



LEOBRAND

**Letters on**

# **Living Ethics**

**Introduction to Agni Yoga**



**1. The truth about yoga**

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Image on the cover: “*On the peak*” painting by Nicholas Roerich, 1936.

## The truth about yoga

### 1. Yoga as unifying cultural asset

If we analyze the spiritual condition of humanity, we note that almost all the world's population is in a fateful, spiritual crisis. Old values and forms prove to be useless and are no longer adequate to show a new and better way forward.

The great civilization upswing of the 19th and 20th centuries brought at least a greater approximation and connection of the peoples, although unfortunately there is no equivalent cultural improvement. This not only led to an exchange of goods, but also an exchange of spiritual goods and cultural values.

The first Christian missionary went to the East, but mostly without success, for the wisdom of the East turned out to be greater. The East, however, did not send a missionary to the West, but waited. There people have a lot of time and know the value of higher knowledge.

Since time immemorial, India walks the path inwards, in contrast the Western World heads for the outside.

India's highest spiritual goods are the yoga sciences or yoga systems. But as it is in life always and everywhere, the most precious treasure and highest values are hardest to obtain. In contrast, low-priced goods are easily sold.

Thus it happened that misconceptions about yoga have been formed in the West, because profiteers have appeared in order to praise and sell knowledge and skills, which are not useful in the long run, more than that they lead away from the true purpose of yoga.

In order to attract persons interested in yoga, they promised mainly success, beauty, health, old age and occult power.

In truth, yoga has a very different purpose and a much higher and more beautiful aim. To demonstrate this, it is necessary to tell the truth about yoga concisely to the westerner.

### 2. What is yoga?

To get to the understanding of the Indian doctrine, one must first analyze the meaning of the word YOGA.

YOGA is identical with the English word »yoke« or with the Latin »jugum« = yoke or obligation. The Latin verb »jugo« = I connect - wed, clearly expresses the true meaning. The meaning is the connection between the individual soul and the universal soul.

Therefore, yoga means the merging of the lower human self or individual spirit (jiva) with the divine and supreme self - the universal spirit.

Yoga encompasses all the methods and systems that lead to this goal and the pathway how to complete the merging.

Yoga is the widening of human consciousness and the merging into the consciousness of something higher. This is the great problem of human advancement in general.

Yoga consists of doctrines, which are based on observation of human nature as well as interrelations of existence. By practicing yoga, one gains forces that are still unknown in the West.

Yoga shows natural forces and natural laws that affect and regulate the forming of human fate completely. Also the Western world is almost entirely not familiar with this idea.

While the Western researcher sets his goals to utmost questionable material improvements, the Indian researcher sets his eyes on superior problems of existence.

The Yogi primarily explores the inner life - the spiritual life - and uses the natural forces, which he controls in such a way that it borders on the miraculous.

Yoga is not just theory, but is rooted in practical experience that everyone can test himself.

Therefore, yoga does not require blind faith, but says: convince yourself and analyze the correctness of what is found.

Yoga is based on exact knowledge of psychic forces and is a practice based on experiment and analysis, as well as Western science.

Yoga enjoys the great advantage that all of its experiences can be practically achieved in life through various exercises.

Yoga is not contradicting to nature, nothing artificial, nothing abnormal, but an efficient method to rapidly reach a big goal, but therefore certain exercises, especially mental, are necessary. It would usually take centuries or millennia without exercise for the same success that can be achieved through yoga in a few years or decades.

So yoga is the method of accelerated spiritual growth, and a short cut.

The meaning of yoga is to see through the illusiveness of material existence to reach the bottom of eternal reality. Its purpose is the overcoming of physical existence, which is in truth recognized as *maja* or illusion, without departing from life.

Yoga shows the way to a general brilliancy, because brilliancy is in fact not a random excellence of a nation or race, but the result of thousands of years of efforts of an individual soul.

The genius is a few steps ahead of the general public, it has already reached a stage that others might gain in ten or a hundred thousand years.

What geniuses have achieved is as easily accessible for the average person. What the great Masters of the Ancient Wisdom, as CHRIST, BUDDHA and some others who are unknown to the public, are today, is accessible for all geniuses in the foreseeable future or at least in the course of many incarnations, if they follow the path of yoga.

Mastery is nothing more than the sum of life experiences in all scopes of life which, when seen from the beginning of human development, have been collected in hundreds of incarnations, i.e. rebirth, extending over millions of years. Please consider that the age of humanity is estimated to be at least 18 million years old.

The original meaning of the Christian creed is: "I believe in the repeated resurrection in the flesh, and life everlasting." The same is taught by the yoga science.

It is a fundamental concept of yoga teachings that at this stage of his development, man has not for a long time yet used all possibilities, but is right in the flow of evolution (development) and therefore unimagined possibilities are in store, that is why we are now in a transitional stage that leads up to a higher existence.

There is no end to development. Nature also perpetually creates higher forms, which replace the old ones.

Yoga shows the way to a huge human development and evolution, while the Western world, with few exceptions, desperately denies the meaning of any development at all.

Yoga shows the way to higher forms of existence, from man to superman and from there to the God-man (son of God), in the most rapid way in fact. This path of perfection is not a unilateral activity of consciousness, but the improvement comprises all life experiences, all sciences, all arts, i.e. mastery in every way.

