

THE FOUR V'S OF GANESH BABA'S KRIYA YOGA & SACRED SCRIPTURES PART 2

Words: Keith Lowenstein MD and Lyndsey Anderson

The foundational text of classical yoga is the *Yoga Sutras*, an organised treasury of yogic science and philosophy, compiled and written in as early as 400 BC by the Indian sage Patanjali. The word yoga means union, and in the *Yoga Sutras*, Patanjali defines yoga as “the inhibition of the random modifications of the mind and its field”. (*Yoga Sutras*, 1:2) This is the task to accomplish in order to achieve that union of yoga, the union of body, mind and spirit. Kriya Yoga is the only yoga named in the *Yoga Sutras*. The Sanskrit root verb *Kri* means work, and the root verb *Ya* means soul, or breath. Therefore, in Kriya, breath work is soul work, and through breath control and its modifications, one may gain control of the “random modifications” of the mind and begin the ultimate union.

Nature and Spirit represent the duality of *Maya* as perceived through our externally-focussed five senses. This duality can be seen in inhalation and exhalation, yin and yang, and the spinal energy channels - *ida* and

pingala. Through Kriya Yoga exercises, we can bring together Nature and Spirit by balancing our *prana*, or life energy, thus experiencing non-duality or what Ganesh Baba described as Ultimate Universal Unity or U3. Kriya Yoga is the science and art of learning how to go deep within your own central nervous system and experience the still point within that is the gateway to all that is and all that ever will be.

Ganesh Baba's Kriya Yoga is comprised of the 4V's: physical, biological, psychological and spiritual exercises that when combined lead to the emergent properties of meditation. Kriya yoga is a complete holistic yoga. It is a scientific process, the results of which can be replicated if practised in any individual in a similar state of health. Kriya is also a creative art: as every individual is unique, every experience is unique as one moves their body, mind and spirit toward an experience with the Absolute.

The Bhagavad Gita, an Indian spiritual text is also considered a text



for Kriya. Supported by the deeply spiritual texts of the *Yoga Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, Kriya Yoga masters also often quote Judeo-Christian scripture, citing certain quotes as references to the Kriya process. Using quotes from the *Sutras*, the *Gita* and the *Old and New Testament*, we will explore correlations to the 4V's.

V1 VERTICALIZATION

Posture should be steady and comfortable.

By relaxation of effort and meditation on the infinite.

—*Yoga Sutras*, 2:46-47

The secret of meditation is posture. This is the V1 Stage, also known as Verticalization. In Kriya Yoga, the next stage of human evolution is a spiritual evolution, as our potential as humans has yet to be reached. As stated in the *Yoga Sutras* and emphasised by Ganesh Baba, posture is the bedrock teaching from which the next stage of human evolution may arise. In fact, Ganesh Baba would often say, “sit straight and all will come.”

The first two stages or limbs of Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras* consist of interpersonal and intrapersonal observances. They’re not unlike the Ten Commandments, or the Eight-Fold Noble path of Buddhism. Ganesh Baba taught that with the practice of Kriya, the first two steps of Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras* develop on their own. The third limb in Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras* is *asana*, or physical postures. The Western world associates the word *Asana* with physical yoga positions, which often overlooks the deeper purpose of these exercises: to strengthen and align the human body to be able to maintain correct posture during meditation. The deep stillness that can be experienced during meditation arises with the ability to sit for periods of time with a supple yet bolt-upright spine while allowing for full, rhythmic respiration.

Ganesh Baba insisted on a bolt-upright posture in his students, and often highlighted the divinity of Kriya to his Western students by illustrating the similarities with the teachings in the bible. He taught that correct posture mirrors the shape of the cross: the shoulders when held in their anatomically correct position reflect the horizontal bar of the cross, and the vertical bar mirrors the straight spine.

Kriya Yoga

The Basics – The Work

V1	Verticalization	Posture
V2	Ventilation	Breath
V3	Visualization	Third Eye
V4	Vibrationalization	Mantra
Meditation		

Therefore, Ganesh Baba urged his students to “carry your cross”, referring to a flexible yet bolt-upright posture

V2 VENTILATION

Make even the inward and outward breaths to move within the nostrils.

—*Bhagavad Gita*, 5:27

Liberation can be attained by that Pranayama which is accomplished by disjoining the course of inhalation and exhalation.

