

Dharma and the Nine Distractions

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Inside everyone
is a great shout of joy
waiting to be born...
~ David Whyte



The first book of the Yoga Sutras, the **Samādhi Pada**,

sets forth the underlying vision of what yoga is.

Sutra 1.2, *Yogah cittavritti nirodha* (Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind), is

followed by Sutra 1.3, *Tada drashtuh svarupe'vasthānam* (then the seer dwells in his own splendor).

This splendor is our dharma.

Later in the Samādhi Pada, Patanjali describes the obstacles we face in discovering our own dharma.



The Nine Distractions and How to Disarm Them

व्याधि vyādhi – illness.

स्त्यान styāna – Lethargy (tamas)
sometimes linked w/ālasya

संशय saṁśāya – Doubt, a regular or
persistent feeling of uncertainty.

प्रमाद pramāda – Haste.

आलस्य ālasya – Resignation or
exhaustion, a lack of enthusiasm.

अविरति avirati – Distraction, the
giving in to sensory input.

भ्रान्तिदर्शन bhrāntidarśana – Arrogance, ignorance.

अलब्धभूमिकत्व alabdhabhūmikatva – Inertia, inability to take the first step.

अनवस्थितत्वानि anavasthitatvāni – Loss of confidence. Set-back.

1.30-1.32

(1.30) व्याधिस्त्यानसंशयप्रमादालस्याविरति-
भ्रान्तिदर्शनालब्धभूमिकत्वानवस्थितत्वानि
चित्तविक्षेपास्तेऽन्तरायाः ।

vyādhistyānasamśayapramādālasyaaviratibhrāntidarśan-
ālabdhabhūmikatvānavasthitatvāni cittavikṣepāste 'ntarāyāḥ

The Antidote and Fortifications

How these obstacles manifest at any given time is usually the very key to growth and insight within our personal practice. It is not really a matter of avoiding the difficulties that resolves them and opens a path to liberation; instead, it is the ability to face the difficulties and the distractions straight on that allows us to truly mature and grow. ~ Richard Freeman

1.31, describes what the distracted looks and acts like (suffering, depression, nervousness and irregular breathing)

In the next sutras, Patanjali gives us tools & strategies to help fortify ourselves. He begins with

1.32, Eka Tattva, one-pointedness, single-truth. This could be a positive experience or universal Truth (how small our troubles are in the big picture). It could also be an obstacle, viewed as a gift from **Ganesha**.

That which continues to oppose our path serve us too in the end, by testing and strengthening our resolve to live our dharma.

~ Aadil Palkhivala

Sutras 1.33 – 1.39 provide examples.

1.33, The four attitudes: **Maitri** (friendliness), **Karuna** (compassion), **Mudita** (delight in the good) and **Upeksanam** (equanimity). These are like the Buddhist Brahmaviharas (benevolence, compassion, empathetic joy, equanimity).

1.34 Pranayama.

1.35 Meditation on the Senses.

1.36 Meditation on Luminosity.

1.37 Meditation on a mind free from desire.

1.38 Meditation on the Stream of Dream, the subconscious.

1.39 Meditation on your choice.

Dharma Flow Practice

Om

Listening Presence

Asana Practice w/Twists & Openings

Pranayama ~ Kapalabhati (Skull Shining)

Japa ~ Hum Phat, The Release Mantra

Open Heart Meditation w/Loving - Kindness

Savasana

