

Heinz Grill

The Approach and Aim of
“Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”

A basis for exoteric work

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Contents

The approach and aim of “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”	3
The order of the consciousness is reflected inwardly in the individual and outwardly in the organisation’s administration	10
On the problem of hierarchy and obedience	14
Sources of inspiration on the path of spiritual training	16
On Rudolf Steiner’s Anthroposophy	
On “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”	
On <i>Sri Aurobindo’s</i> Synthesis of Yoga	
Recommended literature for practical study	
Stages for developing order and self-determination on the path of spiritual individuation.	19

The Approach and Aim of “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”

A basis for exoteric work

The term “exoteric” in its usual definition means a foundation for religion, which is intended for all people and for the public in general. It is a term which describes a natural openness. In a certain contrast to this is the term “esoteric”, which is used for a religious discipline valid only for specific people who have already been prepared. It is the path of initiation into a quite different form of reality.

In the last decades the term “esoteric” has gained an extremely varied, profane meaning and has been introduced into everyday public life, with a broad range of methods, exercises, movements, rituals, uses and techniques, in a way that contradicts the very essence of initiatory life. It is not the profane meaning which is intended here with the term “esoteric”, but rather the actual classical form of initiation into the experiences and thoughts of the spiritual worlds. However in the discipline of Yoga a very clear division is made between the components which are exoteric and those which are esoteric in character.

For the sake of simplicity it can be said at the start that in general the original texts written for “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” have an esoteric and so initiatory quality, while all the forms of teaching arising from it, and the ways of approaching and working with the teaching, are formed on a typically exoteric basis. Instruction in this kind of Yoga therefore has no particular, mysterious or mystical elements, but rather a natural, educational and scientific basis.

The original texts and the contents which have been written down for the Yoga, are meditation texts and cannot be understood by contemporary scientific analysis, for they are for the most part descriptions of a different and higher reality. This higher reality is only understandable through a very gradual approach, with the development of an all-encompassing and spirit-filled logic. The unusual demands made by this content, which in itself is a concealed train of thought, does not nevertheless mean that it might be wrong or irrational. It is only incomprehensible within contemporary scientific paths with their intellectual and analytical methods.

For this reason, the reader may well wonder what purpose the texts then have with their un-scientific and non-analytical character. A small example can explain their meaning. In the descriptions there are soul-experiences and various indications of the existence of a soul-mystery. The very unusual purpose of the teachings is accomplished through the way they are described. As a rule the conventional awareness is completely bound to the senses and to the way they flow from the body outwards to various objects. The movement of the senses in this direction enables the usual, scientific method, bringing an ability to judge, which correlates with the ability to analyse and reach conclusions. But in the texts of “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” the goal of the thinking is reversed and is directed as though from something external to something internal, going from an object to the personal consciousness. In the descriptions an atmosphere of spiritual vision which corresponds to a body-free soul is to be found. This is another reality which is close to the levels of purity in the heavenly regions, and so looks on earthly events with that logic which is usually only liberated after death. Those who study the texts of “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” work their way into the other-worldly, eternal laws of life. The scientific view of our modern culture proceeds from a sensory awareness and from a reality that can be researched. The spiritual way of seeing however proceeds from the reality of a cosmic and eternal consciousness, into which the soul is only integrated after death. This realm after death belongs to a different sense of reality and a different direction of the thinking from that experienced by the worldly, conventional understanding and awareness.

The exoteric teaching principles quite deliberately separate the scientific foundations, which correspond to the laws of contemporary culture, of education, of comprehensibility and usual teaching methods, from the texts, insights and teachings which emerge from another reality and so have a mysterious, initiatory and intangible energetic action.

The over-arching term “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” does not however preach a new religious movement, a new Yoga with alternative exercises and standards, nor a religious group, which is oriented towards a creed or an ideological world of the future, but rather this description intends to express directly in words the inner discipline of the practice, which arises out of a discerning understanding of the different connections between body and soul. From this discerning point of view the physical body is not the primary starting point in which the development into the higher insights and planes of the

consciousness begins. It is rather the consciousness which is trained to a higher level through right sentiments, thoughts and attitudes to practice, and which is ultimately expressed via the body, the speech, the gestures and actions in expansiveness, beauty or wisdom. The Yoga emphasises the artistic and aesthetic quality of being and is oriented with all its different exercises more to the development of the so-called soul-forces, namely to the thinking, feeling and the will, which should be expanded in their capacity, refined and illumined by spirituality. If the soul-forces and not the body are primarily addressed as the means of conveying perfection, then in the Yoga this is a direct form of expression of development and of learning. This primary emphasis of the soul, of observance and respect for a spiritual reality and the development of the soul-forces, is characteristic for “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”.

This approach to the practice is clearly differentiated from a mystical path or from those forms of Yoga which are usually combined under the somewhat unclear terms of “Hatha-Yoga” and “Kundalini-Yoga”. Quite simply, without being technical, “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” wishes rather to strengthen the spiritual components in the global nature of an individual’s being. On the path of development, the spiritual components, and thus the components which are to be newly individualised, should be constantly elevated to a more mature, more stable and at the same time more unified personality, so that the body, with its fears and troubles, recedes in its dominance, and a light of something individualised and also infinite takes guidance.

The Yoga is not aimed at a group of people who want to cope with something highly demanding, but can be used for all groups, paths, professions and developmental disciplines. The practice is only unsuitable for those who deny self-perfection as a need for development and who never question their own self-identity. Its general character, which is healthy for the consciousness, means that it is not a new religious movement, nor a branch within the varied and broad array of Yoga practices. It seems nevertheless worth mentioning that the path of directly training of the soul-forces seems rather alien and hence incomprehensible and difficult for our contemporary culture and for the religious spirit of the time. For this reason it is, from an outer view, still barely understood or put into practice.

One of the most important requirements for the beginning of Yoga-activity – whether it is of a simpler kind as is the case in adult-education-colleges, or whether it is a more specialised training with inspired texts as is the case in Bad Haering[?] – is the level ground created by the most pure and serious approach possible. A pure approach is like a street without furrows and potholes. Just as a vehicle can travel more easily on a paved street, so individual seekers can more easily manage their perceptions and feelings when the underlying approach and motives are pure. The degree to which the will is free and available for development, the individual nature of the heart, and the most alert presence of mind are encouraged through an appropriate teaching-environment. The Yoga has as its intended goal the purity of the consciousness, but the development of this should not be at the cost of individual freedom. Rather it should be developed on a spiritually scientific plane of correct and broad perspectives.