By inflammation of the centers of higher consciousness (chakras), Yoga leads to higher skills, such as levitation, walking on water, rising into the air, walking on fire, clairvoyance, clairaudience, dematerialization, etc., overall to more than 30 significant skills, that are considered in the West as a miracle, but even in India, mastered only by a few, are considered self-evident.

But these skills are not the purpose of yoga in itself but only the side effect of a natural development to the true yogi. Probably they are the great dream of many yoga aspirants and especially of the morally and cognitive undeveloped beginner. With these skills the true yogi only registers his spiritual progress, his state of development and does not show it in public.

People should not be convinced by wonders, but through observation and meditation, by syllogism and own experiences.

It must also be ascertained once and for all that yoga is not magic and not fakirism, not theory nor speculation, but life and action. In particular there is nothing artificial in yoga. The yogi is working in full harmony with nature. His acquirement is based on precise knowledge and intuition.

Yoga requires daily exercises, above all self-observation, self-conquest, transmutation of the lower qualities in higher qualities, concentration of thought and meditation. Only practice and perseverance leads to yoga, yoga leads to knowledge, knowledge leads to - love and wisdom, and this leads to bliss and release from all burdens of the earth.

Yoga is no conviction, no dogma, no creed, no church, no denomination, no religion, no sect, but knowledge about previously unknown mental processes and mastery of nature and its forces and a path of spiritual development.

### a) The difference between the yogi and the average person

The difference between a master yogi and the average person is nearly the same as between animals and humans. Compared to animals, man has significant mental abilities; he can talk and also has creative qualities.

Of course in some ways we are inferior to animals. Animals are better protected from disease and also superior in physical strength and suppleness. Animals have retained the connection to the subtle world, and thus often feel approaching dangers for hours and days in advance. In truth, they are warned by the leadership of their resonance soul. By overdevelopment of the intellect and oppression of the heart- thinking, but primarily by materialistic thinking, man has lost the connection to his subtle leadership, which children often still have. Yoga connects people with the upper world.

Brilliance and spiritual refinement gradually lead to the weakening of the physical body. The developed spirit demands a finer shell, i.e. a finer body. We should therefore not believe that true yoga produces people that are bursting with strength and health. Arguably a part of the yoga systems show the way to the mastery of physical strength, the simpler systems through breathing exercises and certain body workouts, the higher by the strengthening of the psychic energy. The Yogi would otherwise not be able to exist in this world.

By evocation of special psychic powers some yogi even stood up from their deathbeds almost completely recovered. By the way, this is also possible for a non-yogi, if he activates appropriate psychic energy simultaneously with the doctor or healer.

## b) Yoga and teacher

No one is able to become a yogi because he is learning a particular system by reading about it in a book. The Yogi needs life experience; he has his teacher or guru in his own heart. The disciple must obey this voice, because the subtle heart is the best guide.

In a specific stage of development the disciple (chela) gets in contact with a real teacher or guru, even in the West. In order to avoid bitter experiences of life, it is better to follow the wise advice of the teacher.

## c) Yoga and personal hygiene

True yoga does not mean headstand, contortion of the body or only breathing exercises, although among the six major systems of yoga one deals exclusively with the care of the body, namely Hatha Yoga.

The care of the body is not the purpose of yoga in itself but only a means to an end and therefore must not be an end in itself, filling the free time or even life. In the West, naturally many charlatans took possession of yoga, especially of hatha yoga, and even books have appeared that promise material success through yoga.

It needs to be explicitly ascertained that real yoga has nothing to do with business and commercial magic, i.e. manipulation by suggestion and hypnosis, but objects to it sharply.

True yoga is just the opposite: a scientific system that frees from the shackles of the material world, that leads from a short life of a few years to timeless eternity, and thus brings freedom and liberation from all that binds us to matter and the body. It's just a matter of personal reason, if someone lives senselessly for the moment or organizes his life systematically.

## 3. The six primary yoga-systems

The primary yoga-systems are:

1. Hatha-Yoga = Path of body control.
2. Karma-Yoga = Path of selfless work in complete renunciation of the fruits thereof.
3. Raja-Yoga = Path of the perfect mastery of thinking and mental processes.
4. Bhakti-Yoga = Path of selfless love, from earthly love up to the highest love to God.
5. Gnana-Yoga = Path of knowledge and worldly wisdom.

6. Agni Yoga = Light-yoga or fire-yoga, a complete mastery and liberation by striving for light. The highest world is the world of light. The more we improve ourselves, the more fiery and bright our subtle constitution becomes. By Agni Yoga, man becomes a light bearer.

## 4. Hatha-Yoga

Hatha yoga must be considered as mentally outdated.

Hatha yoga = combination of sun- (Ha) breath and moon- (tha) breath. Combination of breathing through right nostril (sun breath) with left nostril (moon breath).

The aim of hatha yoga is the perfect mastery of the physical body and all of its functions. It is a sanitary system and initially most comprehensible to the Westerner.

Hatha yoga is training of muscles and breathing control, altogether physical training and not mental education. Hatha yoga thus does not put in an ethical claim, and as far as such claims of other yoga systems are not included, it opens the floodgates to abuse.

Hatha yoga, primarily perhaps as pure in his intentions, namely to serve keeping the body tough as an instrument of the mind, was abused by greedy selfish people, because hatha yoga imparts health, strength, beauty, suppleness, old age and occult abilities.

The hatha yogi at first has to get used to complete calmness, gracelessness and complete mastery of the body.

This is achieved by the so-called asanas.

### a) Asanas

These are specific body positions in which one must remain motionless.

