



# TEACHER TRAINING

300HR WORKBOOK - PREVIEW 01



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|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>How to Use this Manual .....</b>                                | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Introduction.....</b>   | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>A Brief History of Yoga .....</b>                               | <b>9</b>  |
| Vedic Era (1500–600BCE) .....                                      | 9         |
| Post-Vedic/Pre-classical Era (600–200BCE) .....                    | 11        |
| Classical Era (200BCE–400CE) .....                                 | 15        |
| Post-classical Era (400–1800CE).....                               | 16        |
| Modern Era (1800–present).....                                     | 18        |
| <b>Aṣṭāṅga Yoga.....</b>   | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Balanced Breathing.....</b>                                     | <b>23</b> |
| The Science Behind RF/Balanced Breathing .....                     | 23        |
| How to Train HRV and Balanced Breath .....                         | 24        |
| Resonance Frequency (RF) .....                                     | 25        |
| How Important is it to Precisely Determine RF Breathing Rate?..... | 26        |
| Balanced Breathing / RF Breathing Practice.....                    | 27        |
| Observing Progress .....   | 29        |
| <b>Bhagavad Gītā .....</b>   | <b>31</b> |
| Karma Yoga (the path of selfless action).....                      | 32        |
| Raja Yoga (the path of meditation) .....                           | 33        |
| Jñāna Yoga (the path of wisdom) .....                              | 34        |
| Bhakti Yoga (the path of love and devotion) .....                  | 34        |
| <b>Bhramari Prāṇāyāma.....</b>                                     | <b>36</b> |
| Technique .....  | 36        |
| Nitric Oxide and Why Bhramari works .....                          | 37        |
| <b>Central Channel.....</b>  | <b>39</b> |
| Central Channel “Flossing” .....                                   | 41        |
| <b>Dvādaśānta.....</b>   | <b>42</b> |
| <b>Guna .....</b>  | <b>45</b> |
| <b>Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahā-mantra.....</b>                                 | <b>47</b> |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Heart Centre .....</b>                                  | <b>48</b> |
| <b>Heart Meditation.....</b>                               | <b>49</b> |
| Technique: .....   | 49        |
| <b>Karma .....</b>   | <b>51</b> |
| Karma Storage .....  | 51        |
| Three Types of Karma .....                                 | 53        |
| Improving Karma and Removing Karma .....                   | 54        |
| Breaking the Action-Reaction Cycle .....                   | 54        |
| <b>Kleśa .....</b>   | <b>56</b> |
| Avidyā (Ignorance or Lack of Awareness of Reality) .....   | 56        |
| Asmitā (Egoism or “I-Am-ness”) .....                       | 56        |
| Raga & Dvesha .....  | 57        |
| Abhinivesha .....  | 57        |
| <b>Nāḍīśuddhi - Nāḍī Śodhana .....</b>                     | <b>59</b> |
| Karma, Kaivalya and Nāḍī Śodhana .....                     | 60        |
| Nāḍī Śodhana and Tibetan tantra .....                      | 60        |
| Visualising Nāḍī .....                                     | 62        |
| Technique - Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā .....                     | 63        |
| Technique - Śīvasaṃhitā .....                              | 63        |
| Technique - Gheraṇḍasaṃhitā .....                          | 64        |
| Classical Timings.....                                     | 64        |
| Practice Notes .....                                       | 65        |
| <b>Niyama .....</b>  | <b>66</b> |
| Shaucha (purity).....                                      | 66        |
| Santosha (contentment).....                                | 67        |
| Tapas (austerity) .....                                    | 67        |
| Svādhyaya (self-study) .....                               | 68        |
| Ishvara pranidhana (devotion or surrender to Ishvara)..... | 69        |
| <b>Pañcakośa.....</b>                                      | <b>71</b> |
| Annamaya kośa.....   | 71        |
| Prāṇāmaya kośa .....                                       | 72        |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Manomaya kośa .....   | 72         |
| Vijñānamaya kośa .....                                      | 72         |
| Ānandamaya kośa .....                                       | 72         |
| <b>Passive Awareness Meditation.....</b>                    | <b>74</b>  |
| Technique: .....  | 74         |
| <b>Sāṃkhya .....</b>  | <b>76</b>  |
| Puruṣa .....  | 77         |
| Prakṛti.....  | 78         |
| <b>Six Realms of Existence .....</b>                        | <b>82</b>  |
| Realm of Hell.....  | 83         |
| Realm of Hungry Ghosts .....                                | 84         |
| Animal Realm .....  | 85         |
| Human Realm .....   | 86         |
| Realm of Demons.....  | 88         |
| Realm of Demigods.....                                      | 90         |
| <b>Tantra.....</b>  | <b>92</b>  |
| <b>Uccāra .....</b>   | <b>97</b>  |
| Breakdown.....  | 97         |
| <b>Upāyas.....</b>  | <b>99</b>  |
| <b>Void.....</b>  | <b>100</b> |
| <b>Void Practices From The Vijñānabhairava Tantra .....</b> | <b>101</b> |
| <b>Yamas: Introduction .....</b>                            | <b>103</b> |
| Ahiṃsā (non-violence .....                                  | 104        |
| Satya (truthfulness, adherence to the truth) .....          | 105        |
| Asteya (non-stealing).....                                  | 106        |
| Brahmacharya (alignment with the Divine) .....              | 106        |
| Aparigraha (non-possessiveness) .....                       | 108        |
| <b>Yamas In Daily Life.....</b>                             | <b>109</b> |
| Ahiṃsā Diary .....  | 109        |
| Satya Diary .....   | 109        |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Yoga Sutras of Patañjali .....</b>             | <b>110</b> |
| Samādhi Pada .....                                | 111        |
| Sadhana Pada .....                                | 111        |
| Vibhuti Pada .....                                | 111        |
| Kaivalya Pada .....                               | 111        |
| The purpose of Yoga.....                          | 111        |
| Āsana.....  | 112        |
| Prāṇāyāma .....                                   | 112        |
| Pratyahara.....                                   | 112        |
| Dhāraṇā .....                                     | 113        |
| Dhyāna .....                                      | 113        |
| Samādhi .....                                     | 113        |
| Supernatural Powers and Liberation .....          | 113        |
| Liberation .....                                  | 114        |
| <b>Appendix 1: Timeline of Practices.....</b>     | <b>115</b> |
| <b>Appendix 2: Kāṭha Upaniṣad .....</b>           | <b>117</b> |
| <b>Introduction .....</b>                         | <b>117</b> |
| Death as Teacher .....                            | 117        |
| <b>Kāṭha Upaniṣad .....</b>                       | <b>120</b> |
| PART 1 [1].....                                   | 120        |
| PART 1 [2].....                                   | 122        |
| PART 1 [3].....                                   | 124        |
| PART 2 [1].....                                   | 126        |
| PART 2 [2].....                                   | 127        |
| PART 2 [3].....                                   | 128        |
| <b>Appendix 3: Yoga Sutra.....</b>                | <b>130</b> |
| Chapter 01 SAMĀDHI PĀDA.....                      | 130        |
| Chapter 02 SĀDHANA PĀDA .....                     | 133        |
| Chapter 03 VIBHŪTI PĀDA .....                     | 136        |
| Chapter 04 KAIVALYA PĀDA.....                     | 140        |
| <b>Appendix 4: Recommended Translations .....</b> | <b>144</b> |



# HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

The goal of our 300hr training at Higher Yoga Academy is to develop yogis, not merely train “yoga teachers.”

In this course, you will put into daily practice the techniques and theory of the Classical Patañjali Yoga Tradition. You will learn to experience, and fully embody, the training you received in your 200hr TTC.

As such, this manual aims to provide a deeper understanding of foundational yoga practices. We will review the Yama and Niyama and then work at deepening those teachings by integrating them into daily routine, specifically focusing on a reflective journaling practice for Ahimsā and Satya.

During your training we will also “layer on” advanced information about Karma and other core principles, as well as add visualisation and timings to some standard Prāṇāyāma, revealing the full forms of those techniques as taught in the **Haṭhapradīpikā**, **Śivasamhitā**, and **Gheraṇḍasamhitā**.

We also introduce advanced meditation practices from the Tantric yoga tradition as taught in the **Vijñānabhairava Tantra**.

Following a brief history of yoga, the manual is arranged in alphabetical order to make it a convenient reference. The order of techniques and theory in this manual is not necessarily how they are presented in your training.



# INTRODUCTION

**When the wise realise the Self,  
Formless in the midst of forms, changeless  
In the midst of change, omnipresent and supreme,  
They leave worldly joys and sorrows far behind.**  
|| Kāṭha Upaniṣad 2.22 ||

Since birth, our attention is compelled by the world around us, we are endlessly watching and exploring.