The aim in Yoga is, in general terms, a perfect freedom. Yet this freedom, which is spoken of in a general way, could very easily become misunderstood and signify a kind of emotional vitality with an ecstatic experience of life, or it could be a hidden self-identity which is based exclusively on intellectual values and knowledge. However Yoga does not seek these outer forms and experiences of feeling free, but rather a freedom of the so-called self, described in Yoga as the highest *purusa*, in *manas*, the thinking, in *buddhi*, the feeling, in *atman*, the will. That freedom which arises on the path and should ultimately prevail has quite a different radiance from that which exists initially. Those practising remain the same in their life arrangements, tasks and duties, they keep their usual circumstances and do not change their lives to follow alternative principles which have an Eastern or ideological emphasis. They now become stronger and more stable in their soul-life, and this offers them greater freedom in their external encounters. Practitioners also become freer in relation to themselves and can recognise trivial worries, fears and dependencies more as relative conditions of existence. The freedom which arises on the path of development is therefore not of an outer nature, it rests on the flexibility and dynamic activity of the thinking, feeling and willing, which become objective soul-instruments and are permeated and enriched by a light-filled spirit. A new and greater awareness is added to the previous consciousness. The soul expands beyond the usual genetic limits to a greater comprehension. So at the beginning there is a person who is born in *karma* or in the flesh, and at the end, one who is born in the spirit or *purusa*. In order to succeed, however, the path must be paved from start to finish by very pure terms and be embarked on with free decisions and free steps.

Since this individual freedom is of crucial importance for the development of the soul-forces in *manas*, *buddhi* and *atman*, it is taken into careful account in the personal meeting with a teacher and in the whole method of a seminar, teaching-system

[?] Bad Haering is the name of the Austrian village where Heinz Grill lived and taught at the time this booklet was written.

or institution. If any strain, group-pressure, subconscious psychological emotion, moral persuasion, or organisational control were to arise, they would in a certain way restrict the freedom of the human soul. Just as it is a goal in the Yoga that in their realisation people do not project their fleshly, outer greatness of personality, so the organism for spiritual seminars is formed so that it cannot stand before a spiritual source with a mighty body. The environment that is of necessity constructed around a spiritual personality, his work and its emanation, maintains a light-filled transparency in its basic exoteric approach, and encourages the freedom and the potential to train the consciousness of the individual seeker in many respects.

It must be a familiar analogy, in this modern culture coloured by psychology, that a teacher can give his students and those interested in his work only as much individual breadth of consciousness and individual freedom as he himself has achieved. Where is the justification for teaching the so-called truth? A Yoga teacher cannot teach the truth, which is generally said to be the absolute reality, for he would be teaching in a very constraining way only a partial aspect of the whole. This aspect certainly has its validity under certain circumstances, but under other conditions cannot be appropriate. A small example can clarify the situation of a free and broad-minded teaching, in comparison with a bound and restricted approach: Yoga as a rule advocates a vegetarian way of life to help realise an ideal, in which human nature surrenders to a non-violent ordering of creation and avoids the killing of animals. The school could now mistakenly teach dogmatically that vegetarianism is a compulsory requirement and state this as an independent truth. This instruction would however be almost forceful, sounding prescriptive or moralising in character and would have more the effect of imprisoning the consciousness. For this reason no dogmas and no forceful ideas are taught through the Yoga teacher, but it is rather the background, its context with humanity and human development, that has more light shed on it. After attending a seminar, therefore, the interested participants still have the free choice to decide independently whether (staying with the example) they become vegetarian or not. Since the listeners receive a very broad based interpretation and a description that is given in context, they gain insight into many truths, which are appropriate under various circumstances but in the whole scheme of things are only of relative value.

Although “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” is not an established church, religious institution, order, or any kind of umbrella organisation, it needs different educational places for the translating of its ideas. These educational places are nevertheless free organisations which as with the example of Bad Haering, are comparable to one body with different smaller, individual bodies. Each body forms a single unity in itself, with its own individual responsibility, which is however again integrated into a whole within the structure of the house. For a spiritual seminar for example, the body needs an organisation which is concerned with the necessary administrative structure, advises and invites people. Furthermore the seminar needs an appropriate and functional building which, with lodging and meals, forms the suitable and intended framework for the teaching. Finally the central activity of the seminar is formed by the teaching activity and the training, this again as an individual body that has many limbs, which exist in different forms, as for example by leading Yoga-exercises and discussion sessions. Alongside this division into different areas of responsibility, the exoteric classification of different fields of work makes a quite purposeful separation between all the administrative areas, the teaching activity and the way of practice on the one hand and the spiritual source on the other. This separation is like a clarifying organism, which divides the light from the dense, or the intangible from everything tangible. Spirituality is not its own body in the structure of the whole. The exercises for concentration, or for aesthetic shaping, fall under the manifest and tangible dimension, and are differentiated from spirituality within the organism of the body of the teaching structure.

Once again there is the essential question about the nature of spirituality, about the dignity of its mysterious character, about its hidden life and its actual place in the system. This question arises above all because the teaching with exercises, meditations and instructions no longer has the name “spirituality”, rather it is only one of the building-blocks in a seminar. Where then is the mystery of spirituality to be found?

Spirituality in “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” is carried completely by the source of its founder. It is personal. It is not absolutely related to one person and also not to the physical nature of the person. It is expressed, for example, through the spirit of the writings, which are in themselves, as already mentioned, meditation texts, which require a lengthier contemplation. It is also expressed in the pictures of the *asanas*, but it is not the perfection of an *asana*. It streams out into the hearts of all those who turn, in personal form, to the original content of the Yoga and seek the personal connection. For these reasons it also lives in part in the hearts of those who work together in a team to organise a seminar and turn to the source. Nevertheless the work in the different fields, whether more administrative or educational, is differentiated from the inner, deep and intangible regions of personal existence.

