Freedom and Conditionality: Analysing mental and Yogic models of freedom

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Abstract

Keywords: Emotion, mental, psychological, freedom, cognition, kleśas (kleshas), saṃskāras, conditionality, non-conscious mind, dynamic energy and bio-energy.

This thesis explores how emotions stand in the way of clarity of mind. I examine a human being’s ability to break free of problematic emotional traits and attain liberation from conscious and non-conscious activators (behaviour motivators). I describe this aspiration as mental (or psychological) freedom. I identify mental freedom as an effective, unperturbed, helpful and productive state of mind; one that is free of irrational fears and emotional over-reactions. This thesis asks: Is freedom possible on a cognitive level, or do particular emotions negate freedom? I examine various theories of emotion, from both a cognitive and a physiological level, ultimately demonstrating a resonance between Yogic theories of energy distribution and Sigmund Freud’s mature work on energy flow (also exemplified in certain aspects of Wilhelm Reich’s theory of bio-energy). I call on the wisdom of ancient Eastern philosophy, modern cognitive theory, theories of emotion and psychoanalysis—exploring the mind-body relationship in respect to emotion and how this is expressed through the investment of energy.

In examining the relationship between mental freedom and emotional life I investigate the destructive, cyclic nature of conditionality (conditioned thoughts that arise from events that then condition further events), thereby analysing the part conditionality plays in creating a barrier to mental freedom. In particular, I explore the Hindu concepts of kleśas (causes-of-affliction) and the application of both Eastern techniques and modern cognitive therapy as behaviour modifiers—deconstructing unhelpful emotional tendencies—tendencies influenced by what Yogic theory would describe as saṃskāras (psycho traces or impressions [non-conscious afflictions]). Through textual and philosophical analysis, I aim to:

1. Outline the Yogic goal of citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ—restraint of the whirls of consciousness (whirling mind-stuff);
2. Define East/West concepts of cognition and emotion (from a philosophical perspective);
3. Explore the concept of kleśas, examining the affect kleśas have on the quality of human life;
4. Isolate and critique similar abstractions for kleśas in Western philosophy;
5. Elucidate and investigate particular philosophical approaches to the study of emotional life (I aim to avoid the interpretive filters traditionally used to dissect these theories: that is, frameworks that are religious, political, gender-based and/or cultural);
6. Investigate the relationship between emotional life and the body’s energetic system using empirical data and textual analysis;
7. Consider the important link between justice and freedom (a sense of personal justice) in identifying a path towards mental freedom.

1 “Reaction” is used to describe involuntary responses to an event, whereas “to act” is the term used to describe to a voluntary response.
I reach the goals outlined above by examining specific texts, teachings and practices that establish a connection between Eastern and Western interpretations of emotional life, through:

1. Exploring the barriers between mental bondage and mental freedom;
2. Identifying, comparing and analysing the causes and conditions responsible for these two extremes;
3. Investigating the hermeneutic cycle created between klešas and conditionality;
4. Analysing the reciprocal nature of cognition and physiological response in the creation of emotion.

Initially, this dissertation proceeds by:

1. Defining the key terms of the study;
2. Researching, isolating and analysing relevant theories of philosophical and psychological inquiry;
3. Exploring the cross-discipline/cross-cultural conceptual relationship between key theories discussed;
4. Investigating the barrier between mental bondage and mental freedom through a quantitative/qualitative survey: analysing the distinction between two diametrically opposing realities:
   a) Misconception/ignorance and fear (the basis of conditionality leading to mental bondage); and
   b) Observer-awareness or apperception and myth-deconstruction (the construction of mental freedom—through a form of introspection).

This thesis concludes by summarising the subversive nature of conditionality as it evolves from problematic emotional traits (klešas), and by determining the value of Eastern and Western goals directed towards observer-aware thought processes, mind-body therapy (such as breathing techniques and meditation practices).

In summary, this research examines the importance of clarity of mind and the free flow of energy within the human bio-system, highlighting a sense of personal justice and the absence of fear as essential qualities for achieving mental freedom (liberation).
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Preface

The people of the West live in a free world. There are, for instance, no tanks driving through the streets, no soldiers crashing down doors, no guns poised to fire. Yet many still live in a form of bondage—a bondage created by a state of mind. According to Yoga, this bondage is the result of a “cluttered” mind. Hatha Yoga (forceful [physical] Yoga)\(^1\) bases its wisdom on restraining the thoughts that “whirl” through the mind. Yoga recognises the need to access the “space” between one’s thoughts—a peaceful silent space that stills the mind—a point of clarity.

Yoga suggests that when a constant stream of “chatter” takes place in the mind ripples occur—ripples of unrest. Like the ripples in a pond once a stone has been thrown, the mind becomes unsettled and thereafter remains in a constant state of flux, where a stream of consciousness takes one from thought to thought to thought, often unrelated, sometimes illogical, and frequently unhelpful. The individual caught up in a perturbed stream of consciousness becomes restless, anxious, even disturbed. Therefore, the ripples of thought move beyond one person to the next as a result of action, what takes place within one mind cannot help but influence others. Every individual thought, every decision, every action has an effect on the lives of others; one person’s thoughts can change the state of the world as reflected by the graciousness of Gandhi and the cruelty of Hitler.

According to Yoga, freedom is defined by what it is not: it is not pain and misery. Mental bondage comes in the form of suffering, a suffering known as emotional pain, dis-ease and unhappiness. In The Conquest of Happiness, Bertrand Russell writes: “Animals are happy so long as they have health and enough to eat. Human beings, one feels, ought to be, but...are not”.\(^2\) Russell attributes unhappiness to mistaken views of the world.\(^3\) He argues that happiness is a human right. Yogic philosophy reaffirms this belief, claiming that individuals often become captive to the ignorance of illusion: a view that proposes that perception is reality.

Yoga maintains that human beings look for joy or happiness in all the wrong places: in their attachment to objects and relationships, in the tortuous cycles of thought that grasp for approval, status and power. Consequently, one’s freedom, on a mental level, is stifled by the frustration of unfulfilled wants: by emotional pain and by the fear experienced because of a perceived lack, rejection or denial. Yoga contends that human beings constantly look outside themselves for satisfaction, seeking the path to contentment through environmental stimulus. For Yoga true freedom can only take place from within. This thesis seeks to explore this claim.

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\(^1\) Hatha Yoga is one of the many limbs of the tree of Yoga. It is based on theories and techniques aimed to facilitate the healthy functioning of the mental and emotional processes by working with the energy or life force present in the physical body.


\(^3\) Ignorance is a term used throughout this thesis. Firstly, as a word to describe a person’s inability to understand what motivates their own thought processes, and secondly, in the context of avidyā, which reflects the inability of consciousness to be aware of itself: to be caught up in illusion.
Part One: Foundations of freedom and conditionality
PRELIMINARIES

All over the world, Yoga and systems related to Yoga are being practiced; discontented people are searching for viable paths of transformation.

Christopher Key Chapple

i. Styles, definitions and conventions

Before commencing it is important to clarify my use of style, definitions and conventions. The formatting used throughout this thesis is as recommended in the DCITA Style manual: for authors, editors and printers (Sixth Edition). In this thesis single quotation marks are used to highlight actual quotations and double quotation marks are used to emphasise particular words, as are occasional italics. Because of the volume of theoretical input evaluated the writing style I use is quite descriptive, as constructing my argument requires a critical exegesis of a multitude of theories. A comprehensive glossary is found at the end of this thesis, just before the bibliography.

The language used is intended to be non-gendered. Use of masculine pronouns in relation to traditional or classical texts has been left unaltered. Where possible, plurals (them, they, their) have been used. Where the quotations form part of the text they are either indented or contained within quotation marks. However, where quotations are used for creative emphasis and are not actually a direct part of the text they are indented and italicised. Throughout the thesis I use Jean-Paul Sartre’s term “the other” to describe other people. When discussing what is “not conscious” in the mind, I use the terms “unconscious” for psychoanalysis and “non-conscious” when referring to Yogic and other traditions. This is done to make a clear distinction between specific theories and their terminology.

1 CK Chapple, Yoga and the luminous: Patañjali spiritual path to freedom, State University of New York Press, Albany, 2008, p. 5.
2 DCITA, Style manual for authors editors and printers, 6th edn, John Wiley & Sons, Milton, Qld, 2002.
3 Sartre, p. 302.
This thesis is a philosophical investigation discussing the benefits of particular theories “uncoloured” or unencumbered by traditional interpretive filters, filters such as patriarchy, gender, sexuality, culture or religion. I attempt to create a point of reference from which the idea of freedom can be examined and compared to existing knowledge without limiting the acquisition or attainment of freedom to societal constructs, milieu, doctrines and mindsets.

I deliberately avoid using a strict historical-critical approach to the study of Yoga, which would digress into a history of the theories of Yoga. Instead I choose to approach Yoga as a practical methodology for physical and psychological transformation. This thesis is not a treatise of all things Yoga. I do not set out to argue the differences between numerous schools or theories of Yoga, nor do I tease out every significant aspect of Yogic theory and practice. I do however, analyse Yoga in a remedial manner, as a method of counteracting unhelpful emotional tendencies, and the terms I choose to define Yoga relate specifically to this avenue of exploration. I endeavour to present my study of freedom in an “objective” way; without the ‘gloss’ of particular theoretical frameworks. I do not apply a strict Marxist, Freudian, Reichian, Jungian, Hindu or Buddhist framework. This theory can only be properly examined when viewed impartially. Therefore, I attempt to approach this research as impartially as humanly possible, and I concede the difficulties arising from this approach.

I draw heavily on Taimni, in particular his book titled *The science of Yoga.* By using this reference I do not infer that Yoga stands or falls on a scientific model. Although I reference studies from Harvard that provide scientific evidence of the biological effects of Yoga I am not suggesting that Yoga is only explained using a scientific representation. Yoga is used widely as a spiritual therapy and many of its benefits remain unexplained in terms of science. However, I certainly wish to give recognition to the scientific principles reflected through Yogic physiology.

In Western psychology “consciousness” is used to describe ‘the state of being conscious...the normal mental condition of the waking state of humans’. Consciousness is characterised by experiences of the external world—perceptions,

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thoughts and feelings and by self-awareness.\textsuperscript{7} In Eastern terms, consciousness is often used to refer to something greater than a waking state. It refers to a higher form of intellect (\textit{buddhi}): an “awakened” state of knowing, rather than simply being awake.\textsuperscript{8} However, it is important to note the Feuerstein uses the word “consciousness”, when he refers to the “whirls of consciousness”, in the Western context.

It should be noted that the use of the word “self” will vary depending on the way it is used within this thesis. “The Self” in various aspects of Eastern theory denotes a higher Self, something connected to the universal essence of all things: with one’s true-nature \textit{puruṣa} (spirit), whereas “the self” is used in both Eastern and Western theories to denote a person’s sense of individuality.

Instead of using the word “rational” to describe positive emotions and thoughts, I use the word “helpful”, unless referencing a specific theory (bearing in mind that one can “rationalise” inappropriate behaviour and feelings). I use the word “helpful” in respect to what is helpful to one’s wellbeing and is not detrimental to others. My approach reflects Robert C. Solomon’s view that emotions are simply not a black or white phenomenon; hence one should avoid describing them as positive or negative.\textsuperscript{9} Instead of viewing emotions as positive or negative, I see them as helpful or unhelpful. Notably, Albert Ellis’s concept of rational emotive behaviour also refers to what is helpful to the individual’s wellbeing.\textsuperscript{10} This will be explained in more detail as the thesis proceeds.

In this research I avoid associating freedom and bondage (bondage as defined as a conditioned existence) with normal and abnormal behaviour. In behavioural terms, normality implies a level of constancy, which is in contrast to the dysfunction and distress associated with abnormal behaviour. However, the variations or gauges used to determine normal behaviour vary between cultures, religions and other arbitrating frameworks. Furthermore, although the pain and suffering induced by psychological abnormality is inherent in Yoga’s concept of bondage, the term “abnormal” suggests a

\textsuperscript{7} ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} Feuerstein, \textit{The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga}, p. 66. \textit{Buddhi} is the feminine form of \textit{Buddha} (the awakened one).
\textsuperscript{9} RC Solomon, \textit{True to our feelings: what our emotions are really telling us}, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p. 171.
more clinical approach to psychological imbalance, and is therefore not an appropriate term to use here.

Within the context of this thesis, the phrase “Eastern thought” or “Eastern philosophy” refers to certain Hindu or Buddhist theories that relate to Yoga. I use the word Yoga with reference to the *Yoga-Sūtras*, unless otherwise identified. When I use terms like “Yoga suggests” or “Yoga teaches”, I am speaking specifically of the practical and philosophical components of Patañjali’s Classical Yoga as presented by the scholars identified in this research such as Feuerstein, Chapple, Taimni, Wood and Whicher. I also reference my own experience as a Yoga practitioner for over 40 years and as a Yoga teacher and Yoga therapist. In this respect, “Yoga teaches” relates more specifically to the practical aspects of Yoga theory and philosophy. I accept and identify that not all theories and aspects of Yoga can be examined in such a short work and it is not my intention to do so. I do not purpose that this thesis be read as speaking for all Yoga tradition, nor should it be read as an all-encompassing view of the whole history of Yoga.

Yoga has widespread theories and many of these involve religious and spiritual aspects. Cosmology, Shamanic influences, Ayurvedic medicine and physiology, religious and spiritual dynamics, and cultural and historic doctrines, including Vedic teachings are large issues that, although a significant component of Yogic tradition, are not referenced in depth within the scope of this thesis. This is a deliberate decision that allows the work to maintain focused on the effects of Yoga on the Western world, more specifically the individual, in terms of freedom from conditionality. When I refer to “Yoga theory” I also do not intend to give the impression that I am representing Yoga as a monolithic tradition. I respectfully recognise the numerous texts, traditions, theories and lineage of Yoga, most of which cannot be addressed without increasing the scope of this thesis.

The term “Western thought” or “Western philosophy” refers to theories such as Freud’s psychoanalysis, Ellis’s Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) and any other Western theories drawn on, such as the theories of Robert C. Solomon, Robert Plutchik and a number of others. However, it is important to point out that my approach to Yoga is posited in the Western world and its relationship to freedom from conditionality, therefore the theorists chosen for analysis are those who aim to convey the practicalities of Yogic theory and philosophy to the Western world. Some scholars may object to this
vision of Yoga and its overlay of Western interpretation but my strategic positioning is based on the decision not to analyse the Yoga system in light of its context within history of Indian thought, but rather to focus on the context of universal human psychological issues. I use primary research with informants, through empirical data, to confirm the applicability of the *kleśas* within modern psychological categories. Critics may argue that many of the Western theorists I have included would denounce Yoga as a therapy, or at the very least depreciate its benefits. However, I have found that there are obvious parallels in a comparison of Eastern and Western thought, even if only on a basic premise.

With regard to the Eastern texts examined, Sanskrit spelling varies between schools and translations and interpretation may present difficulties due to lack of an equivalent English word. English and Sanskrit terms have both been used simultaneously upon introduction of the term and where re-clarification is required. Notably, Sanskrit meanings between Buddhist and Hindu interpretations can vary slightly therefore the particular source of word used is clarified at the time of discussion. Furthermore, there are numerous variations in translation of the main text analysed within this thesis, namely *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*. The word “*sutra*” is presented in both singular and plural format. For example, Stoler Miller and Feuerstein’s translations are titled *The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali*, Swami Satchidananda uses the plural version *Sūtras*, and Wood refers to the *Yoga-Sūtras* as the *Yoga aphorisms of Patañjali*. For the purpose of this discussion the *Yoga-Sūtras* are referred to in a plural format except when quoting from a specific text. It is my intention not to become burdened by the need to explicate every term within its original context but rather I aim to expand the hermeneutic within context of the thesis topic.

The word “justice” is used within this thesis to describe an individual’s sense of personal justice or injustice. I could go much further in analysing the connection between justice and freedom but it would take me too far a field. For the purpose of this research justice is discussed as a perception, rather than a measure; it is highlighted in terms of the justice or injustice relating specifically to one’s sense of reality.

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ii. Literature review

The literature examined in this thesis is used to provide a framework in which to analyse the concept of mental freedom. In order to explore this concept of freedom, I analyse specific texts, teachings and understandings. I investigate the connection between Eastern interpretations of concepts such as kleśas (causes-of-affliction) and saṃskāras (subliminal activators or non-conscious impressions) and similar or equivalent ideas provided by Western philosophical, psychoanalytical and psychological traditions.

Although Georg Feuerstein and I. K. Taimni are the primary researchers referenced in respect to Yoga, I also quote from various translations of the Yoga-Sūtras and other related texts, reviewing authors such as: Christopher Key Chapple, Eugene Kelly, Ian Whicher, Jiddu Krishnamurti, David Carpenter, Barbara Stoler Miller, Sri Swami Satchidananda, Ernest E. Wood, T. S. Rukmini and Mircea Eliade. The reason for this broad reference is the often slight, and occasionally considerable, differences in the interpretations provided by each commentator. For instance, where one translator uses the word “grasp”, another might use the term “known”. In many respects these variations mean virtually the same thing, but it is also possible that slight discrepancies between them can be significant. Each commentator expounds the views of Yogic sages with their own unique perspective, bringing a richness and clarity to the subject. The general texts researched for this study are as follows:

- *The science of Yoga*, by I.K. Taimni. This is one of the most comprehensive discussions of Patañjali’s Yoga-Sūtras. It details the goal of Yoga pinpointing the kleśas as a pivotal aspect of Patañjali’s philosophical treatise.
- *The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali* by various authors (which consists of four books). This thesis focuses on book two (the book of practice), although it cannot avoid touching on the other three.

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12 Taimni.
• Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy: a therapist’s guide by Albert Ellis and Catharine MacLaren.\textsuperscript{14} This text is used to analyse the relationship between emotional disturbance and internal dialogue and its link to observer awareness in Eastern thought.

• The first and last freedom\textsuperscript{15} and Total freedom\textsuperscript{16} by Jiddu Krishnamurti. These texts give a detailed account of the Yogic concept of freedom and examine the ways in which it needs to be integrated into modern living through awareness: with the aim of putting an end to ignorance and societal disorder through Yoga.

• Emotions in life by Robert Plutchik.\textsuperscript{17} This text provides definitions of emotive and cognitive function in relation to freedom (exploring various theories including those of Walter Cannon, Charles Darwin, William James and Sigmund Freud).

• What is an emotion? Edited by Robert C. Solomon.\textsuperscript{18} This collection discusses emotions as a mental, physical and social phenomenon. An analysis of the mind-body connection requires an exploration of the work of S. Schachter and J. Singer as detailed in What is an emotion?\textsuperscript{19} Schachter and Singer propose that emotions have two components: physiological (feeling) and cognitive (thought).

• The basic writings of Bertrand Russell by Bertrand Russell.\textsuperscript{20} This collection provides in-depth philosophical insights that explore the basics tenets of human existence from a Western perspective.

• ‘The psychophysiology of freedom’ by José M. Delgado.\textsuperscript{21} This text explains the psychophysiological aspects of freedom.

From a Yogic perspective, I examine texts that focus on the concept of ignorance and suffering, which in Yogic thought result from unhelpful emotional prompters (klesās). As well as those mentioned above I research various other theorists such as Purushottama Bilimoria, Mark Singleton, Peter Fenner, Ian Kesarcodi-Watson and Padmasiri de Silva and others.

\textsuperscript{14} A Ellis & C MacLaren, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy: a therapist’s guide, Impact Publisher, California, 1998, p. 28.


\textsuperscript{17} R Plutchik, Emotions and life, American Psychological Association, Washington, 2003.


\textsuperscript{19} Solomon, What is an emotion? pp. 110-118.

To explore the notion of morality in relation to freedom and emotion, or as it is referred to in the Classics ‘the passions’, I explore Greek traditions of Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics. I broaden my study of freedom by examining a number of Eastern and Western theorists including: Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Douglas Kirsner, David Bohm, Bertrand Russell, José M. Delgado, Abraham Maslow, Friedrich Nietzsche, René Descartes, Immanuel Kant, David Hume, Michel Foucault, Jean-Paul Sartre, Mark Epstein, and Wilhelm Reich.

The following texts are used to analyse the brain and its evolution, and to explore biological links to cognition, emotion and energy, more specifically the concept of energy distribution, which has important significance in relation to the practical aspects of Yoga outlined in Patañjali’s eight limbs of Yoga (ashtā-anga-yoga), particularly āsana (posture work) and prānāyāma (breathing techniques):

- *A triune concept of the brain and behaviour* by Paul Maclean. This book is included to establish the physical evolution of the brain (supporting the concept of environmental influences on emotional life).
- *Principles of anatomy and physiology* by Gerard Tortora and Bryan Derrickson. This text is consulted to explore a comparison between Western medicine and Yogic physiology’s vital energy source.
- *Molecules of emotion* by Candace Pert. This text is studied in order to examine the relationship between mind and body chemistry.
- *Emotions* by José Delgado. This text provides a comprehensive analysis of emotional life.

These authors, and various others, are included to help evaluate whether (and if so, how) non-conscious or subtle emotional influences are catalysts for particular patterns of development, in respect to freedom on an emotional and biological level. I question

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whether one’s thoughts control one’s body chemistry or whether one’s body chemistry
directs the mind, investigating the notion that health and wellbeing are constructed by
environmental events that create a destructive “think/feel/act” cycle, which can be
explained in terms of cognitive behaviour therapies such as Albert Ellis’s Rational
Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) and from an Eastern perspective in terms of
conditionality. 26

Due to the scope and nature of this research, presenting all of the historical details, in
respect to a comprehensive textual exegesis, is not possible. Instead, each theory is
analysed with a specific emphasis on the notion of mental liberation and how this is
constructed within the framework of the theory that is being explored. For instance,
although Freudian theory has had an extensive and significant influence on the world of
psychology, my discussion is narrowed down to Sigmund Freud’s insights regarding the
organisation of the personality and his views on the concept of psychodynamic energy. I
use Freudian psychology to demonstrate what is hidden: that is, particular thought
processes such as the unseen or unsaid nature of the unconscious mind. I also focus on
Freud’s philosophical views, which are expressed within his many writings.

In my research, the ego, the id and the superego are contrasted against similar Eastern
theories relating to governing cognitive functions. 27 Although a traditional review of
Freud’s psychoanalytical theory is customarily linked to sexuality, I endeavour to
examine Freud’s theories from an objective, eclectic perspective, focusing on his later
work and the view that ‘cathexis’ (the investment of emotion energy) is significantly
related to the life and death instincts rather than purely reliant on one’s sexual life.
Furthermore, rather than dwelling on Freud’s theory of the cause of dysfunction, I
concentrate on the cognitive, physiological and emotive processes activated once the
dysfunction occurs.

I explore Wilhelm Reich’s ideas in relation to ‘character armor’, which he describes as
invisible armour created by emotionally driven tension connected to the body’s bio-suit
of muscles and respiration. 28 This armour creates what Reich calls an ‘emotional

27 The id is German for “it”.
28 W Reich, Character analysis, trans. VR Carfagno, M Higgins & CM Raphael, M.D. (eds) Farrar,
plague’, resulting from certain ways of thinking, more specifically the way one internalises societal judgement and stereotypical role construction.29 Similarly, When discussing Carl G. Jung’s theories of the anima and animus, I do not attempt an in depth understanding of Jungian psychology, but instead, examine Jung’s ideas specifically in comparison to the principles of Yogic theory, highlighting the unique link between the male and female energy—aspects evident in both theories.

Yogic theory relates the body’s energy force to prāṇa,30 and this concept of prāṇa is explored using The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali as translated by Feuerstein,31 Chapple and Kelly,32 Taimni,33 Stoler Miller,34 Wood35 and Satchidananda.36 Yoga tradition holds that prāṇa moves with the breath within the body—in Hatha Yoga, prāṇa37 is enhanced by a combination of movement and breath. David Gordon White describes Hatha Yoga as: ‘The forceful channeling and control of the vital breaths (prāṇas)’.38

This part of the study also draws heavily on the practical course content from the Advanced Diploma of Yoga Teaching39 and the Graduate Certificate in Yoga Therapy40 as instructed by the Director Leigh Blashki (Blashki is an advisor to International Association of Yoga Therapists and the President of Yoga Australia). This material provides vital insights into the nature of Yoga. Yogic texts suggest that when one experiences tension in the body and mind, the flow of prāṇa is restricted, which ultimately causes blocks in energy that lead to dis-ease. For this reason the study outlines various theories of energy, starting with prāṇa and then extending to explore Western concepts such as biochemical (Pert) and psychological theories (Freud). Also

are no purely mental illnesses as the body and mind are intrinsically entwined—each individual is burdened with ‘Character Armor’ that reflects the rigidity of the society in which one lives.

29 ibid., p. 460.
31 Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali.
33 Taimni, The science of Yoga.
35 Satchidananda, The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali.

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relevant to the study of the Western notion of dynamic energy is Reich’s concept of bio-
energy, referred to as orgone.\textsuperscript{41}

Using the literature outlined above, energy is examined from various perspectives—
physical, subtle, mental and emotional.\textsuperscript{42} I note that philosophers or scientists such as
Freud, Reich, Jung and Patañjali share a common thread. Each of these theorists
presents a basic premise that the mind and the body is a unified energy system, one that
is charged and discharged by a combination of physical and psychical exchanges.
Influenced by different values, cultures and eras, each theory takes its own stance but
shares an underlining principle: that the ebb and flow of this energy influences the
quality of an individual’s emotional life. See below for some of the texts explored in
relation to energy:

- \textit{Introductory lectures on psychoanalysis} and \textit{The unconscious} by Sigmund
  Freud.\textsuperscript{43} This text is reviewed to investigate Freud’s dynamic energy.
- \textit{Character analysis} by Wilhelm Reich.\textsuperscript{44} This text is examined in terms of Reich
  ‘character armour’ and ‘emotional plague’.
- \textit{Man and his symbols} by Carl G. Jung.\textsuperscript{45} This text is used to explore the male and
  female aspects of psyche.
- \textit{Principles of anatomy and physiology} by G. J. Tortora and B. H. Derrickson.\textsuperscript{46}
  This text is a resource for comparing Western medicine with Yogic physiology’s
  vital energy source.
- \textit{Molecules of emotion} by Candace Pert.\textsuperscript{47} This text is reviewed to discuss the
  relationship between mind and body chemistry.

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\textsuperscript{41} Reich, \textit{Character analysis}, p.xii. Orgone energy, as presented by Reich, is a universal life energy—the
bio-energetic core of emotional function.
\textsuperscript{42} Partridge, \textit{Origins}, p. 678. The term “subtle body” is used within the context of Yoga as the underlying
system or life-force—the word ‘subtle’ relates to the Latin word for \textit{subtilis} meaning ‘fine-woven, delicate,
ingenious or web’.
\textsuperscript{44} Reich, \textit{Character analysis}, p.xii.
\textsuperscript{46} Tortora and Derrickson, \textit{Principles of anatomy and physiology}. 

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iii. Chapter overview

PART ONE

Chapter One

Chapter One presents the basic premise behind my thesis and discusses Yoga as a concept, providing the background and context for this study. I detail the significance of the research and the rationale behind it. I present my research aim, design and methodology, identifying the primary research question. This chapter includes a conceptual and historic outline of Yogic theory and explains the eight limbs of Yoga. I discuss certain theoretical frameworks pertinent to the wider study, and of particular importance here is Yoga’s focus on *yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*: restraint of one’s thought processes.

PART TWO

Chapter Two

Chapter Two defines the notion of the *kleśas* and identifies them as the seeds of burden: a barrier to freedom. From a Yogic perspective, I explore Yoga’s “afflictions” and how they relate to freedom.48 I discuss the concept of conditionality and consider how it affects an individual’s wellbeing. I investigate wellbeing in terms of emotional life, highlighting the complexity of human feelings and the problematic nature of emotional control. I introduce the concept of the five *kleśas* on a more extensive level. The next five chapters examine the five *kleśas*.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three discusses the concept of *avidyā* (ignorance), which is the first of the five *kleśas*. To establish a meaning for ignorance within the context of this study, I examine

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48 Pert, Molecules of emotion.
the criteria of knowledge—the how and why of knowing—particularly in relation to a measure for what one might consider to be the truth. I then discuss “knowing” in terms of understanding and subjectivity, and relate this back to ignorance through exploring the notion of freedom, ultimately linking this to emotional life.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four explores the notion of “I” or I-sense (asmitā), which is the second kleśa. I examine belief systems and how they contribute to the construction of “I”. I delve further into subjective “truth” and discuss what one might call personal myths. I investigate freedom in terms of justice: from an individual perspective. I examine the “shoulds, oughts and musts” one imposes on oneself and the frustration and perturbation associated with these constraints. I investigate moral concepts of righteousness and the affect this has on mental freedom. Finally, I analyse the Yogic notion of consciousness, as veiled by the I-sense.

Chapter Five

Chapter Five examines the third kleśa—rāga (attachment). I explore attachment in terms of pleasure and attraction and relate this back to the non-conscious. I discuss Freud’s idea of the unconscious and his theory of dynamic energy, showing the attachments of the id, the ego and the superego. When discussing the superego I relate this back to inner conflicts and notions of sin and virtue. I then go on to investigate Jung’s unification of male and female energy and relate this to Yoga’s male and female aspects of the individual’s psycho-physiology. I explore the link between freedom and wellbeing. In relation to mind-body theory, I examine what Reich terms “character armour”—the physical effects (attachment) of emotion. I briefly explore Reich’s emotionally plagued society and Freud’s theory of sexuality.

Chapter Six

Chapter Six examines the fourth kleśa, dveṣa (aversion). I present dveṣa as the flip side of rāga, which reflects the polarity between what one likes and what one dislikes;

46 Yoga’s affictions consist of change, anxiety, habituation and conflict. These will be discussed further in Chapter Two.
something ultimately associated with pleasure and pain. I identify the links between dveṣa and rāga in relation to human misery and suffering (in mental/emotional terms). I research the concept of aversion and its extremities and explore the lack of emotional control associated with this kleśa. I relate this Eastern concept to the views of various Western theorists such as Freud, Ellis and Reich. Finally, I connect dveṣa and rāga back to fear.

