

Research Article

Ethics And Value System Of Sāṅkhya-Yoga

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Article Info

Article history

Received on: 12-01-2026

Accepted on: 24-01-2026

Keywords: Saṃskāra, Īśvara, Yama, Niyama, Sāṅkhya, Yoga

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to explore the ethics and value system as represented in the Sāṅkhya-Yoga school of Darśana and how it can be adopted and synthesized into the contemporary framework of ethical society. The Sāṅkhya system looks at ethics from the perspective of removal of Duḥkha-traya and cultivation of the Vivekakhyāti of differentiation between Sat and Asat. It also looks from the perspective of Trigūṇa and how to attain Apavarga and Kaivalya through cultivation of Sattva and removal of the influences of Tamas and Rajas.

While its sister philosophy Yoga looks at the perspective of Body-Mind Sādhana by either adopting the body-breath practice of Haṭha Yoga or attainment of the Cittavṛttinirodha-avasthā of Rāja Yoga of Patañjali. Whether it is adopting the practices of Sādhaka-tattva or abstainment from the Bādhaka-tattva, or Mitāhāra, Haṭha Yoga advocates the practice of retention of breath to ultimately control the mind.

Mental control is the ultimate aim of the Yogasūtra of Patañjali, which aims to rid the mental constitutions of the latent impressions or Saṃskāra which shape our thought patterns. Each of the practices of Abhyāsa, Vairāgya, Īśvarapraṇidhāna, or Cittaprasādanam are the foundational ethics for the practice of Aṣṭāṅga Yoga. Yama and Niyama are not just values but ways of advancement into the body and breath work of Āsana and Prāṇāyāma. They are classified under Mahāvratā.

Through this paper, we will see how there is a conjunction and point of arrival of the values and ethics of Sāṅkhya-Yoga and how these can be applied for any time period with the definition of “sārvabhauma-mahāvratā”.

Introduction

The Sankhya Karika starts with the word “Dukha” and describes the intention behind the study and exposition of the Sankhya Darsana as an intense burning desire to end the endless suffering and miseries inflicted by the Dukhatraya. It seeks to a solution which is ekanta which is exclusive and atyanta which is absolute.

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दुःखत्रयाभिधाताज्जिज्ञासा तदभिधातके हेतौ । दृष्टे
साऽपार्था चेन्नैकान्तात्यन्ततोऽभावात् ॥१॥
duḥkha-trayā-abhighātāt-jijñāsā tat-abhighātake hetau
| dṛṣṭe sā-apārthā cet na-ekānta-atyantataḥ abhāvāt ||

It starts with the problem which has plagued philosophers across generations, which is misery.

As Swami Vivekananda ¹quotes “There is no misery where there is no want. Desire, want, is the father of all misery. Desires are bound by the laws of success and failure. Desires must bring misery”. The solution of this is termed as “vyaktāḥ avyakta-jñā-vijñānā” which is the knowledge that leads to differentiation between the vyaktā (Manifested Prakriti/ 25

1. https://www.ramakrishnavivekananda.info/vivekananda/volume_2/work_and_its_secret.htm

Tattvas including Intelligence, Ego sense and Mind) and avyakta (Unmanifest Prakriti) and the jñā (Purusa / Pure Consciousness). This entire term व्यक्ताव्यक्तज्वज्जिज्ञान has been told to lead the sadhaka away from the impurities arising from avisuddhi / impurity, kṣaya/ decay and atīśaya / excess².

This same concept has been extended into the yoga sutras as the concept of Viveka Khyati. The problem of Dukha which is said as the only end in all situations can be avoided in the future or Heya. The root cause of this sorrow is the misconstruing of the Drasta and Drishya or the mistaken identity of the self as consciousness principle. This can be removed by the destruction of this false knowledge termed as Avidya using the tool of Aviplava Vivekakhyati or continuous discriminative knowledge. The solution is termed as Astanga Yoga or Raja Yoga of Patanjali.

We will explore how the Astanga Yoga instills the ethical values through its principles of Yama and Niyama, while based on the foundational ethics of Abhyasa, Vairagya, Iswara Pranidhana.

Concept of Dukha

The concept of Dukha has been presented quite differently in the Yoga Sutras Sadhana Pada, rather as a viewpoint than a problem of sorts. The perspective of Dukha has been explained infact immediately after the mention of experiences that one might get in turn for a meritorious and demeritorious deed as pleasure (hlāda) or pain (paritāpa) respectively.