The light shines on the different individual bodies, but the individual bodies which fulfil a practical function for the structure are still of a different kind and density from the light. The light shines for everyone and is something constant, whereas the bodies, in the course of their development, take on different aspects. But the light is also freedom, it is infinite

and unmanifest and is equally available for everyone. But if now through false identification a confusion were to occur, in which the manifest became a claim for self-assurance, then this claim would disturb the natural order and capture the freedom of the individual. These claims, which represent claims on the truth, capture the light and bring it into an unfortunate manifestation which robs any spiritual freedom and leads to illusory perception. Comparatively speaking, most religious systems, Yoga organisations and spiritual places function in that misplacement of the free dimension of light. This free dimension is expressed in a thinking of perfect awareness of the spiritual present, but is imprisoned through the error of the institutional hold and falls into the clutches of worldly identification. The exoteric structural system tries to avoid this mistake, with very separate individual areas of responsibility.

For “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”, alongside the publications of its founder, there are the works of *Sri Aurobindo* and Rudolf Steiner. They are regarded as source texts, or as inspired literature, and their words express soul and spirit. With their fullness or quite different reality, the soul and spirit elevate the word out of its usual intellectuality or emotionality, and bring closer a sense or a pictorial idea of a spiritual truth, which is known by the special term “imagination”. It would actually be a false conclusion or logic if anyone were to say: “I have a different opinion from *Sri Aurobindo*”. It would be confusing conventional thinking with a spiritual thinking and introducing a measure of judgement, which is not appropriate for inspired texts. Rightly seen we can only learn to work with and practically understand spiritual source-texts by approaching the thinking in the sense of the author and exploring the majesty of the thought. The path of study is a careful, active one which requires the capacity to leave our own standpoint and to penetrate with greatest concentration into the thoughts of the author. The learning steps are of an objective kind.

Spirituality rests on a thinking that belongs to a body-free dimension and is integrated into a quite different field of awareness beyond the senses. When this kind of thinking becomes intertwined with a conventional and organ-bound thinking, there arises an invisible attachment, which is expressed in an illusory awareness opposite from reality. The result of these illusions leads to imitations of the teacher, to hierarchical games of faith and to symbioses with holiness, to secret flights from the world with unfounded dreams and false displays of piety, usually with a clear or less clear surrender of the self. To a considerable degree students tend either to live emotionally in their spirituality or to argue intellectually, instead of developing a realistic, discerning vision of the subtle and yet great dualities.

Spirituality, with the thoughts and perceptions that it emanates, is always like a silent fire, which in its transcendence cannot be grasped by the burning torches of one’s own wishes, feelings and thoughts. It is a world which is not of this world and yet, with its rich words and emanations, serves in this world as an example for reverence and appreciation.

Yoga classes with different exercises for the body, the breath and the soul, flow naturally in their practical information, pictures and instructions. The perfection for which they aim depends on the particular situation and the ambition of the teacher. In general a very high quality is required by the training in “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”. An interpretation of an exercise or a very precisely thought-out instruction for a meditation is, however, still not a spiritual discipline. The spirituality of a Yoga teaching should therefore not be confused with words, accurate instructions, a flair for teaching, or energising mantras, for spirituality would otherwise be bound to the achievements of outer humanity. Spirituality is the reverence of inner purity and silent relationship to the spirit. Perfection in technique, practice and instruction is the reverence of the outer attitude. A Yoga teaching can therefore become very spiritual, if the teacher who is teaching, develops a deep relationship, a knowledge and an awareness towards the spiritual sources. Yet spirituality is a very silent contribution, which lives more in the soul of the individual and which utterly escapes words and interpretation.

What does Yoga teaching look like in the sense of this so-called exoteric structuring of the teaching? One of the first and most important principles is that in a general course no unwanted spiritual content is foisted upon the participants. The majority of those interested in Yoga attend courses not so much for their spiritual content, but rather for a simple feeling of bodily harmony. It can therefore be difficult nowadays to teach educational work because using a work-book gives the teaching a very person-centred approach. In public colleges therefore this form of Yoga can only be taught in its initial steps of a natural way of working with the body, the breathing and with mental exercises. Nevertheless the teaching is not done according to psychological theories and physical experiences, but rather it aims to work in a lively way, both with the abstract terms as well as with practical perceptions of the exercises and their results. With respect to the very varied methods of relaxation in Yoga, it is therefore not just the method that should be taught, but the content should also include the principles of a relaxed body and its laws. With this the teacher learns to develop a thinking that as far as possible is in context, that does not stop with a single definition, but takes account of various components and tries to see the overall nature of human beings. But this Yoga teaching avoids too theoretical a discussion and holds itself back from emotional and mystical experiences. The intention is to train the soul-forces, which should become stronger in their interplay and thus

promote more health as well as clarity in the consciousness. So the teaching is not moralising, not person-bound, is free of creeds and thus suitable for everyone. Nevertheless in educational institutions spirituality can be made available as an option by referring students to a book such as “Harmony in Breathing”. However in public institutions the book is not a compulsory basis for the work. Public Yoga courses in educational institutions are not person-centred.

It is different in the seminars that take place in the direct presence of the spiritual teacher and founder. The requirements, terms and code of conduct that protect the working atmosphere have a greater role in preparing for a seminar. It is a requirement to study certain books and to attend a preparatory information day, so that the work can begin more easily. The organisation and the preparatory information are, however, taken as a quite clear and practical area of work, which even when they function in direct relation to the spiritual teacher, are an independent and preparatory social activity. If hidden claims to truth were to slip into the administrative work of a seminar, this could have very unpleasant knock-on effects for visitors. For example, an administrator with a hidden claim to a spiritual truth would inhibit the freedom of telephone enquirers. Perhaps out of naïveté inappropriate praise would be expressed down the telephone. It would be disturbing and restricting for the running of a seminar if something grasping appeared at the telephone, informing the interested party not about the facts of the seminar, but wanting to win this person over for the seminar and the spirituality present in it. This innuendo in the information would already take away the freedom of the caller. Callers would not receive appropriate information and would be influenced by the underlying motive. The administration in the sense of “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” therefore has the task of assuring the factual quality of neutral information and of descriptive details.