Chapter Seven

Chapter Seven examines the fifth kleśa known as abhiniveśa (clinging to life or the will to live). I identify this clinging with fear and relate it back to the other kleśas, thus explaining fear as a basic catalyst for all of the kleśas. Here, I utilise the empirical data of the questionnaire and interviews. As fear is a major focus in this thesis its discussion is not confined solely to this chapter.

PART THREE

Chapter Eight

Chapter Eight begins by discussing Yoga’s emphasis on self-discipline and social-restraint. I explore and compare both Eastern and Western concepts of energy and relate them to freedom. I explain the Western function of homeostasis and examine how emotions influence this process. This chapter also looks at breathing techniques and the power of silence, particularly regarding meditation and yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ.

Chapter Nine

Chapter Nine, the final chapter, provides a summary of all of the above. In this chapter I encapsulate Yoga’s path to freedom. My thesis concludes by reaffirming the value of Eastern and Western goals that work towards constructing a consummate, rational, observer-aware thought process as a means of controlling the unhelpful effects of conditionality. I underscore the importance of awareness and responsibility, and friendship and justice in the realisation of freedom. In all of the chapters outlined I include the findings of my empirical research, relating these findings to the key concepts as discussed.
CHAPTER ONE

Mental freedom and the veils of illusion

Yoga has spread far from its home in India, yet its message has remained the same: one can experience freedom and spontaneity through adoption of a specific way of life, defined by ethics, movement and meditation.

Christopher Key Chapple

1.1 Introduction—concept in brief

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the notion of mental freedom. There are many ways of understanding the concept of freedom, which include political, religious and spiritual freedom, and these need to be demarcated. I examine the psychology of mental freedom: analysing the notion of freedom as a process of thought. I use a cross-cultural and cross-disciplined investigation to explore freedom in respect to emotional life. I avoid classifying freedom within a “glossed” framework. Freedom, as a concept, implies the need for an objective and un-conditioned approach. For this reason my approach is psychological, philosophical and spiritual (with a particular definition of this term), it is not religious.

I investigate the differences and similarities between various Eastern and Western theories of freedom and how they relate to emotion. More specifically, I research the connection between the Yogic concept of the klešas, said to be the causes-of-affliction and the Buddhist term “conditionality”, which is used within this thesis to describe a destructive cycle of thought:3 ‘conditioned thoughts that arise from events that then condition further events’.4 More specifically, I examine the connection between klešas and conditionality, and how this affects freedom: in doing so, I bridge a gap in academic

1 CK Chapple, Yoga and the luminous: Patañjali spiritual path to freedom, State University of New York Press, Albany, 2008, p. 5.
2 RA Wilson, Wilhelm Reich in hell, New Falcon Publications, Arizona, 2007, pp. 18-34. Glossing refers to a biased overlay applied to concepts.
research by providing a link between particular theories of emotion, freedom and conditionality. It is important to clarify that although I often compare theories from the East and the West, I, in no way claim that an exact correlation can be found between the specifics of these theories. It is unavoidable that at times this comparison will create a nuance issue. For instance, British philosopher Bertrand Russell’s views regarding theology, and its spiritual connotations, cannot be directly overlaid on the Yogic concept of spirituality. However, Russell’s concept of free intelligence reflects a freedom from conditionality and which places the two theories on a path towards the higher goal of psychological liberation.

I included Russell in this analysis because he represents the history of Western philosophical tradition. Although Yoga is something that comes from a completely different tradition—a tradition that Russell would be unlikely to appreciate—the two theories share similar core values. They each work towards the betterment of human life. There is a common humanitarianism shared between them. Both theories come to similar conclusions, yet from entirely different philosophical backgrounds. Russell was a champion of freedom of thought and in many of his treatises he questioned the fundamental nature of being in the world. Although it is highly unlikely that he would be an advocate for Yoga, like Yoga, his worked centred on freedom of mind, and for this reason it adds a vital element to my philosophical argument.

Using the empirical data collected from questionnaires and interviews and a textual analysis of particular Eastern and Western theories of emotion, I aim to reveal the polarity between freedom and conditionality. Moreover, I link these two extremes with the schism between wellbeing and dis-ease, using Yogic and Western theories of physicality.\(^4\) Through this process of investigation I connect the duality of one’s cognitive-physical emotional life with the release of tension, exploring the reciprocity between the mind and the body in terms of freedom. Where Freudian analysis might relate such tension to the unconscious expression of sexual drives and the inevitable pull of the life and death instincts, I suggest that any tension experienced by an individual, whether physical or mental, begins with particular emotions, and as such emotional life is at the core of human freedom.

The reason for my inclusion of an empirical analysis is to provide examples of the way the individual experiences their world within the context of the *kleśas*. Given the experiential nature of life it was not possible to adequately address the issue of freedom from conditionality without evidence to support how the *kleśas* influence an individual’s life and the extent to which they cause suffering. I consider it imperative that first-hand experience be included in any academic argument in relation to emotional life.

Yoga proposes that unhelpful emotions result from an individual’s inability to control their thoughts. Hence, my thesis focuses on cognitive-emotive processes with an emphasis on emotional energy and how it relates to freedom. My research into the energy system of the human body and mind examines the connection between the body’s subtle and gross energy systems and the tension and/or release created by emotions: the investment of emotional energy, something reflected by Freud’s dynamic theory of energy distribution within the psychic apparatus.⁶

Critical to this study is my definition of freedom. I argue that freedom, crucially, requires a non-tensed state (free of fear) and a personal experience of justice (peace of mind, or freedom from unnecessary feelings of guilt or anger, or other associated emotional burdens). Etymology reveals something significant here. This notion of justice is linked to the origin of the word “freedom”, as derived from two sources—“free” and “dom”. Free comes from *frēo* or *frēoh*, which has an Old English ancestral link to *love, friendship and peace*,⁷ and *dōm*, which has an Old English lineage meaning *law, decree or justice*.⁸ The correlation between freedom, friendship and justice will be discussed at length in this thesis; a concept that inevitably links the notion of individual freedom to back to “the other”.⁹ Sartre writes:

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⁵ The word “dis-ease” is used here to describe the opposite of wellbeing.
⁸ Partridge, p. 163.
⁹ J Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, Methuen and Company Ltd., London, 1976, p. 302. Sartre uses the term “the other” to emphasis the distance between the individual’s sense of self and the outside world.
The one who realizes in anguish his condition as “being” thrown into a responsibility which extends to his very abandonment has no longer either remorse or regret or excuse; he is no longer anything but a freedom, which perfectly reveals itself and whose being resides in this very revelation.\textsuperscript{10}

Freedom is paradoxical—freedom cannot exist without responsibility. To be free on a cognitive level is to experience a revelation of unity; to understand the charge of being human—that one is ultimately responsible for one’s actions, and as such is charged with the responsibility of the other. Eric Partridge traces the origin of the word “responsible” back to the Old French word respondère, meaning ‘to perform one’s part in a solemn engagement’.\textsuperscript{11} In the solemn engagement of life, one’s part is clear: ‘to be just’. Yet the boundaries of justice, in respect to understanding, are not always clear to the individual, especially if conditionality keeps the individual chained to an insular perception of personal justice or injustice. The intricate system of Yoga has an ethical and moral thread that connects freedom with responsibility, which is why such a system presents the ideal framework in which to analyse freedom and conditionality.

Yoga encourages something akin to what sociology refers to as the ‘reflexive self’—a self that is continually aware and conscious of its own presence and nature.\textsuperscript{12} (However, Philip Salzman disputes the notion that one can examine oneself without bias.\textsuperscript{13} This will be discussed later in terms of self-deception.) Mental freedom requires the ability to think reflexively and honestly on one’s biography and state of being and to experience the present in terms of a critical appreciation of the past, while being conscious of all discerning aspects of the present, thus promoting a sensitive, clear and insightful mind.\textsuperscript{14}

Reflexivity can be likened to Yoga’s process of apperception, a unique awareness where one is able to break free of a conditioned cycle of thought—a form of intuitive and wise introspection.\textsuperscript{15} The Yoga-Sūtras claim that the road to freedom becomes apparent

\textsuperscript{10} Sartre, \textit{Being and nothingness}, p. 711.
\textsuperscript{11} Partridge, p. 149.
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{15} Feuerstein, \textit{The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali}, p. 73.
through apperception.\textsuperscript{16} In such a state a person’s thoughts, feelings and actions are fully conscious and aware and there is a sense of responsibility for the “cause and effect” of one’s action. This kind of introspection is the opposite of conditionality. Psychoanalytic theory proposes that human beings are driven by unconscious drives (desires, wishes) but whether or not this constitutes a perpetual state of un-freedom is unclear. Nevertheless, in Yogic theory \textit{citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ} (restraining mental activities) is said to lead to liberation from all that would bind the individual on a psychological level, suggesting that even the dominion of the non-conscious is controllable.

In an attempt to define the concept of conditionality I apply Yogic, psychoanalytical and cognitive-behavioural frameworks: examining the effects of conditionality and its influence on freedom. To encapsulate, this thesis explores the internal nature of mental freedom, not the external influences of societal dictate. Although the external world remains unpredictable and unsettled, with major problems such as war and poverty— influences that are often uncontrollable—this thesis concentrates on the internal world of thoughts and feelings, as seen in terms of attitude: something that the individual has a possibility of controlling.

The quotation below, written by English poet John Milton, symbolises the Yogic concepts of freedom and bondage. He writes:

\begin{quote}
The mind is its own place,
And in itself,
Can make a Heav’n of Hell,
A Hell of Heav’n.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

Although mental freedom is not a term used in Eastern or Western philosophy, it is appropriate to use it to demonstrate freedom from conditionality. Yoga uses the term “liberation” as its goal but this concept is not directly comparable with freedom. In Yoga, liberation is a spiritual aspiration, whereas freedom is presented in this thesis in practical terms. Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti claims that freedom is a beginning and not an end: freedom begins with transformation of the mind and this transformation can only take place in the now, for the past is no longer and the future

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{ibid.}, p. 73.
never arrives. Krishnamurti’s freedom implies a “wholeness” of mind and body, as opposed to a fragmented and perturbed way of being. He associates emotional angst with fear, presenting fear as a catalyst for a conditioned existence: an existence based on illusion (māyā): conditionality.

Conditionality is a cyclic pattern of thought, one that is fuelled by kleśas. It represents an emotionally fragmented state, where one’s thoughts are conditioned by negative aspects of the past. Conditionality is kleśa-based: it is a process that undermines freedom on a cognitive level. Indian philosopher and chemist I.K. Taimni wrote in The science of Yoga, that:

The philosophy of kleśas is...an analysis of the underlying and fundamental cause of human misery and suffering and the way in which this cause can be removed effectively.

According to Yogic tradition, human misery and suffering relate to an inability to be free on an emotional and/or mental level, a life subject to emotional pain: held captive by fear.

Over the following eight chapters I examine kleśas, addressing how they relate to freedom and conditionality and, in fact, how they relate to one another. My interest in this subject evolved from my personal experience of Yoga. As a teenager in the 1970s, I was deeply frustrated and dissatisfied with my concept of self and as a result I experimented with drugs. Eventually, I turned to meditation to defuse this dissatisfaction, a dissatisfaction that was largely due to living with an unstable alcoholic single parent and a violent and abusive brother. Yoga, in particular meditation, gave me a deep sense of peace in an otherwise turbulent environment. It was at this point that I realised that my ability to free myself from perturbation came from within; that my mind-state mirrored my interpretation of experiences: that without mental freedom I was trapped in a repetitive cycle of self torment, destined to re-live every destructive event in my mind.

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19 I.K. Taimni, The science of Yoga, Theosophical Publishing House, India, 1979, p. 141. As discussed previously, this is a Buddhist term denoting conditional thoughts that arise from events that condition further events.
Because of my childhood experiences, I became acutely aware that mental freedom, being able to think for oneself without the confines of past conditioning, is fundamentally problematic. I grew up believing I was stupid. I couldn’t concentrate at school and although on an inner level I wanted to learn I found it difficult. I left school at fifteen and didn’t return to study until much later in my life, when my own children were small. I have suffered from depression throughout my life, undoubtedly something associated with the shattered concept of self I developed from a disapproving, lonely and critical home environment. Yoga has helped me to cope with my own struggle with conditionality.

I have since trained as a Yoga teacher (Diploma of Health [Yoga] and an Advanced Diploma of Yoga Teaching) and as a Yoga therapist (Graduate Certificate in Yoga Therapy). Through my study of Yogic theory and philosophy, I discovered that the practical aspects of Yoga were invented to facilitate the mental and emotional processes: to free the individual from conditionality by providing the tools that provide a vehicle for freedom. My research revealed that much of today’s Western psychological theory and folk psychology relates to Yoga’s 3,000 year-old concepts: one of which is the idea of a non-conscious mind. Modern day psychology encapsulates many aspects of Yoga. Yoga is ultimately aimed at freeing the individual from the pain and suffering caused by a turbulent emotional life.

Mental freedom is very difficult to achieve. How does one separate one’s thoughts from the colourings of subjectivity: distance oneself from the determining factors of individual existence? Surely a study of freedom must, first and foremost, be objective. Yet in his translation of The Yoga Sūtra of Patañjali, German Indologist Georg Feuerstein writes:

> All knowledge is interpretive. There are no hard facts and pure objectivity is a myth. The reality we perceive is always our reality, and what we call ‘facts’ are properly speaking events, which we, as we become conscious of them, immediately interpret in terms of our specific cultural and personal patterns of thought and experiences.\(^\text{21}\)

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\(^\text{21}\) Taikni, p. 135.
\(^\text{21}\) Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, p. ix.
Feuerstein claims that individual views are always susceptible to deterministic factors; interpretation of events will be founded on individualised experiences? (The reader of this thesis will already be forming judgements based on their pre-existing notions of the truth.) Yogic philosophy claims that it is possible to achieve clarity of thought, to distance oneself from a restricted, personalised perspective, without fragmenting or damaging one’s concept of self. This is accomplished through citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ, which has various translations, including restricting the whirling mind-stuff/restraining the fluctuations of the mind (note, this is not a restriction of consciousness per se, but rather a restriction of the mental activities that interfere with consciousness. From here on I will use the phrase “whirling mind-stuff”. ("Mind-stuff" is a term often used in Yoga to describe the activities of the mind and this will be discussed further in section 1.4).

![Basic Premise Diagram]

Table 1. This table shows the author’s interpretation of the basic premise. Conditionality creates a veil of illusion by burdening the individual with unhelpful thoughts constructed by past experience.

The diagram above depicts the individual’s consciousness looking out upon the world—an outlook, according to Yoga, that is often veiled by illusion the idea that no “mind” object can be identified as Absolute truth. Such ideas are created in the mind based on assumptions and conditioning and borne from particular emotional reactions to events. It is the construction of this illusionary veil or barrier that Yoga sets out to dissolve. This habituation process obstructs the ability to see life clearly, inhibiting clarity of thought. To remove these obstacles Yoga suggests various techniques or practices that aim to still the mind: touching the peaceful silence within (these practices will be
discussed at more length in Chapter Eight). This veil represents the interpretive filters that colour one’s view of the world.

Classical Yoga maintains that some emotions stand in the way of clarity of mind, resulting in thoughts that are subject to conditionality. Problematic emotions cause confusion and cloud one’s ability to see clearly, these emotions are often “attached” to past experience, “glossed” by the habitual interpretive filters through which one sees the world (obviously emotional life is at the core of being human and not all emotions are considered problematic). Biased interpretive filters can cause one to react (involuntary) rather than act (voluntary).

Romanian historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, claims that Yoga is existentialist in its approach. 22 He suggests that the West has ‘been devoted to the factors that “condition” the human being’, adding that in India knowing about various ‘systems of conditionings’ is not seen as an end in itself: essentially knowing about them is not what matters, what matters, is ‘mastering’ them. 23 Eliade writes:

The problem of the human condition—that is the temporality and historicity of the human being—is at the very center of Western thought, and the same problem has preoccupied Indian philosophy from its beginnings. 24

According to Eliade, Indian tradition recognises that the greatest obstacles to human freedom on a mental level are the residues or latencies of the non-conscious mind. 25 Freedom requires a distance from the particular emotions that bind one to such conditionings.

To reiterate, in my thesis mental freedom is discussed in terms of freedom from conditionality: 26 freedom from emotional obstacles. 27 Such obstacles are defined as patterns of cognitive-emotive expression that block clarity of mind and impede rational thought. Paradoxically, according to Yogic theory freedom is reflected by the ability to

23 ibid., p. xv & xv ii.
24 ibid.
25 ibid.
27 Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, p. 45.
restrict negative and destructive emotional responses through apperception and on a physical level through the unrestricted flow of prāṇa (life-force/life-energy). Yoga maintains that being free from restrictive or unhelpful psychological programming or conditioning enables one to truly experience joy, peace and contentment. This could be described as gaining clarity of mind, which is often equated with enlightenment (an awakened state).

Mental freedom is not simply the ability to choose to move from one room to another. It is about what motivates that choice and whether, or how, one is bound by those motivating forces, and whether one is even aware of them. I present mental freedom as a concept definable by what it is not: mental bondage. I explore whether Yoga has the ability to bring about greater reflexivity of the self—creating a process of apperception or observer awareness—and in doing so, contribute to a better future for society.28 I test whether Yoga has the capacity to bring about self and social change. I use empirical data and textual analysis for this purpose, providing evidence of the effects of conditionality and the processes of Yoga as a source of relief from said affects.

1.2 Research design

Is freedom possible on a cognitive level, or do certain emotions negate freedom? Yoga maintains that one can break free of problematic emotional traits and attain liberation from conscious and non-conscious motivating forces (more specifically conditionality29). Yoga practices and philosophical approaches claim to work to achieve this purpose. In the following chapters I examine the concept of freedom by looking at various classical and contemporary theories; investigating particular debates regarding emotion and cognition and their physiological effects. I strive to bridge the gap in academic literature relating to kleśas, freedom and conditionality, and the effect these aspects have on wellbeing.

28 See glossary for more detail.
English naturalist Charles Darwin’s theories propose that the nature of human life is social and that the need for survival governs choice (physical and emotional survival). In *Civilization and its discontents*, German psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud suggests that the process of civilisation itself contributes to society’s discontent. Reason implies that how a human being relates to others is affected by their own self-concepts and that troubled self-concepts (on-mass) have the potential to create an unstable society. Within this context, the concept of freedom has been explored, globally, in both literal and abstract terms; from the chronicles of war to the suffering of poetic angst. Philosophical debate questions whether a person has free-will, or whether they are a victim of deterministic factors. Conditionality, it would seem, is a quasi-deterministic concept as determinism assumes that all human thoughts and actions are effects necessitated by preceding causes. Debates in relation to free-will and determinism question the voluntary or involuntary nature of personal choice, does one, say, have a predisposition to certain choices? If so, the notion “involuntary choice” presents an oxymoron; as choice signifies a voluntary action. In the abstract, Yoga suggests that one is free to think without the predeterminations imposed by conditionality, yet on a literal plane this remains debatable.

Yoga incorporates three general aspects, which are often conflated, a discipline, a philosophy and a practice. This last aspect of practice should be viewed separately from a religion. Critics may object to a purely secular approach to Yoga, as many of its practices are used in different religions. Religion is arguably a difficult concept to define. It is sometimes referred to as an organised system of beliefs, doctrines and moral creeds that postulate the presence of a higher power. The foundation of Yoga culminates from Hindu culture, which is laden with Gods and Goddesses—higher powers often in the form of deities. And its premises are heavily based on a spiritual essence or universal force, which is often applied within in a theological framework.

Although Yoga lends itself to being applied in a religious context it is also something that can stand alone. By alone, I do not mean that it must be devoid of spiritual dimensions. Instead I simply mean that it is multi-layered and can be used as an instrument of worship, if the individual sees fit to celebrate any number of religious and

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spiritual beliefs. However, it is equally important to acknowledge the fact that a person does not necessarily have to be religious or spiritual to respect and value Yogic processes that as based on a reverence for life’s essential energy. The Yogic mind has an affinity with nature. As previously discussed, I equate spirituality, and its Yogic connotations, with the deeply heart-felt and compassionate qualities of human empathy, an empathy that extends beyond the individual into the natural environment—something incorporated in the breath of life itself and the shared responsibility and connectedness of all life.

My theory is based on the premise that Yoga goes beyond religion. It is something that celebrates and revels in the beauty and energy of life, in all its diversities, yet because it reveres the oneness or connectedness of all life, to be discussed within the context of freedom from conditionality, it must remain free of attachments—attachments that create the creeds and doctrines associated with organised religion. Such attachments, in their own right negate freedom because they tend to suggest that there is only one way to approach Yoga; each approach makes their own statement of authenticity. This is the reason for my secular approach to Yoga. The simple practices of Yoga are beyond prejudice, and although not all religion has prejudicial foundations the essence of religion is a particular type of belief, and a belief must—by the nature of belief—negate other beliefs. It is not my intention to criticise religion, I am just focusing my analysis on a particular perspective with regard to Yoga. My approach to Yoga remains impartial to doctrines and beliefs that would limit it to one discipline. To me, Yoga dwells within the stillness of an unruffled, uncomplicated mind—a mind free of conditionality. It is here that its essence is found.

Many would argue that spirituality is at the core of religion, yet as history has shown religion can be used as a political device—devoid of spiritual awareness. Over the centuries, some religious beliefs and doctrines have been mutated into a vehicle for judgement and bias. In such cases religion loses touch with its more spiritual elements because it is cast under a shadow of fear—fears associated with power wielding concepts such as hell and damnation, sin and punishment.32 One could argue that Yoga, too, has its own unique form of sin and punishment in terms of karmic debt. Yet the

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basis of *karma*, being answerable for one’s actions, is essentially a natural consequence of life: not a societal punishment.\(^{33}\) *Karma* is not presented in the sense of crime and punishment, but merely cause and effect. Yoga’s spirituality is founded in a responsibility to nature: a respect for the natural processes of life—a balancing of debt between what is taken and what is received. In this respect “the spiritual” is what is essentially pertaining to the human spirit—to the connectedness this spirit has to all life—to the breath of life.

Although profoundly spiritual, Yoga also focuses on the practical tools necessary to become conscious of, and in control of, one’s mental and emotional life. The Yogic interpretation of “spirituality” relates to a shared or collective essence, in tune with nature’s life-force. The concept of God, or a higher universal power, is interpreted in varying ways in different religions and cultures, including Hinduism, from which Yoga sprang. However, Yoga’s spirituality is not limited to societal constructs instead it reflects the word’s original meaning ‘*spíritus*’, which means ‘of the breath’ or ‘by breathing’.\(^{34}\) Spirituality is seen as the heart of being. Within the context of *freedom* and *conditionality*, “spiritual” equates to the ‘vital principle animating a person’s life and actions’, in other words, the individual’s pure or vital essence.\(^{35}\)

The 195 aphorisms constituting the *Yoga-Sūtras* provide a way of embracing this vital essence, enhancing wellbeing through the experience of Yoga.\(^{36}\) Again, although I acknowledge the profoundly spiritual nature of the historical roots and on-going practice of Yoga, I base my argument on the secular dimensions of Yoga practice, more specifically, Yoga’s connection between the breath, mind, and spirit, which creates an interesting parallel with Western psychology. The word “psyche” comes from the Greek Goddess *Psukhē*—“the Goddess of the Soul or Spirit personifying the ‘breath’ or ‘breath of life’.\(^{37}\) In *Haṭha Yoga* practice, specifically *prānāyāma* or ‘breath control’; liberation is achieved through the breath.\(^{38}\) *Prāṇa* (breath/life force) and its extension (*ayama*) is the process of moving the vibratory power (energy, spirit or essence of life) in harmony

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\(^{36}\) Note, some scholars also say 194 aphorisms and others say 196.

\(^{37}\) Partridge, p. 531.

with nature.\textsuperscript{39} Although \textit{Hatha Yoga} is said to be beneficial to physical wellbeing, it was primarily invented to facilitate mental and emotional balance, to support the path of \textit{Rāja Yoga} [Royal Yoga].

At the core of \textit{Rāja Yoga} is \textit{citta-vṛtti-niruddha},\textsuperscript{40} ‘the inhibition of the modifications of the mind’ (restriction of the whirling mind-stuff).\textsuperscript{41} In \textit{The science of Yoga}, I. K. Taimni likens \textit{citta} to ‘an intangible screen which enables the Light of consciousness to be projected in the manifested world’.\textsuperscript{42} He refers to \textit{vṛttis} as the ‘functionings’ of \textit{citta} (mind)—explaining that the concept of ‘\textit{vṛtti}’ means ‘to exist’, or a way of existing, that includes modifications, functions, states or activities.\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Nirodhaḥ} translates as ‘restrained’, ‘controlled’ or ‘inhibited’;\textsuperscript{44} \textit{citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ} means to control the functionings of one’s mind-state (whirling mind-stuff).

\textit{Citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ} leads to the ultimate aspiration of Yoga which is to achieve \textit{samādhi}:

\begin{quote}
"\textit{Samādhi}" most literally means, "together (or, same)—joining..."
\end{quote}
\textit{[Samādhi]} refers to the "oneness" we must attain to know the true-nature of anything.\textsuperscript{45}

\textit{Samādhi} (sometimes referred to as bliss) is an ultimate state of understanding and awareness: free of the burden of \textit{avidyā} (ignorance).

According to the principles of Yoga (and Buddhism), the greatest obstacle to controlling ideas in the mind is ignorance (\textit{avidyā}), and all of human suffering, including the tendency towards violence, is the result of ignorance.\textsuperscript{46} Ignorance comes from the Latin word \textit{ignārus} which translates as ‘not knowing’.\textsuperscript{47} In Eastern philosophy ignorance also

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 224-225.
\textsuperscript{40} Feuerstein, \textit{The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali}, p. 26.
\textsuperscript{41} Taimni, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Ibid.}, p.8
\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{45} I Kesarceodi-Watson, ‘\textit{Samādhi in Patañjali’s Yoga Sūtras}’, \textit{Philosophy east and west}, vol. 32, no. 1, The University of Hawai‘i Press, Hawai‘i, 1982 pp. 77-90.
\textsuperscript{46} Feuerstein, \textit{The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali}, p. 62.
\textsuperscript{47} Partridge, p. 304.
relates to ‘a lack of knowledge’ or nescience ‘to not know’: cognitive error (the ignorance of consciousness).  

In Classical Yoga, a person suffers because they are ensconced in a conditional existence. This suffering traces back to the kleśas: the five basic obstacles to freedom, the first of which, ignorance, is at the root of all of the kleśas. Ignorance could be defined as a lack of awareness, misconception or making false assumptions; being caught up in illusion due to a lack of clarity or vision. Some refer to ignorance as an act that is obstinate, tenacious or impertinent: the deliberate act of ignoring what is reasonable. The main distinction between these definitions of ignorance is whether one holds on to the source of this ignorance with belligerence and choice, or whether one is purely misguided and unaware—whether one acts in ignorance or from ignorance. Nonetheless, the very nature of the word “ignorance” refers to misguidance, misconception, or in Yogic terms, it is a cause of affliction (also see Chapter Three).

Emotions that “afflict” are certainly not foreign to Western psychological theory. From the late 19th century, scientists such as Sigmund Freud dedicated their lives to researching and understanding the human thought processes, particularly what is unconscious. Freud’s ‘philosophical’ approach demonstrates a profound and deep desire to understand human nature. As British cultural critic Mark Cousins points out in his introduction to The unconscious, Freud’s work is best viewed as a continual ‘work in progress’ because it has a decidedly evolutionary nature. Freud regularly uncovered new and vital discoveries that challenged his own theories and philosophies, causing him to re-evaluate previous claims.

To American psychologist Albert Ellis, the founder of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy, one is “afflicted” when subject to unhelpful internal dialogue. He used his study of Eastern and Classical Greek philosophies to create a therapeutic process aimed at working towards achieving a helpful and healthy mind-state. His therapy, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT), works with opposites by changing unhelpful thoughts into helpful thoughts. A student of Eastern and Western classics himself, Ellis recognised the benefits of working with opposites in relation to changing mind-states.

49 ibid., p. 61.
One finds a possible origin for such thought in Patañjali’s *Yoga-Sūtras* (Sūtra 2:33), which calls for ‘vitarka bādhane pratipaksa bhāvanam—for the repelling of unwholesome deliberation [the yogin should pursue] the cultivation of the opposite’ (yogin and yogini represent the male and female practitioner of Yoga).\(^51\) Ellis’ theory uses practical concepts practised in Yoga, such as breathing techniques and the utilisation of mantras and affirmations.\(^52\) In *Yoga and the luminous: Patañjali spiritual path to freedom*, Indic and comparative theologian Christopher Key Chapple, writes:

> By cultivating the opposite the practitioner of meditation builds a life of responsible freedom.\(^53\)

Inner dialogue is pivotal to the analysis of mental freedom. With this in mind, empirical data and textual analysis are necessary to quantify and qualify an individual’s experience of freedom. The empirical data gathered for his research highlights a significant distinction between freedom and conditionality. Like Eastern philosophy, Western psychology is concerned with the way one responds to life Human feelings, although often instinctive, are primarily a result of thought and according to the *Yoga-Sūtras* they have a strong tendency towards habituation.\(^54\) Freud’s research into the organisation of the personality suggests that this kind of habitual thinking, with its underlying influences, leads to misery and manifests within the body as discomfiture and disease. Consequently, wellbeing is analogous to “freedom from conditionality”.