ते ह्लादपरितापफलाः पुण्यापुण्यहेतुत्वात् ॥ १४ ॥

Te hlādaparitāpaphalāḥ puṇyāpuṇyahetutvāt||14||

According as they are due to Merit or Demerit, they (actions) bring about Happiness and Unhappiness³. The outcome of Punya is seen as the bhoga of Hlada and the outcome of Paapa karma is seen as the bhoga of Paritapa.

परणिामतापसंस्कारदुःखैर्गुणवृत्तविरिधाच्च दुःखमेव सर्वं
वविकनिः ॥ १५ ॥

*Pariṇāmatāpasamskāraduḥkhaigūṇavṛttivirodhācca
duḥkhameva sarvaṁ vivekinah*||15||

The Pains of Consequence, Annoyance and Impressions also by the adverse functions of attributes, all is but “Pain” for the Wise Man⁴. There are many sources of pain like transformation or change, experiences due to the Tapatraya or three sources of misery, impressions of past life as well as conflict in the personality and thoughts, all experience is but a source of misery for the one who has attained true knowledge.

2. Sankhya Karika, Swami Nikhilananda, Pg 5

3. Yogadarsana, Ganganath Jha, Pg 163

4. Yoga Darsana, Ganganath Jha, Pg 164

This is immediately followed by the solution for Dukha as :

हेयं दुःखमनागतम् ॥ १६ ॥

Heyam duḥkhamanāgatam||16||

The sorrow which is yet to manifest in future can be avoided. This is a clear indication that Raja Yoga is but a means to transform one’s reactions to situations, than changing the situations themselves. That which has transpired in the past is not to be ruminated upon. But see that as a possibility to learn and rectify the reactions in the near future.

The cause of this Dukha is mentioned as the mistaken notion of contact between the Seer (Drasta/ Purusa/ Jna) and the Seen (Drasya/ Prakriti/ Vyakta). This notion is also presented as the affliction of Abinivesha Klesha which is the false identification of the Pure Consciousness (Drk Shakti/ Purusa) to the power of cognizance which is Darsana shakti or Buddhi/ Intellect.

दृष्टदृश्ययोः संयोगो हेयहेतुः ॥ १७ ॥

Draṣṭṛdrśyayoḥ saṁyogo heyahetuḥ||17||

दृग्दर्शनशक्त्योरेकात्मतेवासमिति ॥ ६ ॥

Dṛgdarśanaśaktyorekātmatevāsmitā||6||

The solution which has been mentioned is the attainment of Aviplava Viveka Khyati which is the same solution of “vyaktāḥ avyakta-jñā-vijñāna” as per Sankhya. The Viveka Khyati is that discriminative knowledge which destroys the concealing power of Avidya which has been mentioned as the heyahetu or the root cause of the dukkha. The removal of this Avidya leads to the removal of the illusory union between the Drk and Drasya which is called as the revelation of Viveka Khyati. This state is called as Kaivalyam which is the true nature of Purusa as now the Illusory union with the Prakriti is broken. This state is called the final solution called as Hanopaya. This is unbroken Abhyasa of Viveka Khyati which leads one towards the state of Kaivalya.

तस्य हेतुरवद्विया ॥ २४ ॥

Tasya heturavidyā||24||

तदभावात्संयोगाभावो हानं तददुशोः कैवल्यम् ॥ २५ ॥

Tadabhāvātsamyogābhāvo hānam tadduśoḥ kaivalyam||25||

वविकख्यातरिवप्लवा हानोपायः ॥ २६ ॥

Vivekakhyātiraviplavā hānopāyah||26||

Abhyasa and Vairagya

The solution for attainment of this Hanopaya of Aviplava Viveka Khyati is predicated as the practice of Astanga Yoga.

योगाङ्गानुष्ठानादशुद्धक्षिप्ये

ज्ज्ञानदीप्ततरिवविकख्यातेः ॥ २८ ॥

*Yogāṅgānuṣṭhānādaśuddhikṣaye
jñānadīptirāvivēkakhyāteḥ*||28||

The practice of Astanga Yoga leads to removal of the impurity (ashuddi) which clears the citta of the avarana due to the Tamas which reveals its true brilliance termed as “Jnana Deepti”. This process reveals the citta’s innate nature of Jnana which leads towards Viveka Khyati.