Our senses are attracted and, therefore, bound by a constantly changing phenomenal universe. Because we know of not much else other than what we perceive through our limited senses, this experience becomes our reality: we believe what we see is what really is.



By accepting such a limited reality to be true, we create a prison for ourselves, allowing boundaries of the senses become boundaries of our conscious awareness.

As a result, the mind and intellect are entangled in the phenomenal world which alternately brings pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow - leaving an infinite number of

impressions and memories in the subconscious. These impressions imprison the mind and define our behaviour, subsequently leading us further into these pleasures and pains.

This never ending cycle of ever-changing psycho-emotional experiences causes us to forget our true Self, disconnecting us from the innermost unchanging essence of what we are. (That is, we forget what we are, where we are, and why we are here). This disconnection is the root cause of all inner sufferings, such as fear, anxiety, grief, depression, doubt, regret, etc.

Thousands of years ago the sages of ancient India invented a technique of liberating the mind from limitations of the phenomenal world, reconnecting to and realising one's eternal essential Self and thus achieving supreme wisdom, unaltered peace and abiding joy.

They called this technique "Yoga" (योग).



# A BRIEF HISTORY OF YOGA

It is believed the origins of Yoga date back more than 3000 years to pre-Vedic Indian traditions. There is no hard evidence to support this view, but chances are that before it was ever formalised and written down, the ancient knowledge of Yoga was passed through word of mouth, using poems, prayers and spiritual instruction for a fairly long time. The first documented concepts and practices, however, refer to later, so-called Vedic and Post-Vedic periods.



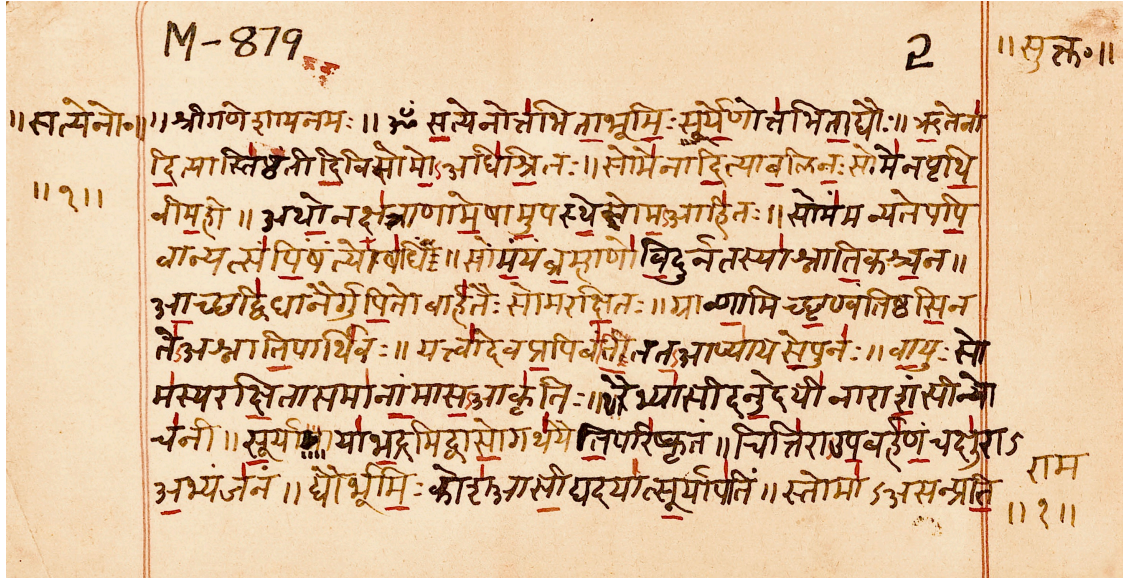
## VEDIC ERA (1500–600BCE)

This period is defined by the holy writings of Brahmanism called the **Vedas** (pictured above), they are the oldest layer of Sanskrit literature and describe mantras, rituals, ceremonies, offerings (sacrifices) and other practices performed in those days to overcome afflictions and unite with the Divine.

The Vedas are divided into four books: the **Rgveda** (ऋग्वेद) which is most commonly written Rig Veda, **Sāmaveda** (सामवेद), **Yajurveda** (यजुर्वेद) and the **Atharvaveda** (अथर्ववेद).