Freud’s concept of psycho-dynamic energy can be seen through a Yogic lens, specifically the effective distribution of energy within body and mind as the basis for mental, emotional and physical wellbeing.\(^55\) Yet from a scholarly perspective, there appears to be little documentation available combining Yogic philosophy, psychoanalysis and cognitive-behavioural therapy with theories of bio-energy. Existing texts tend to approach the subject of freedom from a particular standpoint, often religious or political, in which case freedom is linked to concepts such as salvation,

\(^{51}\) *ibid.*, p. xi.
\(^{52}\) *ibid.*, p. 82.
redemption and power. Although I briefly explain the cosmology of Yogic philosophy in the next chapter under the section titled “Conceptualising Yoga”, I do not use a cosmological approach to freedom. Freud contends that ‘no proposition can be a proof of itself’.56 Following this argument, if I was to proceed by overlaying an interpretive filter to this study I will fail to provide an objective analysis of the subject under discussion. However, I concede that some sort of interpretive bias is inevitable and that the best I can do is to be as aware as possible of my own predilections and prejudices, to hopefully avoid being ensnared by them.

Yoga provides practical tools for improving the quality of one’s existence. It is my argument that biased interpretive filters are often the result of one’s culture, social values, religious views or political affiliations and therefore, by their very nature, negate freedom. This does not refer to one’s right to think these things. Instead, I refer to what has been ingrained into one’s mind as the truth, as this will ultimately influence one’s thought processes; often blocking out new ideas. Consequently, the ability to achieve any form of freedom requires an awareness of the affect of social influences and controls. However, I explore specific approaches to thinking, emoting and being in relation to one’s passions, which are ultimately invoked by subjective views. So although I do not incorporate religious or cultural influences as the framework, I do acknowledge their influence on mental freedom or mental bondage.

In reality, Yoga creates a conundrum, for freedom can only exist in relation to its opposing force of bondage, and in Yoga both freedom and bondage are said to be illusions. In this sense the truth is very much connected to awareness. In contrast, Freud claims that science is the basis of all truth, that ‘science is no illusion’:57 In my thesis I attempt to expand on this concept of illusion and how it affects mental freedom, and in doing so I examine the science behind the bodymind’s energy distribution: the word “bodymind” signifies an integrated human bio-system.58

A number of books have been written comparing Freudian psychology to Buddhist philosophy. Some say that Patañjali was heavily influenced by Buddhist theory. When

57 Freud, The future of an illusion, p. 56.
one considers the similarities between the eight limbs of Yoga (Classical Yoga) and the eightfold path (Buddhism) this is quite a reasonable assumption (see glossary). Regardless of overlaps in theory, it is evident that both the Buddha and Patañjali have based their theories on thousands of years of Yogic tradition. Modern Yogic theorists like Feuerstein have often compared Freud’s theories to Yogic philosophy, in particular, the concept of sanśkāras (subliminal activators). 59 However, as I explained earlier, there appears to be a significant gap in the literature that compares cognitive behaviour therapy, Yoga and Freud’s psycho-dynamic theory, specifically regarding energy distribution and kleśas.

The following syllogisms reflect my research rationale.

**Syllogism 1.**

1. According to Yoga, one can restrain (control) one’s mind. 60
2. But Yoga teaches that there are certain things, cognitive and physiological, that interfere with one’s ability to achieve this restraint.
3. Therefore, there are things one needs to know, understand and implement (though Yoga practice) to achieve restraint.

**Syllogism 2.**

1. The mind is affected by reason, instinct and emotion (passion).
2. Instinct and emotion are largely involuntary and are difficult to restrain.
3. Therefore, the mind is best restrained through processes that enhance the faculty of reason and discernment (buddhi mind).

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60 Partridge, p. 252. The word ‘control’ has a Latin origin; it comes from the word gerere meaning ‘to bear or carry, to take charge of, to perform or accomplish, to take on oneself’. 

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Syllogism 3.

1. Emotions are the result of cognitive and physiological processes.  
2. Hence, emotions involve the mind and the body.  
3. Therefore, because Yoga works with the mind and the body it offers a suitable vehicle for attenuating one’s more unhelpful emotions (*kleśas*).

My methodological approach is analytical and comparative. It proceeds with a process of analysis that examines specific texts and teachings, establishing an overview of particular areas of Eastern and Western philosophical, scientific and psychological theories regarding energy, emotion, cognition and Yoga, while maintaining focus on the concept of mental freedom. I incorporate empirical research, which uses questionnaires and interviews. The first part of this empirical study (the questionnaire) includes a qualitative and quantitative survey for the purpose of compiling a descriptive knowledge-base relevant to the research topic and to establish an analytical point of reference in relation to concepts such as freedom and conditionality. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1.

The questionnaire is designed to explore the motivational forces behind the individual’s cognitive processes with the aim of identifying emotive pre-dispositions and habits; investigating how these tendencies relate to cognitive processes. It is followed up with an interview process to expand on and qualify the initial answers: providing clarification. The information gathered in the survey and the interview process itself is used to identify parallels in the participants’ emotional lives: thoughts that inhibit their ability to experience freedom. The survey is aimed at a broad demographical forum resourced through word of mouth and public advertising. Overall results of the survey are detailed in Appendix 2 and individual responses are quoted throughout this thesis.

In design, the research questionnaire is multi-layered. Firstly, it provides a forum in which the individuals participating can answer questions that explore the effects of *kleśas*: how they affect wellbeing. Questionnaire participants consist of males and females from various age-groups ranging from eighteen upwards. There is a range of
education levels, occupations and nationalities. Although the questionnaire does ascertain whether the participants have Yoga experience the research is not aimed at individuals with practical Yoga experience. The prime aim of the questionnaire and the interview is to ascertain the degree in which klesās hinder an individual’s sense of wellbeing and happiness, and whether the individual attributes any value to methods of relaxation that are aimed at achieving wellbeing.

From a more subtle perspective the questionnaire is also designed to challenge the individual’s belief-system by declarative questions that might be arguable in their own right, to paraphrase: Are there three primary emotions that cause affliction? Can a human being’s ability to function emotionally in a helpful or positive way be attributed to their past? Does the term “sources of trouble” adequately explain the effects of unhelpful emotional experiences? These questions and others challenge the individual to be completely honest: they call for open and self-explorative responses. Such questions seek insights into the core belief-system of the individual and require self awareness to be answered honestly.

In essence, Yoga presents a practical ‘psycho-technology for living’. It provides a “circuit breaker” to interrupt the cycle of conditionality and to enhance the health-giving reciprocal relationship between the body, thought processes and emotional life. The following diagram was constructed to conceptualise Yoga as a circuit-breaker for conditionality. The inner Self is surrounded by an experiential layering that creates a veil of perception, restricting the individual’s ability to think with clarity.

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62 EE Wood, Practical Yoga, Rider and Company, London, 1951, p. 224. This term was used by Wood to describe klesās.
In later chapters, I compare this concept of freedom with other philosophical theories, exploring Eastern and Western theories of power, sexuality, choice, feeling, rationality, intellect, energy and habit—all of which are discussed in relation to the polarity between freedom and conditionality. Although I avoid using social frameworks as a overlay for these theories, it is important to understand that the collective notion of what is termed “civilisation” is a major restriction to, and influence on, freedom, particularly given that everything one “knows”, or considers reality, is ultimately affected by the environment in which one lives. My empirical study aims to establish an evaluative framework in which to examine the relationship between such influences by investigating the individual’s capacity to achieve freedom when pitted against the conditioned nature of life.
1.3 Conceptualising Yoga

Although I have chosen to use Patañjali’s *Yoga-Sūtras* as the primary point of reference to analyse the *kleśas*, this does not necessarily mean it is the definitive text on the subject. Mark Singleton observes, in *Yoga body: the origins of modern Yoga practice* that the *Yoga-Sūtras* have gained considerable popularity due to the interest of European scholars but this does not mean that it is the only authoritative transcript.\(^{64}\) Singleton maintains that the study of Yoga is problematic in respect to its modernisation claiming that the commercialisation of Yoga by Westerners has made it a billion dollar business, and as such the ‘modern transnational yoga’ is predominantly associated with postural classes.\(^{65}\) Bearing this in mind, my examination commences with the *kleśas* and although it does discuss postural work it does not attribute the totality of Yoga with single aspects. Instead, it endeavours to recognise the immense diversity Yoga offers as a whole in respect to its therapeutic and philosophical benefits. In fact, according to the program BBC news, commentated by Andy Dangerfield, 30 million people now practice Yoga worldwide;\(^{66}\) demonstrating Yoga’s popularity as a methodology for enhancing wellbeing.

In *Translating, practicing and commodifying Yoga in the U.S.*, theologian Shreena Gandhi discusses the history and subsequent commodifying of Yoga in the U.S. Gandhi examines the utilisation of Yoga with varying religious practices, highlighting how Yoga’s popularity has extended beyond its Hindu origin.\(^{67}\) She discusses how Yoga has become a commodity in the U.S. Gandhi questions whether Yoga could be classified as a religion. Identifying Yoga as a complex and multi-faceted system acknowledges how difficult Yoga is to categorise, especially in terms of religion; given its ability to be adapted to many different religious practices. Gandhi’s research demonstrates the expansiveness of Yoga, particularly in the U.S., and how easily it meshes with different cultural and religious practices, how it has become a fundamental life-process for many individuals.


\(^{65}\) Singleton, p. 3.


While it can be argued that yoga is a system of bodily movement that aims to control the body in a different way, at the same time, it is important to regard the ways people practice yoga. It is important to explore the ways in which they build yoga into their everyday lives.68

Again, I examine freedom as a mental/emotional phenomenon, rather than from a political, global or environmental perspective. I do not deal with the lack of freedom involved in social restriction—that is, maltreatment, tyranny, incarceration, poverty, war and the like. Hence, any reference to freedom will specifically refer to mental freedom unless otherwise identified. I explore a human being’s ability to think freely in a free society, in other words, the ability to function free of emotion-based illusions that hinder the quality of human life. Furthermore, within this thesis freedom does not represent specific notions of Eastern philosophy such as Buddhism’s Nirvana. Instead it merely refers to the idea that the mind is subject to freedom or bondage as determined by “conditioning influences” that program or condition thought.

Particular terms in this research need to be clarified. For instance, I define “ignorance” from two perspectives. Firstly, it is a Western word that describes a person’s inability to understand themselves and others; and secondly, it can be seen in the context of avidyā, which Chapple describes as ‘nonwisdom’.69 (Avidyā is the first of the five kleśas and it is said to be the cause of the remaining four kleśas.) The first, more literal definition relates to knowledge or rather a lack of knowledge, acquired through the intellect (concerning the phenomenal world); the second more abstract definition relates to the ability to function using Yoga’s discerning mind, rather than the desiring mind. Also, the word “intellect” has particular meanings in context with this thesis. According to Yogic theory, ‘a man may be a great scholar, a walking encyclopedia...yet may be so completely immersed in the illusions created by the mind’ and as such may stand well below a simple-minded individual.70 As I discussed earlier, Yoga’s higher mind or discerning quality is referred to as buddhi, a wisdom associated with awareness and intuition rather than the intellect. During this thesis I will at times refer to both the intellect of reason and knowledge (Western concept) and the intellect of intuition and awareness (Eastern concept) and I will clarify this distinction as the term arises.

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68 Gandhi, p. 218.
69 Chapple, p. 6.
70 Taimni, p. 141.
Essentially, Yoga aspires to the realisation of vidyā (the total or complete knowledge of consciousness): freedom from kleśas.

Chapple describes kleśas as negative influences that define the ego. In layman’s terms, the kleśas are: ignorance, I-am-ness, attachment, aversion and the will to live. Traditionally they are defined as causes of affliction and afflictions are described as: change, anxiety, habituation and conflict. This conflict is between the guṇas (primary constituents of nature—see Chapter Eight and the glossary) and the vṛttis (mental activities). Feuerstein explains that the guṇas are a strand or quality that signifies the energy quanta or building blocks of nature: they are sattva (the principle of lucidity; beingness), rajas (the dynamic principle) and tamas (the principle of inertia). It is my premise that these two concepts—“causes of affliction” and “afflictions”—are interchangeable. In fact, I contend that it is more likely that change, anxiety, habituation and conflict (Yoga’s afflictions) are the causes of affliction, and the emotion or attitude generated is the affliction. However, this stands in conflict with popular scholarly opinion. Taimni describes the word “kleśa” thus:

It means pain, affliction or misery but gradually it came to acquire the meaning of what causes pain, affliction or misery.

Philosophical psychologist Peter Fenner refers to kleśas as ‘emotional reactions’. Although they require emotional reaction to become manifest, they can also be described as the cause of emotional reactions because of their hermeneutical nature, that is their interpretive and communicative propensity. I use the term “seeds of burden” to describe kleśas, for when it comes to the mental processes, they are at the root of all human misery.

Yoga has many faces. There are literally thousands of beliefs and practices associated with Yoga, and there are many schools of Yoga. Of course, this thesis cannot delve into all traditions of Yoga; it is independent of particular schools of Yoga, apart from what is drawn from the wisdom of Classical Yogic theory. My intent is to examine specific

71 Chapple, p. 6.
73 ibid., pp. 111, 263 & 264.
74 Taimni, p. 135.
areas pertaining to certain \textit{Hatha Yoga} (physical yoga) practices, theories or philosophies, exploring how they aim to still or restrain the ripples (thoughts) in the mind, and are therefore of paramount important to abating conditionality.\cite{76} While looking at these practices as a tool for attaining freedom, I compare how these aspects of Yoga fit into Western theories.

My argument is not confined within the boundaries of some of Yoga’s more extensive and exclusive philosophical principles and beliefs. Like any philosophy, there are aspects that convey much wisdom and others that seem too extreme or impractical for today’s world (such as a more ascetic approach to living). The reader is encouraged not to view this research as a strict representation of all that is Yoga, but rather as an exploration into the vital insights or quintessential aspects of Yoga that relate to the influence of emotion on wellbeing. I recognise that there are problematic differences between Yoga and modern psychological theories, such as Reich’s release of tension through orgasm and the practice of celibacy in many of Yoga’s treatises (including the \textit{Yoga-Sūtras}) and it is not my intention to claim these theories can be reconciled. This research is not a treatise on Yoga, it is an exploration of freedom from conditionality and both Yoga and modern psychological theories have much to offer in this respect.

It is not possible to give an in-depth description of the experience of Yoga. As the author of this thesis, I acknowledge and declare my limitations, for the subtleties of Yoga practice is a phenomenon that is difficult to explain in verbal terms, nor is it something that can be fully comprehended through academic discovery alone. Yoga is an experiential enigma, one that is unique to each practitioner. I can acknowledge that 40 years of practising Yoga has helped me improve the quality of my life, but I cannot explain the nature of this transformation in words.

\footnote{ibid.}
1.4 Yogic history in brief

When the word Yoga is mentioned, most people immediately think of some physical postures for relaxing and limbering up the body. This is one aspect of the Yogic science, but actually only a very small part and relatively recent in development... physical Yoga, or Hatha Yoga, was primarily designed to facilitate the real practice of Yoga, namely, the understanding and complete mastery over the mind...the actual meaning of the word Yoga is science of the mind.

Sri Swami Satchidananda

Philosophy questions the nature of being. Where philosophy discusses and analyses, Yoga experiences. Yogic philosophy, which is at the core of Buddhist and other Hindu traditions, suggests that to understand one’s essential nature is to understand the heart of being. In order to reach this understanding Yoga aspires to achieve citta-vrtti-nirodha, a goal detailed in the Yoga-Sūtras. This concept is best demonstrated by the dichotomy between mindfulness and mind-full-ness: the mindfulness of focused attention (heightened awareness) contrasted with a mind full of unrestrained thoughts (an uncontrolled stream of consciousness) that remains in a constant state of flux. It is the effects of these experiential extremes, and their relationship with emotional life, that is explored within this thesis.

Yoga is an oral tradition, one which uses a practical application of physical, mental, spiritual and subtle processes that allows the practitioner to experience Yoga. It is somewhat difficult to explain the concept of Yoga wholly and substantially in an academic text, but perhaps it is best understood through the simple statement, ‘Yoga is collectedness (samādhāna)’ (Shankara’s Yoga-Sūtra-Bhāshya-Vivarana 1.1). This collectedness is a reflection of pure consciousness—allowing one’s mind to be collected in one’s space.

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79 Feuerstein, The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga, pp. 74-75.
81 ibid., p. 3.
82 Partridge, p. 594.
Yoga proposes that a human being has a natural state of knowing, but this knowing (awareness) is restricted by the whirls of uncontrolled thoughts that continually overwhelm it. In Yoga, collectedness represents ‘a stable quality of consciousness’. This stability is a collective and unifying force, inspiring empathy, understanding and compassion. Critics may view this as an oversimplification of human hardship, suggesting that a person’s troubles, angst, anger and pain cannot simply be thought away. Yet Yoga insists that the root cause of all human suffering is unrestrained thought.

Yoga maintains that the whirls of consciousness (or modifications or fluctuations of consciousness) must be restrained in order to attain liberation from a conditioned existence (Yoga’s conditioned existence relates to karma—establishing a direct relationship between thought and action). In Yogic philosophy the concept of a conditioned existence is intrinsically linked to the notion of karma (or karman), ‘derived from the root kri meaning to ‘to make’ or ‘to do’ (usually translated as action). The theory of a conditioned existence implies that one’s actions (past and present) determine one’s future. Feuerstein describes karma as a ‘feedback loop’—a loop between actions and being. Hence, ‘we are what we are because of our actions’, inclusive of ‘what we do, how we do and why we do’.

In The Yoga tradition, Feuerstein states: ‘Every action acts upon one’s self and contributes to the entire structure of the person one tends to be’. Buddhism uses the term “conditionality” to describe the daily cognitive-emotive-reactive manifestations of this feedback loop—conditioned thoughts that arise from events that go on to condition other thoughts and events. Samsāra is the term given to the experiential flow of the phenomenal world (a world in a constant state of flux)—a world governed by the law of karma (the wheel of action and reaction)—liberation is achieved when the individual is free from the conditional residues of the feedback loop. A comprehensive guide to the process of liberation is found in the Yoga-Sūtras, which provides a life-system that aims

83 Feuerstein, The Yoga tradition, p. 3.
84 Feuerstein, The Yoga tradition, p. 62.
85 ibid., p. 64.
86 ibid., p. 62.
87 ibid., p. 64.
to free the individual from the narrowness and chaotic extremes of worldly conditioning. The word “sūtra” is derived from two words—su meaning ‘thread or string’ and tra meaning ‘to transcend’—which reflects ‘the weaving of thoughts into a sequence that produces transcendental insights’. Mukunda Stiles, author of *Structural Yoga therapy*, refers to the *Yoga-Sūtras* as ‘the earliest complete experiential Indian philosophy for self-transformation’.

### 1.5 Patañjali

The Indian sage Patañjali was the author of *The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali* (the first written Yogic text—historically Yoga is an oral tradition). Little is known about Patañjali (Patañjali, from *pata* meaning ‘falling leaves’ and *anjali* referring to ‘palms joined in cupped prayer’). Feuerstein describes Patañjali’s theory in terms of *Kriyā-Yoga*, the Yoga of action or ritual or ‘the Yoga of transmutative action that obliterates…subliminal activators’. In essence, the principles behind *Kriyā Yoga* (the Yoga of action) are borne from the perspicacity of *Rāja Yoga* (Royal Yoga, sometimes referred to as a mental science).

According to Feuerstein, the roots of Yoga go back to the Indus Valley (circa 3,000 BCE). Opinions vary regarding the date of Patañjali’s work referred to as Classical Yoga, but the most commonly sanctioned period is between 300 BCE and 150 CE (there is evidence of two Patañjalis living in the second century [the other, a grammarian] and some scholars believe that they are one and the same person). The *Yoga-Sūtras* are written in four parts, which consists of: *Samādhi-Pada* (transformation of consciousness), *Sādhanā-Pada* (Yoga practice), *Vibhūti-Pada* (paranormal manifestations—sometimes referred to as the description of powers) and *Kaivalya-Pāda* (liberation—kaivalya, which some translators use as a synonym of

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93 Feuerstein, *The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali*.
94 Stiles, p. xi.
95 Feuerstein, *The Yoga tradition*, pp. 75-76.
97 *ibid.*, 74-75. Although opinions do vary regarding its origin.
98 *ibid.*, p. 208. The word *pāda* means ‘word or footstep’.
mokṣa, actually means “aloneness”\(^98\).\(^99\) Other possible translations for samādhi, sādhāna, vibhūti and kaivalya are: ecstasy, path of realisation, powers and liberation.\(^100\)

Patañjali’s mental science links freedom to physical, cognitive and emotive wellbeing. His teachings outline the concept of kleśas presenting them as an obstacle to mental freedom.\(^101\) Ernest Wood refers to kleśas in Practical Yoga as ‘sources of trouble’.\(^102\) The kleśas result in the creation of sāmskāras.\(^103\) Sāmskāras are the non-conscious impressions resulting from past conditioning (see Chapter Two). Liberation from this conditioning requires ‘apperception’—where the perceiver is aware of the act of perceiving, a process that allows one to direct the mind and, as a result, control emotion.\(^104\) Control has many meanings and in a modern context it is often viewed in a negative way. Within context it refers to restriction, restraint, regulation, keeping in check.\(^105\) Controlling emotion does not mean the denial of emotional feeling; instead, it means the constructive direction of emotional life— influencing feeling through thought. For humans, the nature of being is to feel, and to seek immunity from feeling is to deny all that is human. Consequently, to control thought means to direct or control feeling. The realisation of the self is only possible when the mind is at peace; in Yoga this is best achieved through the processes of the breath.\(^106\)

Patañjali’s aphorisms weave a path towards ‘self-realisation’ (sādhana or ego-transcendence)—‘the recovery of one’s authentic identity’—a Self that transcends the human condition.\(^107\) However, for the purpose of this research, self-realisation is approached within an emotive/cognitive/behavioural framework; hence it is presented as a process and a desired end, rather than the more esoteric definition proposed by Patañjali, which conveys other-worldly connotations. I propose that the path towards self-realisation can be a practical process; rather than a total transformation of human nature (the de-humanisation sometimes associated with Yoga), self-realisation is

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\(^{100}\) Feuerstein, The Yoga tradition, pp. 288-310.
\(^{101}\) Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, pp. 61-64.
\(^{103}\) Feuerstein, The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga, p. 258.
\(^{104}\) Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, p. 73.
\(^{106}\) Chapple, p. 5.
\(^{107}\) Feuerstein, The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga, p. 266.
presented as a journey towards and achievement of awareness—what one might equate with a higher, more enlightened or liberated form of consciousness;\textsuperscript{108} and one free of conditionality.

Chapple and Kelly maintain that \textit{Patañjali} demonstrates three principal concerns: practice (\textit{sādhanā}), involution (\textit{pratīprāsaṇa} [involution—return to the origin/a condition of equilibrium]) and absorption (\textit{saṃādhi}).\textsuperscript{109} Perhaps this means adopting a way of withdrawing from mundane reality and becoming absorbed by a state of collectedness. According to Chapple and Kelly both disciplines, Yoga and \textit{Sāṃkyha}, ‘serve a common purpose: to lessen attachment, first to the gross world, and then to the subtle influences that shape one’s perception of the gross’.\textsuperscript{110} Ultimately, this is aimed at helping the individual to achieve a state of freedom.\textsuperscript{111}

Chapple and Kelly claim that ‘three languages are present in the \textit{Yoga-Sūtra}’.\textsuperscript{112} The first speaks of what is termed ‘conventional reality, of things and thoughts’ including phenomenology, the second language ‘points to a totality of consciousness’; something prior to ordinary perception.\textsuperscript{113} The third language expounds the method one uses to attain that totality; a language that relates to ‘responsible engagement, of practice, of meditation, of creative imagination’.\textsuperscript{114} This third language is the focus of this thesis; the language of union; where the conventional world and the totality of consciousness unite through silence (silence is an important aspect of Yogic theory—in silence peace is found).

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{108} \textit{ibid.}, p. 168.
\textsuperscript{109} Chapple and Kelly, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{110} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{111} Chapple, p. 29.
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{114} \textit{ibid.}
\end{flushright}
1.6 Yoga and Śāṅkya

Traditionally Yoga and Śāṅkya are entwined, and share the same goal: liberation. The word “Śāṅkya” translates as ‘insight’ or ‘knowledge’. Chapple and Kelly maintain that both Yoga and Śāṅkya extol ‘discriminative knowledge as the means to liberation’. Śāṅkya is usually associated with the Indian sage Kapila (it dates back to the Upanishads, evolving from the fifth century BCE). The main distinction between Yoga and Śāṅkya is that Śāṅkya relies on tradition (the testimony of adepts) whereas Yoga focuses on the act of perception (pratyaksha), in particular, apperception. The spiritual path of Śāṅkya requires the renunciation of everything other than the Transcendental Self (eternal or “Absolute” consciousness), which is said to be the only principle capable of true consciousness.

These two traditions share the same psycho-cosmology, which describes the two primordial and most fundamental principles of the universe, namely:

Prakriti and purusha. Prakriti is loosely translated as ‘matter’ or original energy-stuff (it could also refer to nature, but in some unformed state); purusha is translated as ‘spirit’ … (it may also refer to sentence). The proximity of purusha and prakriti brings about the evolution through stages of changes in the ‘matter’ of the basic principles, traces and gross elements that come to constitute the manifest universe (or ‘creation’ as some refer to the process).

In Yoga, meditation and the Guru, Indologist, philosopher and theologian Purushottama Bilimoria describes this cosmology using various analogies:

The scintillating effect of a coloured light falling on a crystal…the photosynthetic effect of the sun’s rays on a leaf…the union between a man and a woman.

Although Śāṅkya and Yoga have similar cosmological models, the main difference is Yoga’s addition of Ishvara (a deity that is not necessarily conveyed as a creator or

\[116\] Chapple & Kelly, p. 4.
\[118\] Feuerstein, The Yoga tradition, pp. 4-6, 602, 289-290 & 604.
\[120\] Bilimoria, p. 22.
redeemer, but more like a Buddha, representing the highest quality of being human). *Iśhvara* is a giver (or provider) of insight into ‘the truth and techniques of meditation’. According to Feuerstein, Patañjali’s ontology of Yoga has ‘three major foci’: *iśhvara* (giver of insight), *puruṣa* (spirit) and *prakṛti* (nature/matter). Although these terms are important to acknowledge, this thesis investigates Yoga from a more tangible perspective; as a practical process.

Biochemist and philosophical theorist Ken Wilbur suggests that in Eastern and Western traditions of Yoga there are two distinct approaches, that of the scholar and that of the practitioner: one associated with intellect and the other with feeling. Wilbur claims that for a true understanding of the essence of Yoga, the writer must seek knowledge from both the head and the heart in unison. Hence, when examining Yoga’s textual traditions academic perspective needs to be supplemented by phenomenological experience. For although Yoga’s ancient history is built on an oral and textual traditions, it is also built on the phenomenological experiences of sharmans, sages, yogis and philosophers. My digression from traditional forms of expression will undoubtedly present a great challenge.

### 1.7 Eight limbs of Yoga

Patañjali’s path to freedom is eight-fold ([āshta-anga-yoga] the eight limbs of Yoga should not be confused with Buddhism’s eight-fold path although many of the principles overlap). The first two parts focus on the practical aspects of Yoga, advocating an eight tiered path as a means to peace of mind through restraining the ripples of thought. These are:

- *Yāma* (abstinence or restraint);
- *Niyāma* (observance or discipline);
- *Āsana* (posture);

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121 *ibid.*, p. 22.
122 Bilimoria, p. 22.
125 *ibid.*
• Prāṇāyāma (breath control);
• Pratyāhāra (sense withdrawal);
• Dhāraṇā (concentration);
• Dhyāna (meditation);
• Samādhi (contemplation, absorptions or a super-conscious state [ecstasy or enstasy]).

Feuerstein uses the word “ecstasy” (enstasy virtually means to transcend to a state of ecstasy [samādhi]), to describe when consciousness is deliberately emptied of all contents but is still aware of its ‘rarefied’ (profound) existence.

In Practical Yoga, English theosophist and Sanskrit scholar, Ernest Wood explains the eight limbs of Yoga as:

• Peace with the world, through five Abstentions;
• Peace with yourself, through five Undertakings;
• Peace with your muscles, through good balance;
• Peace with your nerves, through good breathing;
• Peace with your senses, through voluntary selection;
• Concentration, the knack of mind-poise;
• Meditation, the integration of thoughts;
• Contemplation, the gateway to reality.

Western science has carried out extensive research to investigate one of these aspects in particular: meditation (a process by which one controls the ripples of thought—see Chapter Eight). The eight limbs of Yoga suggest that the path to liberation (or in context with the thesis—mental freedom) is a twofold process: it requires self-awareness as well as an awareness of the other. Yāma advocates moral restraint as demonstrated by the second rule of yāma, which is ahimsā or non-violence. Philosopher and theologian Gerald Larson describes the first five limbs of Yoga as ‘largely practical, preparatory exercises that have little to do with the cultivation of concentration’. He refers to

127 ibid., pp. 79-80.
them as ‘external limbs’. Larson explains that when these preparatory exercises have been properly cultivated, the yogin is ready for the final three limbs: dhāraṇā (concentration), dhyāna (meditation) and samādhi (contemplation, absorption).

The eight limbs of Yoga work towards the attainment of samādhi. In his paper, ‘Samādhi in Patañjali’s Yoga, Sūtras’, comparative theologian and philosopher, Ian Kesarcodi-Watson writes:

> It is common to talk as if these eight limbs of Patanjali’s Yoga are eight things to do. But clearly they are not. For samadhi is not a thing to do, but the thing to get. Nor is it quite correctly called a “thing.” It is Patanjali’s word for the goal of all yoga, that which is achieved or “reached” (these words can only be indicators, not true descriptions) when we effect nirodha, a total detachment from all mind-things.

Kesarcodi-Watson explains the purpose of the eight limbs is to find one’s true-nature. Free of the attachments of the past, liberating oneself from the mind-things that work to overwhelm it. Kesarcodi-Watson explains it thus:

> Patanjali’s āshtanga is his understanding of the way to mokṣa, which he more often calls kaivalya; a noun form of the adjective "kevala," "alone"; hence, "aloneness" or "lofty isolation."...[free] from the misleading influence of mind-things (cittavṛtti). One would then stand firm in one’s properly understood true-nature (svarūpa).