Citta as per Sankhya as four innate properties or Bhavas : Dharma, Jnana, Aishwarya, Vairagya.

अध्ववसायो बुद्धिर्धर्मो ज्ञानं वरिग ऐश्वर्यम् ।
सात्त्विकमेतद्रूपं तामसमस्माद्वपिर्यस्तम् ॥ २३ ॥
*adhyavasāyah buddhiḥ dharmah jñānam virāga aiśvaryam
| sāttvikam-etad-rūpaṁ tāmasam-asmāt-viparyastam* ||
(Sankhya Karika 23)

In the state of Tamas, the Viparyaya Bhava dominates which are : Adharma, Ajnana, Anaishwarya, Raga. There are two types of Jnana, Paroksha and Aparoksha : Paroksha Jnana is the Apra Jnana which is made available from scriptural knowledge and reading of the texts like Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, Samhitas. They are the means for the transactional and material existence. This knowledge paves the gateway to the higher transcendental knowledge which is Aparoksha Jnana . The Aparoksha Jnana is where Viveka Khyati arises. Tamas which is of the nature of Avarana or concealment, conceals the true nature of citta which is Jnana Bhava, this when conceals goes into the viparyaya bhava of Ajnana. When by the practice of Astanga Yoga, this concealment or Avarana is removed (Asuddhi Ksyaya), then the dominance of sattva reveals the true nature of citta as Jnana. This is termed as Jnana Deepti which leads to Viveka Khyati.

One of the key foundational practices which has been mentioned in the Yoga Sutras are Abhyasa and Vairagya. These are usually recommended together as one without the other ceases to sustain the practice. They are usually compared to the two wings of a bird, both need to flap together to ascent. This ascension is the path of yoga usually called as the Nivrittika Marg or the Path towards Liberation.

अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्यां तन्नरिधः ॥ १२ ॥
Abhyāsavairāgyābhyām tannirodhaḥ||12||

तत्र स्थितौ यत्नोऽभ्यासः ॥ १३ ॥
Tatra sthitau yatno 'bhyāsaḥ||13||
स तु दीर्घकालनैरन्तर्यसत्कारासेवति दुर्धभूमिः ॥ १४ ॥
Sa tu dīrghakālanairantaryasatkārāsevito dṛḍhabhūmiḥ||14||

Abhyasa is defined as constant effort or Yatnah. It is a continuous Viveka Khyati which will lead towards the Yathartha Jnana, which is a continuous effort or abhyasa. It is also defined as uninterrupted, long term, with an attitude of surrender or seva bhaav, does the practice get firmly established. It is the same with Viveka Khyati, unless it is

Aviplava or continuous and uninterrupted, the outcome does not lead towards Ashuddi Kshaya. The effort and its effect is reflected in the Kaivalya Pada as when the mind becomes completely absorbed in the Viveka Khyati, it leads to a state called as Viveka Nimnam which is inclination towards the natural state of Kaivalya. This has been explained in sutra 4.26. If there is a small interruption in the Viveka Khyati, it leads to breaches in the process or abhyasa, leading to state of Pratyaya (Externalised Thoughts) and Sanskaara (Latent Impressions). This is the real effect of Abhyasa.

तदा वविकनमिन्डकैवल्यप्राग्भारञ्चतितम् ॥ २६ ॥
Tadā vivekanimnāṅkaivalyapragbhārañcittam||26||

तच्छदिरेषु प्रत्ययान्तराणिसंस्कारेभ्यः ॥ २७ ॥
Tacchidreṣu pratyayāntarāṇi saṁskārebhyaḥ||27||

While Abhyasa is needed, so is Vairagya to have the effort to let go of one knowledge and go to the other state. It is the ultimate letting go of the state of inertia or tamas which is a key factor in spiritual progression. It is said that letting go of one step of the ladder, while ascending another is vairagya. Only one who has an intense burning desire for the spiritual progression will attain this, called as tivra samvegam. Tivra Samvegam is told to be attained by the practice of surrender of Ego to the Almighty which is termed as Ishwara Pranidhana.