The high requirement to be factual, to be clear and to inform and mediate in a way that is not persuasive but descriptive helps all those present towards a natural order and a good atmosphere in an event. The organism of an exoteric foundation bears a very concrete and pure motive, which works, on the one hand to allow a higher reality to transpire, and on the other hand to inform and explain. The spiritual source is in a certain way completely passive in “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”. It does not teach, it does not moralise, it does not seek gain, rather it shows, offers itself and lets each go as far as they may wish in coming towards its other reality. The spiritual source is, however, not an undertaking that would itself organise seminars and send employees outwards like lengthened arms. If this were spirituality, then it would be its own worldly centre. The exoteric administration introduces, describes, informs, and thus builds a natural bridge from the spiritual plane to the world. As a bridge it is open in both directions, upwards and downwards. But it is also an undertaking which has financial running costs, and maintains for the protection of everyone a necessary, natural management which is indispensable. The administration in “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” is its own social organism, which functions autonomously, independent of spirituality.

The basic exoteric order of a teaching organisation most clearly keeps away those feelings, which invisibly want to take control of the soul. These clear conditions are very important, for many people seek with the Yoga exercises a better feeling of health, or a more stable feeling of self-esteem, or quite generally a psychological sense of harmony of body, soul and spirit. In the course of time however these experiences usually turn into emotional energies, which are very difficult to identify and which can push the consciousness in an unwanted direction. Very few people nowadays can differentiate a psychological feeling of the organs from a spiritual experience. A feeling of harmony in the body and an increased flow of energy through an exercise or meditation are nowadays falsely rated as spiritual experiences and sometimes even as an experience of God. “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” will proceed very carefully with these experiences, which rely on tangible emotions, and it will sooner keep them away from its teaching structure. This is because experience has shown that those who gain an experience through exercises or meditation tend to over-identify with the experience. Their feeling of self-esteem becomes inflated and they feel themselves to be, so to speak “divine”, or “in a state of grace”, or “chosen”. At the very least they feel themselves elevated a pace from the earth and from all other people. What effects do these experiences, which can be very different in kind and yet almost always rely on a stimulation of the organs, have for further life in the future? If these experiences are investigated a very characteristic similarity can be established in most cases. That which represents the life-force in the body (technically: the etheric body), the pulsating, centrifugal and always dynamic energy-principle is released from its anchor in the body and rises too far upwards, or out of the body. The result is a feeling of elevation and at the same time a weakening. The latter usually remains unnoticed and in the long run brings many disorders, amounting to exhaustion and illness. The inappropriate release of the life-forces eventually almost always leads to infinite longings for heaven, which, however, only represent an unconscious search for security and safety. It is actually a temptation, which exists nowadays within people with many different organically-bound experiences, and does not really organise life in the body, but lifts it out of its usual stability. Those people who are subject to this temptation trigger family and partner conflicts quite unconsciously on their path. They feel themselves no longer understood by the family and transfer their attention all too easily to belonging to a spiritual group, or to their inclusion on the spiritual path. The teaching-body in its exoteric form works very strongly against these temptations, even if these are not completely avoidable.

Seminars are organised in a clear, objective context and offer no possibility of long-term attachment to a group. The spiritual source does not stand in the world as an independent party, but only serves as a possibility for inspiration. The teacher in his function only gives exercises to form the consciousness clearly and pays no attention to experiences that can be consumed. All this can provide an essential contribution to help form the soul in the right way. The exoteric order and the separation of the spiritual source from all technical, associated themes avoids the temptations which arise through false identification and feelings of belonging to a group.

This exoteric teaching structure is newly developed in its whole make-up, idea and practice. It is very rarely found in Yoga and Christian religious organisations. A different reality lives, or at least should live, in the Catholic Church through the so-called succession, through the ordination of priests. This succession upholds the power of the mass, the power of the sacrament and the rituals that represent spirituality. Even today therefore the giving of sacraments in the Catholic Church has a fictitious and yet intentional mystical character and it involves the help of magical powers in transubstantiation. In Yoga institutions the inner energies of a teacher are similarly transmitted to his followers who in turn transmit it to their students. At the same time many exercises take on an esoteric character, as they stress the psychological result in the experience of the feelings and do not strive for a fundamental strengthening of the soul-forces. Usually meditation and Yoga exercises also have an energetically charging and partly mystical character. The terms “mysticism” and “esotericism” are to be differentiated from each other in colloquial language and in their theological basis. For this description of the exoteric system of teaching however both orientations, the mystical paths of Christianity and the esoteric paths of Yoga, have a certain, common, inner character. They nearly always move in the hidden layers and activity of the consciousness. Teachers who teach approaches and components of “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” work entirely according to their own individual insights. They are not representative for the spiritual source, they are not officials of a system, which obeys a higher director and functions by extending a higher will. Rather they are people who have been trained on a path that strengthens the soul-forces and, according to their potential, pass on the knowledge they have achieved in a more explanatory and descriptive way.

The teaching is generally done more by illustrating, describing, portraying, showing. If the participants wish, consideration can be directed with care and clear awareness to the spiritual source and to the inspirations, to enrich the teaching further in a spiritual way, like meditation. However, the teacher points out the difference between the thinking which prevails in the spiritual source and conventional, academic thinking. These clear indications lead to a further, objective view and at the same time to an individual standpoint which leads to personal enrichment. The instructions of the teacher give rise to important and stabilising impressions which help to differentiate between the different forms of energies. Students are thus prevented from living in the spiritual source too soon, or from even seemingly merging with it.

The exoteric system of a seminar programme is, as a rule, experienced by the participants as very pleasant, liberating and purifying. But some people, principally those who from the start emphasise their “experience of God”, and let it be known that they feel themselves “enlightened” or “blessed”, usually have problems for a few days in accepting it all. From experience it is clear that the exoteric programme works to order and purify the minds and hearts of the individuals. Above all the programme stabilises the individual structure and the power of the consciousness. Illustrative teaching is comparable with a climber, who must first look for a long time at the mountain and reflect on the route, before actively placing his hands on the rock. One might think that exoteric teaching is never really put into practice and so seems like a climber who views his ideal as though from the perspective of an armchair. But that is not the case, for in “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” exercises and learning-steps are practised directly. The difference is only that of a more encompassing, individual position, which remains held like a full overview from an I to a You. So the individual participants go only as far into the practices as they can, while still maintaining their overview and natural understanding. Unlike climbers Yoga-practitioners do not seek the breakthrough in a wall to the longed-for peak of a sublime feeling. Rather they seek an objective experience of the various conditions of their own soul and its connections with the body, and if applicable, of the additional inspiration for the exercise.