The Indians let their imagination run wild. Reportedly there are 8.4 million different body positions, 1600 actually practiced. 32 exercises there under are considered indispensable.

Without exaggeration we can say that all of these postures entail difficulties for the untrained Westerner. Yet children and young person's can learn them within a few weeks because of their agile limbs.

Of these 32 best-known positions, "padhmasana" and "sidhasana" are known from the Indian and Japanese Buddha statues. By the way, most people in the East are able to sit in this position for days without difficulty, because with a shortage of chairs they have become used to it since childhood.

This position is the best for concentration and meditation exercises. Any other position, especially a lying one, is less recommendable. Most important is an upright posture of the spine because of the passage of kundalini. Therefore one can of course meditate sitting on a chair.

### b) Breathing exercises and chakras

By combination of such exercises with breathing exercises, i.e. by the intentional directing of breath on certain subtle centers of the body, named »chakras«, it is possible to attain the aforementioned superhuman abilities. This is no assertion without substance, but skills that many Europeans assured them self of in India.

But here we reach the neuralgic spot of hatha yoga. All these skills and countless others are usually the result or the fruits of a natural spiritual development and can be achieved by an adequate ethical improvement even without breathing exercises.

There have also been saints of Western churches that exceedingly developed such skills. If they are achieved in a natural way by ethical perfection, they are also permanent, which means they are taken along from incarnation to incarnation and get expanded.

By hatha yoga, these centers get inflamed by mechanical action, i.e. by the intentional directing of breath on the chakras, without simultaneous development of the ethical maturity of the student.

Such abilities require an increased sense of responsibility, which an ethically not consolidated person does not have. Therefore it is necessary to warn urgently against mechanical action on the chakras by breathing exercises.

The abuse of these skills leads to black magic and sexual magic and creates a serious karma, or fate, whose clearance takes thousands of years.

Without the guidance of a trained teacher mechanically acquired skills will be lost with death and often lead not only to insanity and schizophrenia, but also to serious lung and heart disease.

Therefore, fakirs, magicians and prestidigitators use hatha yoga, because thus they are able to produce legerdemain that no Westerner brings about.

It is very important to distinguish strictly between yogi and fakir. If a yogi is misled by selfishness and produces legerdemain and phenomena, he has left the path of true yoga.

Another thing is to show and instruct various »asanas« for physical relaxation or for reasons of hygiene.

### c) Prana-Yama

The breathing exercises are called »prana-yama«, but they are not only a part of hatha yoga, but also of raja yoga.

They are based on the fact that breathing is the most important life process. Without food it is possible to survive for weeks, but not without a breath. Highly trained hatha yogis can also stop their breathing for a long time (some let themselves be buried alive).

In contrast to digestion, breathing has been considered of small importance until now by the Westerner. Although it is claimed that one can't live on air alone, there are yogis whose only food is air. Also in the West there were people that got along without solid food (see Therese of Konnersreuth – unknowingly bhakti yogi).

The following breathing exercises are recommended:

1. Inhale 8 pulse beats, pause 4, exhale 8.
2. Inhale 4 pulse beats, pause 16, exhale 8.
3. Inhale 8 pulse beats, no pause, exhale 8.

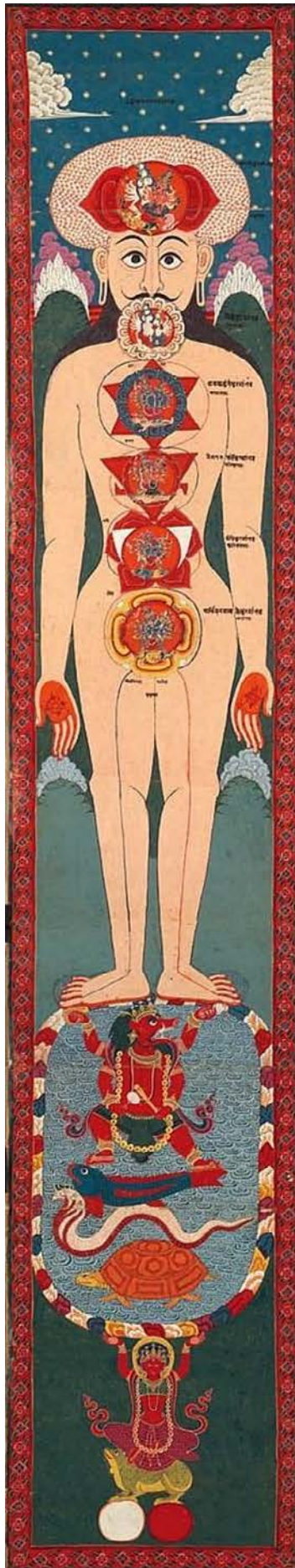
At the beginning, none of these exercises must be carried out more than seven times.

### d) The meaning of prana

Yoga argues that the world - the cosmos revealed – emerged through fusion of the two principles, »akasha« and »prana«. Akasha = primary matter, prana = vital force.

However, it seems it is a matter of two different states of the same thing, where one becomes the other. We approach again the theory of the absolute unity of all that exists, which is the core of Indian philosophy.





The meaning of the term prana includes universal energy, in a narrower sense also the source of life in a living organism, for which the Europeans have different names such as nerve force, animal magnetism, od-forces etc.

The aim of prana-yama is to gain control over the universal energy in its manifold manifestations and forms, which is primarily exhaled from the ether of the sun and accumulates in the needles of conifers. That is why walks in the forest are highly recommended.