Patañjali refers to this true-nature as purusa (spirit), although he also refers to the Self as ātman (given the scope of this thesis there is limited discussion on this topic). However, this thesis is concerned with the practicalities of achieving a peaceful state of mind, a state of mental freedom, in contrast to this more spiritual revelation. My concern here is to explore Yoga in relation to ‘stopping the having of things in mind’, and in particular acknowledging that it is an essential aspect of wellbeing.

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130 ibid.
131 ibid.
133 ibid., p. 79.
135 Kesarcodi-Watson, pp. 77-90.
I discuss Yoga within the context of a science of mind. Traditionally, Yoga is defined in a number of ways, for example to join, to integrate or to unite. Georg Feuerstein translates the word “Yoga” as ‘to yoke’ or ‘to harnesses’. For the purpose of this study, Yoga is an integrative process involving practical and innate aspects of the individual’s cognitive, physiological and emotional life. I investigate whether it is possible to make choices from a purely internal perspective, without being dominated by the influence of the external environment. Predominantly, my focus is on the individual rather than the individual’s place in society—yet one might ask: Is it possible to distinguish between the two? In an effort to answer this question, in later chapters I examine civilisation’s “discontents” and society’s “emotional plague”. Freud equated society’s suffering to three sources:

1) The superior power of nature;
2) The frailty of our bodies;
3) The inadequacy of the institutions that regulate people’s relations with one another in the family, the state and society.¹³⁹

All three of these aspects relate to the concept of prāṇa.

1.8 Prāṇa

Yogic theory relates the human bio-energy to prāṇa—the energy present in all living things. The word “prāṇa” literally translates as ‘life’ or ‘breathing forth’. Pra means ‘life’ and an means ‘travel’, hence ‘to breathe forth’.¹⁴⁰ This universal life force is described by Feuerstein as a ‘vibrant psychophysical energy’: an energy connected to nature, to the individual and to the collective.¹⁴¹ He writes:

Prāṇa stands for ‘life’ or breath of the cosmic (Puruṣa). In Hinduism… prāṇa almost invariably signifies the universal life force, which is a vibrant psychophysical energy similar to the pneuma of the ancient Greeks…The Yoga-Vāsishtha (3.13.31) tellingly defines prāṇa as the “vibratory power” (spanda-shakti) that underlies all manifestation.142

Chapple maintains that ‘by the fundamental process of breath…a closeness to self is achieved’; that ‘by gaining control over the breath the yogin masters the other senses including the thinking process’.143 The promise of a deliverance from the pain and suffering of life’s upheavals is an extremely seductive notion. The essence of Yoga is built on achieving this bliss, a bliss associated with merging the individual’s consciousness with the Ultimate Reality (Brahman). Indian nationalist, guru and poet Ghose Aurobindo (1872-1950) associated this spiritual liberation to the elevation of the individual’s psyche into what he referred to as the ‘overmind’.144

Through Hindu philosophies, such as Yoga practice, the overmind communes ‘with the “supermind”, the goal of which is to reach spiritual perfection; where the ‘empirically inscrutable “logic of the infinite” ensures that this supramental descent will make all life “beatitude’s kiss” [Supreme Blessedness or happiness]’.145 This is seen as the ultimate utopian goal of consciousness. Although the magnificence and beauty of the Yogic goal of spiritual transcendence this is not discussed in any depth within this thesis, as a practitioner of Yoga I know that this essence is always present.

142 ibid.
143 Chapple, p. 4.
144 Honderich, p. 67.
145 ibid.
Part Two—The five *kleśas* and their afflictions
CHAPTER TWO

*Kleśas* (causes-of-affliction)—sources of trouble

2.1 *Kleśas*—the barrier to mental freedom

*I think of self-awareness as the key to everything. If we don’t know what is going on we can’t make a change. If we are unaware of what is making us unhappy we can’t take the step to change, to become happy.*

*Participant 0014*

Yoga proposes that controlling one’s emotional life is at the heart of freedom. Wayward emotions keep the individual bound to a conditioned existence. As such this thesis is not just centred on understanding, but rather on a lack of understanding. Such a focus is on unhelpful human emotions and the conscious and non-conscious manifestations of these feelings. Yogic philosophy contends that, emotionally, there is such a thing as hell on earth and it is created by *kleśas*. *Kleśas* are causes-of-affliction or seeds of burden.

To be afflicted is to be burdened or to suffer, to experience unnecessary emotional pain.

In the following pages I will provide a more in-depth description of the *kleśas*, which Yoga maintains must be attenuated if freedom is to be achieved. My premise is that the ability to attenuate the *kleśas* is connected to the ability to experience a sense of justice and to be free of irrational fear. As I outlined earlier, the five *kleśas* are ignorance (*avidyā*), I-am-ness (*asmitā*), attachment (*rāga*), aversion (*dveṣa*) and the will to live or fear (*abhiniveśa*). *Kleśas* should be viewed as categories of experience rather than single aspects of any emotion. For instance, fear also translates to dread, anxiety, worry, and anger includes resentment, frustration and impatience (see table below). Patañjali’s

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1 Deakin University research questionnaire and follow-up interviews carried out 2009-2012, participant 0014.
2 CK Chapple, *Yoga and the luminous: Patañjali spiritual path to freedom*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 2008, p. 4. Chapple also refers to the *kleśas* as ‘causes of suffering’.
3 Although experiencing some kind of pain is necessary for intellectual and emotional growth, Yoga suggests that prolonged irrational and unhelpful suffering is not necessary.
**kleśas** create a causal process, in that each stage follows the other in progression;5 ultimately feeding from one another. Ignorance, or a lack of awareness, leads to misconceptions about the self. This misconception results in attachment to certain objects or outcomes, creating likes and dislikes which ultimately results in fear (fear of loss, failure, death).

**Interpretations of the Kleśas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kleśa</th>
<th>Radhakrishnan</th>
<th>Chapple/Kelly</th>
<th>Feuerstein</th>
<th>Satishamanda</th>
<th>Steiner</th>
<th>Miller</th>
<th>Wood</th>
<th>Alternative view</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adhimāsa</td>
<td>Error—thinking—a mistaken view of things/ignorance</td>
<td>Ignorance, Non-wisdom, delusion</td>
<td>Nescience</td>
<td>Ignorance</td>
<td>Ignorance</td>
<td>Ignorance</td>
<td>Lack of knowing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>amama</td>
<td>I-sense</td>
<td>I-am-ness</td>
<td>I-am-ness</td>
<td>Egoism</td>
<td>Egoism</td>
<td>Self-personality</td>
<td>A sense of alienation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>raga</td>
<td>Desire</td>
<td>Attachment</td>
<td>Attachment</td>
<td>Attachment</td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>Desire</td>
<td>Obsession or need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doora</td>
<td>Hatred/adversion</td>
<td>Dislike, aversion</td>
<td>Aversion</td>
<td>Hatred</td>
<td>Hatred</td>
<td>Aversion</td>
<td>Resentment or bitterness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abhiniveśa</td>
<td>Fear of death</td>
<td>Tenacity desire for continuity</td>
<td>The will to live</td>
<td>Clinging to the body</td>
<td>The will to live</td>
<td>Possessiveness</td>
<td>Insecurity or fear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. This Table, constructed by the author, shows various interpretations of the kleśas.

In its active state a *kleśa* is easily recognised because of its outward expression.6 For instance, when someone is overtly angry the anger is evident, but this is not always the case, for anger can be expressed covertly: passively aggressively.7 Alternatively, if the individual reduces their anger to a point where it is directed in a manner that allows them control over the expression of their anger, the anger is reduced to a potential condition.8 In the latter state, the power of *abhiniveśa* has been reduced to potential: here the *kleśa* is no longer functioning but ‘germs are still there and, given favourable conditions, can be made active again’.9 These germs are referred to as seeds. The individual is faced with two stages in the *kleśa* elimination process, firstly the reduction

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7 Not consciously acknowledged and understood.
8 Taimni, p. 152.
of the *kleśa* to a seed, then secondly the complete elimination of the *kleśa*.\textsuperscript{10} Perhaps this process has a similar aim to many Western modes of psychotherapy: to reduce the negative impact created by the individual’s emotional life.

The *Yoga-Sūtras* claim that one’s experiential potential is often afflicted, afflictions such as change, anxiety, habituation and conflict.\textsuperscript{11} All four afflictions relate to fear. The first affliction, “change” (*parināma*), is said to result from *māyā* or illusion, *māyā* makes the individual afraid of change.\textsuperscript{12} Taimni explains that with the world in a constant state of flux, fear is often a dominant emotion.\textsuperscript{13} Change can leave the individual feeling as if the very ground under foot has been cut away.\textsuperscript{14} He writes:

> This fast-moving current of time and material changes appear to the individual as if the Universe is caught up in a ‘swirling flux of phenomena like the water running under a bridge’.\textsuperscript{15}

Taimni claims that with such a panorama seemingly rushing by, one cannot help feeling alone, anxious and vulnerable.\textsuperscript{16} Fear of loss created by change drives the individual to find solace in activities and interests that provide a distraction from any changes occurring.\textsuperscript{17} Yoga aims to help the individual to slowly transcend this change and to gain a foothold, revealing the real underneath the unreal.\textsuperscript{18} Through this insight one can see the short-lived glory of those in power and how eventually what a person desperately clings to will ultimately disintegrate and disappear.\textsuperscript{19} In *Yoga-Sūtra* 2:15 Taimni explains thus:

> We are all under sentence of death in a way, only we are not conscious of this fact and do not know when that sentence will be carried out. If we did, all our so-called pleasures will cease to be pleasures.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{10} *ibid.*, p. 153.
\textsuperscript{11} *ibid.*, p. 163. Conflicts between the functioning of the *Gunas* (the three primary constituents of nature—one’s natural tendencies) and *Vrttis* (mental activities) that are inherent in life.
\textsuperscript{13} Buddhism claims that everything changes: nothing stays the same.
\textsuperscript{14} Taimni, p. 164.
\textsuperscript{15} *ibid*.
\textsuperscript{16} *ibid*.
\textsuperscript{17} This results in the development of particular habits.
\textsuperscript{18} Taimni, p. 164.
\textsuperscript{19} *ibid*.
\textsuperscript{20} *ibid*. 
The second affliction inherent in human nature is “anxiety” (tāpa).

Every happiness, pleasure or indulgence—conscious or non-conscious—is associated with anxiety, for they bring with them a certain degree of attachment, and the threat of losing what one is attached to, creates anxiety.

The third affliction is impression (saṃskāra), which can be referred to as habituation. According to Yoga’s law of nature, everything that passes through one’s life leaves an impression. As experiences reoccur the force of the impression increases or deepens. This results in the formation of various kinds of habits as one gets used to particular aspects presented by life. Discomfort arises when one is forced out of these habits through the natural course of change. Samskāras, often referred to as subliminal activators/imprints, have a cyclic relationship with kleśas (this will be explained in more detail later).

The last affliction referred to in the Yoga-Sūtras is guṇa-ṛttis-virodha, which means conflict between the guṇas and the ṛttis. Again, guṇas represent the ‘principal modes of manifestation’: the constituents of nature. The ṛttis incorporate mental functions, activities and states of existence, which can either be painful (afflicted or [kliśṭa-ṛttī]) or non-painful (non-afflicted or [akliśṭa-ṛttī]). Painful ṛttis are the result of kleśas, which become habitual, leading to even more emotional pain. According to Taimni, nature constantly brings about oppositions between one’s natural tendencies and one’s state of mind, and such opposing forces create a state of contradiction (virodha). According to the principle behind guṇa-ṛttis-virodha, conflict arises between: 1) natural tendencies caused by the preponderance of one of the guṇas, and 2) the states of mind which are constantly changing. This inner conflict leads to disappointment,
dissatisfaction and resentment.\textsuperscript{33} Yoga contends that \textit{guna-vr̥ttis–virodha} is a major cause of misery.\textsuperscript{34} Such inner conflict reflects the contradictory nature of being human.\textsuperscript{35}

To attenuate the \textit{kleśas} Yoga uses practices that assist the individual to develop \textit{viveka} or spiritual discrimination (see Chapter Eight): ‘the spiritual consciousness hidden behind the mind’.\textsuperscript{36} To experience \textit{viveka} is to understand the transient nature of “will”. According to Taimni, unless the Yogic aspirant understands this \textit{Sūtra} they will not be able to endure the ‘difficult climb which leads to the mountaintop of Self-realization’.\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Sūtra} 2:16 claims that ‘the misery which is not yet come can and is to be avoided’: \textsuperscript{38} suffering can end. Freedom from \textit{kleśas} is the means to that end: freedom from the internal pain and suffering caused by conditionality. Yoga claims that what an individual thinks and feels is a result of their internalisation of events, in other words, an individual’s perspective obstructs their view of the outside world thus hindering the quality of their emotional experience. This concept of freedom does not focus on the afflictions imposed by others; instead its focus is on the dispossession of one’s ability, on a day-to-day basis, to think with clarity: divorced from emotional affliction.\textsuperscript{39}

In his book \textit{Modernity and self-identity: self and society in the late modern age}, British sociologist Anthony Giddens warns that reflexivity of the self is influenced by the extremes of modernity: ‘the increasing interconnection between extensionality and intentionality: that is, globalising influences on one hand and personality dispositions on the other’.\textsuperscript{40} Giddens explains that ‘personal meaninglessness—the feeling that life has nothing worthwhile to offer’—has become a fundamental problem in the modern world.\textsuperscript{41} According to Giddens, with globalisation no one can ‘opt out’ of the changes brought about by modernity.\textsuperscript{42} He explains that ‘all human experience is mediated through socialisation and the acquisition of language’: that is, ‘language and memory

\textsuperscript{33} Taimni, p. 167. Spiritual discrimination or consciousness may also be described in terms of awareness (see Chapter Seven and the glossary).
\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 167.
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 203.
\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 167.
\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{39} Here, the word affliction is not considered in a clinical sense.
\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 9.
are intrinsically linked. Human belief systems are inevitably based on an emotional foundation—on what is communicated and remembered—formed through the processes of intentionality and extensionality: internalising external experience. Nonetheless, Yoga maintains that one can choose what to internalise and therefore the process of intentionality can become an issue of conscious awareness: something founded on objectivity and wisdom.

Reflected through Yogic wisdom, freedom is a way of seeing the world that is not bound by past conditioning: Yoga’s liberation (mokṣa or kaivalya). Larson describes kaivalya as: ‘The standing forth of pure consciousness in its own inherent nature’. Although this more spiritual element of freedom is an important aspect of Yoga, in context within this thesis, kaivalya is defined as a positive and life-supporting emotional mind-state. Ultimately freedom is expressed as feelings of wellbeing and peace, which enhance the quality of one’s existence. The word “positive” comes from the Latin word positus, from posit an agent of pose, which means ‘to place firmly’ (a ‘sustained posture’). Mental freedom is a state of mind that is sustained and firm—helpful to wellbeing—it is a mind-state that places one firmly in the present, free from the irrational fears of a conditioned existence. According to Yogic theory, this firm and sustained state of mind is mirrored in the body. In other words, what one experiences as reality is reflected reciprocally between the body and the mind. Here freedom is linked to the wellbeing on all levels emotionally and physically. (This notion of something firm and sustained is reflected by Yoga’s use of “posture” [āsanas] with regard to physical practices.)

Of course there are profound and pleasurable emotional experiences at the core of being human and emotional evolution and growth are paramount to development and sensibility. However, a perturbed emotional life causes unnecessary dis-ease, discomfiture and anxiety, and binds one to the past. In his book Emotions physiologist

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43 ibid., p. 22.
44 ibid., p. 23.
45 Again, this relates to what the individual can choose to control not what is imposed upon individual externally.
46 Mokṣa or Moksha: liberation could be described as a shift in consciousness that transcends all duality, creating a paradox that both liberation and bondage are constructs based on perception. Liberation is also referred to as kaivalya meaning ‘aloneness’.
José Delgado discusses Plato’s dualist approach to emotions. He highlights both the beauty of emotion and the threat emotion brings to the human condition. Delgado suggests that for any degree of freedom to be attained one must first become educated in the processes of human thought and feeling: understand the connection between the body and the mind.

Yoga’s *citta-vrtti-nirodha*, is a process that enhances wellbeing in body and mind (refer Chapter Eight). Feuerstein writes:

> The pursuit of liberation, which can be equated with spiritual life per se, is not only the noblest but also the most meaningful undertaking of which people are capable.

Liberation is gained when one is free of the unhelpful effects of conscious and non-conscious conditioning. The practices of Yoga liberate the individual from a conditioned existence bringing about the cessation of *samsāra*, the wheel of conditionality or the domain of *karma*. *Samsāra* represents “the perceived”—the whirlwind of thoughts that result from a ‘sentient world of flux and impermanence’. For Yoga, liberation and bondage are simply perceptions. Feuerstein writes further:

> The event of liberation and bondage [on a psychological level] are merely conceptual constructs and hence of no ultimate significance...there is neither bondage nor liberation...there is only the Absolute beyond ill.

“Beyond ill” is a life free of conditionality. Yoga proposes that the individual’s freedom is dependent on perception: a mind free of bias, prejudice and assumption. Just as bondage is a learned response, so too is freedom.

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49 JMR Delgado, ‘The psychophysiology of freedom’, *Political Psychology*, vol.4, no. 2, 1983, pp. 355-374. Also see Chapter Seven. Delgado’s research focuses on the electrical and chemical reverberation of neurons in the brain and the effects that these reverberations have on one’s ability to function successfully on an emotive level.
2.2 Emotion and morality

In ‘The notion of Kleśa and its nearing on the Yoga analysis of mind’, philosopher Anindita N. Balslev maintains that ‘the river called mind flows in two directions’. According to Balslev, this implies an ethical consideration—what is good and what is not good for the mind—he suggests that the ‘two directions’ could be characterised in terms of the kleśas, as the painless and the painful.

Yoga claims that kleśas are synonymous with suffering (duḥkha), because they produce an unhelpful feedback loop between the present and the past. The traces (saṃskāras) left behind by past vṛtti states produce latent tendencies—just like a seed germinating, once developed, these vṛttiś become perpetual (conditionality). Kleśas ‘drive the mind towards all that is “of this world”, saṃsāra, and block discriminative knowledge’. Discriminative knowledge flows towards the good and pure, reflecting an ethical consideration. In contrast, the other direction flows towards worldly existence and leads to suffering and discontent. Kleśas move one away from the wisdom of discriminative knowledge giving rise to what Balslev refers to as a ‘mistaken view of things’—views motivated by the desire for pleasure, and the need to avoid pain.

Rāga (desire/attachment) is seeded in the memory traces of the experience of pleasure, compelling the individual towards the attainment of the object of pleasure, and in the extreme, resulting in ‘longing, thirst, and greed’. Similarly the emotional core of dveṣa (hatred) is seeded by the memory of pain, and again, in the extreme, this results in ‘retaliation, malice, revenge, and anger’. Balslev’s description of the kleśas, as

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51 ibid., p 336. Here, Balslev is referring to the commentary of Vyāsa. Vyāsa is said to have compiled the four Vedas, the Mahābhārata, together with the Bhagavad Gītā and the vast Purana Literature along with other works.
52 Balslev.
53 Freud suggests that the desire for pleasure and the wish to avoid pain are the motivating forces behind all human behaviour (this will be discussed further in Chapter Four).
54 Balslev.
55 ibid.
56 The term “worldly existence” is used to reflect the saṃsāra—the phenomenal world of change or flux.
57 Balslev, pp. 77-88.
58 As a 3,000 year old theory Yoga has undoubtedly influenced many Western theories.
59 Balslev.
60 ibid.
erroneous views, supports the idea that all of the kleśas fall under the category of ignorance. But one could also argue that all of the kleśas fall under the influence of fear, for without a perceived threat none of the other kleśas could exist: fear creates the uncertainty responsible for problematic emotional responses. In many respects, this fear-based foundation relates to the influence of what Russell refers to as 'ancient fears' (fears inherited from the habitual thought of previous generations), and the guilt they impose on the unconscious mind. Russell’s theories are far removed from Yoga, yet the notion of fear, as a motivating force, is profoundly universal.

The kleśas reflect five basics principles. These are: 1) a lack of knowing, 2) holding on to a particular image of the self, 3) attaching oneself emotionally to a thing, 4) being obsessed with one’s dislikes and 5) fear or insecurity. It is possible to link the underlying principles behind the kleśas to German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’, which is something driven by survival instincts, and by a fear of one’s ultimate inconsequence.

Philosopher Robert C. Solomon refers to Nietzsche as one of the great ‘depth psychologists’ (along with Freud, Jung and Adler). Although Nietzsche, at times, praises the passions as ‘deep and profound’, he also concedes that emotions can be deceiving. For instance, the pretence of sympathy may mask ‘a deep structure of resentment and vengefulness’. This may stem from a distorted sense of superiority: something that veils an underlying derision. Where true sympathy is the ‘real emotion’, false sympathy is a ‘manifest emotion’: a manifest emotion that may well be a strategy for self-deception. Solomon adds that the word “deep” in respect to emotions may refer to something profound or it may ‘simply mean “unconscious” in the sense that one does not acknowledge or understand one’s own motives and emotions’. Such theories

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65 Something also argued by Freud. See Chapter Five.
67 This reference to survival is not just survival on a physical level but also reflects emotional survival.
68 Solomon, Living with Nietzsche., p. 23.
69 RC Solomon, Living with Nietzsche, p. 65. The phrase “the passions” is commonly used by scholars to describe emotional life (particularly the Greek Classics).
70 ibid.
71 ibid.
72 ibid.
mirror the Yogic concept of ignorance, that is, self-deception and a lack of conscious awareness.  

Critics argue that Nietzsche’s description of ‘life-enhancing’ and ‘life-stultifying’ passions create an over-simplified depiction of emotional life. Thus to put a value on emotions, using notions such as good or bad, limits emotion to a purely ethical realm or from a practical perspective, a healthy or unhealthy domain. Yet given a human history ripe with discontent, it is naïve to assume that emotions are not definable in terms of ethics or wellbeing. The fact that emotions can inspire joy or misery, hope or despair, compassion or hatred—reflecting the extremes of human experiences—means they are bound to influence society on an ethical level and an ethical dimension cannot help but affect wellbeing (see section 2.5). Solomon writes:

An emotion is a strategy, the strategy of a biological creature with an inbuilt need to exert and express itself. 

This need is central to Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’ because, he argues, will is inevitably linked to desire. Solomon explains that if emotion is a strategy it must relate back to the will to achieve a desired exertion or expression, and as such requires a cognitive directive: whether this directive is conscious or unconscious relates back to self-deception. The mere fact that some emotions are repressed indicates that an inner gauge of ethical conflict is at work; for the need to deceive oneself implies an ethical dilemma, a conflict in relation to the other: an issue of conscience. Giddens writes:

Self-deception is one of the most valued human skills. How many reflexive self-reports are uncontaminated with wish fulfilment, ideal presentation of self, or creative manipulation of image?…‘There is reason to distrust our own description of ourselves’ [Barth].

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73 Also see Chapter Four.
75 ibid.
77 Solomon, *Nietzsche and depth psychology*, p.130.
Kleśas affect our perception of the world and our perception of the world can create kleśas. How we feel about ourselves is reflected in our relationship with the world. Without engaging in the world, albeit abstractly or literally, one has no need for such emotions. Emotions require a degree of intentionality and extensionality, for as Solomon writes, emotions require ‘a meaning, a significance, an orientation toward the world.’ In The passions, Solomon maintains that ‘emotions are subjective’ and therefore can be founded on the surreal rather than the real. The objects of one’s emotional experience are worldly objects filtered by one’s concerns and values. These concerns and values are based on past experience yet they colour the future. Solomon adds that from an emotional perspective, the thoughts and behaviour a person presents to the world are not necessarily indicative of who the person really thinks they are.

Although there are fundamental differences between Yogic philosophy and the Western theory of emotions proposed by Solomon, there are also parallels, one of which is Yoga’s aim to liberate the individual from self-deception. Solomon writes thus:

> Nothing is more immediate to us than our own emotions...nothing...more prone to self-deception, suppression, lack of recognition, and even straightforward denial than our emotions...People don’t always know when they are angry... they don’t always know what they feel.

Solomon’s argument does not present emotion as an individual’s downfall. Without emotion, how can we be human? Nevertheless, there are emotions that reduce the individual to a primitive level and take them away from their more discriminative facilities, distancing them from the faculty of reason. Solomon maintains that being honest about one’s emotional life—acknowledging one’s feelings—is always fraught with obstacles.

My research questionnaires and interviews provide examples of the difficulties associated with acknowledging one’s feelings. For example, during the empirical research interview participant 0033 confessed that she deliberately lied when filling out

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72 Salzman, p. 67.
74 ibid., p. 116.
76 Solomon, The joy of philosophy, p. 214.
the questionnaire. Many years ago this participant was seduced by her therapist. She had sought help from the therapist during a difficult period in her life: her marriage was ending. She was not honest while filling out the questionnaire because she was too embarrassed and uncomfortable to admit the truth to anyone. She had suffered extreme guilt and remorse as a result of this affair and she preferred to convince herself that it never happened. Over thirty years after the event she still carries this guilt and shame. This is a good example of an alternating kleśa: the individual was conflicted between two opposing forces, wanting to deny what happened, yet at the same time wanting to overcome its influence. Yoga’s kleśas reflect the emotions that trouble the individual on a continual basis. The concept of a kleśa is not presented as a means of judging the individual. Experiencing these emotions is not something that the individual should be ashamed of. It is the mere fact that these emotions create a prolonged sense of guilt and remorse that makes them detrimental to wellbeing.

Kleśas are implicit in the Greek classics. They negate the notion of emotional stability, which Greek philosopher Aristotle presents as: ‘courage, generosity, temperance, honesty, honour, justice, pride, courtesy, friendship and humour’. Without some control over the passions these virtues are unachievable; yet without passion (feeling deeply) they completely lose meaning. Both Aristotle and Nietzsche view courage as a prime virtue. This is an interesting point, considering that if one accepts that kleśas are governed by fear, overcoming fear—having courage—is the most important and significant element of emotional stability. This is not courage in the sense of taking arms against some unknown foe, but more importantly, courage in the sense of doing what is necessary to overcome emotional turmoil: facing the shadow self, something Jung associates with a deluded and confused self-identity, where destructive shadows on the mind are ever-present.

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81 RC Solomon, True to our feelings: what our emotions are really telling us, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p. 28.
82 Deakin University research questionnaire and follow-up interviews carried out 2009-2012, participant 0033.
83 Solomon, Living with Nietzsche, p. 148.
84 ibid.
The *kleśas* are implicit in many philosophical debates and as a concept *kleśas* are certainly not new to Western thinking. In fact, as already discussed, a number of theories relating to modern psychology reflect this Eastern theory. In Western terms, *kleśas* are reflected in the negative impact of the unconscious mind, leading to what Freud describes as repression and defence mechanisms. In fact, Feuerstein claims that: ‘Yoga anticipated the modern notion of the unconscious’, and that Yoga’s theory of subliminal activators went ‘beyond the insights and goals of psychoanalysis by developing a means in which the entire unconscious can be uprooted’. He argues:

...unless the traits of subliminal activators are completely transcended [we]...are trapped in the circle of our own egoic experiences, forever alienated from the Self, which is our true identity.

Subliminal activators represent non-conscious motivation—the non-conscious ‘network of impressions’. Yoga’s aim is to provide a circuit-breaker for these subliminal activators. To accomplish this, the individual must first become removed from the cycle of *conditionality*. By embracing Yoga as a discipline that recognises the subjective nature of emotional life, one welcomes a level of awareness (*buddhi*) focused on moral principles and innate wisdom, instead of subjective or manufactured need. Yoga’s higher intellect is not focused on mere intellectual pursuits; instead, it emphasises the subtle and intuitive aspects of feeling. For instance, Taimni explains this concept by reflecting on one’s inability to see what lies beneath the surface of vision. One remains ignorant of the infinitesimal aspects of the world consisting of atoms and molecules, of protons and electrons that form a kind of solar system in miniature, a reflection of the infinite universe and the earth’s place in it. The size of the universe with its unending vastness is only viewed by the human eye as matter, and only as far as the eye can see. This provides a very limited vision of a phenomenon that is purely unfathomable. Taimni puts it thus:

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90 Various cognitive theories are discussed in the next chapter.
93 *ibid*.
94 *ibid*.
95 *ibid.*, p. 320.
96 Taimni, pp. 134-135.
Mere intellect is blind and is incapable of seeing even the obvious truths of life, much less the Truths of truths’ reflected in the enormity of what one does not see.  

An example of being ‘blind’ to the truth is demonstrated by one of the participants in the questionnaire. In one part of the questionnaire participant 0020 claimed that she had never experienced a negative or unhelpful emotion in her life, or any physical side-effects of emotional experience. Yet at a later stage in the same questionnaire this participant admitted that she had experienced ‘a lot of sadness’. She writes: ‘At times I think I’ve wasted my life’. She then went on to say: ‘I’ve felt physically sick when the build up of emotions has been too great to deal with’. This participant also disclosed that sometimes ‘troublesome’ emotions caused her to feel a deep sense of emotional pain, yet when initially asked if she could identify any troublesome emotions she said ‘no’. This tendency to deny, or inability to acknowledge or understand the extent of one’s emotional life, reflects Yoga’s māya and suggests an irrational need to be flawless or perfect.