In this way those practising approach a spiritual source in a very broad way of working and of developing discernment; a source which they experience in the course of their development as standing apart from their own I. It is a greater I, which stands apart from a smaller one. In “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” a spiritual individuation takes place, in which step by step an unfamiliar and strange reality is approached and confronted. It is not a mystical path and neither can it be described as one of the modern and typically esoteric paths. It is a path that rests on the power to form objective vision and consciousness.

The thoughts on the basic principles of exoteric teaching described above, have arisen through practical experience and through research into spiritual knowledge. They do not only describe a structure for earthly life and social religion, but give a picture that comes from a reality beyond the senses, which is applicable and harmonious to humanity. The goal of Yoga is not, as is generally still aimed for in various schools, the extinction of the individuality and an ascent into the experiences of cosmic unity with its silent calmness. Rather, it is to become conscious in the thinking, feeling and ultimately in the identity of action, of a self-revealing spiritual reality that even goes beyond the metaphysical world. The thinking and the feeling is not extinguished in an ascetic silence, and life is not withdrawn into monastic solitude. The thinking is taught to become an ever greater and more useable spiritual instrument, that becomes one with the creative thoughts of the world. The feelings remain natural and integrated, but they also are refined and attain a creativity developed out of the spiritual realm, which makes them a creative feeling of truth. The goal of all the efforts is a synthesis of the spirit in the world. This synthesis is expressed in people and their individuation, which takes place step by step and leads to transformation.

The order of the consciousness is reflected inwardly in the individual and outwardly in the organisation's administration

The whole exoteric system has been developed from a spiritual observation of the structures of the consciousness within the body. The outer work is to a certain extent a direct reflection of an inner understanding of spiritual order and the workings of the consciousness. However, a correct insight into the outer structures and their relationships to each other and amongst one another also provides another basis for directing the soul-life to that which we call God. A systematic division of the specialist areas into individual areas does not lead to hierarchical relationships, nor to a closed commune. It leads rather to a clearly defined competence and to a rational, individual organisation of the areas of work. The tasks, although varied in character and scale, are led by a communal idea. This is to implement and gradually shape deep imaginations and inspirations within the respective specialist area and social position. Hence a transcendent light of the spirit can shine, and moreover with this light, a practical enriching and penetrating of the life-structures can begin. The goal of the whole activity of the work is a synthesis of spirit, consciousness, life and matter.

Let us consider first of all in a more technical way the whole organism of the inner body of human beings. The highest limb of the human being is that which is commonly called "I". However, on more precise consideration this I as the highest limb is not a psychological component or a metaphysical reality. Rather it is a pure manifestation and pure transcendence, which escapes any subtle access or ethical standards. As a transcendent reality, this I is not really rooted in a body, neither in a physical nor a subtle one. Nevertheless it is in its mystery oriented to a body and fills this body with a uniqueness, with a secret of the highest, with that which is spirit, taking individuals beyond the animal kingdom and making them independent citizens with their own responsibility and their own awareness.

Furthermore the individual human being is supplied with an independent limb and that is the consciousness, the carrier of knowledge, of awareness, of perceptions and of actions and reactions. This consciousness is, in its basic configuration, already quite different from the transcendent and mysterious I, for it has a flow of movement from inside outwards and from outside inwards. In the consciousness the most varied movements, sequences of events, transformations and learning steps take place. Sometimes the contents of the consciousness change and spread outwards from within, and sometimes, through observations and learning steps, they stream in from outside. The consciousness is the magnificent bearer of learning and teaching.

The uniqueness of this consciousness is its integration into the duality, which exists above all in the great world-polarities of joy and sorrow. Whereas the I is still perfectly free, pure and intangible, the consciousness is seized by a kind of stirring, or better, movement which, in the constant play of a growing and becoming, wants to bring it to an infinite expansiveness. The consciousness wants to grow, and develop as broadly as possible. It is therefore also the limb which can take in what in religion is called temptation.

The further two limbs seem at first glance to be very concrete, easily understandable and so almost obvious. But they are in their uniqueness far more difficult to experience than the first. These are the so-called life (etheric) body, the sprouting principle of centrifugal energies, and furthermore the physical body with its visible form. Yet these two limbs exist only for the simple reason that the human-being is equipped with an I and a consciousness. It is for this reason that human awareness notices the life circumstances and physical conditions.

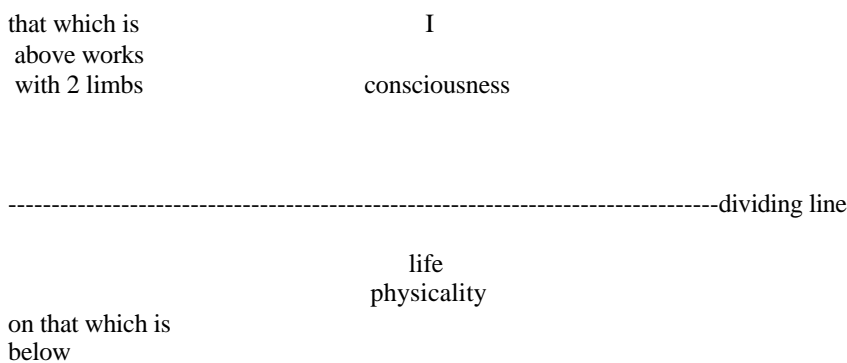
In spiritual development the attention is directed to the highest limb of being, to the I or to the self, the *paratman*, as it is called in Sanskrit. But this I is a magnificent and yet always incomprehensible mystery, which can have various holy names and yet evades all possible access. It is truth, love or uniqueness. It is universal and timeless. The attentiveness and the reverential feelings, the appreciative thoughts and praises are directed to this highest existence, which is generally known by the term "God". If in our discourse we ask who can actually possess this I for themselves, we will clearly receive the answer that the highest mystery is given and it exists in its own grace, free of any access, claim, power-games or possession.