The Europeans know the food shell or »anakosha«, as the yogi says, but not the »pranakosha«, the energy shell.

For within this »pranakosha« are the so-called »chakras« or centers of greater consciousness, which are also called the lotus blossom.

In »pranakosha« the channel »sushumna« leads from the root of the spine through the middle of the backbone up to the angular point of the brain. Two smaller channels, »ida« and »pingala«, entwines around this channel »sushumna« in opposite directions, and end in the left respectively the right nostril. Together they form the image of the caduceus (mercury wand).



### e) The seven primary chakras

»Sushumna« begins in an ethereal nerve center, called »**Mūlādhāra**« or four-leaved lotus. On its way up, »sushumna« then touches six other primary centers or chakras. (see lesson no. 20)

»**Svādhīsthāna**« = in the pelvis

»**Manipūra**« = in the pit of the stomach, respectively »solar plexus«

»**Anāhata**« = the so called »cup« opposite to the heart on the right side of the chest,

»**Viśuddha**« = in the larynx or the pharynx,

»**Ājñā**« = (spoken adshna), »third eye« upon the forehead,

»**Sahasrāra**« = »bell« at the vertex.

Within all centers (chakras), certain higher abilities are embedded. In the West, the only one of these centers that is officially known is the solar plexus. It regulates breathing and is affected by the changing of breathing. Homer even determined the seat of the soul to that place. Also boxers know that their most sensitive body part is the pit of the stomach.

According to yoga, prana is stored up primarily in the solar plexus and kept in reserve there, to be sent accordingly to where vitality is required.

## f) Kundalini

In the lowest chakra »muladhara«, rests »kundalini«, the meandering fire. The gradual rising of this invisible flame of life provides a basis for all higher consciousness development and marks the beginning of gaining yoga skills.

At first, kundalini must be awakened, then all the centers get inflamed in sequence. Woe to him who begins in reverse order.

Ignorant people, who intentionally directed their breath to the third eye and the »bell«, in order to inflame this center first, reached the brink of insanity by continuation of this exercise. A flame always burns from the bottom up and never reversed.

Therefore it cannot be stressed enough that the awakening of such psychic forces and abilities must not be forcibly and mechanically followed and that any such development at all is only possible with the guidance of a trained yogi. Also it is not permitted by breathing exercises, but it should be expected as the result of a natural development.

Hatha yoga, as it is performed in India at present is impracticable and completely useless in the West. Probably some good exercises can be done in the West, but normally for the Westerner there will not be enough time for exercise.

Who, for example, is in a position to exercise different asanas several hours a day, or to spend hours on eating, because a hatha yogi bares his food until it literally dissolves in saliva? Of course, thereby he keeps his teeth and digestive system healthy, without turning to a dentist or an internist throughout his life.

Vegetarianism is commonly self-evident in India, and it is also highly recommended for those people in the West who want to begin the path of yoga with earnestness and zeal, but the body must not be forced. The demand for vegetarian diet increases automatically by refinement.

Beginners should also abstain from alcohol, nicotine and all types of drugs. Bromine is also harmful, because it kills the psychic energy.

## g) The weaknesses of hatha-yoga

The weakness of hatha yoga depends on its target course that is focused on physical interests and has nothing to do with the actual development of the soul and its perfection. It's difficult and protracted breathing exercises require an enormous expenditure of time and energy, so that it practically fills one's whole life, or at least the free time, and thus no time for higher duties remains.

The goods or values that can be gained through hatha yoga, like health, strength, youth and long life, become worthless in contemplation of death and therefore do not offer any steadfast benefit.

These values which are highly regarded by people are also maya or illusion when it comes down to it, as well as gold, jewelery and all other earthly possessions per se.

Even if someone lived to be a hundred or two hundred years old, just to enjoy his perfect physical body, he would fail to recognize the true sense of life.

The goal of true yoga is to advance people, i.e. to guide people to a higher spiritual perfection.

## h) The purpose of yoga exercises

The purpose of yoga exercises has to be the liberation and perfection of the soul as well as the mastery of nature. Health is not an end in itself but a means to an end. We must not be slaves of our bodies. The body rather is our tool for the work of perfection, and indeed very precious tool that has to be carefully maintained.

However, if we contemplate personal hygiene, we should bear in mind the fact that everybody is fleeting and is subject to destruction. In contrast, the soul is not subject to destruction, but holds what is immortal within us, that can always be improved and beautified. This important insight should also be absolutely kept in mind by those yoga aspirants who do not want to rise above hatha yoga.

From the standpoint of mental development hatha yoga as it is practiced today has become false gold. It is the great cliff and obstacle on the path of perfection. Hatha yoga is a seducer and a sugarplum that can hold the aspirant in the matter on the path to the true yoga, namely by desirable occult skills which a person that is not steadfast abuses for black magic or to his personal benefit and thereby creates negative karma.

## 5. Karma-yoga

Karma is that concept and that law of nature which regulates and rules the forming of all fate. By thinking and acting or doing nothing we constantly cause something and by the law of karma, these causes lead to certain effects. Positive causes to positive effects and negative causes to negative effects.

Every person continuously creates karma, not only by activity but also by passivity.

Karma yoga shows the way to get rid of negative karma. One who learned self-conquest, self-discipline, love and wisdom, will only create positive causes and thus he will retrieve corresponding effects, which will free him from the necessity of rebirth and by his own force will release him from every guilt.