तीव्रसंवेगानामासन्नः ॥ २१ ॥
Tīvrasamvegānāmāsannaḥ||21||

दृष्टानुश्रवकविषयवत्तिष्णस्य वशीकारसञ्ज्ञा
वैराग्यम् ॥ १५ ॥
*Dṛṣṭānuśravikaviṣayavattiṣṇasya vaśīkārasañjñā
vairāgyam*||15||

तत्परं पुरुषख्यातेर्गुणवैतृष्ण्यम् ॥ १६ ॥
Tatparam puruṣakhyāterguṇavairuṣṇyam||16||

This Ishwara is not the Saguna Sakaara God which is attributed and having form and shape. This God is called Pranava or Omkara and is devoid of the afflictions, actions, fruits of actions, latent impressions. This Iswara is a Vishesha Purusha who has never come into contact with Prakriti for creation. He is to be a symbol for the purpose of Dhyana alone which can be done as Japa of Omkaar with meaning and emotion.

ईश्वरप्रणधिनाद्वा ॥ २३ ॥
Īśvarapraṇidhādvā||23||

क्लेशकर्मवपिकाशयैरपरामृष्टः पुरुषविशेष ईश्वरः ॥ २४ ॥
*Kleśakarmavapīkāśayairaparāmṛṣṭaḥ puruṣaviśeṣa
īśvaraḥ*||24||

तस्य वाचकः प्रणवः ॥ २७ ॥
Tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ||27||

तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम् ॥ २८ ॥

Tajjapastadarthabhāvanam||28||

Vairagya which has levels has Aparā Vairagya and the higher Para Vairagya. Aparā Vairagya is letting go of the fruits of this worldly and other worldly pleasures, often called as drsta and anusravika. The Aparā Vairagya which has its highest level as Vashikaar Vairagya will take you towards the Viveka Khyati. Once the same has been instilled and chitta has become Kaivalya Pragbharam, letting go of the Viveka Khyati itself is the ultimate act of Vairagya called as Para Vairagya. It is Para Vairagya which takes one from the pinda to brahmaanda.

Ethical Practice of Astanga Yoga

यमनयिमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टा

वङ्गानि ॥ २९ ॥

Yamaniyamāsanaprāṇāyāmapratyāhārādhāraṇādhyāna-samādhayo'sṭvāṅgāni||29||

The eight limbs of yoga are : Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama , Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरगिरहा यमाः ॥ ३० ॥

Ahimsāsatyāsteya brahmacharyāparigrahā yamāḥ||30||

The five yamas are non-injury harmlessness (ahimsā), Veracity truthfulness (satya), Abstention from stealing (asteya), Contineness dwelling in Brahma (brahmacharya) and non-possession abstinence from avariciousness/covetousness; aparigraha (aparigrahāḥ). These yamas are verily called as the Mahāvratā or the Great Penance. It is devoid of the differences due to class, place, time or duty and unrestricted and universal laws to be adopted and applicable across the boundaries of worldly concepts and conventions.

जातदिशकालसमयानवच्छिन्नाः सार्वभौमा महाव्रतम् ॥ ३१ ॥

Jātediśakālasamayānavacchinnāḥ sārva bhāumā mahāvratam||31||

Cleanliness, Happiness/Contentment, Penance, Self Inquiry and Surrender to Almighty are the five self-conducts which are called as Niyama. While the Yama is for social ethics, so does the Niyama occupy the self-ethics or observances.

शौचसन्तोषतपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणधानानि नियमाः ॥ ३२ ॥

Śaucasantoṣatapaḥsvādhyāyēśvarapraṇidhānāni niyamāḥ||32||

In case of any situations or events which will deter the practice of Yama Niyama, one needs to practice the abhyasa of Pratipaksha Bhavanam or Reversal of Emotions.

वतिर्कबाधने प्रतपिक्षभावनम् ॥ ३३ ॥

Vitarkabādhanē pratipakṣabhāvanam||33||

These vitarka or negative feelings/actions/karma can manifest as those emotions which cause injury, pain

1. whether it be performed by self, got done by another, or approved another's actions of harm
 2. instilled by vices like Lobha (Desire/Covetousness), Krodha (Anger), Moha (Delusion)
 3. whether the actions are Mrudu (Mild), Madhya (Moderate), Adhimatra (Excessive)
 4. resulting in endless outcomes of Dukha and Ajnana
- Pratipaksha Bhavanam is Emotional Culture which looks at the perspective of positive outcomes, manifestation of results as well as notional corrections.