2.3 Conditionality—regurgitated mind-stuff

*I think the past will always influence my behaviour... although I live in the present. Things that are done and said can leave scars and it takes continual work to let go of these things.*

Participant 0006

Yoga aims to clarify, transform, and release the individual from the effects of māya. Its theories reflect modern cognitive and psychoanalytic aspects which provide an insight into models of cognition, emotion and the conscious and unconscious/non-conscious minds and how they relate to conditionality. Conditionality represents unhelpful behaviour modifiers. In contrast to a helpful mind-state, the cyclic nature of conditionality creates a mind-state: something governed by past hurts. Delgado explains

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97 ibid.
98 Deakin University research., participant 0020.
99 ibid.
100 ibid.
101 Deakin University research., participant 0006.
102 Also see chapters three and four.
that how one interprets life is determined by experience, and by environmental input. 
He writes:

During fetal life, there is an anticipatory morphological maturation and important functions are developed in order to start as soon as needed… When the baby is born, its heart is already beating and vital functions ...are triggered immediately. These necessary mechanisms are prewired in the brain and in the organism...No comparable ready-to-trigger functions exist in the mental sphere. The newborn is incapable of understanding symbols, directing purposeful motor performance, or producing speech.\textsuperscript{104}

Human beings are born with ‘immature brains’, and ‘the hippocampus and cerebellar cortex have only 10 to 20% of their potential neurons’.\textsuperscript{105} Brain development is provided by three components—hereditary characteristics, nutrients and sensory experiences.\textsuperscript{106} Delgado compares the human brain with a computer, adding that ‘the potential to develop abilities should not be confused with their actual existence’.\textsuperscript{107} He explains thus:

Computers have tremendous possibilities and may receive a large variety of information and instructions in order to perform complex operations, but in the absence of suitable programming, the powerful machine will remain dormant.\textsuperscript{108}

Delgado’s ‘behavioural freedom’ is dependent on the normality of mental functions—upon the ability to receive and process environmental sensory inputs and on the ability to evaluate and compare these inputs with previously stored inputs—this ultimately creates the capacity to choose.\textsuperscript{109} He writes ‘without awareness, without the possibility to decide between different alternatives, there is no freedom’.\textsuperscript{110} Freedom of choice relies on the ability to make choices, a process that requires ‘cerebral reception, processing of information and behavioral expression’.\textsuperscript{111} (All three aspects are addressed in various ways through Yoga practice.\textsuperscript{112})

\textsuperscript{105} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{106} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{107} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{108} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{109} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{110} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{111} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{112} Yogic techniques for control breathing, postures, affirmations and meditations all contribute to improving one’s cerebral reception, processing of information and behavioural expression. How these practices help the individual will be discussed at length in Chapter Eight.
The process of conditionality implies that an individual’s “choice” may be based on a conditioned process of thought. In this instance, choice does not necessarily equate to freedom. Delgado’s theories propose that if the ability to choose is severely restricted, and therefore limited by a developing belief system, then freedom is unachievable.\textsuperscript{113} As such the ability to choose is coloured by interpretive filters that control behavioural expression, veiling the mind with limited concepts. Human freedom depends on healthy brain function, which Delgado relates to education (self-education is particularly significant in Yoga).\textsuperscript{114} Delgado writes:

The organ of freedom is not the heart or liver but the brain, and the normality of its functions is an essential requirement for the existence of a free mind.\textsuperscript{115}

Clearly, biological limitations can restrict freedom (for example, clinical conditions such as hereditary disorders), but without these restrictions, freedom is largely represented by the ability to make choices.\textsuperscript{116} Patañjali’s Yogic theory also suggests that freedom is demonstrated by the capacity to understand why one makes particular choices, highlighting the ability to recognise and change one’s choices when the outcome is not beneficial to one’s health and wellbeing.

Delgado’s ideas mirror aspects of conditionality, particularly in his statement concerning the contradiction of freedom:

The individual mind is structured without its own choice by elements originating in its material and cultural environment, which subsequently will determine individuality and personal choices. Where then is the freedom of the mind?\textsuperscript{117}

On a biological level, freedom is a cerebral mechanism, a ‘technology to deal with brain inputs’.\textsuperscript{118} Here it would appear that Delgado touches on the core of Yoga—the application of practices that enhance the quality of one’s choices, liberating the individual from manipulation. Delgado states:

\textsuperscript{114} ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} ibid.
\textsuperscript{116} ibid.
\textsuperscript{117} ibid.
Freedom may be considered a general purpose cerebral mechanism which increases the number and quality of available behavioral options… [Freedom reflects] a democratization of psychological knowledge [that] will diminish the power of mass media and the manipulation of individuals.\textsuperscript{119}

Unfortunately, many aspects of an individual’s developing belief system are open to manipulation. For instance, political powers present politics a way that appeals to the individual, promising a gain or benefit in following a particular political path; and religious powers may present religion in a way that pacifies the individual’s fear, offering Supreme protection and redemption. As such belief systems are determined by environmental stimulus, and to be free on a mental level one must be able to recognise this.

Delgado refers to human beings as temporal centres of transactions involving matter, energy and information, the quality of which is determined by the individual’s relationship with their environment.\textsuperscript{120} Yoga uses dynamic and subtle movements, breathing techniques and philosophical practices to help the mind to transcend its environment, distancing it from the conditionality of life’s interactions or transactions—counteracting unhelpful thoughts that produce destructive, repetitive emotions that undermine wellbeing.

In ‘Perturbations of desire, emotions disarming morality in the “Great Song” of the Mahābhārata’, Purushottama Bilimoria claims that the notion of kleśas can be traced back to the classical Hindu text of the Mahābhārata (Great Story).\textsuperscript{121} Bilimoria maintains that kleśas ‘give rise to mental disturbances or excitations’.\textsuperscript{122} In contrast, one could argue that these excitations are actually the essence of a kleśa itself; raising a chicken or the egg conundrum. Feuerstein uses words like ‘toil or trouble’ to describe the kleśas,\textsuperscript{123} which can be conscious or non-conscious (see table following).\textsuperscript{124}

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\textsuperscript{118} Fenner, pp. 217-227.
\textsuperscript{119} ibid.
\textsuperscript{120} ibid.
\textsuperscript{122} ibid.
\textsuperscript{123} Feuerstein, The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga, p. 172.
\textsuperscript{124} These emotional reactions are fuelled by the impressions or subliminal activators that tend to lay beneath the conscious mind, in the non-conscious realm.
\end{flushleft}
In Yogic terms, *kleshas* have a cause and effect relationship with cognitive experiences and are the root cause of mental perturbation on a non-clinical level. The fear and ignorance they produce block an individual’s ability to live in peace. *Kleśas* can be
subliminally activated, manifesting as affictions such as *sāṃskāras*: ‘indelible imprints’ in the non-conscious mind, impressions caused by the non-conscious internalisation of life experiences.  

These non-conscious impressions contribute to the habitual cyclic nature of conditionality (see table below); laying the seeds for continual perturbation, producing a never-ending cycle. What causes an affliction and what is an affliction is debatable: does emotion cause the impression or does the impression cause emotion? Yogic interpretations are not always clear on this.

The opposite of a perturbed existence is a life full of contentment and peace, begging the question: Can one define freedom as a form of happiness? Furthermore, can a

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person achieve a degree of happiness if every thought, every action is motivated by the perturbations of the past? In the next section I examine the concept of happiness and its relationship to freedom.

2.4 Happiness—an inevitable pursuit

I have always been impressed by the fact that the most studiously avoided subject in Western philosophy is that of happiness.

Lin Yutang

The quotation above suggests that, on a philosophical level, Western society shuns the topic of happiness—implying an underlying stigma—portraying happiness as a self-seeking pursuit. Perhaps this is because Western society tends to be viewed as materialistic and happiness is often associated with this materialism. Many doctrines advocate putting the other first; proposing that not to do so is sinful or selfish. The pursuit of contentment, even bliss, is an essential part of Yogic philosophy. For Yoga, contentment is never gained at the expense of the other. Western beliefs tend to put happiness forward as a more egocentric practice, exclaiming the benefits of self-sacrifice (this is especially true of some of the more extreme religious and philosophical views). Aristotle suggests that one person’s happiness cannot come at the cost of someone else’s misfortune, but instead that true happiness is intrinsically linked to a positive and virtuous state of mind. This concept of virtue is reflected by Yoga’s Yāma [Śūtra 2:30], which is based on disciplining one’s actions for the collective good.

Aristotle’s eudaimonia (or happiness) is something he associates with creativity, purposefulness and fulfillment rather than more transient emotions like joyfulness, delight or merriment. Friendship is a natural goal of Aristotle’s Ethics. The absolute aspiration of human life is the attainment of eudaimonia and friendship is necessary for

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127 Many religions and philosophies refer to putting others before oneself.
129 Feuerstein, The Yoga-Śūtra of Patañjali, p. 150.
130 Aristotle, p. 34.
a human being’s happiness for ‘man is by nature a social being.’\textsuperscript{131} Aristotle’s happiness, or ‘Supreme Good’, is attainable through the intellectual enrichment of a contemplative life: a life in which the individual evaluates and considers their existence in a wise, rational and philosophical manner.\textsuperscript{132} welcoming the virtue (\textit{arête}) of good friendship.\textsuperscript{133} The term “a contemplative life” implies that a person can choose what to think and can exercise the power of discernment to gain quality of life.\textsuperscript{134} Both Aristotle and Patañjali claim that the quality of the human thought processes are pivotal to the quality of human life. To Aristotle, ‘contemplation is the highest form of activity, and the objects that it apprehends are the highest things that can be known’.\textsuperscript{135}

Aristotle’s view has numerous parallels in Eastern thought. For instance his premise of a higher intellect is also reflected in the concept of \textit{buddhi}.\textsuperscript{136} Similarly, the Yoga-\textit{Sūtras} advocate an ethical approach to life, as the principles \textit{Yāma} demonstrate with qualities such as non-violence, truthfulness (sincerity), respecting the property of others, moderation and charity.\textsuperscript{137} The foundations of the Yoga-\textit{Sūtras} highlight the unifying essence of human nature. In book one, aphorism 33, \textit{Patañjali} refers to projecting friendliness and compassion, and fostering gladness and equanimity.\textsuperscript{138} This ethical stance connects Yoga’s goal of liberation to a life of moral wisdom.

Both Aristotle’s and Patañjali’s concepts could be argued to be overly optimistic considering the magnitude of life’s obstacles and complexities. Nevertheless, Aristotle and Patañjali offer a way to achieve happiness or contentment through avoiding the extremes of deficiency and excess and adhering to what Aristotle refers to as the “Doctrine of the Mean”: finding a rational place between the extremes of emotions: attenuating Patañjali’s \textit{kleśas}.\textsuperscript{139}

\textsuperscript{131} \textit{ibid.}, p. 74.
\textsuperscript{132} \textit{ibid.}, p. 304. This is something comparable to Yoga’s \textit{buddhi mind}.
\textsuperscript{133} \textit{ibid.}, p. 260.
\textsuperscript{134} \textit{ibid.}, p. 304. This concept of contemplation could also be compared to the Yogic concept of apperception.
\textsuperscript{135} Aristotle, \textit{The ethics of Aristotle.}, p. 328.
\textsuperscript{136} Feuerstein, \textit{The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga}, p. 66.
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{ibid.}, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{139} Aristotle, \textit{The ethics of Aristotle.}, p. 100. A rational place relative to the individual and their situation.
There is an obvious relationship between Aristotle’s views and the concept of kleśas. They both require an ethical response to life through negating unhelpful emotional reactions, suggesting that happiness is borne from a just and virtuous world. To find happiness, one must first lead a just and virtuous life, which collectively is a reciprocal process. Aristotle argues that, because of its virtue, '...friendliness is considered to be justice in the fullest sense'.\(^{140}\) Patañjali, too, supports the projection of friendliness, compassion and gladness in the Yoga-Sūtras (1:33).\(^{141}\) Both theorists indicate that the quality of human life is enhanced by a capacity for friendship; by welcoming friendship, justice in its purest form is embraced. As I discussed earlier, this concept of personal justice is pivotal to the study of freedom. The correlation between freedom, friendship and justice will be discussed at length in the pages to come as it inevitably links the notion of freedom to the other, something strongly emphasised in both the Yoga-Sūtras as well as Aristotle’s ethics.\(^{142}\)

Aristotle claims that to be a good friend one must be true to oneself.\(^{143}\) It is reasonable to assume that without respecting and loving one’s self (not narcissism) it is not really possible to love another person, as one’s feelings about oneself have the power to either enhance or inhibit one’s expression towards others. Aristotle writes:

A man’s best friend is the one who not only wishes him well but wishes it for his own sake...and this condition is best fulfilled by his attitude towards himself—and similarly with all the other attributes that define a friend.\(^{144}\)

Aristotle’s version of happiness is strongly associated with virtue and is not seen as a selfish or negative trait; rather it is purposive and serves the good of all. This is contrary to the pursuit of personal happiness, which tends to be judged fiercely and looked down upon by many religious and cultural doctrines, presenting self-sacrifice as a much nobler endeavour. In many ways, happiness, as a concept, appears to have no clear interpretation and will undoubtedly continue to be elusive. An examination of random colloquial definitions of the word “happiness” reflects its diversity; for instance, it is considered to be:

\[^{140}\text{ibid.}, \text{p. 100.}\]
\[^{141}\text{Feuerstein, p.151.}\]
\[^{142}\text{The conundrum here is that one cannot control “the other” but arguably if each individual controls their own minds this control becomes collective.}\]
\[^{143}\text{Aristotle, The ethics of Aristotle., p. 300.}\]
\[^{144}\text{ibid., p. 300.}\]
• The state or quality of being happy;\textsuperscript{145}
• The pleasurable experience that springs from possession of good;\textsuperscript{146}
• Expressing pleasure, contentment or gladness;\textsuperscript{147}
• Cheerfulness, merriness, gaiety, good-spirits, light-heartedness;\textsuperscript{148}
• The gratification of desires.\textsuperscript{149}

Perhaps the last definition, which attaches the concept of happiness to the satisfaction of one’s desires, explains why happiness is often discussed within the context of ethics, raising questions like: At what expense does one achieve happiness? According to Aristotle and Patañjali, happiness is not truly happiness if it creates an ethical issue, namely, when it is achieved at someone’s expense.

In respect to Yoga, Taimni explains that ‘virtue and vice beget respectively pleasurable and painful experiences’. So why not simply choose virtue over vice?\textsuperscript{150} If virtue leads to pleasure, shouldn’t it be a natural choice? But Yogic theory maintains that the happy life is often laid on a surface of illusion. In other words, its foundations are weak and elusive, as Taimni argues: ‘all experiences are either actively or potentially full of misery to the wise person whose spiritual perception has become awakened’.\textsuperscript{151}

The term “happiness” can be traced back to the Medieval English word hap (happe), meaning: ‘happenchance’ or ‘a chance happening of good luck’. It is not viewed as a sustainable quality, but rather, as defined, a chance happening—something fleeting. This may well explain the use of alternative words in Yogic philosophies such as joy, contentment and bliss to describe the goal of \textit{citta-vṛtti-nirvodha}. In contrast, the word “contentment” (Old French origin) is ‘a state of quiet satisfaction’; Yoga sees this as something more sustainable, much less excitable, in contrast to happiness which is considered to be a more transient state.\textsuperscript{152}

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{149} Funk and Wagnells standard dictionary, p. 573.
\textsuperscript{150} Taimni, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid., p. 163.
\textsuperscript{152} In Yogic terms “contentment” is less focused on an object of desire (discussed further in chapters four and seven).
Does happiness require pleasure to override displeasure, or is it much more complex than this? From a Yogic perspective happiness entails being content in spite of displeasure. In *Happiness and pleasure*, philosopher Daniel M. Haybron explains the difference between hedonism (pleasure) and happiness, when he proposes that:

An important aspect of hedonism’s error is that pleasure lacks what we may call causal depth. All appearances are that happiness has deep, far-reaching, and typically lasting consequences for a person’s state of mind and behaviour.\(^{153}\)

Haybron claims that causal depth has three aspects:

1) Deep states or conditions that are productive (they are prolific in their causal effects);
2) They are wide-ranging in their effects (not limited to a narrow class of states);
3) They are in some sense psychologically deep (they affect one’s psychological condition at a very profound and basic level and in lasting ways, not just in superficial and transient ways).\(^{154}\)

According to Haybron, pleasure does not have the causal depth that happiness does. Rather he argues that hedonism just skims the phenomenal surface of emotional states and calls it happiness, whereas happiness is a quality with much more depth.\(^{155}\) Nonetheless, happiness (and associated words like joy, contentment or bliss) tends to describe feelings linked to pleasurable experiences. According to Freud and Patañjali, pleasure and pain (pleasure and non-pleasure) are prime human motivators, and this is discussed further in chapters two to six.

Happiness is a positive, emotional mind-state, a helpful mind-state where thought produces a particular feeling: a good feeling: a state of emotional stability and endurance, where the individual is not subject to the constant instability of mental-

\(^{154}\) *ibid.*
\(^{155}\) *ibid.*
In the face of change the individual remains unperturbed. Happiness is different for each individual—the diverse meanings associated with the word reflect this. The degree of happiness experienced depends on what one associates with its achievement.

In Yoga tradition, a lack of quality with regard to perception relates to the source of one’s troubles. In Practical Yoga, Ernest Wood writes that kleśas are emotions borne from false perception.\textsuperscript{157} Life-supporting emotions are honest emotions and life-destroying\textsuperscript{158} emotions result from deception or false perception. Whether one idealises happiness or prefers to describe it as contentment, one cannot argue that the sense of happiness, in whatever form, inspires wellbeing or, say, being satisfied with life. Arguably, a sociopath may appear happy in carrying out horrific acts, but this kind of satisfaction is not happiness within context of this thesis for it has no connection to virtue, nor does it support the life-enhancing qualities that pure happiness or contentment require.

### 2.5 Wellbeing, mind, evolution and emotion

Within the context of this thesis the word “wellbeing” appears to be a more appropriate term than “happiness” to describe a state contentment and balance. Wellbeing describes a positive state of body and mind. Social economist J.F. Helliwell and political scientist R.D. Putnam\textsuperscript{159} conducted a study and series of surveys relating to wellbeing that links happiness to social life. While conducting several national (UK) and international ‘self-assessment health status’ surveys (88,000 samples in total), they found that there are strong links between social status (family relationships and community involvement) and physical/emotional health.

Choices made by participants in these studies demonstrate that ‘social connectedness [has] strong positive effects on physical health’ and that ‘family…friends…workplace ties, and civic engagement…all appear independently and robustly related to happiness

\textsuperscript{156} Used to describe disturbing activity in the mind—for example, anxiety.


\textsuperscript{158} Life-destroying in the sense of extreme unhappiness.

and life satisfaction’.\textsuperscript{160} In ‘The social context of well-being’, Helliwell and Putnam write: ‘networks and norms of reciprocity and trust’ play a vital part in the subjective wellbeing of the individual, adding that empirical research provides evidence that ‘social connections...are the most robust correlates of subjective well-being’.\textsuperscript{161} Such studies suggest that wellbeing is conducive to a positive emotional mind-state that relies heavily on social perception.\textsuperscript{162} This explains the tendency for engaging in gossip, bullying, victimisation and the “casting out” of those that don’t meet the expectations of the dominating social body. Social connections, although not always based on awareness and equality, are significant in respect to the social milieu of wellbeing, and this is reflected in the evolution of the human brain.

In 1967, neuroscientist Paul MacLean introduced the idea of the triune brain, an evolutionary explanation of human brain development. In \textit{A triune concept of the brain and behaviour}, MacLean lists three areas of brain development that human evolution necessitated: the reptilian brain, which relates to the primitive reflexes such as the fight or flight response,\textsuperscript{163} the paleomammalian or limbic system, which relates to emotional behaviour and sexuality (the social connection), and the neomammalian or neocortex, which relates to the thinking processes; and as such allows the individual to read, write, calculate and reason.\textsuperscript{164} MacLean explains:

These three brains might be thought of as biological computers, each with its own peculiar form of subjectivity and its own intelligence, its own sense of time and space and its own memory, motor, and other functions.\textsuperscript{165}

MacLean’s research parallels that of Darwin.\textsuperscript{166} MacLean proposes:

In evolution one might imagine that the brain has developed like a building to which wings and superstructure have been added.\textsuperscript{167}

\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{161} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{162} Feuerstein, \textit{The Yoga tradition}, pp. 4-5.
\textsuperscript{163} G Tortora & B Derrickson, \textit{The principles of anatomy and physiology}, Harper Collins College Publisher, California, 1996, pp. 652-654. The fight or flight response is another name for the general adaptation response – the physiological response one has to a threat (sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system).
\textsuperscript{164} P MacLean, \textit{A triune concept of the brain and behaviour}, University of Toronto Press, 1973, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{165} MacLean, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{167} MacLean, p. 8.
These three brains intermesh, yet each plays a part in day-to-day function. The reptilian brain ‘programs behaviour according to instructions based on ancestral memories and ancestral learning’,\(^{168}\) the paleomammalian brain or limbic system is paramount to sexual/emotional development and the neomammalian or neocortex is the ‘hallmark of higher mammals’,\(^{169}\) which allows the higher functions of reasoning and understanding.

Just as the physicality of the brain has followed an evolutionary cycle, the psychological realm has also evolved into what some call a civilised mind. Interestingly, Yogic philosophy has a unique understanding of this evolutionary phenomenon. MacLean’s views on evolution reflect Patañjali’s three elements of citta, the mind.\(^{170}\) (I am not suggesting that these two theories can be directly overlaid. However, there is a resonance between them, particularly in relation to the evolution [or in the case of Yoga, the involution] of the cognitive-emotive processes.) Citta consists of manas, the sensory realm (basic instincts), ahamkāra, the individual’s identity (emotional life), and buddhi, the intellect (the higher or discerning mind).\(^{171}\) Citta represents the totality of the mind, incorporating a variety of inner processes, primarily the capacity of attention.\(^{172}\) Historical translations vary. Citt is often translated as ‘consciousness’. Chapple and Kelly describe cit as ‘to perceive’.\(^{173}\) From a Yogic perspective, citta is the ‘entire inner instrumentality’,\(^{174}\) that is, the ‘arena of vṛttis and saṃskāras in which all the modifications arise’;\(^{175}\) the substratum in which ‘all the cognitive, affective, and emotive processes take place’.\(^{176}\) According to Ian Kesarcodi-Watson, finding a specific meaning for the word “citta” is difficult at best. In his paper titled ‘Samādhi in Patañjali’s Yoga, Sūtras’ he points out that:

Scholars often err by looking for "the one" meaning of a word. There might not be just one meaning, and I suspect that for "citta"…there is not.\(^{177}\)

\(^{168}\) ibid., p. 21.
\(^{169}\) ibid., p. 8.
\(^{171}\) ibid.
\(^{172}\) ibid.
\(^{173}\) Chapple & Kelly, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, p. 3.
\(^{175}\) ibid.
\(^{176}\) ibid.
Yoga’s interpretation of mind is multilayered and complex. From a Western point of view, one could describe Patañjali’s levels of mind as instinctual drives, subjective reality and the instrument of wisdom and ethical awareness. Yoga’s aim is for buddhi to discipline and control the sensate desires of the lower minds.\textsuperscript{178} A higher level of consciousness is achieved through self-mastery. The three levels of mind in Classical Yoga reflect the two aspects of the self: ātman and jīva.\textsuperscript{179} The ātman represents the higher Self in the form of the seer, the all-knowing source of awareness.\textsuperscript{180} The jīva represents the part of the self that is limited by the sensory world; it is here that the mind is focused on the world of matter and subject to illusion (Western interpretations of the self are more closely aligned with jīva).

Whether discussing the disposition or evolution of the mind on a Yogic or a biological level, it becomes apparent that both theories recognise the complexity of emotional life. In \textit{Emotions and Life}, psychologist Robert Plutchik writes the following about emotion:

> [Many] definitions of the word emotion have been proposed…[including] that emotions are usually triggered by one’s interpretations of events, that they involve strong reactions of many bodily systems, that emotional expressions are based on genetic mechanisms, that they communicate information from one person to another, that they help the individual adapt… [Contributing] in some way to the chances of survival and to the regulation of social interactions amongst people.\textsuperscript{181}

The various theories of emotion present a vast body of knowledge that is often conflicting. Primary emotions are usually associated with instinct: that is, fear, disgust, joy, sadness and surprise.\textsuperscript{182} Plutchik lists the primary emotions from core theories, which include:

- Psychoanalytical — fear, anger, satisfaction, tension and appetite;
- Autonomic — fear, anger, grief/resignation, joy, elation, satisfaction and shock;
- Empirical — fear, anger, sadness, happiness and love;
- Developmental — fear, anger, sadness, joy, interest, surprise, distress, shame,

\textsuperscript{178} Whicher, \textit{The integrity of the Yoga Darśana}, p. 157.
\textsuperscript{179} Feuerstein, \textit{The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga}, p. 42.
\textsuperscript{180} Yoga suggests that awareness within the person merges with Purusa (eternal spirit).
\textsuperscript{182} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 69.
shyness, disgust and guilt.\textsuperscript{183}

Plutchik explains that mixed or secondary emotions are constructed from a mixture of primary emotions, and because they are constructed by a combination of emotions, they appear more complex and sometimes more difficult to comprehend. Plutchik himself only gives the list detailed below as an example, as emotional states are multifaceted and the extremes of emotional life defy any simple definition. Secondary emotions may include:

- Joy and acceptance = love or friendliness;
- Fear and surprise = alarm or awe;
- Sadness and disgust = remorse;
- Disgust and anger = contempt, hatred or hostility;
- Joy and fear = guilt;
- Anger and joy = pride;
- Fear and disgust = shame or prudishness;
- Anticipation and fear = anxiety or caution.\textsuperscript{184}

As Maclean’s triune brain suggests, psychological development is reflected in the evolution of the brain. It is reasonable, therefore, to surmise that emotional development is reflected in the evolution of the mind.\textsuperscript{185} Plutchik asserts that emotive adaptation and the evolution of the communicative processes are an intricate part of the survival process.\textsuperscript{186} The question is: What comes first? Does one need to experience social interaction to evolve or does psychological evolution dictate social tendencies? Is mental freedom hampered by the need to be accepted socially? And, if so how is it unrealistic to refer to this as being free, for this need, in itself, is governed by a conditional need for approval and acceptance, as Helliwell and Putnam’s research indicates. According to Plutchik, emotions are powerful forces that influence behaviour and it is one’s early experiences that lay the foundation for ‘desirable and undesirable emotional behaviour’.\textsuperscript{187} With this in mind, any kind of freedom would require the

\textsuperscript{183} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{184} \textit{ibid.}, p. 74.
\textsuperscript{185} MacLean, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{186} Plutchik, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{187} \textit{ibid.}, p. xvii.
control of, or, at the very least, an understanding of, the reasons behind one’s emotional responses.

2.6 The psycho-physicality of emotion

In ‘Cognitive, social and physiological determinants of emotional state’, psychologists Stanley Schachter and Jerome E. Singers claim that emotions have two elements:

The Jamesian physiological component of arousal and a “cognitive” component that determines how emotions are labelled and discriminated among... The first component can be measured quite precisely, which was not the case in James’s day. The second component, however, is complex and difficult to quantify.

This theory supports the Jamesian view that ‘an individual will react emotionally only to the extent that he experiences a state of physiological arousal’. This is demonstrated by the basic premise behind Hatha Yoga’s theory regarding the integral nature of the processes of the mind and body (bodhimind). Hatha Yoga works with the physical body to initiate changes in the mind. Patañjali encourages the use of practices, such as āsana (Yoga postures), prāṇāyāma (breath control) and sādhanas (spiritual/mental practices such as meditation), suggesting that all of these pursuits work towards achieving citta-vṛtti-nirodha.

Many theorists acknowledge this connection between the biological processes and the cognitive processes: psycho-physiological energy. The Stoics, Plato and Aristotle all made considerable contributions to theories of emotion. According to Aristotle:

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189 William James (1842-1910) One of the four primary theorists on what constitutes an emotion. His essay ‘What is an emotion?’ was published in 1884.
190 Schachter and Singer.
191 ibid.
192 L. Blashki, Graduate certificate in yoga therapy: study guide, Australian Institute of Yoga Therapy and CAE, Melbourne, 2007. Hatha Yoga consists of a multitude of practices such as āsanas that massage the body’s internal organs, re-oxygenate the blood (through breath work), improve circulation and strengthen and tone the body—improving the body’s immunity and resistance.
194 This notion will be explored further in chapters five and eight.
We can define an emotion as that which leads one’s condition to become so transformed that his judgement is affected, and which is accompanied by pleasure and pain.\textsuperscript{195}

Aristotle recognises that emotion is influenced by judgement and that how one feels (pleasure or pain) influences one’s judgement. He associates qualities such as discernment with a particular concept of emotion and presents this as ‘correct emotion’—emotion that demands an element of virtue—implying that the mind has some cognitive control over emotions: that some emotional responses can be directed or controlled through decision-making powers.\textsuperscript{196} In contrast, uncontrolled emotions can drastically affect one’s judgement. Consequently, the achievement of a mind-state of freedom requires an awareness of the reciprocal relationship between cognition and emotional life. Aristotle’s idea of correct emotion reflects the concept of “emotional integrity”, a phrase coined by Robert C. Solomon.\textsuperscript{197} (This is discussed further in section 2.8.)