Thereby the yogi achieves »nirvana« the state of bliss and the merging with the higher self. This does not mean idleness, but is the beginning of a conscious creative activity and collaboration in building the universe.

On the one hand karma is remorseless, on the other hand it is merciful. Because it knows no hell with eternal perdition, but always the possibility of reparation and of ascension.

### a) Karma and diseases

The negative effects of karma do not only find expression by strokes of fate, but also in the form of diseases. There are diseases which are caused from wrong lifestyle millennia ago. They only break out now and scientific medicine and also the best hatha-yogis stand helpless and powerless in the face of them.

To realize that one can contract diseases from previous lives, even must incur as a karma, is a novelty of course in the West.

Karma is just remorseless, but absolutely fair and does not ask for time, status, or honor. The causes may even date back millennia.

Of course, also a hatha yogi can suffer chronic diseases which cannot be cured even with the best breathing exercises, before his karma is repaid.

As we have to deal with the problem of karma in a separate lesson, we can move on to raja yoga.

## 6. Raja yoga (spoken radscha)

(royal yoga – see latin rex = king)

The great Indian genius - Bhagavan Rama Krishna - lived in the 19th Century. In the West, this wisdom was spread by his disciple Swami Vivekananda. The study of his books is highly recommended.

Raja yoga consists of 8 stages:

1. Yama = non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, abstinence and even- non- acceptance of gifts.
2. Niyama = purity, contentment, austerity, study, self-surrender to God.
3. Asana = right body position (Buddha-position).
4. Pranayama = control of breath.
5. Pratyahara = withdrawal of the senses from things of the outside world.
6. Dharana = concentration.
7. Dhyana = meditation.
8. Samadhi = merging with the highest consciousness, complete abandonment of conscious-ness into the higher self, with evanescence of all differences between subject and object.

It is merging with the absolute, which is the highest level that any true yogi seeks to achieve. To be one with the universe and thus have a state of knowledge and experience that borders almost on omniscience.

## 7. Bhakti-yoga

Bhakti is innermost love to God, a sincere search for God. Bhakti begins in love, proceeds in love and ends in love. If one feels this love within, he loves everything and is not able to hate. Bhakti is perfection and can nevermore sink to an earthly goal.

Love is greater than selfless work (karma).

Love is greater than wisdom and knowledge (jnana).

Love to God is fulfillment, way and destination all at the same time.

Bhakti is the easiest way, but it can degrade in its lowest forms, leading to a terrible fanaticism which can degenerate in greatest intolerance, as we have seen it in Hinduism, Islam and also Christianity.

Love can lead to the highest ideals, but in the primitive forms also to intolerance towards other human brothers, but only as long as the spirit is undeveloped and is unaware of the law of cause and effect.

Nescience is the greatest calamity for the people. Only higher knowledge leads out of the maze of life.

Intolerance of the bhakti is therefore only possible in the initial stage. When a bhakti reaches maturity, he knows no more fanaticism and loves his enemies as well as himself. Thus, Christ taught, the greatest bhakti yogi in history. To achieve his stage requires the

difficult path of self-mastery by the highest love. But the ascension of the Son of Man to the Son of God is possible for all people.

Yet CHRIST and the MASTERS OF THE ANCIENT WISDOM, don't stop at the goal which THEY achieved, but undeviatingly rush onward. The great mystery of evolution consists right of that. Heroes and saints set off to follow CHRIST – (Thomas a Kempis – the Imitation of Christ).

Through love and wisdom, they will also one day follow in His footsteps.

The study of bhakti yoga and of Agni yoga, which includes bhakti, establishes understanding of the true doctrine of Christ and His mission.

## 8. Gnana (Jnana)-yoga

Gnana means rationality, wisdom, philosophy and contemplation of life. Gnana or jnana is related to the Greek »gnosis« = knowledge.

Whilst the bhakti yogi achieves union with the Most High through love, the gnana yogi blazes a trail for connection with God through knowledge and absolute rationality. He is the one who constantly advances all outdated conceptions and world-view in dynamic progressive manner and systematically unveils the secrets of the macrocosm and microcosm, and not least that of the soul and its constitution.

### a) Gnana – redemption through knowledge

Gnana leads to the knowledge of who and what we humans are. Gnana enables you to soar above birth and death, shows the relativity of existence and the impossibility to be at all aware of the Absolute.

The whole universe is seen as a manifestation of the godhead. Man sees »Para Brahman« or the Absolute through the veil of maja or appearance and can only catch a glimpse of a small piece of true existence, which is boundless and inconceivable.

When we see through the illusion of this world, it is no longer reality for us. Then it does exist further as a mirage. Man, world and godhead are one, but only a few can comprehend this truth.

### b) Gnana – overcoming dread and fear of life

Beholding the gigantic dimension of the universe and the infinite and incomprehensible existence, fear could be scared. Therefore, a gnanin primarily has to overcome dread and fear of life. Dread is a bad enemy. The gnanin knows that he will not perish. For he is a particle of the divine self and as such he is arguably subjected to perpetual change, but in truth indestructible. Relying on the brazen, unchangeable laws (karma, etc.), he as a thinker can accountably master his fate by himself.

A gnanin must believe in nothing that he does not know. He has to constantly tell himself: I am neither the body nor the senses, feelings and thoughts or consciousness, but »Atman«, the existence and the self itself. If we can separate ourselves from everything, all that remains is the true self.

A gnanin meditates in two ways:

He denies everything and thinks away all that he is not.