Since this eternal uniqueness of the highest self is completely free and will remain free, "Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul" has undertaken the task to revere it in its forms of expression and its manifestations, to serve it and as the highest goal to know it in its meaning. For a certain time, therefore, the discipline of spiritual exercises is focused quite specifically on active study of those texts in which it achieves most clear expression. These are the texts already mentioned, which must all

come from the authenticity and originality of the authors, for if they were plagiarised or channelled messages, then the revelation and love of the self would no longer be experienced in them.

If these studies are completed according to the instructions, following the right principles of discernment, then the basic configuration of the soul develops. This expands the consciousness and increases the strength of the soul-forces, which are namely the thinking, the feeling and the will. On this path seekers get to know quite new dimensions of experience with clear thought-content, which enrich their world of perception and which comes to them like new nourishment for life and their life-forces. This revival of the life-sheaths is quite particularly experienced if a personal respect or reverence accompanies the studies, and the steps are taken with care and attentiveness. But since the mysterious, hidden life of the will also experiences an extraordinary strengthening, the ability develops for a more objective observation and contemplation. Seekers direct their attention to a quite different thought-world, which is not yet existent in them in this form and logic. They cannot therefore simply take it up, consume it or connect with it blindly, but must first of all familiarise themselves with it, like a strange mystery and then learn to comprehend it in its original, hidden sense. This training of the thought, the perception and the will leads to a silent strengthening of the I, in its transcendent reality. But this strength of the I does not make individuals seem insistent or perhaps dogmatic, rather it gives them the ability for further, objective considerations with regard to their own lives as well as the lives of others. This ability for more objective observation leads to an actual freedom and a feeling of being able to let be. But alongside many different aspects of freedom it also gives a healing clarity, for the seeker sees conditions such as illness, misfortune and death no longer as threatening and absolute, but as relative. Yet the growth of the I is a very silent development, which arises almost invisibly with these stages of learning.

This development of the limbs of being can be clarified with the following schematic representation:



The breadth and uniqueness lead, through steps of active awareness, to the detailed shaping of the life-forces, and there develops, as a result of this penetration, a natural harmony, health and beauty in the body. What is particular to this development is that individuals receive a stream out of the creative world of the thoughts and so their whole body-organisation, which is formed in a physical and etheric (life) way, becomes ordered in accordance with the principles of beauty and health. New life-forces are born and bring health to the previous existence.

When this development is carried over to a teaching institution, then this is illustrated through a very great breadth and organisation in the people who work in it. It is equipped similarly with an orderly structure, which allows invisible desire-beings and personal claims of individualities barely even to emerge. Schematically it looks like this:

transcendent source
of inspired thoughts

passive plane

plane
of work

teaching structure,
teacher in relation to students

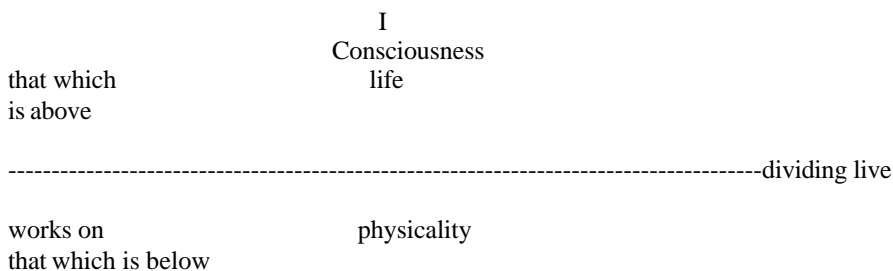
field of the I
and the consciousness

plane of effects

physicality, life

Life is thoroughly organised through the work with the consciousness in quite practical steps, and this can take effect right into the physical body, with an aesthetic enrichment of life's whole manifestation. Yet the requirement is that the esoteric plane of the spiritual source is not a limb, to which students or appointed teachers could lay emotional or intellectual claim in order to fulfil their needs. For this reason the upper dividing line arises. The lower dividing line arises furthermore because the physical body as well as the life-forces must be left free of all techniques, influences, manipulation and stimulation. The work always take place on the plane of the consciousness which, in clearly developed thoughts and well-considered perceptions, forms a relationship to that above and below. Therefore in the Yoga it is not stimulation of the organs and energies that is the primary intention with the physical exercises, and in the meditation we do not live our way into a silent stillness. The life-forces and the physical body with its genetic make-up are just accepted as they are.

As an additional example, a small comparison may show how, as a rule with the different mystical paths of immersion, these concrete planes of relationship become more and more difficult. In a mystical meditation-practice as a rule the consciousness is brought to a silence, or it is coupled with a specific esoteric or spiritual content with which it strives for a feeling of oneness. But this feeling of oneness is usually aimed for at much too early a stage, so that it all too easily comes to a temporary extinction of the quite concrete awareness of one's identity and of one's place in the world. The successful feeling is a kind of living one's way into another reality, with which the whole feeling of identity merges, and an illusory mood, usually perceived nonetheless as pleasant in itself, occurs. But this living one's way beyond proceeds at the expense of the growing alertness and understanding of the consciousness, as well as of the ability to pass over in perfect presence of mind to the esoteric or other reality. With these processes, the life processes are raised out of the body and mixed with other energies, which still have a character that is difficult to identify. Schematically the process looks like this:



When life is raised out of the physical body, at first very ecstatic feelings usually arise, which nevertheless point to an initial weakening and lead to numerous complications. The technical term for this is "the false separation of the ether". If this kind of spiritual practice prevails, there are usually quick experiences of success among the students, yet at the same time a

strange veiling of the consciousness arises, resulting in a generally ungrounded atmosphere that is neither here nor there. The participants in a course feel their quick success and identify with the ether broken off from the body. This, however, either removes the soul too far from the earth, or integrates the soul-forces in their existing state in a dulled way. The transcendence of the I is confused with an astral feeling. Within an organisation and institution the game of identification with the so-called “truth” cannot then be stopped, and on attending meetings we then meet nothing but “mystics”, “enlightened” or “initiated ones”. Through this brief description it must become clear that these manifestations give out something very strange, both outwardly and inwardly, for the empathetic and aesthetically perceptive individual.

The training projects are therefore established from the start on an exoteric basis. “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” strives both for a right integration of the soul in the innermost body, as well as for the right social and educational ordering in the outer structure of the teaching organisation.

