, the monkey took a fan and started fanning him. The master was so pleased and he thought to himself, "I have the best of all possible servants. Here is a servant who neither complains about anything nor constantly pesters me for a raise in salary. Imagine that people criticized me for having a monkey as a servant!"

With these thoughts of satisfaction in his mind, the man dozed off to sleep while the monkey continued fanning him. Suddenly a fly appeared and started buzzing around the master's nose. The monkey brushed the fly away with the fan a few times, but the fly kept coming back. Then the monkey became annoyed and found a big stone nearby, and crashed it right down on its master's nose. The fly escaped unharmed, but the master ended up with his face smashed!

Entering into the *mudha* state is like befriending the monkey within you—your lower self. If you look at that "monkey" of the lower self with favor for a long enough time, you may begin to develop the conviction that he is wonderful and that befriending this "monkey" is what life is all about.

You may say to yourself, "Who cares if there is Yoga? Who cares if there is *samadhi* or God-Realization? My social life is all that's real. I don't need anything else." Now you are the one who is befriending the monkey.

Things work satisfactorily for a while, of course, but then there comes a time when your very personal-



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ity and all the things that you craved are smashed to pieces in this negative process. This happens because the mind, which is constantly being reshaped, becomes a rusted caricature of its former majesty. The mind has become crippled, and this is the worst predicament for a human being.

THE KSHIPTA STATE

Your movement in *mudha*, the lowest state, is caused by increased *tamas*. When *tamas* increases, grosser impurities such as sustained greed and vanity, abnormal pride, intense superiority complex, hardness of the heart, and intense self-centricity begin to develop. When *tamas* decreases, you can control the grosser impurities but the subtler ones remain.

These subtle impurities are impressions of attachment and hatred, or *raga* and *dwesha* in Sanskrit. You will not have the discipline to keep your mind balanced if it is constantly involved in likes and dislikes. People who are not disciplined by Yoga and *satsanga* (good association)—and the vast majority of people fit in this category—are simply led to go after what they like and avoid what they dislike. They want to run away any time a situation develops that is not pleasant for them. If you are that type of person, your mind will become *kshipta* in the course of time, and remain *kshipta* because you are not developing the deeper qualities of your personality.

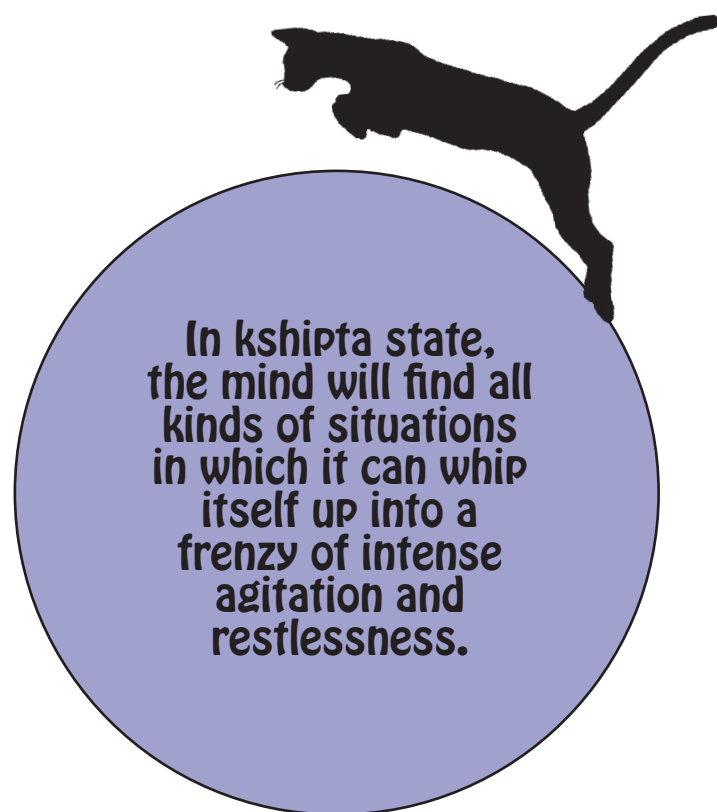
In the *kshipta* state, mind is dominated by *rajas* and is ever restless. It is involved in the senses and cares little for philosophical or sublime things. However, now and then, as *sattwa* mixes with *rajas*, there are fleeting situations in which the mind becomes inspired and moves in a positive direction, enjoying occasional flights into the higher states such as *vikshipta* (partially gathered) and *ekagrata* (one-pointed). However, these higher states will be of a very short duration. Also during *kshipta* state, there will be occasional lapses into *mudha* state. This is natural. When you are in the *kshipta* state and your mind is running wild in tangents, you are naturally creating negative karmas. You speak words that you should not speak. Since your mind is not under control, you do things you should not do. Reactions then set in.