He remains what he really is, Atman, the only self, being and knowledge.

You can deny everything, but not the real you, for it is the watcher of the universe.

The Gnanin must always repeat: I am you and you are me. The one who has defeated his desires is in truth free, because there is nothing left for him to desire. Our true nature is bliss. All the pleasures that people know are just a shadow of this bliss.

Gnana yoga teaches us that we shall abandon the world but not flee, and that we shall stay in life, but have to overcome the world gradually. Everything has to be born even-minded, praise and reprimand, good and evil, heat and coldness.

The gnanin does not recoil from suffering and sacrifices, but bears it confidently. So he reaps inner peace and thus true freedom. He does everything for others, renounces the fruits of his work (karma yoga) and does not hope for reward or gratitude. Thus he becomes one with the universe and owns everything.

The gnanin knows that we exist, and existence means bliss. Bliss is the true form of being.

The gnanin discovers sin as the struggle of the divine within us. He knows that we hold an animal within us - the lower self - and that we must overcome it. Man shall soar above sin, i.e. mistakes, in order to reach divinity and become one with it.

The heart must be pure and therefore we must never presume to criticize the morality of others, nor to let us be revered as saints, in order to convert sinners. Everyone has to start on oneself and may refrain from speaking ill of others. Only the pure in heart shall see God, i.e. comprehend the principle of divinity.

Gnana also means to be free of any denomination, but that is not to despise denominations, but to reach that level of independent thinking, which is already above all confessions. A gnanin is neither Hindu, nor Buddhist, nor Christian, but all together. For him there is neither heaven nor hell, neither denomination nor church, but only »Atman«. For whoever rids himself of everything, the only thing that remains is the true being.

The great Master Krishna taught gnana yoga in the Bhagavad Gita. But the supreme teacher of gnana yoga was Gautama Buddha.

## 9. Derived yoga systems

Laya yoga deals with all kinds of expansion of consciousness, especially the control of will power.

Shakti yoga is a part of laya yoga and includes the merging with the divine power (shakti) through concentration of thought.

Matra yoga shows the expert use of mantras. These are words and prayers of secret power. To enunciate invocations belongs also to this sector.

Yantra yoga is the appliance of yantras, i.e. geometrical figures of mystical meaning. This includes all secret symbolism.

Kriya yoga includes mantra- and laya-yoga, and deals with the training of thinking and meditation.

Mudra yoga is a variation of yantra yoga and is based on mystical signs that are used in Lamaistic initiations.

In many cases, parts of raja yoga, namely dhyana and samadhi are also referred to as separate systems. Some hatha yogis speak of kundalini- and prana- yoga, but these are in no case separate systems.

## 10. Agni yoga

Agni (Lat. ignis), light or fire yoga, is the latest and most comprehensive yoga system. It came into existence between 1927 to 1938, or rather it was made accessible to a small group of disciples. The founder is MAITREYA MORYA, one of the greatest masters and Mahatmas of the Orient.

Agni yoga combines everything that is useful of the previous yoga-systems, deepens and expands them, considers Western science, but excludes hatha yoga because of its dangers.

Agni yoga is the shortest way to the light, the direct connection back to the highest powers by work, readiness to make sacrifices, love, devotion, loyalty, endeavor, acquirement of knowledge and acquittal without asking for a reward.

Agni yoga is a system that is also suited perfectly for the Westerner and can be practiced without difficulties in the midst of life. What other systems achieve laboriously through breathing exercises and meditation, the agni yogi gains by opening up psychic energy.

### a) The meaning of psychic energy

Psychic energy, that emanates from the main center, namely the heart, and which more or less already exists in every person, offers the mastery of all fiery energy. The universe was built up by fire and is constantly transformed by this primal element. Therefore, its mastery to the finest spiritual substances is the duty of the agni yogi.

Also for maintaining health in agni yoga, the raising and mastery of psychic energy take the place of protracted breathing exercises and other body positions. But psychic energy does not guarantee being in robust health, because of the body that refines more and more and a fine instrument is just more sensitive. But psychic energy even empowers critically ill people to care for the less ill and cheer them up.

All faith healings are unknowingly caused by psychic energy. Not faith heals people directly, but psychic energy does, and thus the so-called miracle healings occur. Yet these are far from being the most important healings, but the healing of the spirit is.

### b) The meaning of spiritual healing

Due to nescience and immorality humanity finds itself in the critical stage of a mental disease and therefore in great danger, which may result in the destruction of the planet. That is why the great teacher M.M said:

„At a time when one sacrifices his soul for the good of the World, the other sits upon the water. While one offers his heart for the salvation of his fellow-men, the other flounders in the manifestations of the Subtle World.“ (FW II §14)

The most important of all duty is to serve humanity. Given the complicated international situation, caused by the grim struggle (mentally) on earth between the light and darkness, the various occult skills and the mastery of the body is absolutely unimportant. However, it is important that everyone keeps his mind healthy, recognizes the need of the hour and assists in saving the planet and humanity.

Agni yoga shows the way out of the stage of spiritual beggary in order to help ourselves. Thus we will be able to bear the mental and emotional burden of weaker people together.

### c) The most important exercise

Agni yoga requires simple exercises, and yet all the more effective. The main one is: find out your three worst qualities, and bother to burn them in fiery endeavor, or rather to gradually discard them and transmute them into good qualities.

This sounds very simple, but it is more difficult than to do a headstand for an hour every day and to practice the most difficult asanas. However, it is necessary to gain control over ones personality.

