

Yoga/Rebirth

Yoga is a 5000 year old system that was originally and singularly designed to re-awaken the Self from the self. Many come to the ancient practice of Yoga as a means for rebirth. Currently in the West there exists a tremendous rebirth of yoga. This has mostly taken place in the Hatha or physical (asana) part of the yoga practice. The asana practice proves to be an ideal starting point for the yoga aspirant. The body and its physical sensations are among the most tangible or accessible parts of our selves. As challenging as the physical practice can be, the real miracle of the practice begins when one turns inward and finds the strength of self discovery, discipline and focus to be reborn to a higher Self.

Yogi's came to realize that their identity is wrongly placed with parts of "Who" we are that is transitory, instead of "With" the part of our self that is changeless. The rebirth to this original and unchanging state is achieved through the physical and spiritual practices of yoga with the purpose of achieving Moksha, a state of spiritual liberation. The many techniques of yoga are simply designed to strip away all the accumulated "stuff", sorrows and grief's that plague us as a human being living in the world.

This liberation is freedom from Samsara, the cycle of rebirth from the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain traditions. Most Buddhists believe in rebirth. Rebirth is no different from what the Hindus believed, i.e. reincarnation; moving from one's old body at death to a new body at birth. Rebirth is nothing more than the transmission of one's karma. Buddha likened it to the flame that passes from one candle to another.

But why do yogis's on their spiritual quest want freedom from Samsara and this endless cycle of rebirth? Samsara literally means "wandering-on" or great revolving door between life and death. There are six realms of the possible states of rebirth in traditional Buddhist history. They represent all the possibilities, good and bad, of life in Samsara. The six realms are also called the "six paths of suffering", "the six planes" or the "six lower realms". You can be reborn as a human, animal, ghost or be born in hell according to your Karma. So the yogi strives for enlightenment or liberation (Moksha) from the uncontrolled cycle of existence and this path of suffering.

Many people think of Samsara as the Buddhist name for the place where we currently live or the place we leave when we die. But in the early Buddhist texts, it's the answer, not to the questions, "Where are we?" or "Who are we?", but to the questions, "What are we doing in this life?" or "What is your life for?" The early yogi's wrote our path down in an ancient Vedic text:

There are four aims of life to accomplish:

To live in harmony with spiritual, mental, and physical laws of cause and effect in accord with your ability to do it.

Have constructive desires easily fulfilled.

Have the necessary material resources to satisfy real needs.

Liberation of consciousness.

When you know why you are in this world- and do your utmost to successfully accomplish your purpose-you will live as you are meant to live and prepare yourself for what you are to do and experience for the rest of your immortal life. Your current rebirth is but a brief sojourn in this realm of time, space, and ever-changing circumstances.

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