This is well-illustrated in a parable:

Once upon a time a honey vendor brought hives of honey in an earthen jar to a shop in India. While he was selling them, a drop of honey fell on the floor and attracted ants. Suddenly, ants from everywhere started running towards that drop. A lazy lizard was watching them and flung itself towards them.

The shopkeeper had a cat, which then ran towards the lizard. Now there happened to be a customer who had come to buy certain things in the shop, and he had brought along his dog. When the cat dashed towards the lizard, the dog ran after the cat, creating great havoc. The cat jumped from one table to another, rattling and overturning things. The dog raced after the cat, finally catching up with it and injuring it. Then the cat injured the dog by scratching its eyes.

The owner of the dog became incensed over this and started beating up the shopkeeper. Now there were some people in that village who loved the shopkeeper dearly, so they joined in the fight to help him out. At the same time, the irate customer had some of his old friends with him, so there were two parties that started battling against each other. After this terrible confrontation had ceased, there was a lot of chaos with many injured people. The whole shop had been devastated. And to think that all of this had started with just a little drop of honey!



An intense form of the *kshipta* state of mind is just like this. It is looking for problems, and all it needs is just a little provocation. The mind will find all kinds of situations in which it can whip itself up into a frenzy of intense agitation and restlessness. Not only does the person in this state of mind suffer, but any person that comes into contact with them will also suffer.

Furthermore a *kshipta* mind draws other *kshipta* minds. One person may be restless because of what happened at home, and another person is restless because something has gone wrong at the office. One thing in common is that they are both restless. They sit down together for some type of interaction and soon they are fighting. Each one feels the other is the cause of his problems.

Reason doesn't work in the *kshipta* state. Therefore, in *kshipta* state, life becomes terribly complicated, yet people become reconciled to it.

OVERCOMING MUDHA AND KSHIPTA

If you keep your mind in a *kshipta* or *mudha* state, you are degrading your personality. You are ignoring the great resources you have in the realm of intellect. You must recognize the great future that you can build for yourself by culturing your mind. In addition, if the mind is controlled, you will not incarnate, putting an end to the cycle of birth and death—an attainment that is the ultimate goal. Keeping all this in view, it is important that you begin immediately to wage a constant and persistent war against *mudha* and *kshipta*. The task before you is to guard the mind against falling into *mudha* state, and urge it to rise to the higher states. Further, you should strive to maintain the higher states for a longer and longer duration, until the mind is no longer centered in the *kshipta* state, but finds its center in the higher states.

Satsanga

Satsanga or good association is the greatest and most important factor in overcoming the *mudha* and *kshipta* states of mind. Do not let your intellect talk you out of *satsanga*. When it does, you are out-smarting yourself.

You need *satsanga* constantly in order to elevate the mind. Never become satisfied. Never assert, "I've studied and heard a lot, and I've met many saintly personalities. I already know Vedanta, and I am sure that I am *Brahman*!" Mere intellectual

knowledge is not enough. You may have heard about the value of meditation, *samadhi*, and surrender to God, but experiencing these things is an entirely different matter. You may have heard hundreds of lectures, you may have read scores of books on Yoga and Vedanta, or intellectually you may have understood a great deal, but the question remains: "How do I bring all of this into my life?" The message has to be brought home to your mind again and again. You must tirelessly practice Yogic disciplines and allow your unconscious to change. All this requires repeated effort with the boundless patience promoted by constant *satsanga*.