### d) Agni yoga and problems of everyday life

Agni yoga provides information and instructions for all problems of everyday life and brings order into the forming of fate and human relations.

Agni yoga fathoms all the other yoga systems, extracts the connecting essence and provides a much deeper insight into this. So we gain knowledge of the basic principle of the law of cause and effect (karma), of the law of reincarnation, of the meaning of life, of the meaning of suffering, of marital problems, education, Subtle and Fiery World, the Brotherhood of the White Lodge etc .

Agni yoga shows control of thoughts and control of mental activity and teaches how to think and act positively in order to attain release from the cycle of rebirth, and shows the way how to merge with the higher consciousness.

An important knowledge of Agni yoga is, that only by raising the morale and elimination of ignorance it is possible to decisively help all people as well as each individual.

### e) Agni yoga = LIVING ETHICS

Agni yoga includes all the moral demands of Western ethics and therefore also is identical to the term LIVING ETHICS.

The path of yoga has been followed not only by the greatest geniuses of the Orient, but also of all the saints and mystics of the West. Yet not only these, even great poets and thinkers walked the same path, often unknowingly.

In the context of yoga, who would not comprehend the highest knowledge of G o e t h e: „For he whose strivings never cease is ours for his redeeming!" (Faust part II)

Even better, however, the "D i v i n e C o m e d y " shows us the path to the light. From the heavenly Jerusalem, the crest of paradise, B e a t r i c e (symbol of the divine monad) sends a guide – V e r g i l - (the soul) towards the wayfarer and pilgrim D a n t e – A l i g h i e r i, in order to safely guide him through the perils of the inferno, and finally unite him with divine light and the most beloved.

May all those good-willed who strive walk the path to the light (agni)!





List of references:Works of the blessed MAITREYA MORYA:

Blossoms of Morya`s Garden:

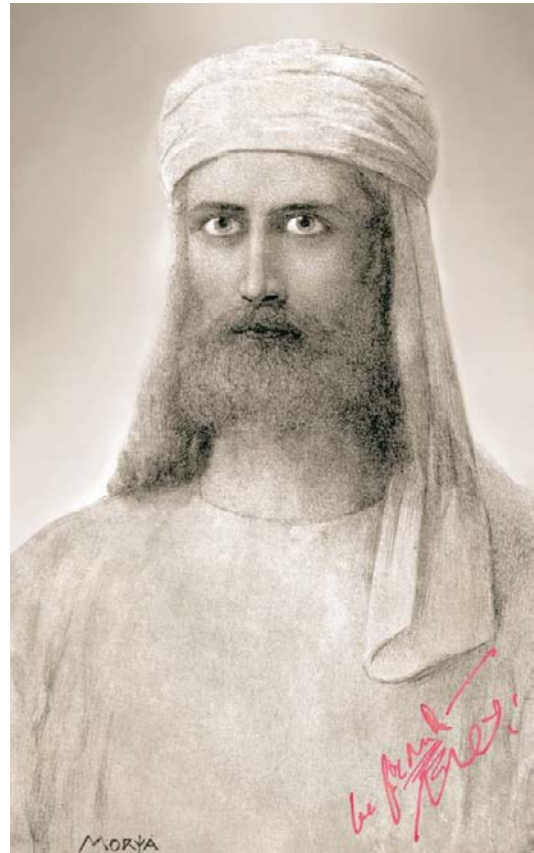
<b>CALL</b>	CALL	§§ 387
<b>ILLUMINATION</b>	ILLU	§§ 358

New era:

<b>COMMUNITY</b>	COM	§§ 275
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Doctrine of Living Ethics in seven themes:

<b>AGNI YOGA</b>	AY	§§ 670
<b>INFINITY</b> (2 parts)	INF	§§ 918
<b>HIERARCHY</b>	HIE	§§ 460
<b>HEART</b>	HEA	§§ 600
<b>FIERY WORLD I</b>	FW I	§§ 666
<b>FIERY WORLD II</b>	FW II	§§ 470
<b>FIERY WORLD III</b>	FW III	§§ 618
<b>AUM</b>	AUM	§§ 600
<b>BROTHERHOOD I</b>	BR I	§§ 610
<b>BROTHERHOOD II</b> (2 parts)	BR II	§§ 955



**MORYA** – Indian Rajput prince, whose spirit had enraptured to the great spirit of the MAITREYA, become enlightened and overshadowed by this. This ordered portrait drawing of the artist Hermann Schmiechen in 1884 was often copied, however the copies are only similar to the “face of the teacher”, so repainted copies lead to failures in meditations!

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**Living Ethics shows the way of a rational self-education through applied ethics.**

## Build a “Star”

Many responsible-minded and worried people today demand a practical action that promises maximum success without attracting much attention, without affiliation to a club or without political risk. In this way they live up to positive expression to their sense of responsibility towards the world situation. Working on the "Star" helps to alleviate not only spiritual but also material distress. It is therefore important to be concerned, at least a few times a day, sending out good thoughts, not for oneself, but above all for the world and for peace. Then the general mental work will also become accustomed to selfless aspirations, and there will be the hope that through such concentrated powers of thoughts the power of evil can be successfully reduced and averted. If millions of people voluntarily made themselves available to such a work, those men and women who would be fit for their purified thinking and noble character, could be able to protrude without great difficulty in religion, politics and social life in order to establish a fair and peaceful world order for the benefit of all people.