As already discussed, Yoga maintains that the mind (citta) is governed by vṛtti (whirl, activity, fluctuations); vṛtti are sometimes referred to as mind-stuff or fluctuations of consciousness. Feuerstein describes them as ‘psychomental states’.\textsuperscript{198} Patañjali recognises five types of vṛtti:

- Valid cognition (accurate or right knowledge—pramāna);
- Invalid cognition (misconception—viparyaya);
- Conceptualisation (imagination—vikalpa);
- Sleep (nirūti);
- Memory (smṛiti).\textsuperscript{199}

Again, vṛtti can be painful or non-painful. In Yogic terms, non-painful vṛtti are conducive to liberation, whereas painful vṛtti result in bondage (bandha-phala).\textsuperscript{200} Yoga’s philosophical concept of the aklīśṭāh vṛtti (non-painful thoughts) reflect

\textsuperscript{195} Aristotle, ‘From rhetoric’, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{196} ibid., p. 6.
\textsuperscript{197} RC Solomon, True to our feelings: what our emotions are really telling us, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p. 267.
\textsuperscript{198} Feuerstein, The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga, p. 335.
\textsuperscript{199} ibid., p. 335.
\textsuperscript{200} Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, p. 30.
Aristotle’s notion of correct emotion, suggesting that valid cognition represents correct judgement, whereas misconception represents incorrect judgement. Yoga’s concept of habituation implies that feelings such as pleasure and pain can be addictive; that to reach an innate state of bliss (ananda), and avoid the spectrum of pleasure and pain, vṛttis need to be controlled.\footnote{\textsuperscript{201}}

In \textit{The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga}, Feuerstein writes that: ‘Ordinary life revolves around the maximization of pleasure (sukha) and the minimization of pain (duhkha)’.\footnote{\textsuperscript{202}} Patañjali and Aristotle’s support qualities such as self-discipline, restraint and valid judgement. Because ethical acts are virtuous acts and action (behaviour) is dependent on judgement, Aristotle’s emotion is intrinsically linked to discernment (valid cognition or valid judgement). Aristotle’s soul, which he connects with the psyche, has two parts: the rational and the irrational, and these two parts form a unity.\footnote{\textsuperscript{203}} Such views parallel Yoga through the concept of mastery or lack thereof:

The Greek terms are \textit{akrasia} (‘incontinence’; literally: “lack of mastery”) and \textit{enkratieia} (‘continence’; literally “mastery”). An akratic person goes against reason as a result...\textit{pathos} (“emotion,” “feeling”). Like the akratic, an enkratic person experiences a feeling that is contrary to reason; but ... he acts in accordance with reason.\footnote{\textsuperscript{204}}

\textit{Akrasia}, or lack of mastery, reflect Yoga’s unrestrained whirls of mind-stuff, likewise \textit{enkratieia} mirrors the restraint summoned by apperception. To Aristotle, emotional restraint can be moulded by education and habit, emphasising virtue as a habit that can or must be developed: the habit of emoting correctly (this concept of emotional wisdom is at the core of Yoga’s theory and practice).\footnote{\textsuperscript{205}}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{201} Also see Chapter Eight.
\item \textsuperscript{202} Feuerstein, \textit{The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga}, p. 221.
\item \textsuperscript{203} RC Solomon, \textit{What is an emotion?}, p. 6. Word count does not permit a more elaborate analysis of “soul”.
\item \textsuperscript{205} Plato, \textit{The symposium}, trans. C Gill, Penguin Books, London, 2005, p. 96. Patañjali’s functions of the mind are also comparable to Plato’s four states of the mind—intelligence, reason (which he conveys as something midway between intelligence and opinion), belief and illusion.
\end{itemize}
Some suggest that, traditionally, Yoga has paid little attention to the value of emotions or feelings, yet Feuerstein argues that Yoga has accounted for ‘the entire range of feelings … known to modern psychology’.206

The yogic process consists initially in the transmutation of negative emotions207 into positive feelings.208 Enlightenment209 does not terminate [a person’s] emotional life…rather as a fully liberated being… [the individual engages] in life spontaneously and…animate[s] all kinds of emotions without [being] bound by them.210

The word “emotion” is derived from ëmouëre (Latin) to ‘strongly affect the feelings,’ proposing that emotions are a demonstration of feelings.211 The word “feel” means ‘to be touched’ (from Old English félæn).212 But, the notion of touch can be tangible and intangible, physical or subtle. Schachter-Singer’s study shows that emotions, like feelings, are at the same time tangible and intangible—initiated physiologically (body) and cognitively (mind).213 The four main historical traditions or theories of emotions demonstrate the relationship between cognition and feeling in respect to emotion. Plutchik lists them as follows:

- **Evolutionary**—Charles Darwin (1809-1882)—‘emotional expressions are communications of intentions in emergency situations and tend to increase the chance of survival’;

- **Psychophysiological**—William James (1842-1910)—‘emotions are subjective feelings based on the awareness of internal autonomic changes associated with actions’;

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207 Solomon, *True to our feelings*, p. 38. It is interesting to note here that Solomon believes that there is no such thing as a negative emotion instead, Solomon argues that all of our emotions serve to play a part in the wholistic nature of being human. For instance, fear alerts us to danger and helps keep us safe from harm.
208 Such as compassion (*karuna*), friendliness (*maitrī*) and love (*bhakti*). This is accomplished through adherence to the principles of moral discipline and self-restraint.
211 Partridge, p. 419.
212 *ibid.*, p. 205.
213 Schachter and Singer.
• *Neurological*—Walter B. Cannon (1871-1945)—‘emotions are subjective feelings resulting from hypothalamic arousal and usually associated with acts of fight or flight’;

• *Psychoanalytic*—Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)—‘emotions are complex states involving conflicts, early experiences, personality traits, and defences—they can only be inferred on the basis of various kinds of indirect evidence.’

Darwin saw emotions as an example of adaptive behaviour; emotional expressions are the ways in which one communicates one’s intentions. Emotions are the feeling of bodily changes that occur after the perception of an event. They are instinctive reactions and ‘act as signals and as preparations for action’. To Darwin, emotions are inherently linked to bodily function and as such they are a necessary part of the survival instinct. He also claims that behaviour patterns are reliable characteristics of a species. Although Darwin argues that emotional reactions are instinctive, he explains that some behaviour is learned just as the words of a language are learned. Behavioural tendencies, then, are not completely deterministic and can therefore be modified.

To philosopher and psychologist William James, emotions take place when ‘bodily changes directly follow the perception of an event and...the feeling of these changes is the emotion’. It is impossible to feel an emotion without experiencing the bodily changes that accompany it. Consequently, one cannot feel happy, sad, frightened and so forth, without expressing it physically; when one experiences a feeling one is responding to bodily changes. Delgado summarises Jamesian theory in two parts:

1) Individual experience or feeling;

2) Expressive or behavioural aspects.

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214 Plutchik, p. 42.
215 ibid., pp. 26 & 27.
216 ibid.
217 ibid.
218 ibid.
219 ibid., pp. 29-31. *Hatha Yoga* uses mind and body to manifest changes in emotional state and ultimately, consciousness.
Physiologist Walter Cannon’s research relates emotional states to brain structure, concluding that particular parts of the brain are responsible for particular emotions.\textsuperscript{221} He argues that emotions evolve from simple sensation when the hypothalamic processes have been roused. To Cannon, emotions are not responsible for the fight or flight response instead, they are ‘homeostatic adjustments’ that help the body to prepare for action.\textsuperscript{222}

To Freud, emotions are complex states that are produced by varying factors. Freud was well acquainted with Darwin’s theories and agrees that emotional expression has an ‘adaptive significance in the struggle for survival’, thus relating emotions to instincts for self-preservation.\textsuperscript{223} Thus Darwin deduces that adaptation to change is a significant aspect of survival, not only on a physical level, but also on an emotional level. Freud expanded on Darwin’s idea of the fight for survival and extended it to include psychological and interpersonal conflict. Freud’s psychodynamic interpretation of emotions raises the question of unconscious emotions, hypothesising that an individual can experience an emotion without being consciously aware of it.

Freud’s concept of emotion is best understood in terms of energy. Emotional energy requires some kind of direct or indirect expression. An indirect expression of hysteria, anxiety, neurosis, or other psychological disturbances may result in repression\textsuperscript{224} (an unconscious expression of emotional energy) or other defence mechanisms, which overflow into seemingly unrelated physical and emotional symptoms; such repressed feelings involve personality traits, conflicts, and defences.\textsuperscript{225} Freud relies heavily on various signs of the emotional experience to fathom the depths of the emotion being repressed and uses dreams, free associations, postures, facial expressions, slips of the tongue as well as voice quality to uncover what is repressed.\textsuperscript{226} To Freud, emotional experiences are created by the individual’s complex history, and an emotional state may

\textsuperscript{221} Plutchik, p. 34. Both James and Cannon recognised perception as the primary function leading to emotional response—suggesting that perception preludes feeling.

\textsuperscript{222} Tortora and Derrickson, Principles of anatomy and physiology, pp. 652-654.

\textsuperscript{223} Plutchik, p. 39.

\textsuperscript{224} AM Colman, Dictionary of psychology, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 650. Repression—used in psychoanalysis as a defence mechanism whereby unacceptable thoughts or wishes are repressed: not consciously recognised.

\textsuperscript{225} Plutchik, p. 36. Such as the case of Anna detailed in A Study in Hysteria. Breuer and Freud discovered, after treating Anna for a two year period, that she was experiencing a repressed memory with a strong emotional association and that this resulted in her symptoms (symptoms included partial paralysis and fits).
exhibit both love and hate simultaneously. His theories involve, most notably, repression, infantile sexuality and an understanding of the unconscious.

In summary, for Freud ‘beliefs, bodily motions and physiological changes are inseparable elements of emotion’.[227] Modern science and philosophy reflect a “collectiveness of ideas”, whether directly or indirectly, providing important insights into the complexity of emotional life.

2.7 The complexity of feeling

In True to our feelings: what our emotions are really telling us, Solomon argues that to view emotions purely as feelings is an oversimplification.[228] Solomon claims that every emotion includes some feelings, together with the physiological effects, adding that feelings are generally associated with instinct rather than the higher faculties of thought and intuition.[229] He writes:

    Feeling... is an enormously promiscuous and generous term that includes all sorts of experiences, from the feeling of cold water dripping down the middle of your back to the feeling that something is awry in the kitchen.[230]

What all human feelings have in common is simply the fact that they are felt; they are sensations that register in consciousness, and are not just intellectual. He points out that this is not to say that they are always felt on a conscious level, they may be unconscious. Solomon argues that emotions are feelings, emphasising that feelings alone cannot be articulated. He refers to John Locke and David Hume, seventeenth century empiricist philosophers, both of whom claim that an emotion is, essentially, a sensation. Solomon explains that Hume associates emotions with an “idea”—an idea that is created by pleasant or unpleasant impressions (again, this relates back to Aristotle’s notion of transformation, judgement, pleasure and pain).[231] Solomon

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[226] Colman, p. 650.
[228] Solomon, True to our feelings., p. 137.
[229] ibid.
validates Hume’s argument but adds that it ‘gets stuck on the idea that...emotion...is a simple sensation’. ²³² (Hume will be discussed further in Chapter Three).

According to Solomon, James’ view that emotion is a feeling caused by sudden changes in the body falls short of a valid definition of emotion; the notion of “feelings” tends to get too ‘tightly specified to bodily sensations’. In contrast, Solomon proposes that emotion can have integrity; it can be whole and unified. Emotions are too complex to merely associate with feelings. Solomon’s emotional integrity ²³³ is a process of development rather than a purely instinctive reaction (emotional integrity is something that can be compared to Daniel Goleman’s theory of emotional intelligence). ²³⁴ This concept of emotional integrity reflects the aim of Yoga: freedom through discipline and restraint.

Patañjali highlights the importance of overcoming the binding nature of kleśas, which constitute emotional tendencies that hinder one’s ability to achieve any measure of freedom. According to Patañjali, by restraining the fluctuations—or as Wood calls them, ‘ideas’—in the mind one overcomes afflictions and their causes. ²³⁵ Freud’s psychodynamic interpretations of emotions reflect the origin of kleśas in relation to personality traits, childhood experiences and conflicts. Again, kleśas connect to Freud’s defence mechanisms in that they both develop from an inability to understand and express emotional energy in a healthy and rational manner. Hatha Yoga works with the physical body to initiate changes in the mind, which provide a means for restraining emotions and their bodily effects.

### 2.8 Excessive impulse, violence and “the passions”

*Arguments are to no avail against [our] passions.*  

*Sig mund Freud* ²³⁶

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²³² Solomon, *True to our feelings*, p. 139.
²³³ *ibid.*, p. 267.
²³⁶ *ibid.*, p.8.
In *What is an emotion? Classic and contemporary readings*, philosopher Julia Annas explains how the Stoics (circa 4th century BCE) relate emotion (*pathos*) to the passions. To the Stoics, a passion is an impulse, the movement of the *soul* (psyche) towards something: but it is only a passion if it is opposing reason (*logos*). The movement of the *mind* (intellect) towards something is said to be a rational impulse. Thus, when one moves away from something that is dangerous, or when one moves towards something that will provide benefits, one is not driven by passion; rather one acts through reason (even when the act is spontaneous). Passion is an impulse that tends to be excessive; an impulse disobedient to reason. Stoicism claims that reason and rationality are two distinct things: one can rationalise and justify something, but that does not mean it is based on *good* reasoning. Stoicism considers good reasoning an art, it requires practice; reason is the ‘craftsman of impulse’.

All of our impulses can be represented as articulated in language (for the Stoics, the ability to communicate in language is the most important characteristic of reason)... When a human acts in accordance with an impulse, there is a belief that can, in principle, be represented in language and that has a particular logical form.

Annas adds this about the early Stoic view of emotion:

> Emotions are a kind of impulse—that is, a kind of response we make to the world when it seems to us to require a reaction on our part. What distinguishes them is that an impulse is always an *excessive* impulse, in that, while rational in the sense in which all human impulses are rational, is also disobedient to reason in the sense of *good* reason.

Similar to Yoga, Stoicism claims that good reason requires good judgement and emotional restraint. Emotions like violence are the repercussions of being ‘disobedient to good reason’: showing no restraint. In ‘Reason and emotion; essays on ancient moral psychology and ethical theory’, historian John M. Cooper writes: ‘Emotion is not a

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238 ibid.

239 ibid.

240 ibid.

241 ibid.

242 ibid.

243 ibid.
matter of being moved by impressions received, but of surrendering one’s self to them and following up the chance of movement’. 244 He gives the following example:

Anger is put to flight by precept, for it is a voluntary fault of the mind, and not one of those which occur through some quirk of the human condition and can therefore happen to the very wisest of men. 245

Cooper maintains that there are three stages of anger— involuntary, voluntary and out of control. 246 The first is a reaction, which is a mental jolt that is beyond reason, in the case of anger when one thinks oneself wronged; the second a decision; and the last is an excessive impulse which overwhelms reason. 247 Cooper writes that emotions ‘begin, grow or get carried away’. 248 Anger, violence and rage are all emotions that carry one away from reason: in Yogic terms, these emotions evolve from the seeds of burden. Similar to the Stoic view, Yoga’s concept of apperception, where the perceiver is aware of the act of perceiving, suggests that awareness of the source of one’s thoughts and emotions apply reason to impulse. 249 It would seem that reason is the place where freedom dwells, because it liberates one from such excess or extremes. Cooper adds:

Where emotion might first be invoked by instinct, it takes form, according to the Stoics, by way of decision (using the faculty of rationality), if the emotion becomes excessive, thereby progressing to the third stage, it has undoubtedly been rationalised beyond reason. 250

Philosopher and historian Gillian Clark argues that all passions require beliefs and one cannot have a belief without reason; furthermore a passion is not necessarily contrary to reason. 251 Similarly, Yoga’s philosophical approach to emotion recognises that not all emotions are destructive, only those that cause harm to the individual (niyāma) or to society (yāma). The Greek classics, cognition was considered to be a natural component of emotional life, and it is at this point of cognition that the path to freedom is forged. In such philosophy,

245 Ibid.
246 Ibid.
247 Ibid.
248 Ibid.
249 Ibid.
250 Ibid.
emotions have an ethical obligation, one implicated by the ability to reason. Virtue is, inevitably, part of a rich emotional life, and for freedom’s sake, must be embraced. As Feuerstein writes:

The yogic process consists initially in the transmutation of negative emotions into positive feelings…this is accomplished through adherence to the principles of moral discipline and self-restraint.\(^{253}\)

In keeping with Yogic theory, as described by Feuerstein’s quotation above (and reflected in Aristotle’s “correct” emotion), I argue that the cognitive component of an emotional response is controllable, proposing that the ability to control emotion has a direct link to wellbeing. Consequently, this view of freedom presents an irony, as *freedom* is dependent on social *restraint* and personal *discipline*—both vital components of Patañjali’s theories and Aristotle’s notion of virtue. This view supports the premise that emotions are not destined to be uncontrolled responses but instead can be cognitively guided to a virtuous end, something largely connected to ‘feeling the right thing’.\(^{254}\)

If one links freedom to emotion and emotion to virtue, then it follows that freedom involves responsibility, a degree of understanding and a distance from self-obsessioned subjectivity. Helliwell and Putnam’s findings agree that “freedom” is paradoxical because to achieve it requires the social “ties” of ‘reciprocity and trust’.\(^{255}\) Feuerstein writes:

The projection of friendliness, compassion, gladness and equanimity towards objects—[be they] joyful, sorrowful, meritorious or demeritorious—[bring about] the pacification of consciousness.\(^{256}\)

Through ideals of right and wrong, this reciprocity of being, highlights the importance of awareness and respect for the other. This is reflected in Aristotle’s concept of virtue and in his philosophy of friendship. According to Solomon, Aristotle’s philosophy of friendship takes one away from the more social aspects of ‘mutual advantage or mutual enjoyment’ and creates a shift towards ‘self-improvement’ (as opposed to self-

\(^{253}\) *ibid.*, p. 101.
\(^{254}\) Solomon, *What is an emotion?* p. 6.
\(^{255}\) Helliwell & Putnam, pp. 1435-1446.
advantage).\textsuperscript{257} In a similar vein, self-study, is one of Yoga’s methods of self-
transformation, and it strives towards controlling kleśas.\textsuperscript{258} In the following chapters I
will discuss the kleśas systematically, the first of which is avidyā (ignorance).

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{256} Feuerstein, \textit{The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali}, p. 151.
\textsuperscript{257} Solomon, \textit{Living with Nietzsche}, p. 148.
\textsuperscript{258} Feuerstein, \textit{The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali}, p. 89.
\end{footnotesize}
CHAPTER THREE

_Avidyā_ (ignorance)—the uncertainty of knowing

_Theory of knowledge is rendered difficult, by the fact that it involves psychology, logic, and the physical sciences, with the result that confusions between different points of view are a constant danger._

_Bertrand Russell_ ¹

3.1 Ignorance, bondage and freedom

To explain the _kleśas_ Taimni uses an analogy of the roots, trunk, branches, leaves and fruit of a tree.² They are all connected, each part a piece of the whole. _Avidyā_ is at the heart of all of the _kleśas_; it is described as the root-cause of the other _kleśas_, which collectively are said to ‘produce all the miseries of human life’.³ _Kleśas_ can be potential or active and they have four states:

1) Dormant;
2) Attenuated;
3) Alternating;
4) An expanded condition.⁴

The “dormant” condition describes a _kleśa_ presented in a latent form (its lack of expression converts its energy to potential).⁵ “Attenuated” describes a _kleśa_ existing in a “weak” condition, ready to be activated when the slightest stimulus is applied.⁶ An “alternating” condition describes a _kleśa_ with the tendency for two opposing forces, for example, attraction and repulsion (both of which are based on attachment, for one is repulsed by the extreme opposition to what one desires).⁷ An expanding condition

² IK Taimni, _The science of Yoga_, Thc Theosophical Publishing House, India, 1979, p. 139.
³ _ibid._
⁴ _ibid._, pp. 152 & 139.
⁵ _ibid._, p. 139.
⁶ _ibid._
⁷ _ibid._
describes a kleśa that is fully active, something Taimni equates to ‘the waves on the surface of the sea in a storm’. ⁸

Conditionality is associated with the last two states: alternating and expanded. An alternating state creates inner conflict and a strong sense of uncertainty. The individual may feel fine while things are going well, but erupt into a state of emotional turmoil when things start to deteriorate. A good example of an expanded condition is the anger demonstrated by road rage. Here, the individual is beyond reason and the kleśa is an all-consuming experience.

According to Yoga, mental suffering is not based on what we know, but rather on what we do not know. It is not always clear to the individual why they think the way they do. Hence, when one’s thoughts result in unhappiness or emotional pain the cause is not always apparent. The unhelpful ideas one holds on to, ideas that produce destructive core beliefs, are the very things that keep the individual captive on an emotional level, because they interfere with clarity of “knowing”.

Feuerstein claims that ‘all knowledge is interpretive’—every thought, every response, every feeling one experiences relates to one’s subjective knowledge of the world.⁹ In ‘Are pure consciousness events unmediated?’ Author Stephen Bernhardt writes:

Our experiences are mediated in that we are led to them or seek them, allow certain of them and disallow certain others—and all of this on the basis of the influence of the particular sociocultural, theological, linguistic, or historical context in which we find ourselves.¹⁰

Yoga does not set out to label one’s beliefs as right or wrong. It aims to rid the individual of unexpressed tension and unhelpful processes of thought (through meditative and other practical techniques) and help the individual to understand their own thought processes (through apperception). Yoga practices work with the subtle aspects of the body and mind to enhance wellbeing, and the deep meditative processes subdue the cyclic nature of conditionality and reduce reactive tendencies. It is not

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⁸ ibid.
necessarily the beliefs one chooses that are problematic, instead it is how these beliefs manifest in emotion (cognitively and physiologically): conscious and non-conscious emotion.

The human mind is constructed by beliefs; individual beliefs form the substance of one’s character. They can build self-worth and self-assurance, but they can also cause a tortuous mental continuum resulting in unjustified manifestations such as guilt, shame, sadness, anger, fear, possessiveness. Thus, they perpetuate a conditional way of being in the world, one that is not necessarily based on reality. For instance, a person may feel a sense of rejection over a loved one leaving. They may be left with a great sense of remorse or a feeling of guilt and self-blame—their self-talk may consist of: “I am not lovable” or “I am not good enough”. This pattern of repetitive thinking creates a torturous cycle of thought, continually holding one captive to the past.

The research questionnaires and interviews reveal various examples of this turbulent cycle. For instance, participant 0022 remembered quite vividly the day she was told she had been adopted. She was eight at the time, and until that point she had no idea of the truth about her parentage.\textsuperscript{11} Her father had just been hospitalised because of a nervous breakdown and was undergoing shock treatment. This was extremely traumatic for her to witness. Moreover, her mother told her that her father’s breakdown was caused by his depression over not being able to father a child.\textsuperscript{12} This participant realises now that at the time she had blamed herself for her father’s breakdown. She had felt rejected and inadequate. She remembers crying for weeks on end. As a result, over the course of her life she struggled to overcome feelings of worthlessness.\textsuperscript{13} Whether her adoptive parents loved her, all those years ago, is no longer the issue. She continues to feel a sense of abandonment, which still undermines her feelings of self-worth.\textsuperscript{14} Yoga defines the remnants of such character traits as \textit{samskāras}: the affliction of habitual, subliminal thought, thoughts that have grown from the seeds of past experience.\textsuperscript{15} Such afflictions are caused by \textit{kleśas}: they result from, and result in, emotional ignorance or misconception.

\textsuperscript{11} Deakin University research questionnaire and follow-up interviews carried out 2009-2012, participant 0022.
\textsuperscript{12} \textit{ibid}.
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{ibid}.
\textsuperscript{14} \textit{ibid}.
\textsuperscript{15} Tsai-mni, p. 155.
The overwhelming emotions this participant felt at the time of her father’s breakdown provides an example of a *kleśa* in an expanded condition. During the period where this participant experienced a severe reaction the emotions she felt (the *kleśas*) were fully active. It is highly likely that she experienced more than one *kleśa* at this time. In fact, it is probable that she experienced all of these *kleśas* at once. In other words, a conflict of self-identity (who she thought she was), a misconception of her role in the events, an aversion to the truth, an attachment or desire to be her parents’ biological child and a fear of losing their love.

To Taimni, ignorance and fear are interrelated, whereas a liberated mind is a positive emotional mind-state, one free of the conditionality imposed by ignorance and fear.\(^{16}\) In Yogic tradition conditioned thoughts are a result of the past; more specifically, they arise from one’s *karma* or *karman* (action). Feuerstein describes three types of *karma* distinguished in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* as:

1) *sāttvika-karman*, actions that are prescribed by tradition and performed without attachment by a person, one who does not hanker after the fruit (*phala*)\(^{17}\).

2) *rājasā-karman*, performed out of ego sense (*ahamkāra*) and in order to experience pleasure;

3) *tāmasa-karman*, performed by a deluded and confused individual who has no concern for the moral and spiritual consequences of his or her deeds.\(^{18}\)

Put simply, *karma* describes actions that have three faces: purity, selfishness or delusion, the last two faces are based on the *kleśas*, and they arise from one’s attachment to certain beliefs about one’s character and the emotion generated by these beliefs.\(^{19}\) *Karmic* action, such as selfishness and delusion, is produced from and result in the formation of *kleśas*, perpetuating discontent, a discontent caused by internal (psychological) conditioning. Patañjali teaches that peace of mind is represented by a state of freedom or liberation (*kaivalya*)—the experience of order and clarity on a

\(^{16}\) *ibid.*, p. 139. Internalised fears, not fears related to external victimisation.

\(^{17}\) *Fruit* is generally related to benefits, remunerations or outcomes—something sweet and sought after.

cognitive and emotive level.\(^{20}\) In contrast, mental bondage is the result of a disordered or discontented mind-state and results from *kleśas* created from unrestrained *vṛttis*.\(^{21}\)

The participants’ answers to the questionnaires and interviews demonstrate the binding nature of conditionality resulting from unrestrained thought. For example, participant 0029 explained that she had lived her whole life believing she was unworthy.\(^{22}\) She was an only child and her parents had subjected her to countless criticisms and in the case of her father, violence and emotional cruelty.\(^{23}\) She grew up with the constant echo of their words in her head: ‘You’re not good at anything’ and ‘No one will ever like (or love) you’.\(^{24}\) Hence, the *vṛttis* that consumed her were self-defeating and self-degrading.\(^{25}\) Even though they are long dead, her parents’ accusations still reflect her concept of self.\(^{26}\) At sixty-nine years of age her perception remains based on this sense of worthlessness.

In Yogic philosophy, mental freedom is threatened when consciousness (*citta*) becomes coloured by a perceived object: these objects ‘affect or colour the percipient consciousness’.\(^{27}\) This colouring produces traits ‘responsible for the occurrence of fluctuations’ (*vṛttis*) and these fluctuations need to be restricted if freedom is to be achieved. Otherwise, one’s consciousness is dominated by the colourings of one’s perceptions. The practice of Yoga is based on the restriction of these fluctuations of consciousness.\(^{28}\) Yoga practice (in particular *Hatha Yoga*) was designed to attain this end.

Taimni explains that it is not possible to become Self-realised if one is caught up with the play of *citta-vṛttis*.\(^{29}\) But when all of the modifications of the mind are inhibited Self-realisation (*sva[rā](pa)*) is possible.\(^{30}\) Realising this state is only possible from within

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\(^{19}\) Taimni, p. 157.
\(^{21}\) ibid., p. 156 and 335.
\(^{22}\) Deakin University research., participant 0029.
\(^{23}\) ibid.
\(^{24}\) ibid.
\(^{25}\) ibid. In her mind this was a kind of withdrawal of love (see section 5.4).
\(^{26}\) Deakin University research., participant 0029.
\(^{27}\) Feuerstein, *The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali*, p. 135.
\(^{28}\) ibid., p. 26.
\(^{29}\) Taimni, p. 10.
\(^{30}\) ibid.
and it cannot be comprehended intellectually.\textsuperscript{31} Svarūpa occurs when the mind comes to rest and reverts back to its original unmodified state (uncluttered).\textsuperscript{32} “Self-realisation” reflects the ultimate form of freedom. Reason dictates that the achievement of freedom relies on stilling or restricting cognitive function. The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali suggest that human beings’ inability to work together, the widespread sorrow and misery experienced, is due to dysfunctional or inadequate cognitive practices or processing: a lack of understanding of one’s thoughts and the thoughts of the other.\textsuperscript{33}

The goal of the Yoga-Sūtras, as translated by Ernest Wood, is ‘the control of ideas in the mind’ (thought-guidance and awareness).\textsuperscript{34} The theory of Yoga holds that internal discontent and its antonym “contentment” are both related to the way a person assimilates ideas in the mind, thus much of social discontent is caused by an ignorance of the workings of one’s own thought processes. The Yoga-Sūtras provide a methodology for threading or weaving one’s consciousness with what it would equate to a “universal consciousness”, aiming to enlighten the individual through practices that foster awareness and apperception.

Yoga highlights the one-on-one tradition of the patient and therapist; or, in this case, the Guru (teacher) and student. The Guru (the teacher of the wisdom of Yoga), gu signifying darkness and ru signifying the destroyer of darkness.\textsuperscript{35} Here the individual is “en-lightened” by destroying the darkness born from ignorance (avidyā), a process that achieves clarity of mind. The phrase “viveka-khyāṭi” is the term used to denote an actual awareness of Reality, which is the extreme opposite of ignorance.\textsuperscript{36}

A phenomenological view of human existence reflects the diversity of experience and the breadth of social influences, a diversity that can put one person’s sense of reality in opposition to another’s. Existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre reflects this opposition when he states that: ‘hell is other people’.\textsuperscript{37} To Sartre, discontent is the result of one’s inability to connect with the other,\textsuperscript{38} a conflict between how a person sees their self and how they

\begin{footnotes}
\begin{enumerate}
\item ibid.
\item ibid., p. 11.
\item Feuerstein, The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga, p. 112.
\item Taimni, The science of Yoga, p. 201.
\item Sartre, p. 302.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotes}
“think” they are seen by the other; in other words, the sense of either belonging or a sense of abandonment. If one accepts Patañjali’s view that ineffective habitual patterns of cognition result in emotional and spiritual disorder, it follows that any chance to improve the overall human condition must rest with each individual: existentially, wars are the result of individual decisions.