—*Yoga Sutras* 2:49

The second step in Kriya Yoga is breath exploration, a respiratory reawakening. This stage is called V2 or Ventilation. This corresponds to the fourth limb in Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras*, known as *Pranayama*, or breath work. Ganesh Baba distilled dozens of pranayama exercises to a simplified few that are extremely helpful in shaking up old patterns of respiration, to which the natural rhythms of breath can then return. Ultimately these practices lead to states of breathing that make full use of one’s lung capacity. Ganesh Baba called this Regular, Reposed, Rhythmic Respiration or R4.

Conscious participation in one’s breathing process is not only a deeply pleasant experience, it is a way to directly experience the Infinite. Is it not what Job meant when he wrote, “All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God in my nostrils.”? (Job 27:3)

V3 VISUALIZATION

The third step in Kriya Yoga is the retraction of the outward-focussed senses and the development of one-pointed concentration. This is referred to as V3 or Visualization. The V3 stage corresponds to the fifth limb of Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras*: *Pratyahara*. It is this highly-focussed attention that begins to cultivate awareness of the third eye, also known as the *Ajna chakra*, or the seat of all knowledge.

There is often confusion with regards to where the third eye actually is. In fact, there is more than one specific area that can be focussed on. To begin with, the point just between the eyebrows is often the easiest and the best place to begin. Sustained concentration on the third eye may lead to a variety of illuminations. This

is the underlying teaching when Jesus said, “*The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*” (Matthew, 6:22)

V3 VIBRATIONALIZATION

And remembering me he utters OM, the eternal word of Brahman, He goes to the path supreme.
—*Bhagavad Gita*, 8:13

The final basic step in Kriya Yoga is referred to as V4 or Vibrationalization. This may be understood as vibrational realization, or the development of the awareness of the Primordial Nodal Vibration— referred to pronounced by Ganesh Baba, and in Sanskrit as *pranava*. Vibration is a huge area to explore and it includes the breath, internal and external sounds, as well as experiencing the vibration within.

OM is the most basic universal representation of this vibration. In Kriya Yoga, OM is regarded as the first sound, representative of U3. The Bible echoes this belief in the Gospels: “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*” (John, 1:1) There are a variety of ways OM may be used as a repetitive mantra in Kriya Yoga. There are many other mantras as well, and these may also possess a beautiful rhythm and meaning for those who use them in their practice.

Set thy heart and intention upon the work, but never on its reward. Work not for a reward; but never cease to do thy work.
—*Bhagavad Gita*, 2:47

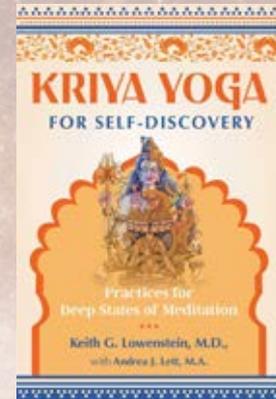
In Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras*, meditation is reached as the seventh phase, *Dhyana*. The 4V’s prepare the body, mind and spirit for this seventh limb of Yoga, when the antenna of our central nervous system has been tuned by the practice to receive the vibrational energetic frequencies surrounding us. As Yogananda was often heard saying, “*God is within you and around you.*” He also pointed out that the “alter of God” was our central nervous system.

Ganesh Baba encouraged people of every background to practice Kriya Yoga. Any religious or contemplative practice can simply sit on top of the V1-4 foundational techniques. No particular belief system is required for Kriya. All the practitioner must understand is that the practice of Kriya Yoga is exactly that — a practice. And as the *Bhagavad Gita* states above, Kriya is to be practised on a regular basis without expectations of the end result. Kriya Yoga is a complete yoga, and its process leads the practitioner along an accelerated path toward Self Realisation. Ultimately it is the breath that controls the modifications of the mind and its field and allows for resonance with U3.

For it is only through the experience of love and compassion for oneself and

others that we may be part of the change to bring forth light and love for the good of all sentient beings.

In our next article, we will discuss “The Cycle of Synthesis”, Ganesh Baba’s integration of the philosophy of Kriya Yoga with modern physics and physiology.



Kriya Yoga for Self-Discovery: Practices for Deep States of Meditation, Inner Traditions, £12.98

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