On the problem of hierarchy and obedience

Obedience has been valued through the ages as a cardinal virtue. In religious systems this virtue had and has a very important role, both in Eastern as well as Western traditions. Within the exoteric system and teaching structure of Yoga there are no hierarchical structures involving a compulsory personal duty of obedience. This virtue refers rather to the fundamental spiritual and mental attitude, which plays its part in the unit of our own individuality.

Previously there existed a very direct and strict relationship between a master and a pupil. In oriental Yoga there is the tradition of initiation by a guru which seems very alienating to our culture and is often criticised in a very negative way. The guru is valued in India as the embodied form of God, as the truth in earthly form. For the pupil he is the absolute and represents the intangible self. So the pupil saw, and to some extent still sees today in his guru, his own I and the goal of his efforts. A total and unconditional submission to the guru was previously required in Yoga systems for the sake of spiritual success and sacrifice.

In the West the institution of the church took the place of the guru represented a secular yet compelling truth of the Holy Spirit, valid for all. Even after the Second Vatican Council the church has still taken the role of canonisation and states that without persevering in her no redemption is possible. Within the church therefore, obedience is rated as a cardinal virtue.

What is the situation in “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”? The teaching structure consists of many individual bodies that bear responsibility for their work in an individual way. There is no director, no control system, there are no auditors, no first and last, no officials, no priests, no initiated. Within their positions, all individuals have their own power of attorney. Neither is there a guru nor similar position, which would work in a hierarchical way on others. For this reason the cult-activities, reverential rituals, adoration and genuflection usual elsewhere are omitted. The spiritual teacher only has a role in his area of expertise, and that is to promote, in teaching and meditation, deeper knowledge, spiritual insights and the development of artistic, aesthetic and spiritual perceptions. He also teaches corrections, demonstrates different exercises, stimulates creative potential through concentration, and encourage an awareness and energetic development of the inner substances of the soul. The spiritual teacher is however not a guru who in a human way and in personal form demands submission from his pupils, and neither is he the director of a teaching structure in which he makes personal use of employees and helpers. Even though many students express a love for their teacher, this love is not of a limited and grasping kind, but more the expression of an uplifted, inner make-up of the soul, which emerges like an answer to the hidden dimension of the spirit and cannot be distinguished from a universal shimmer of grace.

The student gives the teacher natural esteem and respect and, if it is developed in the soul, an inner but silently declared reverence for the spirit. Respect is valued as an essential attitude and virtue when working and communicating together. A duty to obey, however, is not required from students on this path of constantly growing awareness, neither in relation to a change in their private lives, nor in relation to obligatory study. With the studies of Yoga, students do not enter an order in which they can work their way up to higher hierarchical positions, or which they would be forced to enter in order to participate.

The relationships that occur in a teaching organisation, or in courses of study, over a longer period of time, do not restrict the individuality of the seeker. The consciousness of the oriental Yogi was composed so very differently that even the total surrender of the I did not lead to the surrender of the individuality in the inner. It was more a retreat from outer life and from the world that was demanded by the master of his pupils, so that they could live a greater purity and be unimpeded in their goal of meditation. If nowadays students were to submit themselves totally to a teaching system or a teacher, the danger of confusion between the inner and outer structures of the personality would probably be so great that students would completely forfeit their individuality and creativity. In “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul” the virtue of obedience is therefore transferred to the individual path of development and is thus lifted totally out of outer, system-based hierarchies. The goal of Yoga is also not, as it once was, an escape from the world, but a conscious, orderly and light-filled entering into the manifestation of physical reality. In Yoga the individuality is not seen as a secular and global unit defined according to human forms of manifestation and differences. If it were only outer visible characteristics and qualities of personality that described the individual nature of a person’s being, then only in his physical embodiment would man, as an entity in creation, be an actual, independent manifestation. But man in his whole picture of being is a physical, cosmic and most unique form, which blooms in his infinite approach to the spirit, and particularly because of this inexhaustible approach to the spirit, keeps his individuality. For this reason students do not start on the path of Yoga with a passive redemption through Jesus Christ. They do not seek a creed or an affiliation to a church or group, but rather they seek the challenge of

learning, in order to attain ever new dimensions of insight into a creative reality. In the drive of this individual wish for the sublime truths of the spirit, the individual abilities and inner soul-qualities are revived. These are permeated with new light, ordered and in endless variations find their expression in the outer carrier, the body. Obedience is thus transferred from an outer system into the inner individuality, which, to its own extent and in its own process of development, communicates with the higher thoughts of the spirit. Some will only be able to accept 10% of an inspired text, another perhaps 20%, and again another will be in complete agreement with a text. That limb, which represents the I of humanity, which is also reflected in a certain way in the healthy perception of the heart, receives a living current from the inspired reality of the spirit. Students retain their uniqueness from within. They see the uniqueness in the thoughts and their joyous forms of manifestation and thus bring them alive through learning. The Yoga practised in this sense is a path, which promotes the individual in an all-embracing way and protects the person from falling into the mass-suggestions of our era.

Sources of inspiration on the path of spiritual training

On Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy

This all-embracing work is an infinite tree of wisdom. The thoughts of Rudolf Steiner work on the soul to illuminate, to clarify, and to focus the light at a precisely defined place. The expressions and descriptions, which Rudolf Steiner used, correlate very sensitively with spiritual reality. They come as close to super-sensory experience as colour to light. The colour of Rudolf Steiner's aura is still more alive, refreshing and reviving than those of the truly great saints of past eras. It shines out glowing golden yellow and passionless shimmering red. His work is uniquely precise, and at the same time it is the creation of thoughts that are deeply rooted in coherent knowledge. The thoughts are in no way fantasy. Rather they have an actual existence in the spiritual hierarchies. They are testimonies given partly from the astral realm and partly from the realm of Devachan. In Rudolf Steiner there lived and worked the I of Christ. This I gives revering seekers the key to another world, which they have long been unable to enter. It closes the door of painful, mystical asceticism and opens the reality of the thought. Those who study the texts of Anthroposophy acquire the ability to think in a way that forms and shapes. They will equip their lives with the gift of new senses, which will not become an obstacle for spirituality, but will accompany their own integrity with angelic freedom.