*„Aum – Tat – Sat – Aum“*

*Source of light in the universe,  
pour out light into human thinking,  
it become brighter on Earth!*

*Source of love in the universe,  
pour out love into all human hearts,  
May love blossom on Earth!*

*Source of wisdom in the universe,  
pour out knowledge and wisdom,  
let cognition prevail on Earth!*

*Source of peace in the universe,  
strengthen peace and justice,  
may felicity and joy be on Earth!*

*Source of power in the universe,  
seal the door to evil,  
that the plan of the good will be fulfilled!*

*„Aum – Tat – Sat – Aum“*

(For further information see Lesson no. 6).



**LEOBRAND** – Leopold Brandstätter (\* 20th February 1915 Wallern, † 26th February 1968 Linz), was an Austrian nature philosopher and humanist.

His writings are concerned with ethics, humanities, psychology, philosophy, politics, ideology of the world and architecture.

In the 1950s he translated the Agni yoga doctrine from Russian together with a Baltic-German team, thus paving the way for this philosophy in German-speaking countries.

Leobrand founded a (non public) school for Living Ethics. Decades before the introduction of teaching ethics in public schools he had already written 36 lessons of Living Ethics, as the first interdenominational teaching aid for ethical training. He gave countless lectures and conducted seminars. Recordings of Leobrand's lectures are available. These historical audio documents offer the possibility to understand/think along the philosophical analysis of the great thinker Leobrand and open up new horizons for life's spiritual dimension. Philosophical accuracy and clarity of expression are Leobrand's trademarks.

The new concept of God is particularly noteworthy. For this new and completely independent concept of God, a new term was created: "UNIVERALO". Leobrand's concept is explained on a hierarchical basis, it detaches itself from the abstract and merges with the whole existence. It includes many philosophical and historical concepts as well as advanced knowledge of relatively immortal spiritual fields of force. Leobrand therewith expressed the first and only humanistic definition of God within a new world-view and pulls the rug from under atheism. The new concept of God is as dynamic as nature itself and thus indicative of the forthcoming independent humanities.

Other highlights are his work for a united Europe and for a forthcoming pannational world union. Many of those great-sounding ideas of Leobrand are already self-evident reality.

#### Works:

1955 - 1961: 36 lessons, **Briefe über Lebendige Ethik** (*letters on Living Ethics* - in translation)

1957: **Psychische Energie** (*Psychic energy* - humanities and psychology)

1958: **Heilung durch psychische Energie** (*Healing by psychic energy* - humanities and health)

1966: **Freude** (*Joy* - philosophy)

1967: **Der Ausweg** (*The way out* - politics)

1968: **Neues Europa und Welt ABC** (*New europe and world ABC* - politics)

1968: **Das neue universelle Weltbild** (*The new universal world view* - world view)

1968: **Spiralik** (*Spiralik* - architecture of the future)

1953 - 1968: reprint, articles in magazines (partly unpublished manuscripts)

1976: **Der auferstandene Gott** (*The resurrected god* - humanities, compilation of articles)

1962 - 1967: **Lectures** and seminars on all his works (recordings MC in German language)

#### Activities:

1949: Establishment of a **peace league**

1953: Establishment of the (not public) „**School for Living Ethics**“ and magazine

1960: Publication of the magazine „**Spirale und grüne Wacht**“ (nature protection and biotechnology)

1961: Publication of the magazine „**Weltreichspirale**“

1962: Establishment of the association „**Welt-Spirale**“ - ethical society of progress and renewal of the world, and magazine.

# Joy – Peace – Freedom

Serve peace and welfare of the world!

## Overview of the „letters on living ethics, Introduction to Agni yoga“ from LEOBRAND:

### Basic information ethics

1. The truth about yoga
2. Problems of spiritual renewal
3. The meaning of life
4. Karma and forming of fate
5. Might and meaning of thoughts
6. Self-help through proper thinking
7. Reincarnation – yes or no?
8. The meaning of suffering
9. Absolution or personal responsibility?
10. Dharma and life-task
11. Death and Rebirth
12. Devotions and sacrifice
13. The relationship of the sexes
14. Marital problems
15. Living Ethics and education
16. Living Ethics and everyday life
17. Living Ethics and nutrition
18. Living Ethics and art

### Spiritual training

19. Living Ethics – doctrine of life
20. Chakras or centers of higher consciousness
21. The spiritual meaning of the heart
22. The widening of consciousness
23. The subtle constitution of man
24. Monad or spiritual grain
25. The construction of the universe and Cosmoses
26. Subtle world
27. Fiery world
28. Brotherhood
29. The universal understanding of God
30. The Mother of the world
31. Occultism – yes or no?
32. Danger and meanders of occultism
33. Good and evil
34. The coming new world
35. Infinity
36. The path to become a master

Yoga means the merging of the lower human self or individual spirit (jiva) with the divine and supreme self - the universal spirit. Yoga encompasses all the methods and systems that lead to this goal and the pathway how to complete the merging. Yoga is the widening of human consciousness and the merging into the consciousness of something higher. This is the great problem of human advancement in general. Yoga consists of doctrines, which are based on observation of human nature as well as interrelations of existence. By practicing yoga, one gains forces that are still unknown in the West. Yoga shows natural forces and natural laws that affect and regulate the forming of human fate completely. Also the Western world is almost entirely not familiar with this idea.

*„Welt-Spirale“*  
[www.welt-spirale.com](http://www.welt-spirale.com)

Ethical society for progress and world renewal