The Eastern tradition of Classical Yoga provides an example of a definitive barrier to freedom, a barrier created by problematic and destructive thought processes (kleśas)--which one could also refer to as errors in judgement--creating trouble or problems for the individual. In ‘Cognitive theories of emotions in Buddhism and Western psychology’, Peter Fenner’s term ‘emotional reactions’ reflect kleśas that create a wheel of conditionality. Fenner’s emphasis on reaction makes a clear distinction between an act and a reaction; the former implies choice, the latter impulse. One does not choose to adopt kleśas, but rather they are emotions that afflict the capacity to reason: to think with clarity. According to Classical Yogiic theory, kleśas constitute a barrier that leads to emotional discontent, negating any chance of freedom by the constant and elusive influence of samskāras, which according to philosopher and theologian Ian Whicher are the root of all karmic deposits.

There is nothing general about the nature of thought. Understanding the organisation of the human thought process is arduous, particularly in relation to the fulfillment of what some might consider the ultimate goal of human existence, contentment or happiness: a condition that Freud suggests is not achievable. In Studies on hysteria Freud claims the most one can hope for is to transform the tendency for misery into ‘common human unhappiness’. Freud asserts that misery is caused by an individual’s lack of control over, or understanding of, the nature of their own thought processes, in particular what lies in the unconscious mind. Eastern philosophy provides some hope, for it maintains that ultimately an individual can gain control of their thought processes.

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40 Wood, p. 224.
3.2 Discontent, Freud and ignorance

The dominant myth that informs a person or a culture is like the "information" contained in DNA or the program in the systems disk of a computer. Myth is the software, the cultural DNA, the unconscious information, the metaprogram that governs the way we see "reality" and the way we behave.

S Keen and Valley-Fox

Discontentment and contentment are states of mind. One might describe contentment as a satisfactory or helpful organisation of thoughts or a state of being that is represented by the absence of kleśas. Contentment is primarily linked to cognitive-emotive stability; to a state of conscious equilibrium. Nevertheless, one can always argue that what appears satisfactory, acceptable or reasonable to one person, may be unsatisfactory in the eyes of another. Darwin proposes that as social beings we are reliant on each other for survival, a view that implies that a satisfactory or helpful organisation of thoughts involves some degree of ethical responsibility. Unfortunately, human history demonstrates, quite cruelly, that one individual’s sense of satisfaction can come at the cost of another’s life and liberty.

From a Freudian standpoint contentment is a difficult quality to realise, due to the nature of the unconscious mind and the deep complexities of the human thought processes. Yogic theory argues that one must continually strive to gain control over the cognitive and emotive processes. Eastern notions of contentment reflect a state of satisfaction independent of an object, whereas the notion of the object is the primary focus of Post-Freudian theory.

Despite Freud’s exploration into the darker aspects of the human mind, in Civilization and its discontents he identifies the aim of Yoga practice as a way of ‘stifling the drives’—shifting the negative impact of the psychic drives. Yoga provides a methodology for reaching a higher level of cognitive awareness or observer awareness. And although Freud does not necessarily understand this process (his words reflect an

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46 The Holocaust of World War II is a testimony to this.  
47 Refer to the work of Otto Rank.
understanding, albeit limited, of what Yoga actually is) he recognises a person’s need to search for a feeling of collectiveness on a spiritual level. This is something he describes as an ‘oceanic feeling’—the kind of ‘intellectual content associated with’ a feeling of ‘being at one with the universe’. ⁴⁹

There are many interesting parallels between Patañjali’s philosophy and Freud’s theory of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is a term coined by Freud to describe a method of psychotherapy that has been dubbed ‘the talking cure’. In the Dictionary of psychology, psychologist Andrew Colman describes psychoanalysis as:

A theory of mental structure and function, consisting of a loosely connected set of concepts and propositions, a theory of mental disorders… [a term used to describe] unconscious mental process and the various mechanisms people use to repress them. ⁵⁰

Patañjali’s idea of what is hidden from the conscious mind (subliminal activators) has connections to Freud’s theory of the unconscious. Another interesting connection is that both theories share an emphasis on the distribution of energy.

Patañjali’s model provides a practical tool for understanding the essence of Yoga. He systematises ‘existing knowledge and techniques’ and puts it into a format that is accessible, ⁵¹ creating a valuable instrument for the teacher and the student of Yoga (the Guru and the Yogan or Yogini). Until this time, Yoga’s transmutative process had traditionally been an oral process. In a way one might relate the dynamics between the Guru and the Yogan to a similar dynamic in Western therapy, that of the analyst and analysand working towards the self-improvement during psychoanalysis.

Freud’s organisation of the personality can be loosely overlaid onto Yoga’s three levels of mind, a concept that will be detailed more thoroughly in Chapter Five. According to Freud, it is one’s instinctual urges that make the possibility of achieving contentment difficult. Likewise, in Eastern philosophy, desire is presented as an obstacle to freedom and, in turn, wellbeing. Both theories are heavily based on the dichotomy of pleasure

⁵⁰ ibid., p. 10.
and pain. Both theories relate the problematic nature of the human condition to what one is “not” aware of: what lies beneath the surface of the mind.

As discussed, in Eastern philosophy ignorance is pivotal to the study of freedom. In *Total freedom*, Krishnamurti suggests that emotional frustration is the result of ignorance, leading to mental chaos or disorder.\(^{52}\) In the traditional sense of the word, or as applied in Western society, ignorance indicates a lack of knowing. Consequently, a discussion of ignorance necessitates an exploration into the human capacity for knowing. The word “ignorant” is derived from the Latin word *ignārus*, meaning ‘not knowing’.\(^{53}\) In modern terms, being ignorant refers to ‘knowing little or nothing’; being ‘uninformed’ or ‘unaware’.\(^{54}\) Again, as Socrates claimed ‘no one does wrong voluntarily,’ implying that ignorance is unaware of itself and that there is virtue in knowledge.\(^{55}\) Thought itself reflects an act of knowing, but what needs to be questioned here is the quality of knowing—one’s true awareness—especially in relation to understanding one’s emotional life. One could easily determine that it is the perception and interpretation of information that ultimately determines the extent of one’s ignorance.

In the following quotation, Krishnamurti recognises that this disorder is a correctable condition; a condition transformed by self-knowledge and an insight into one’s cognitive-emotive life. When the mind becomes still, true insight is found. Krishnamurti writes:

> Can the mind be aware of and liberate itself from all those bondages which it has imposed upon itself?...only when the mind is very quiet, very still. But that quietness of the mind does not come through any effort—it comes naturally, easily, when the mind understands its own process of action, which is to understand the whole significance of thinking.\(^{56}\)

Yoga’s freedom is found in the space between thought (often achieved through meditation). In his paper ‘Samādhi in Patañjali’s Yoga Sūtras’, Ian Kесarcodi-Watson


\(^{55}\) Honderich, p. 838.

\(^{56}\) Krishnamurti, *Total freedom*, p. 181.
claims that, ‘merely to stop having things in mind defines what we mean by yoga’. This reflects Buddhism’s concept of ‘emptiness’, an emptiness that liberates one from all pain and suffering.

Buddhist philosophy is based on the premise of impermanence; suggesting that discontent results from the way we, as human beings, crave, desire or value the contents and objects of our existence. Buddhist theory argues that freedom comes from breaking away from attachment. Hence, Buddhism advocates Yoga practice as a way to touch the inner stillness that allows the mind to experience peace, wisdom and freedom, curbing the hermeneutic cycle of kleśa-based tendencies: a concept that links bondage to the notion of obsession or attachment, as well as a cluttered or scattered pattern of thought. Classical Yoga and Buddhism propose that although truth is sought through a process of rational thought and action: a directed intuitive response rather than an emotional reaction, it is also achieved through the silent peace that comes with no thought.

In essence, Buddhist and Hindu teachings are concerned with the way one responds to life, asserting that freedom is found in non-attachment, pure awareness and wisdom. It could be argued that freedom flows from qualities such as a sense of belonging, a feeling of completeness, an aware state of being—a space beyond fear. Eastern tradition claims that freedom is found in detachment from sensual stimulus, in moving the mind away from the colourings of perception as experienced through the senses. British empiricist philosopher David Hume argues that one can only know a thing as translated through one’s senses. In contrast, French philosopher, historian and social theorist, Michel Foucault considers knowledge subjective, he claims that one cannot know anything for certain and that the core of one’s knowledge is based on assumption. Like Yoga’s concept of māyā, Foucault claims that whatever one “thinks” one knows is presented through the coloured lens of individual interpretation.

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3.3 Interpretive filters and event-duality

Unfounded beliefs are the homage which impulse pays to reason.

Bertrand Russell

Sartre suggests that human beings invent themselves: construct their own reality. In his essay *Existentialism is a humanism*, Sartre refers to existentialism as an optimistic philosophy, one that offers the ‘possibility of choice’.61 He claims that ‘existence precedes essence’.62 Consequently, a human being has no preconceived essence or a predetermined nature; instead one simply exists, and evolves from that existence. Sartre writes:

Man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world—and defines himself afterwards.63

According to existentialism, an individual is responsible for their thoughts and actions and every decision they make is theirs alone. Sartre’s theory implies that belief systems have the power to distort or obscure one’s sense of freedom. The phenomenological nature of human existence makes interpretation inevitable. Knowing is reliant on interpretation, for it requires sensory perception, cognitive function, primal reaction and intuitive judgement. Knowing also involves preconception, evaluation, sensibility, presupposition and interpretation. Arguably, the subjective nature of knowing is fraught with personal prejudice. What one knows is constructed from the information available at the time, information provided by the past and the present. Unfortunately, this information is often associated with conditioned responses based on past impressions (*sanskāras*). Therefore, the lens in which one sees the world relates to the duality of thought and action/reaction (event-duality) and the cyclic nature of this process. Theories such as psychoanalysis, cognitive therapy and Yogic philosophy share three important aspects. Firstly, they share a commonality of language. They each use language or, the absence or repression of language (in the case of meditation and

63 ibid.
64 ibid., p. 349.
psychoanalysis—although even in meditation one often uses a word or mantra) to seek out the source of ignorance or fear thereby creating a point of clarification that allows the individual to move beyond mental bondage. Secondly, each approach attempts to bridge the gap between a sense of alienation and a sense of belonging, implying that, as a human being, one has a need to feel connected. Thirdly, they all value the (positive or helpful) actualisation of human potential, for example honesty, creative expression, rational thinking and peace of mind.

Ultimately, any discussion of the nature of psychological freedom necessitates, in the first place, a deconstructive approach, that is, a dissection and evaluation of the eventuality of human beliefs and values—a decoding and elimination of destructive forms of conditionality. In Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy: a therapist’s guide, Albert Ellis and Catharine MacLaren propose that one’s ability to be free of psychological disturbance depends on one’s capacity to think rationally, which is achieved through the elimination of destructive core beliefs.64

Yoga uses apperception and meditation to achieve this aim: apperception as a process of observer-awareness and meditation is a means of attaining clarity (this clarity is found in the silence between thought). Also, similar to Ellis’s emotive-cognitive theory, Yoga directs the use of self-talk to subdue the influence of perturbation. Indian religious teacher, spiritual master and Yoga adept Swami Satchidananda claims:

When disturbed by negative thoughts, opposite [positive] ones should be thought of.65

Classical Yoga provides a foundation for the path to psychological freedom advocating jnäna (knowledge): true wisdom; a discerning knowledge that results in freedom. Patañjali’s path to psychological freedom comes from both the quiet stillness of meditative practices as well as an observational approach to cognition and through the ‘cultivation of the opposite’.66 Psychoanalysis, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy and Classical Yoga provide therapeutically introspective principles and techniques designed to liberate the mind and create an observer-awareness thought process either

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65 Satchidananda, p.127
66 Feuerstein, The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali, p. 82.
by self-examination, by therapeutic analysis, or by connecting with the silence between thought. The commonality between these theories reveals an ability to attain psychological freedom through the realisation of three important ideals:

1) The acknowledgment of a sense of responsibility between the individual and the other (a sense of justice);

2) Liberation from conditionality (conditionality is borne from “ignorance”—created by fears—resulting from and causing kleśas), resulting in peace of mind and awareness;

3) The ability to feel “fully human”—to realise, to feel and to acknowledge one’s inherent potential (a sense of contentment).

In other words, based on these particular Eastern and Western approaches, to experience mental liberation the individual must firstly, reconcile (at least on a cognitive level) their relationship with the other. Secondly, they must become free of the conditionality constructed from repressed memories (Freud), irrationality (Ellis) and kleśas (Patañjali): all of which represent the manifestation of fear in one form or another. And thirdly, they must realise their inherent potential for creative expression and constructive existence. According to this view, then, the three ideals of a sense of responsibility, the absence of fear, and the realisation of the individual’s unique potential are essential qualities of psychological freedom, suggesting a combination of all three support a positive emotional mind-state.

3.4 Hermeneutics, understanding and subjectivity

The concept of mental freedom requires a hermeneutical approach. The individual’s ability to achieve freedom is dependent on the way in which they see their part (their life) in relation to the whole (society). A constructive way of seeing necessitates the evolvement of an observer-awareness approach to the human psyche; it depends on the individual’s ability to oversee their own thought processes, thereby establishing an aspect of psychological freedom as the cognitive ability to reconcile the mirroring relationship between the individual and the other.
Yoga’s concept of identity creates a distinction between the ever-changing self of the external world and the inherent, sustained self which is unchanging. This notion suggests that in the first instance, the construction of each individual’s “I-sense” is associated with fluctuations of thought and that these thoughts are not necessarily based on positive and helpful motivational impressions. Found within both Eastern and Western models of thought, is the notion that freedom starts in the mind; that perceptually one determines a sense of freedom. The way the individual internalises their external experience constructs their sense of self. Patañjali writes: ‘As the mind, so the man; bondage or liberation is in your own mind’. 67

According to American psychologist Abraham Maslow, freedom or bondage depends largely on the interpretive filter one uses to understand the world. 68 Being psychologically free enables one to experience the pure essence of contentment or happiness, something Maslow refers to as self-actualisation, when one becomes removed from the restraints of conditionality. In this sense, happiness thrives for its own sake, not because of an object of happiness (a possession or an accomplishment), but a true sense of contentment borne from a peace-filled mind. According to Freudian theory, to attain a sense of psychological freedom one needs to be unburdened from the inner forces that construct discontent, the things that hinder one’s ability to experience peace of mind.

Again, Buddhist philosophy reflects many of the principles behind Classical Yoga. Consequently, the argument presented in this research is echoed in the words of the Buddha, ‘Everything we are is the result of what we have thought’. 69 Or, to put it another way, everything a person is today is the result of their interpretation of past and presents events. Consequently, psychological freedom is achieved by the ability to think and believe beyond, and independent from, conditioning preconceptions: overcoming the destructive effects of problematic inner (non-conscious) forces, thus recognising the hermeneutical relationship between the individual and their environment, society and nature.

67 Satchidānanda, p. 5.
The word “human” can be traced back to the Latin word *humus* meaning ‘of the ground or earth’ and the Latin word *homo* meaning ‘servant’. As such one could describe a human being as ‘a servant of the earth’.\(^\text{70}\) The collectiveness of this definition implies that, as human beings, each individual inherits certain obligations associated with one’s natural environment, including the ability to change one’s circumstances given the right conditions. This is expressed through potentiality. Naturally, what an individual sees, hears, feels and thinks determines the subjective nature of that individual’s knowledge and understanding. The ancient Eastern chronicles known as *The Vedas* state:

The earth is the mother, and I
the son of the earth.\(^\text{71}\)

Understanding is relative, since a person understands according to their direct and indirect knowledge of the world. Short of certain psychological conditions, it is impossible to become divorced from one’s emotions, because what is felt is a result of subjective understanding or, in some cases, a lack of understanding. The nature of experience involves being influenced by one’s associations with the other. In *The art of loving* German social psychologist, psychoanalyst, sociologist and philosopher, Erich Fromm wrote this about Western society:

Our society is run by a managerial bureaucracy, by professional politicians; people are motivated by mass suggestion, their aim is producing more and consuming more, as purposes in themselves. All activities are subordinated to economic goals, means have become ends; man is an automaton —well fed, well clad, but without any ultimate concern for that which is his peculiarly human quality and function.\(^\text{72}\)

Although written in 1957, the above quotation is even more relevant today. When it comes to the quality of understanding and subjectivity, the question arises, can a person become divorced from what they *want*, particularly when subject to the influences mentioned above, or in fact can they become free from the behaviour motivators of conditionality, while under the influence of societal change?

\(^{70}\) Partridge, p. 293.
An optimist would say civilisation itself is a testimony to a human being’s ability to exercise control, to practice understanding and to overcome the more primitive aspects of being human. The word “civilisation” comes from the Latin word *civis* for citizen, which is connected to the English derivative civil meaning ‘good-mannered’; implying that a decline in civilisation results from a lack of respect for one another.

Both Aristotle and Patañjali promote self-restraint and discipline, presenting these qualities as a reflection of correct emotion. Ultimately, habits are formed by ideas for when one makes a habit of something, one accepts a self-imposed directive to act in a certain way. These ideas can be a product of instinct and impulse, or rationality and intellect; they can also be involuntary or voluntary. In *Aristotle’s ethics*, he claims that ‘actions are [generally] regarded as involuntary when they are performed under compulsion or through ignorance’. As discussed in Chapter One, Aristotle says that there is a difference between acting *through* ignorance and acting *in* ignorance. To act in ignorance is to be unconnected with one’s actions (such as a drunk lashing out at someone violently), whereas to act through ignorance is to have no regret for one’s actions—to deliberately ignore any moral implications. Aristotle emphasises the significance of voluntary or involuntary action—the ‘circumstances and objects of the action’—for he claims that ‘it is on these that pity and pardon depend’. He suggests that for an act to be called involuntary ‘in virtue of...ignorance, the agent must also feel distress and repentance for having done it’. He adds that if one considers an involuntary act to be performed under compulsion, then its original cause must lie in the agent himself.

Aristotle’s view indicates that what one knows, one’s ideas or cognitive content, can be based on discernment and rationality (inference), or alternatively on unhelpful or destructive emotions: the latter being subject to the formation of subliminal activators.
that result in and perpetuate affliction. Given the emotional nature of being human, a person’s reaction to an idea inevitably involves some degree of emotional response, and as I discussed earlier, from an Eastern perspective the control of ideas in the mind requires the restraint or redirection of emotional traits: emotional traits that tend to distort reality and interfere with the quality of knowledge. Another example of a problematic emotional trait is presented by participant 0008, who described a fear of engaging with others created by an insular and closed off childhood. This participant’s answers to the survey questions revealed the continuing effect of past experiences and the on-going influence of his childhood care-givers. He explained that because of his parents’ critical nature he developed an extreme aversion to social situations and, as a result, experienced a deep sense of loneliness for many years.

3.5 The criteria of knowledge—what is truth?

*Family myths...may give us an impulse to strive for excellence and a sense of pride that helps us endure hardship and tragedy. Or they may, like the myths of alcoholic or abusive families, pass a burden of guilt, shame, and failure from generation to generation as abused children, in turn, become abusive parents, ad nauseam. The sins, virtues, and myths of the fathers are passed on to the children of future generations.*

*S Keen and A Valley-Fox*  

An individual’s mind is the sum total of all memory and experience: their knowing of the world. The nature of this knowledge is subjective: what one knows comes from one’s experience of the world. Therefore, any analysis of the concept of mental freedom requires addressing the act of knowing. Knowing or knowledge can be analysed from many different perspectives. In *Symbolic Logic*, logician Suzanne K. Langer explains knowledge thus:

We have two types of knowledge... knowledge of things, and knowledge about [things]. The former is that direct intimacy which our senses give us, the look and smell and feel of a thing—the sort of knowledge a baby has of its own bed ... Yet a baby cannot be said to know anything about beds ... To know anything about an object is to know how it is related to its surroundings, how it is made up, how it functions, etc., in short, to know what sort of thing it is. To have knowledge about

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82 S Keen & A Valley-Fox, p. xiv.
it we must know more than the direct sensuous quality of “this stuff”; we must know what particular shape the stuff is taking in the case of this thing.  

What a person knows or believes about something is based on their sensual experience of the thing, and the level of information at their disposal about the thing. One can take this even further, proposing that a person remembers most what they identify with—a feeling, the shape, sum and substance of the thing as experienced by them. Knowing is a process of understanding and interpretation. One’s knowledge of things, and one’s knowledge about things, depends on the exposure one has to a number of influences: such as, family dynamics, societal conditions, environmental elements, education and everyday experience. How one person thinks about something is unique to their memory-feelings.

Eastern philosophy, in particular the Yoga-Sūtras, provides methods of teaching the individual about their own thought processes, with the goal of achieving a degree of objectivity or observer awareness. It aims to teach the individual how to rise above their subjective experience and access their inherent nature; how to go beyond the memory cycle of thought/feeling to a deeper level of awareness.  

According to Feuerstein, the Eastern interpretation of knowledge is quite distinct from the West. Where the Western world considers knowledge to be about facts and information, Indian sages distinguish between knowledge and information, reflecting knowledge as a higher form of wisdom, something the individual must seek to attain, revealing the nature of the unadulterated, pure, true Self. In Eastern tradition, Self-realisation or Self-knowledge is the “recovery of one’s authentic identity as the transcendental Reality rather than the ego self”. Transcendental reality could be described as a higher realm or greater reality, something connected to a purposive or collective reason for existence. Chapple describes the higher and lower realms as the higher self and the lower self, the seer and the seen (spirit and matter).  

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84 Patañjali suggests this is one’s true Self—something eternal and timeless.
86 ibid., p. 266.
87 CK Chapple, Yoga and the luminous: Pātañjali spiritual path to freedom, State University of New York Press, Albany, 2008, p. 3.
Perception is a sensory and a cognitive process. The word “cognition” comes from the Latin word *cognōscere* meaning ‘to know’. What one knows is reflected by concepts or ideas. The word “idea” is derived from the Greek word *idein* ‘to see’, whereas “concept” is derived from the Medieval French word *cipere* for capability—‘to contain’ or ‘to take’, which is compounded to mean ‘the true’. Consequently, ‘to conceptualise’ is ‘to see’ (metaphorically) what is accepted as true. In short, to know is a way of seeing something as one’s truth.

In *Essentials of Logic*, logician A. Wolf claims that knowledge is defined by ‘justified’ true beliefs, ideas that have been inferred through logical premises. Consequently, an inference is a judgement that is derived or deduced from other judgements. In contrast, Wolf argues that an unproven belief is nothing more than mere opinion as it has nothing to substantiate it as reality or truth. Another word for judgement is idea. Ideas are not only derived from other arguments they can also be based on immediate or intuitive judgements; an instant judgement is something spontaneous rather than educated.

Distinguishing between immediate and inferred judgement is not always easy; after critical discrimination it is sometimes found that immediate judgements are really inferential. As a human being one justifies one’s beliefs by the judgements one makes (whether immediate or inferred) and the ideas one accepts. However, if one considers knowledge to be something that is valid and true then it becomes obvious that ideas do not always represent knowledge, even if they have been derived logically, for a lie can also be justified through a sequence of logical premises. This is where logic falls short of the Eastern concept of wisdom (the *buddhi* mind). Wolf claims that:

> Logic, unlike Epistemology (or the Theory of Knowledge), is not concerned with all kinds of judgements, but only with those, which are professedly derived from, or based upon, other judgements.92

The problem is that one could make any argument seem valid on a logical basis, but that does not necessarily mean it is just or wise. Logic can be based on false premises.

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88 Partridge, p. 109.  
89 *ibid.*, p. 303.  
90 *ibid.*  
92 *ibid.*
Eastern philosophy relies very heavily on the concept of wisdom. The Eastern ideal of controlling ‘ideas in the mind’ is based on working with both derived (judgements formed from other judgements) and intuitive (immediate) judgements, in other words, being able to distinguish between knowledge and belief on a cognitive level: that is, trusting the intuitive nature of the mind while not allowing the instincts, or desiring mind (manas), to dominate.\(^{93}\) Ironically, in this instance, the goal of freedom is achieved by a degree of control, which creates a paradox that freedom is achieved by an act of restraint. Ultimately, the practice of Yoga is about control of the cognitive processes, consciously and non-consciously, and freedom or liberation is achieved through this control.

If cognition reflects knowing and knowing does not always represent wisdom (the truth), then the ideas one sees in the mind may be constructive or destructive, helpful or unhelpful, depending on the individual’s ability to understand or control their cognitive processes. This is further complicated by whether a person is aware of their state of consciousness.

In *Sāṃkhya: A Dualist Tradition in Indian Philosophy*, Larson explains a *Navyānāya*, approach to cognition. He describes a “‘conscious act” as an abbreviation for an “actual conscious state of awareness”\(^{94}\). According to Larson, *Navyānāya* logic suggests a novel relationship between two cognitive acts: ‘the preventer-prevented relation’, suggesting that under particular conditions one awareness ‘prevents the occurrence of another awareness, although it does not prevent or cancel the existence of a mental disposition’ (excluding enumerative cognition).\(^{95}\) He describes this process thus:

a) a moment of origination;

b) a moment of duration in which an act produces its own trace; and

c) a moment of cessation.\(^{96}\)

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\(^{93}\) Wood, p. 31.


\(^\text{95}\) *ibid.*, p. 20.

\(^\text{96}\) *ibid.*
Larson claims that *Navyanyāya* holds that no two awarenesses can come into being at the same moment—one awareness will prevent the presence of another.\(^{97}\) *Navyanyāya* proposes that ‘the method of understanding the nature of awareness is introspection’.\(^{98}\) Larson claims that each succeeded awareness ‘kills’ the preceding one.\(^{99}\) Yet he also adds that the preventer-prevented relation implies a ‘psychological impossibility of more than one awareness originating at one time’.\(^{100}\) Larson writes thus:

A person cannot consciously, knowingly hold self-contradictory beliefs; but unknowingly, without realizing that she does so, a person can hold beliefs (as unconscious dispositions) which may not be consistent.\(^{101}\)

Under this supposition being aware of one’s beliefs, and their contradictions, is problematic, as the subjective—and preventer-prevented—nature of awareness restricts one’s ability to form a higher level of consciousness.

Yoga’s meditative processes aim to allow the individual to let go of ideas created in the mind that form *kleśas*—one aims to restrict the whirling mind-stuff (whirls of consciousness) in the pursuit of freedom. But how can the concept of freedom be separated from the pursuit of knowledge? Knowledge is the yardstick by which one measures what freedom represents. But, as already established, knowledge is essentially subjective. Philosophical inquiry has sought to establish a forum in which to discuss the nature of knowledge, presenting it as the pursuit of truth. But what is the truth? How does one know and recognise the truth? Foucault claims that what one considers to be the truth is based on assumption—that our judgement is often based on assumption.\(^{102}\) If this is so, then even Foucault’s conclusions could also be labelled mere assumptions. American theoretical physicist David Bohm writes this about assumptions:

Normally we don’t see that our assumptions are affecting the nature of our observations. But assumptions affect the way we see things, the way we experience them, and, consequently, the things that we want to do. In a way, we are looking through our assumptions...thought can neither be free nor even really

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\(^{97}\) ibid.

\(^{98}\) ibid., p. 23.

\(^{99}\) ibid., p. 19.

\(^{100}\) ibid., p. 20.

\(^{101}\) ibid., p. 22.

\(^{102}\) Strathern, p. 20.
honest. What is called for, then, is a deep and intense awareness, going beyond the imagery and intellectual analysis of our confused process of thought.\footnote{D Bohn, *On dialogue*, Routledge, London, 1996, pp. 67-69.}

An individual’s history influences their judgement. Short of stripping the mind of all previous experiences, the status of one’s mind-set is all one really has to make assumptions with. Assumptions made about power and knowledge, for instance, assume that power creates freedom: the power to think, feel and act without restriction. Foucault’s claim suggests that knowledge and power are intimately related. Yoga proposes that freedom is limited by ignorance: by a lack of knowledge. Does knowledge represent freedom, and if so, is mental freedom found in one’s liberation from assumptions; is it dependent on one’s ability to be empowered by discernment?

Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’ suggests that power is related to the act of becoming—transformation, the will to become: to be empowered.\footnote{R Cavalier, *Nietzsche: Nachlass (theory of will to power)*, Philosophy Department, Carnegie Mellon University, 2008, retrieved 10 February 2008, http://caac.phil.cmu.edu/cavalier/80254/Nietzsche/W_P_3.html.} According to American philosopher Robert Cavalier, Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’ is essentially an activity of “interpreting” aimed at preserving and enhancing life itself. He writes:

\begin{quote}
At this highest level of complexity we find "consciousness" (the Ego) arising out of a necessary requirement to simplify and order the aggregate of conflicting power struggles...Thus consciousness itself is merely an epiphenomena of will to power. It functions with the same tendency that drives all Becoming, viz., the preservation and enhancement of power. And it is in the light of these criteria that we find, within "the theory of Will to Power," the evolution of knowledge and truth.\footnote{ibid.}
\end{quote}

Foucault expands on these ideas in his concept of the ‘will to truth’.\footnote{Strathern, p. 30.} But Foucault’s initial notion of the ‘will to truth’ falls short. He acknowledges that the seeker of truth tends to reject what is not understood; that the “will to truth” will always be coloured by subjectivity. And as such the quest for truth is a selective and subjective process.\footnote{ibid.} To Foucault, knowledge is teleological—it always works towards a purpose—so the will to truth is really just the will to power, something represented by Foucault’s term ‘knowledge/power’.\footnote{ibid.} Foucault relates freedom to gaining access to oneself. He writes:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}
The individual who has finally succeeded in gaining access to himself, is, for himself an object of pleasure. Not only is one satisfied with what one is and accepting of one’s limits, but one ‘pleases one’s self.\footnote{M Foucault, \textit{The care of the self: the history of sexuality}, vol. 3, trans. R Hurley, Pantheon Books, New York, 1986, p. 64-66.}

Where Nietzsche’s philosophy proposes that the individual holds the key to power, Foucault claims that the greatest form of power rests with society, because society determines the production of information and knowledge.\footnote{Strathern, p. 20.} What society constructs is what the individual comes to believe. Of course, it could be argued that this is putting the chicken before the egg; that society is made up of individuals. But to Foucault it is the ‘episteme, the set of assumptions, prejudices, mind-sets that structured and limited the thought of any particular age’,\footnote{\textit{ibid. Episteme} comes from the Greek word for knowledge.} is the power behind the thoughts of generations to come.\footnote{See Bertrand Russell’s ‘celestial teapot’ analogy in section 4.4.}

British philosopher Paul Strathern validates Foucault’s view using physics as an example of the contradictory nature of truth:

Such a concept of truth is even detectable in the most advanced contemporary ‘hard’ science. The discrepancy between quantum physics and mechanics (which we continue to apply at the everyday level, even in complex engineering) is evident to all scientists. But the ‘truth’ of both systems is applied, even though it is undeniably contradictory, because both have the power to produce knowledge.\footnote{Strathern, p. 30.}

Foucault argues that the pursuit of knowledge ultimately fulfils its power requirement. Yet the example above shows that two conflicting \textit{truths} can be proved. Consequently, how can knowledge be a measure of freedom? Especially if it constitutes subjective beliefs; for this kind of understanding inevitably creates more power for that belief, a power fuelled by subjectivity. This raises another interesting question: Is an individual’s mental freedom or bondage the result of language?\footnote{Cobol Consortium, \textit{Science revealing the mysteries of body language}, 2008, retrieved 6 January 2008, http://209.85.173.104/search?q=cache:ZSU6wPQI2swJ:www.beatricegedelder.com/documents/Cobolfactsheet.pdf+body+language+\%22scientific\%22+my&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=3&gl=au&lr=lang_en. ‘Body language’ is considered an acceptable form of language—body language represents words, albeit unspoken. ‘Without words being exchanged, a person’s body language can attract or repel, signal welcome or create fear. It is a powerful mode of communication’.} Surely, the language used is
produced by whatever knowledge has won power—knowledge used to convince the masses. For example, Hitler was able to convince a nation to think in a particular way: many were simply afraid to disagree. It would seem that no matter how hard one strives to find meaning in life, meaning inevitably comes down to the perception of language used, how one interprets words and how these words are experienced uniquely by each individual. And the degree to which a word will influence the individual depends on the individual’s understanding of the word. In contrast, Yoga claims that life’s meaning is something inherent, simply beyond words; something universal and all encompassing.