On "Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul"

Those who can see the etheric body or life-body become acquainted with the original, powerful dimension of the thoughts, for these arise from the light of the ether. The etheric body has a completely different dimension of action from matter. The earth is to a certain extent the consequence of an etheric life-process. Life is before the earth. The Christ-body in the ether is a creative reality, which brings the earth to life with a warm abundance and delight. The Christ in the ether unceasingly creates a striving for the spiritual, which continually leads people over the difficult hurdles of further attachments and saves them from a fateful descent into matter. In the etheric picture of the whole, the Christ is in fact the saviour from sin. Those who compare the pictures and texts of "Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul" will notice that same stirring, which touches them inwardly with a subtle shimmer, and which likewise relieves them from further movement into the solidity of matter. Even the most insensitive of people cannot completely deny this feeling. In this sense the pictures and texts about the *asanas* are less technical demonstrations, and much more the expression of a love, which has resulted entirely from taking up the etheric body of Christ. The pictures and texts are meditation, and elevate the soul.

On Sri Aurobindo's Synthesis of the Yoga

Reading the works of Sri Aurobindo creates a mood of consciousness that is reverend, respectful, that expands and becomes liberated from all attachments. The work is like the breath, free and untouched. A bluish, calming aura is present in those who dedicate themselves with attentiveness to the lines of his work. The subtle and yet strong, blue aura-radiation is the colour of the realised and pure self, the colour of a saint, of the soul's highest powers of will, thought and feeling. It is the colour of *Sri Aurobindo*. The consciousness, expanding with reverence, which surrenders with the attentiveness and concentration on the person and his work, is a result of the astral body of Christ. This body shines in, like a governing sea of stars, like the reverse side of the cosmos to be precise, and in artistic rhythms it looks upon the reader like a guiding light from heaven. It is cosmic music, rhythmic melody, harmonious vastness and untouchedness without sin. It is a view of the self, of the highest, brought to life again and again with a different spark, never drifting from the centre of the yoke in any of its compositions. Reading *Sri Aurobindo's* work inspires the fire of the will.

These three wide-ranging works have arisen quite independently from one another and thus all exist in their own right. Nonetheless, the inspiration and personal radiance of all three have an inner, spiritual connection: Integral Yoga, Anthroposophy and "Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul" seek a synthesis in world creation with the highest principle, which is generally known as "God". The work of Integral Yoga addresses primarily the will-aspect, Anthroposophy principally the thinking and "Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul", the feeling.

Working with a life's work over a long period of time can often lead to stagnation and an imbalanced understanding of life. It therefore seems very helpful to combine these three works for a sound spiritual study. The emphasis should, however, remain with one life's work.

Most of all these works stimulate that edifying consciousness, which is founded in purity, and which today is necessary to maintain the individuality. In a spiritual training the will, which is freely available in its unique way, must not be given up, laid aside or sacrificed. Rather it must become permeated, within a living context, with the gift of grace of the inspired consciousness that comes from the spirit. In their encoded expression, the texts mentioned hold immanent transcendence, leading readers to a sense of living, spiritual form in their thinking, feeling and willing.

Recommended literature for practical study

1. Rudolf Steiner:
Paths of soul experience
How to achieve knowledge of the higher worlds
Paths of practice
and specialist themes of personal choice
2. Heinz Grill:
Yoga and Christianity
Harmony in Breathing
others of personal choice
3. *Sri Aurobindo*:
The Synthesis of Yoga
Letters on Yoga
and others of personal choice

The *Bhagavad Gita* and the New Testament, probably other inspired works like those of *Satya Sai Baba (Bhagavad Gita)*, *Sivananda (Bliss Divine)*, Murdo MacDonald-Bayne (*Divine Healing of Mind and Body*).

When choosing texts, the emphasis is placed very carefully on the immanent transcendence, on the inherent, pure dimension of “self” of the divine spirit. If this inherent power of the self were lacking, then the works could not pass on to people the shaping-power that spiritualises and transforms the thinking, feeling and willing.

Stages for developing order and self-determination on the path of spiritual individuation

To study the texts of Anthroposophy, of Integral Yoga or of “Yoga out of the Purity of the Soul”, in the sense intended by the author, needs time and a discerning consciousness. A path of training should not be driven ahead too fast for the self-awareness to grow to the necessary stage of maturity and detachment.

1st.stage:

Those interested work at the texts mentioned. They do not yet understand the content, but consider the texts valuable and respect them as the truth of the spirit. Study is only a beginning, the reading of the texts imprecise, the recommended meditations, concentration and physical exercises are practised occasionally. Life remains as it is. Those interested follow spontaneous decisions to attend a lecture, or participate in a seminar or a meditation now and then. An objective is not yet clearly defined.

2nd. stage:

Those interested work more thoroughly with the texts and often practise exercises. Their life-circumstances remain nevertheless the same and there is no change in profession. However a clear objective of spirituality exists, whose direction and form is to strive for a synthesis with the spirit of Christ. This spirit, which radiates on to the thinking, feeling and willing, through the texts and the personal dedication, is the goal to be reached. Still there exists the need for pauses and interruptions in the *sadhana*. Those interested, however, would like at sometime in their lives to reach the ideal of love and holiness in the synthesis of the receiving spirit. An understanding of the texts and a deeper ability to discern gradually develops. However, many questions still remain open.

3rd.stage:

Those interested notice that they no longer makes progress through studying texts or doing exercises, and decide on an additional, more intense task, which they fulfil in lengthy and responsible activities. They work for an expertise in a particular area and try to realise the imaginations within the given thoughts. Life must still not necessarily be changed professionally, however the seekers try to thoughtfully implement their words and actions and learn to express the imaginations in their lives. The goal is to spiritually permeate an area of life with the truths of the imaginations. If the development of this 3rd. stage and the sacrifice connected with it is lacking, the 4th stage cannot realistically be carried out.

4th.stage:

Here the Yoga of Synthesis begins, in which a living spirituality is directly put into action through spiritual, creative research, connected with the sources. Many of life's circumstances must be precisely determined, and a right asceticism, which eliminates all destructive and impeding barriers, must be included in the *sadhana*. The consciousness must strive against many habitual moods and fears for a clear thought-content. Those who have reached this stage must learn to move on a higher, energetic level of awareness, through the strength of their own decisions