वतिर्का हसिदयः कृतकारतानुमोदति लोभक्रीधमोहपूर्वका

मृदुमध्याधमित्रा दुःखाज्जानानन्तफला इति

प्रतपिक्षभावनम् ॥ ३४ ॥

Vitarkā himsādayaḥ kṛtakāritānumoditā lobhakrodhamohapūrvakā mṛdumadhyādhimātrā duḥkhājñānānantaphalā iti pratipakṣabhāvanam||34||

One of the key ethical practices which transcends the time and can be applied universally is the catur bhavana of Maitri, Karuna, Mudita and Upeksha.

मैत्रीकरुणामुदितिपेक्षाणां सुखदुःखपुण्यापुण्यवषियाणां

भावनातश्चित्तप्रसादनम् ॥ ३३ ॥

Maitrikaruṇāmuditopekṣāṅām sukhaduḥkhaḥpunyāpunyaviṣayāṅām bhāvanātaścittaprasādanam||33||

The cultivation of opposites or pratipaksa bhavanam is the central tenet behind the bhavana chatustayam.

1. Instead of Jealousy for the Happy, cultivate the emotion of Maitri/Friendliness
2. Instead of Neglect and Subjugation of those in Misery, cultivate the emotion of Karuna/ Empathy
3. Instead of Jealousy for the Meritorious or Punya, cultivate the emotion of Mudita/Joy
4. Instead of Curiosity for the Demeritorious or Paapa, cultivate the emotion of Upeksha/indifference.

While it is definitely for others, there is an advice to follow this for the self too. Often there are times when we are afraid to be too happy and we fear sadness. We are too hard on self, cultivation of the emotion is for the self too.

Hatha Yoga Ethics

Unlike the misconceptions, Hatha Yoga is not a physical practice of only asana and bodily control. While it is using the body as a means to attain control of the breath, and finally the control of the mind. Hatha Yoga is a ladder towards Raja Yoga.

केवलं राज-योगाय हठ-वदियोपदशियते (Hatha Yoga Pradeepika)
Kevalam rāja-yogāya haṭha-vidyopadiśyate

Since the practice is for the mind ultimately, there are some practices which are mentioned as prerequisites of Hatha Yoga. These are the Sadhaka Tattva and Badhaka Tattva . This is also under Abhyasa and Vairagya

अत्याहारः प्रयासश्च प्रजल्पो नयिमाग्रहः ।
 जन-सङ्गश्च लौल्यं च षड्भरियोगो वनिशयति ॥ १५ ॥ (Hatha Yoga Pradeepika)
Atyāhāraḥ prayāsaśca prajalpo niyamāgrahaḥ | Jana-saṅgaśca laulyam ca ṣaḍbhiri-yogo vanaśyati || 15 ||

Overeating, Effort, Talkativeness, Excessive Rules, Company of the common are stated as those to let go of before the practice.

उत्साहात्साहसाद्घैर्यात्तत्त्व-ज्जानाश्च नश्चियात् ।
 जन-सङ्ग-परतियागात्षड्भरियोगः प्रसदिध्यति ॥ १६ ॥ (Hatha Yoga Pradeepika)
Utsāhātsāhasāddhairyātattva-jñānāśca niścayāt | Jana-saṅga-parityāgātṣaḍbhiri-yogaḥ prasiddhyati || 16 ||

Enthusiasm, Courage, Patience, Devoid of common company and Determination are the practices which comes under the attributes to be cultivated.

The regulation of mitahaar which is another form of tapa or niyama, is defined as that food which is eaten in moderation after offering it to the God as Prasad. The act of offering is meant as sharing which itself is a great rule for self regulation and control. There is an act of Aparigraha too when it comes to Mitahaara as it is eating fresh and only till three fourth of the capacity of stomach.

सुसन्निधि-मधुराहारश्चतुर्थांश-वविरजतिः
 भुज्यते शवि-सम्प्रीत्यै मतिहारः स उच्यते ॥ ६० ॥ (Hatha Yoga Pradeepika)
Susnigdha-madhurāhāraścaturthāṁśa-vivarjitaḥ | Bhujyate śiva-samprītyai mitāhāraḥ sa ucyate || 60 ||

The ordered approach of Haṭha Yoga which as per Svātmārāma, starts with Āsana, Prāṇāyāma, Mudrā and ending with Nādānusandhāna is also a critical rule which has been adopted in later texts like Gheraṇḍa Saṃhitā. Gheraṇḍa has made Śaṭkarma as mandatory prerequisite by starting with “Śodhana” (cleansing) as the first sapta sādhana or the seven practices. Svātmārāma has called out Śaṭkarma as a practice to be undertaken only if one suffers from excess of medas (fat) and śleśman (phlegm). Gheraṇḍa also calls out for the ordered fashion of undertaking the prāṇāyāma which is sthāna (place), kāla (time of year), mitāhāra (moderation in eating/lifestyle change), nāḍīsuddhi (cleansing of the passages) as enumerated below:

आदौ स्थानं तथा कालं मतिःहारं तथापरम् ।
 नाडीशुद्धिततः पश्चात्प्राणायामं च साधयेत् ॥ २ ॥ (Gheranda Saṃhitā – पञ्चमोपदेश)
Ādau sthānaṃ tathā kālaṃ mitā’hāraṃ tathāparam | Nāḍīsuddhiṃ tataḥ paścātprāṇāyāmaṃ ca sādhayet || 2 ||

In the Gheraṇḍa Saṃhitā, the sequence of the Sapta Sādhana (seven-fold path) is distinct because it approaches the purification of the practitioner as a “vessel” (Ghaṭa). Unlike the eight-limbed path of Patañjali, this systematic progression focuses on hardening and refining the body and mind through seven specific stages. The placement of the Sapta Sādhana which are Śodhana – Śaṭkarma, Dṛḍhatā – Āsana, Sthairyam – Mudrā, Dhairyam – Pratyāhāra, Lāghavam – Prāṇāyāma, Pratyakṣam – Dhyāna and Nirliptam – Samādhi. Haṭha Yoga mentions the need for a good guru and that only by gurūpadiṣṭa-mārgena (by the path instructed by the guru) one can attain the state of Rāja Yoga. Even in Gheraṇḍa Saṃhitā, Rājā Caṇḍakapāli approaches his Guru Gheraṇḍa Muni with an intention of getting the knowledge of Ghaṭastha

षट्करमणा शोधनं च आसनेन भवेदुदुढम् ।
 मुद्रया स्थिरिता चैव प्रत्याहारेण धीरता ॥ १० ॥ (Gheranda Saṃhitā – प्रथमोपदेशः)
Ṣaṭkarmaṇā śodhanaṃ ca āsaneṇa bhaveddudham | Mudrayā sthīratā caiva pratyāhāreṇa dhīratā || 10 ||

प्राणायामाल्लाघवं च ध्यानात्प्रत्यक्षमात्मनः ।
 समाधिनो नरिलिप्तं च मुक्तं न संशयः ॥ ११ ॥ (Gheranda Saṃhitā – प्रथमोपदेशः)
Prāṇāyāmāllāghavaṃ ca dhyānātpatyakṣamātmanah | Samādhinā nirliptaṃ ca muktireva na saṁśayah || 11 ||
 Yoga. Svātmārāma has used the Paramparā as an edifice for

building the whole schema of Haṭha Yoga. The same is glossed in the below śloka where he prostrates before Ādinātha (Śiva) before starting the upadeśa of Haṭha. He also has attributed the whole treatise to his Gurus Matsyendra-nātha and Gorakṣanātha.

श्री-आदिनाथाय नमोऽस्तु तस्मै
 येनोपदिष्टा हठ-योग-वदिया ॥ १ ॥ (Hatha Yoga Pradeepika)
Śrī-ādi-nāthāya namo’stu tasmai yenopadiṣṭā haṭha-yoga-vidyā || 1 ||

हठ-वदियां हि मत्स्येन्द्र-गोरक्षाद्या वजिजानते ।
 स्वात्मरामोऽथवा श्री गी जा नीते तत् -प्रसादतः ॥ ४ ॥ (Hatha Yoga Pradeepika)
Haṭha-vidyāṃ hi matsyendra-gorakṣādyā vijānante | svātmārāmo’thavā yogī jānīte tat-prasādataḥ || 4 ||

Conclusion

While the paths are different, all merge at the point of

convergence of establishment of certain rules and tenets, following abhyāsa towards the ethical guidelines while maintaining vairāgya not to revert to the opposite state of non-ethical behaviour. The elements of abhyāsa are seen as practices to control the mind in Sāṅkhya Yoga and to control the body-breath in Haṭha Yoga. There needs to be a continuous vairāgya or detachment to the results even while performance of the practices in Haṭha Yoga. To attain this, the path of Īśvara Praṇidhāna sets the directional element like a moral compass which directs the vehicle towards its destination.

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