The **R̥gveda** (pictured below) is the oldest of the four and dates to around 1500BCE. It includes a hymn devoted to long-haired sages - ascetic wanderers with mystical powers.

This **Keśin Hymn** is often considered one of the earliest evidences of yogis and their spiritual tradition.



The long-haired one endures fire, the long-haired one endures poison, the long-haired one endures both worlds. The long-haired one is said to gaze full on heaven, the long-haired one is said to be that light.

The wind-girt sages have donned the yellow robe of dust: along the wind's course they glide when the gods have penetrated them.

|| RV 10.136 ||





Keep in mind that at that time, practices were neither defined nor executed in such a way that can be called Yoga as we now know it. Rather, we can regard this time as a beginning, the foundations of the Yoga tradition.

## POST-VEDIC/PRE-CLASSICAL ERA (600–200BCE)

With the development of cities came a rise in disease, an increased death rate, stratification of society, acquisitiveness, poverty and the exploitation of man by man, communities were formed by people as a way to voice their objections about the current state of affairs and openly criticise and question where society had gone.

Some of them were looking for answers, wanting to know why people suffer, what determines a human life and what happens after we die. These seekers were leaving cities and heading into the forests and mountains to discover the true meaning of human existence, to discover the truth.

The movement was called **Śramaṇa** (श्रमण 'strivers for the truth') and the places where they settled and practiced were called **Ashrams** (आश्रम 'places of great strivings'). This is where yogic philosophy and the core yogic practices developed. Since this period we find the continuous evidence of Yoga and its evolution.



The discoveries made by these yogis were documented in another collection of ancient Sanskrit texts called the **Upaniṣads** (उपनिषद्), which means "to sit close to a master."

The ideas shared in these texts are the spiritual core of Yoga as well as the core of many other philosophies and religions born in ancient India. There are over 200 surviving *Upaniṣads*, the earliest of them date from 800-600BCE - the very end of Vedic and the beginning of post-Vedic periods.

Among the most notable is the **Kāṭha Upaniṣad** (कठोपनिषद् or कठ उपनिषद्) (see the Appendix for full translation).

The theme of the *Kāṭha Upaniṣad* is the deathless Self, and the need for and the way to its realisation.

This is a legendary story of a little boy, Nachiketa, the son of Sage Vajasravasa, who meets Yama (the Hindu deity of death).

Their conversation evolves to a discussion of the nature of man, knowledge and moksha (liberation). It is highlighted in this collection, and in the *Kāṭha* in particular, that half the battle in life is having the right questions.

Here we have a teenage boy asking questions like “who I am?” “what dies?” “what remains after what dies is gone?” “is there anything that makes life worth living after facing the fact that we all anyway die?” and who better to answer such questions, than Death itself. Through this dialogue, much light is shed on the realm of life, death, and immortality of the soul.



The following excerpts represent the ongoing theme of this collection and its application to Yoga.

1. Kāṭha asserts that there is one changeless foundation of all that exists – the changeless Self that dwells in the hearts of all.

**Hidden in the Heart of every creature exists the Self, subtler than the  
subtlest, greater than the greatest  
|| KU 1.2.20 ||**

2. This Self is unborn and immortal.

**The all-knowing Self was never born, nor will it die. Beyond cause and  
effect this Self is eternal and immutable  
|| KU 1.2.18-20 ||**

3. Kāṭha states that the changeless Self is recognisable through Yoga – synonym to meditation at that time.

**The wise, realising through meditation the timeless Self, beyond all  
perception, hidden in the cave of the heart, leave pain and pleasure far  
behind.  
|| KU 1.2.12 ||**

4. One of the first definitions of Yoga and meditation is found in the Kāṭha Upaniṣad.

**When the five senses are stilled, when the mind is stilled, when the intellect  
is stilled, that is called the highest state by the wise. They say Yoga is this  
complete stillness in which one enters the unitive state, never to become  
separate again.  
|| KU 2.3.10 ||**

5. Kāṭha states that the essence of Veda and Yoga practice is to help men realise Truth about themselves, and so help overcome all sorrows.

**When the wise realise the Self, formless in the midst of forms, changeless  
in the midst of change, omnipresent and supreme, they go beyond sorrow.  
|| KU 1.2.22 ||**

6. Kāṭha asserts that you are already perfect. You only need to realise it.