You eat ice cream today, and you will eat it again a few days later and keep on enjoying it. You never say, "Oh, I've had enough ice cream. I don't need any more of it in my life." If this is so concerning ordinary things in the world of sense perception, it must be so to a far greater extent in the world of the spirit. Each time you learn more about an Upanishad, even though you have read it before, your heart should be delighted. You develop a childlike eagerness for *satsanga*, feeling that with each *satsanga* you are receiving something new—something inspiring and thrilling to the soul—a message of eternity, a communication from the Supreme Self, Who is the embodiment of Love.

Self-Introspection

The next important factor is introspection. You must be able to introspect and not justify the *tamasic* and *rajasic* expressions of your mind. When you begin to justify hatred, greed, lust and anger, there is no cure. It is vital for your mind to develop the sensitivity to know what is wrong and what is therefore to be avoided in life. This is self-introspection. Self-introspection should be so keen that you won't permit even one iota of an error. It may take some time to overcome an error. There is no harm in this. It may even take a few years, but that doesn't matter as long as you are aware that there is an error.

If you limp each time you walk, you will always strive to correct the situation, no matter how long it takes. Similarly, each time the mind makes a mistake, you should be able to recognize it, no matter how long it takes.

In promoting self-introspection, pointing out to the mind certain special virtues is very important. For example, present before your mind the virtue of serenity and meditate on it, keeping that ideal in mind

for a week or so. Then take another virtue and try to impress upon your mind the beauty of that virtue. All the while feel, “I am successfully developing these virtues.”

Bearing Insult and Injury

In practical life one great discipline is bearing insult and injury and yet continuing to do what you have to do. This means that you should not be profoundly affected by words or insults. When you are insulted by someone, understand that it is the working out of a dull-wit karma from the past. By enduring it patiently, you are allowing that karma to be exhausted, leading to a certain degree of purity in the unconscious. In turn, do not promote further karmas by using harsh words or developing jealousy and hatred towards others.

Seva—Selfless Service

The next important factor in controlling the mind is *seva* or selfless service. Your energy must not be locked up in selfishness, but be utilized in serving others in whatever way you are suited to do so. Be a servant of humanity. Never long for a time when you will be served by others. This is the spirit that will permit you to have fewer expectations, fewer worries, and fewer frustrations. Your talents will grow, and your whole life will flow like a sparkling stream.

Shraddha—Faith

The next important point is *shraddha* or faith. You must believe that there is a higher power that sustains your life. That higher power is God within you. No matter how distant or abstract God may seem to be, you can build a subtle spiritual contact with God by means of the constant practice of *japa* (repetition of mantra) or devotional meditation.

Sharanagati— Taking Refuge in God

The next important technique is *sharanagati* or taking refuge in God. There are three aspects: holding God as the Supreme Goal before your view; remembering God through *japa* and devotion, and surrendering yourself completely, whole-heartedly to Him.

Satsanga, self-introspection, *seva*, *shraddha*, and *sharanagati*—all begin with “s”. If you remember these, and practice them—along with the fine art of bearing insult and injury and adapting and adjusting—you will surely overcome the dull and distracted states of mind and lead yourself into the *vikshipta* state and then into the *ekagrata* state. The truly fascinating and thrilling experiences in Yoga belong to the states of *vikshipta*, *ekagrata* and *niruddha*. When you overcome the lower states you have laid down the foundation for these lofty experiences and for attainment of the ultimate Goal—Self realization

When you culture your personality, you are able to reduce a great turmoil into something small enough for you to handle. Through sustained discipline you must develop a mind that does not whip up trouble. Do not allow a little drop of honey to turn into a raging turmoil!

If this is not done with great interest and earnestness, there will come a time in your life as you grow old when you will not be able to handle your mind. If you have not maintained mental health, you will fall into the realm of the senses and have no control over your mind. Your old age will become a period of intense sorrow, degradation, and humiliation.

On the other hand, if you resolve to climb the heights of spiritual culture, develop immense faith in God and in the teachings of the scriptures, and persevere with patience, you will soon discover the amazing powers of the Self that abide in your heart. With this discovery you will be able to attain heights of peace and bliss never before imagined!

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