

Ashtanga Yoga - The Eight-Fold Path

Ashta means eight and anga means limbs or parts. The eight limbs of Yoga are:

1. Yama Yama refers to the Great Universal Commandments. Patanjali lists five yamas:

- Ahimsa - Non-violence
- Satya - Truth
- Asteya - Non-stealing
- Brahmacharya - Self-control
- Aparigraha - Unselfishness

2. Niyama Niyama refers to personal disciplines. Patanjali lists five of these:

- Saucha - Cleanliness
- Santosha - Contentment
- Tapas - Great effort
- Svadyaya - Self-study
- Ishvara Pranidhana - Faith in God

3. Asana Asana means posture, such as the ones described in this book.

4. Pranayama Pranayama means breath control.

5. Pratyahara Pratyahara means control of the senses (taste, touch, smell, sight and hearing).

6. Dharana Dharana means concentration.

7. Dhyana Dhyana means meditation.

8. Samadhi Samadhi or kaivalya, is the goal of Yoga where in the yogi unites with God.

By following this eight-fold path a man gets health of body and control over his mind. He becomes wise and compassionate.

For children, however, only the first three steps of Yoga are important: yama, niyama and asana. These steps prepare a child for the higher steps of Yoga which they can practice when they are older.