3.6 Language, knowing, reason and the senses

_The longest journey is the journey inward._

_Dag Hammarskjold (1905-1961)_[115]

The language of knowing comes from within. External experiences are internalised and form part of a person’s capacity for understanding. In relation to the philosophy of language, twentieth century analytic philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein writes that ‘a word has a meaning only as part of a sentence’: arguing that ‘things cannot have names except in a “language game”’. [116] Wittgenstein claims that one should not ask for the meaning, but rather for the _use_. [117] Language is a tool for expression and how it is compiled and used is the vehicle for that expression. This expression does not always reflect true meaning, or objective knowledge. [118] For instance, the word “peace” might mean a quiet day away from work for one person and the end of war for another. Meaning has to be seen in context as Wittgenstein suggests. The perception of an event inevitably depends on the circumstances in which the perceiver lives, hence Yoga’s use of apperception to determine an objective, rather than subjective, truth. [119]

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[116] _ibid._
[118] Assumptions are a good example of this concept—what one assumes is not always true.
Words are a way of assigning meaning to the way one interprets the world: what a person sees as their truth. Naturally, the perception of language has considerable bearing on mental freedom. Perception occurs through the interpretive filters one applies to language. Because one thinks in words, the ability to be free of conditionality will depend on the meaning assigned to the words used in thought, and the feelings that these thoughts provoke. Conditionality, therefore, is a side effect of subjective knowledge—knowledge that results in what one feels, and these feelings influence the direction of any further knowledge.

David Hume has a sceptical approach to the concept of knowledge.\(^{120}\) Like Yoga’s concept of māyā (illusion), Hume questions the provenance and nature of knowing: highlighting the element of uncertainty in knowing. Hume argues that the only things one can know with any degree of certainty are revealed through sense perception. He claims that knowledge derives from sense experience.\(^{121}\) Hume divides human perception into two categories, firstly, impressions, which enter the mind with a high degree of force such as sensations, passions, emotions and desires (what is felt) and, secondly, ideas, which Hume classifies as ‘faint images’ of impressions (what is thought).\(^{122}\) Because of this approach, Hume’s theories are recognised by many as a precursor for cognitive science.

The dualist approach to emotion associates it with thought and feeling: the cognitive and the physical. Hume supports this approach when he argues that ideas are formed from impressions.\(^{123}\) He claims that impressions are perceived through the power of sentiment, enforcing a kind of emotional impact, whereas ideas could be referred to as second-hand impressions, or thoughts formulated from experience. This conceptual methodology is at the core of conditionality, in particular sanskāras, recognising ideas as the basis of core beliefs (conscious and non-conscious). Similar to Patañjali, Hume considers ideas to be the result of reflecting on one’s sense experience; something contrived by the imagination. Hume argues that the mind takes a copy of the impression

\(^{120}\) Hume, p. 55.
\(^{121}\) *ibid.*
\(^{122}\) *ibid.*
\(^{123}\) *ibid.*
which ‘remains after the impression ceases’. According to Yoga, these remaining impressions lay the foundations for a conditioned existence.

Hume considers an impression of sensation to be the result of one’s experience of the world via the senses, whereas an impression of reflection is an idea that develops according to one’s nature through one’s inner sentiment: such as feelings, emotions, and appetites. Sensation is still the root of reflective impressions, but these impressions have been extended and embellished by ideas. Patañjali would suggest that it is at this point that one’s freedom is at question, where impressions are extended and embellished by ideas. Hume asserts that information is digested through experience (the senses) and then the data is analysed through the format of thought (ideas). Mental freedom, as viewed through the Classical Yogic model, is found in controlling ideas—in controlling what ideas are formed. Hence, the path to freedom is found in controlling the formation of reflective impressions, and it is found in Yoga’s directive to control sensory experience in an attempt to still the mind.

Consequently, in order to achieve freedom—freedom from the barrier created by conditionality—one must first distinguish between what is illusion and what is real. Like Hume, Yoga proposes what is real is presented by the senses, but that this must be arbitrated by discernment (buddhi). Likewise, German philosopher Immanuel Kant maintains that sense experience alone does not provide a solitary basis as a source of knowledge. Kant argues that, although stimulated by the senses, ‘pure reason’ is essential to the birth of knowledge. To a point, Kant agrees with the empirical view of sense perception, but he then takes the question of how one acquires knowledge one step further. Kant’s view supports the Yogic concept of a higher mind, as he maintains that a purely empiricist view of knowledge reduces what one can know to environmental impact and does not acknowledge the full potential of human understanding.

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124 ibid.
126 ibid.
3.7 Faith, hope and freedom

The empiricist approach leaves little to the imagination since it is squarely founded on the tangible. In essence, it lacks a crucial element important to the human spirit: the ability to believe in the unproven. According to theologian Jeffrey Kripal, what is essentially human is the sacred.\textsuperscript{127} This sense of the sacred is not something associated with piety or fundamentalism; it cannot be found in the judgemental, biased or the oppressed doctrines of religious prejudice. Instead, a sacred spirit is an essential quality of humanness. It is human nature to search for truth and human beings are inevitably drawn to the path of spiritual awareness or self-actualisation in a quest for purpose and meaning. Without something as heartfelt and passionate as faith, whether it is simply faith in oneself, the other or in something more other-worldly, life would be meaningless.

Time has proven that two human qualities are vital for happiness: faith, which we may describe as trusting in something, totally and fully, and hope, which we may describe as believing in the possibility of something, an expectation or anticipation of goodness. In exploring English paediatrician and psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott’s theory of ‘basic trust’ Anthony Giddens explains that ‘faith in terms of psychological development’, which he describes as ‘the ontological security that will carry the individual through transitions, crises and circumstances of high risk’, rests on the confidence established in the reliable persons of early childhood experiences.\textsuperscript{128} In other words, faith is a learned response to life.

In the Yoga-Sūtras faith is cultivated towards a ‘ Yogic way of life’,\textsuperscript{129} and a Yogic way of life is aimed towards joy. Without faith and hope, joy is virtually unachievable. Yet one could argue that faith and hope could be invested in something negative, such as striving for the downfall of something or someone, purely from a subjective perspective—uncompromising views that limit the human mind to prejudice and

\textsuperscript{127} JJ Kripal, \textit{Authors of the impossible: the paranormal and the sacred}, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2010, p. 255.
\textsuperscript{129} Feuerstein, \textit{The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali}, p. 40.
intolerance—for instance, faith in a religion that views non-believers as unworthy, perhaps even evil.

On the surface faith and hope, in the quintessential meaning of these words, create a positive experience for the individual, yet to attach these feelings to something negative suggests a state of delusion where one’s goals are based on conditionality, in other words conditional upon some preconceived values or beliefs.

On a practical level, faith and hope are imperative to healthful and helpful emotional functioning, but at the same time the object of these feelings will always be influenced by subjectivity. Therefore, the element of freedom involved in these emotions or feelings is directly related to conditional aspects: that is, where the faith lies and what the hope is directed at. This is not to say that these inspiring emotions are a destructive force. Fear is often the result of a lack of faith or hope. Yet sometimes one’s faith produces fear, for instance, sexual guilt from religious indoctrination.\textsuperscript{130}

It could be argued that without faith a person cannot trust in their own ability to make the right decisions and in this way may sabotage their opportunities for success. This kind of view links faith back to freedom because it proposes that, without faith in oneself, the individual’s attitude to life is restricted or limited. Faith in oneself is a catalyst for positive experience: joy or happiness. As discussed in Chapter Two, Aristotle’s definition of happiness links happiness to moral conduct.\textsuperscript{131} Such an outlook suggests that faith in something beyond oneself is essential to human morality. Kant would agree that the human capacity for faith is a necessary foundation for one’s recognition of morality, and that in a sense this capacity for faith defines what it is to be human.

Empiricist views imply that we can never really know each other, that what one knows about the other is observed by the senses. Empiricism gives little credence to things like intuition or prophecy, and Hume’s empiricism confines a human being within the boundaries of extrinsic experience, reducing and limiting the promise of society’s more discerning qualities. Where Kant’s critique of pure reason gives society back its

\textsuperscript{130} Holy Bible, King James Version, Universal Book and Bible House, Philadelphia, 1945, Genesis 34:1-4, p. 37. Innocence turned to sin as portrayed in Genesis.
humanness, acknowledging human potential, Yoga uses the senses to touch a higher intellect invoking powers of wisdom that serve to subvert conditioning.\textsuperscript{132} When it comes to a concept such as mental freedom, the senses must work in combination with reason to avoid the bondage of conditionality.

3.8 Affliction—the ignorance of fear

\textit{[My fears include] fear of being left (separation), fear of being alone and unloved, fear of not making it [and] fear of not being safe}

\textit{Participant 0006}\textsuperscript{133}

Fear is a valid emotion. It is a natural response to external threat. In contrast, an internalised fear—an unjustified perception of a threat—is something based on assumption and illusion: on a fear of possibilities. Yoga sees these fears as an affliction: the cause of anxiety. As discussed earlier, in Classical Yoga ideas can be afflicted or non-afflicted. Very early in the \textit{Yoga-Sūtras} one learns that the whirls of consciousness (\textit{vṛttis}) are five-fold (\textit{Yoga-Sūtras} 1:6 to 1:13).\textsuperscript{134} As discussed in Chapter Two these fluctuations are valid-cognition, misconception, conceptualisation, sleep and memory.

To Patañjali, valid-cognitions are based on ‘perception, inference and testimony’.\textsuperscript{135} As such there must be a solid foundation to prove validity, and the knowledge of something must be based on its “true” form. Misconception is described as ‘erroneous knowledge and not based on the [actual] appearance of that [which is underlying object]’.\textsuperscript{136} This could be referred to as “assumption”. Patañjali describes conceptualisation as being ‘without object, following verbal knowledge’.\textsuperscript{137} Perhaps this is best described as “imagination” (non-reality). The next \textit{vṛtti} is sleep, which is said to be ‘founded on the presented-idea of the non-occurrence (of other contents of consciousness)’.\textsuperscript{138} Feuerstein refers to this as a state of ‘non-becoming’.\textsuperscript{139} The last is memory and ‘remembering is

\textsuperscript{131} Aristotle, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{132} The senses are a vital component of Yoga practice and philosophy.
\textsuperscript{133} Deakin University research., participant 0006.
\textsuperscript{134} Feuerstein, \textit{The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali}, p. 149.
\textsuperscript{135} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{136} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{137} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{139} \textit{ibid.}
the non-deprivation of the experienced object. In other words, memory is the idea of an object kept in the mind. Kant claims that:

All our knowledge starts with the senses, proceeds from thence to understanding, and ends with reason.

As I have proposed, ignorance is a crucial aspect of Yoga. What one knows becomes one’s perceived reality: as Kant claims above, understanding is a means to an end when it comes to knowledge. How can one understand the whole without understanding the part? In fact, in a world filled with every-changing visual and technical stimulation, as well as a multi-dimensional system of media and communication, how can one know anything for certain? Whether through sensory perception or cognitive processing, knowing is ultimately filtered by experience and, is essentially subjective. To achieve the aim of this research, it is important to look more extensively at the human condition, to consider subjectivity itself. The next chapter looks at the construction of “I” and how it influences freedom, examining the process of cognition (ideas in the mind), the construction of the self and the ideologies associated with the notion of contentment and happiness. I examine processes of subjectivity, which are at the core of the next kleśa, asmitā (the I-sense).

140 ibid.
CHAPTER FOUR

Asmitā (I-sense)—seeded memory and beliefs

*Man is made by his belief. As he believes, so he is.*

_Bhagavad-Gita*

4.1 The self, freedom and justice

In discussing the I-sense (asmitā) it is essential to examine the belief systems that construct a sense of self—a system of thinking that relies heavily on one’s experience of personal justice. Although human beings have the ability to feel for others, it is the experience of the self that directs and controls each individual’s sense of reality.

Asmitā is a complex concept and one that is difficult to define. Taimni describes asmitā as an ‘association of consciousness’ conditioned by ‘intervening vehicles which form a bridge between it [consciousness] and the physical body’. For instance, expressions such as ‘I see’ or ‘I hear’ are activities belonging to the physical body that are witnessed through the mind; in this case the faculties of sight or hearing are exercised by the body and the inner witness becomes aware of the result of this exercise. On another level vehicles resulting in reactions such as ‘I think’ or ‘I approve’ are merely a process of the mind. The mind is the instrument or vehicle which thinks and approves and is witnessed by the consciousness. In Yoga, one’s more ruthless character traits (such as greed or envy) are the result of one identifying oneself with the ‘workings of the mind’. Other vehicles of identification described by Taimni are objects that the physical body associates with the ‘I’ or ‘my’—in other words, ‘my children’, ‘my house’: where ‘my’ and ‘mine’ create a concept of belonging or ownership.

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2 IK Taimni, _The science of Yoga_, The Theosophical Publishing House, India, 1979, p. 144.
3 ibid.
4 ibid.
5 ibid.
6 ibid.
Taimni recognises that the vehicles outlined are only a demonstration of the nature of asmitā. He writes:

Any thoughtful man can separate himself in thought from his physical body and see that he is not the bag of flesh, bones and marrow with the help of which he comes in contact with the physical world. But few can separate themselves from their intellect and realize that their opinions and ideas are mere thought patterns produced by their mind just like the thought patterns produced by other minds.7

Asmitā and avidyā (ignorance) are closely linked as, according to Taimni, avidyā is a veil produced by the individual through their tendency to identify themselves with these vehicles. Yoga suggests that there are also more subtle vehicles of asmitā: beyond the intellect. Again, all of the kleśas relate back to asmitā because they all represent one’s more unhelpful and conditioned reactions to life.

Psychological or mental freedom is reliant on one’s ability to attenuate the kleśas. In modern terms, the word “psychological” refers to what is perceptual, cerebral or cognitive—in essence, mental functioning.8 A contemporary definition of freedom is the ‘power to act or speak without fear’.9 Considering the origins of the word “freedom”, linking it to friendship and justice, two distinct meanings arise for mental freedom:

1) Mental functioning that is without fear, and
2) A cognitive-emotive state of friendship (compassion) and justice.

These two definitions are juxtaposed, for both versions ultimately lead to the same end, and, friendship and justice are a means to that end, which is the absence of fear, the defeat of kleśa-based conditioning. This premise proposes two interesting and relevant aspects of freedom—one related to the response to threat and one related to a perception of justice. These two alternative aspects of mental freedom reflect the same thing: that being without fears (such as a fear of being unlovable or unworthy) enables a sense of justice and that this state is the most likely example of mental freedom. Whether this is

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7 ibid.
8 Although, the nature of perception is considered “subjective”, Yoga claims that the mind is also able to perceive from an objective perspective.
actually achievable requires further debate and it will be discussed in later chapters. But Yoga tradition has it that this is not only achievable, it is imperative.

Participant 0007 writes how she felt rejected and abandoned for most of her childhood, because no one took the time to explain to her ‘what dying meant’. She was only very young when her father died and she realises now that she had internalised his absence from her life as a rejection—as a withdrawal of love. She goes on to explain how her life was dominated by fear as a result of this early sense of abandonment. Given the nature of such individual reflections it is plausible to deduce that freedom of the mind, the ability to express and understand one’s thought processes and the feelings they generate, cannot help but be hindered by upheavals, particularly those relating to early childhood development (i.e. Winnicott’s ‘basic trust’ as discussed in the previous chapter).

If one attempts to define freedom as healthy mental functioning and living in fear (an internalised fear, not the fear created by external threat) as the perception of an unjust world. It follows, then, that freedom requires the absence of fears that result from ignorance or misconception: where the individual believes that they live in a just world, and that their feelings are acknowledged and are understood by others. Here liberation from conditionality is a means: and a lack of fear, resulting in peace of mind, is an end. Consequently, for a human being to reach this ideal of mental freedom they need to eliminate the restrictions imposed by non-conscious automated responses and negative conditioning—that is, attenuate the kleśas.

Freud suggests that this kind of freedom is near impossible, arguing that each individual is a slave to desire—that human beings are subservient to the instinctual drive of the id. Both Eastern and Western theories claim the mind is subject to conditioning influences. According to Fenner, ‘all schools of Buddhism subscribe to a cognitive theory of emotions’, which maintain that emotional responses are mediated on a

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10 Deakin University research questionnaire and follow-up interviews carried out 2009-2012, participant 0007.
11 S Freud, The ego and the id, trans. John Reddick, Penguin Books, London, 2003, p. 108. Freud claims that the energy system of the personality is made up of three major systems—the id, the ego and the superego (see Chapter Five and the glossary).
cognitive level.\textsuperscript{12} To Schachter and Singer, emotions have two elements: mind and body, a connection that parallels Yoga’s duality: a cognitive-emotive approach to wellbeing.

Buddhism considers mental freedom to be reliant on one’s ability to be emancipated from emotional predispositions caused by ‘dormant or latent’ mental events (samskāras).\textsuperscript{13} Difficult emotions are not necessarily a problem if they are experienced and dealt with in the here and now. Fenner explains that avidyā is the ‘reaction or response to false cognitions and perceptions, which produces asmitā.\textsuperscript{14} Indian philosopher Bimal Matilal describes avidyā as ‘false beliefs, misconceptions and wrong convictions’. Matilal writes:

In a general context, avidya may stand for false beliefs or a false belief-system which we all grow up with in the worldly environment. But in Buddhism it obtains a specialised meaning... It is the inherent misconception, a beginningless, cosmic confusion in all of us, which perpetuates our painful existence.\textsuperscript{15}

In a mental realm, bondage or freedom depend on the way an individual digests internal and external input, on the social transactions they experience, and on how they deal with the disturbing influences of particular emotive responses. This process creates asmitā.

Mental freedom is a state free of false beliefs and misconceptions, and the fears they produce. Sartre argues that, ‘we are what we choose ourselves to be’,\textsuperscript{16} and that one needs to embrace ‘authenticity’.\textsuperscript{17} However, it is arguable that to understand or recognise a sense of self, and to be authentic, remains dependent on knowing and controlling the thoughts that motivate behaviour: it depends on conscious awareness. Authenticity, then, depends on the capacity to know, understand and control the catalyst of psychological motion that forms emotion.

\textsuperscript{13} ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} ibid.
\textsuperscript{17} T Honderich, The Oxford companion to philosophy, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, p. 257.
The emotional impact of conditionality creates a hermeneutic cycle built on phenomenological experiences. Emotional responses result from the effects of conditionality, yet they also create conditionality. The cessation of this cycle is primarily determined by the individual’s ability to rationalise, using conscious awareness (apperception). In *Being and nothingness*, Sartre refers to consciousness as ‘a plenum of existence’, claiming that an essential characteristic of consciousness is the ‘determination of itself by itself’. He argues that human consciousness is, in essence, ‘fluid’ and that our selections of choice are signified by what they are not, by ‘not-being’ something else. This view is similar to French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure’s theory that a thing is defined by what it is not—a theory shared by Aristotle—that the essence of knowing is found in contrast. What one chooses not to be, determines what one becomes, and on a more simplistic level one knows joy by experiencing its contrast: sadness. Within this context, being is fundamentally determined by what one does not choose therefore the self is determined by what it is not. Consequently, if one is not bound by conditionality, one is free.

For Sartre, the choices one makes determine one’s concept of self, or the state of one’s consciousness. The self is an on-going construction. As previously stated, I do not suggest that one can apply a strictly existential overlay to Yogic theory. I do however suggest that corresponding nuances can be found within these theories that relate to the notion of choice. In Hindu philosophy the ego-self (jīva) is considered an illusion—it is the ‘individualised self’, the psyche. It is a veil that hinders an understanding of a higher Self (ātman). Feuerstein refers to the Brihad-Aranyaka-Upanishad (3.7.23) when he writes: ‘the Self [ātman] cannot be grasped because it is the grasper, the seer, of everything’. Contrary to the transcendent Self, jīva does not know Reality and is

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18 G Feuerstein, *The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali*, Inner Traditions, Vermont, 1989, p. 73. Note, it can also be achieved through meditation, which unravels the non-conscious and relieves psychological tension.
24 *ibid.*, pp.41-42 & 62.
25 *ibid.*, p. 62 & 236. Ātman is considered to be the Absolute creator of the universe (Brahman) presented in the inner-most self of human beings as ātman. Purusha (male) is the Sāmkhya term for the transcendental Self. In the Yoga-Sūtra the Self is called the “seer” or “cognizer” (drakshti).
therefore ‘afflicted with suffering’. Jīva is subject to illusion, which stems from avidyā. This veil of forces—conscious and non-conscious—negatively influences one’s mental health. Freud claims that psychological wellbeing is affected by unconscious obstacles that control the individual’s thought processes or belief system, blocks that can result in defense mechanisms such as regression, reaction formations, projection, fixation or sublimation. Such conditions create a veil between one’s “knowing” self, and what remain unconscious.

In clinical psychiatrist Arthur J. Deikman’s paper ‘I = Awareness’, he writes that the “I” and the “self” are two distinct things. Where the self is the part of the mind that identifies with subjectivity, the “I” is pure awareness, a view that is reflected in Yogic philosophy, Deikman explains:

Most discussions of consciousness confuse the ’I’ and the ’self’. In fact, our experience is fundamentally dualistic—not the dualism of mind and matter—but that of the ‘I’ and that which is observed. The identity of awareness and the ‘I’ means that we know awareness by being it—thus solving the problem of the infinite regress of observers. It follows that whatever our ontology of awareness may be, it must also be the same for ‘I’.

Where the self consists of one’s personality and one’s experiences, the “I” is the Self—the observer—that which is fully aware. In contrast, when one experiences asmitā there is no awareness, instead one reacts emotionally to circumstances through a process of conditionality. Mental freedom requires awareness—an understanding of one’s belief system.

26 ibid., p. 136.
27 AM Colman, Dictionary of psychology, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 644. In psychoanalysis, regression is used to describe ‘a reversion to an earlier, more immature mode of thinking, feeling or behaving in order to avoid or reduce anxiety’.
28 ibid., p. 636. In psychoanalysis, a ‘reaction formation’ is ‘a defence mechanism whereby a person replaces a repressed thought, feeling or behavioural act with one which is diametrically opposite to it’, such as a shy person who behaves in an exhibitionist’s manner.
29 ibid., p. 606. In psychoanalysis, ‘projection’ is ‘a defence mechanism where intolerable feelings, impulses, or thoughts are falsely attributed to other people’.
30 ibid., p. 287. In psychoanalysis ‘fixation’ is when ‘libido remains attached to…earlier modes of satisfaction and object-relationships’.
31 ibid., p. 736. In psychoanalysis, ‘sublimation’ is ‘a defence mechanism whereby a repressed or unconscious drive that is denied gratification is diverted into a more acceptable channel or form of expression’.
4.2 Belief systems—constructing the “I” sense in a religious world

Faith. You can do very little with it, but you can do nothing without it.

Samuel Butler\textsuperscript{33}

Faith means not wanting to know what is true.

Friedrich Nietzsche\textsuperscript{34}

Both arguments in the quotations shown above have an element of truth. Without faith in something how can one find the comfort needed to cope with adversity? Yet it can be argued that doctrines of “faith” can be used and distorted in order to camouflage the truth. According to Sartre a belief in God is an example of ‘bad faith’: a denial of individual responsibility.\textsuperscript{35} Russell has the following to say on the corruption of faith:

The whole conception of God is a conception derived from the ancient Oriental despotisms...a conception quite unworthy of men. When you hear people in church debasing themselves and saying that they are miserable sinners...it seems contemptible and not worthy of self-respecting human beings. We ought to stand up and look the world frankly in the face...make the best we can of the world.\textsuperscript{36}

By its nature religion constructs a person’s belief system, often excluding or denying the beliefs of others. For example, if an individual strictly adheres to the creation theory of human existence they would find it difficult to accept Darwin’s theory of evolution. This is the paradox prevalent in religion, as each religion aligns itself according to its essential truths and each religion’s interpretation of what is true varies accordingly. One might ask how a religion itself can endorse the credibility of another religion if its beliefs and practices negate the other. Or furthermore, how can an individual endorse a concept proposed as the truth if this truth is in conflict with their concept of the truth?

\textsuperscript{33} ibid., p. 85.
\textsuperscript{34} ibid., p. 86.
\textsuperscript{35} Kaufmann, pp. 280 & 366. Sartre, p.711. ‘Bad faith’ is a term used by Sartre to describe the human tendency to blame God rather than taking responsibility for one’s own life (chapter 7:1).
Personalised truth, or subjectivity, is the basis of Yoga’s asmitā—false notions of the self and others: something akin to Solomon’s self-deception.\(^\text{37}\)

It is difficult to prove one religion’s validity over another, especially when one considers that the history of religion is subject to interpretation, much of which is arguably speculative. Faith is a personal thing and for it to be unbiased, it must remain personal and free of discrimination: logically, if it is without bias it should be without “demand”. In *Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy: a therapist’s guide*, Ellis and MacLaren uphold that “demand” by its very nature invites emotional disturbance because it is ruled by “shoulds, oughts and must”, and it is often accompanied by a sense of guilt generated by self-imposed moral imperatives.\(^\text{38}\)

This discussion of ‘shoulds, oughts and musts’, and what these demands impose on freedom, leads to another issue. Most moral theories propose that one should not lie. But surely, as a liberated mind, one can choose to tell a lie because one is free to do so. Whether it is an act of freedom depends largely on what has prompted the lie. For instance, lying (whether covertly or overtly) may be a form of reaction formation, such as a shy person who acts uninhibitedly; or it may be a deliberate action such as lying to the Nazis about the whereabouts of a Jewish escapee.\(^\text{39}\) It is defensible that, in some circumstances, a lie is the preferred action and that lying can be an act of freedom. Yet lying is viewed by many religions as an immoral act: a sin. It is the I-sense that causes one to judge oneself as sinful. Consequently, the formation of extreme and radical religious views results from asmitā. Yet one could equally argue that the more tolerant aspects of religious belief can provide love and acceptance in an otherwise hostile environment. One’s belief system can therefore be a two-edged sword, on one hand if it is beyond condemnation and prejudice it can bestow great wisdom, empathy and understanding. Yet, in contrast, if it is biased and judgemental, it can limit the individual’s view of the world.


\(^{39}\) Colman, *Dictionary of psychology*, p. 636. In psychoanalysis, a ‘reaction formation’ is ‘a defence mechanism whereby a person replaces a repressed thought, feeling or behavioural act with one which is diametrically opposite to it’, such as a shy person who behaves in an exhibitionist’s manner.
In ‘Freud, civilization, religion and Stoicism’, Professor of philosophy and psychoanalytical studies Douglas Kirsner discusses Freud’s view of religion referring, in particular, to *The future of an illusion.*\(^{40}\) According to Kirsner, like Prussian German philosopher Karl Marx, Freud saw religion as an illusion, as ‘a symptom of alienated needs although they differed as to whether they were remediable’.\(^{41}\) To Freud, ‘religion was itself a symptom of social ills’.\(^{42}\) Kirsner explains that for Freud ‘religion…primarily involves consolations, the fantasized fulfilment of childish needs and drives, the need for protection and the need for a greater force to protect us’.\(^{43}\) Freud himself writes:

> Religion is an attempt to master the sensory world in which we are situated by means of the wishful world which we have developed within us as a result of biological and psychological necessities. But religion cannot achieve this. Its doctrines bear the imprint of the times in which they arose, the ignorant times of the childhood of humanity. Its consolations deserve no trust.\(^{44}\)

To Freud, the core of all religion is the desire to experience an ‘oceanic feeling’, something he traces back to the early stages of a developing sense of self and a deep need to feel a sense of connectedness, to a higher power and to the other.\(^{45}\) Human history shows how survival often depends on the other, for without the support of the other one is left completely to one’s own resources.\(^{46}\) This raises an important point relating to the concept of psychological freedom: the essential nature of reciprocity between the individual and the other. Freud’s theories uphold that the cause of human anxiety and fear is a complex psychical response in relation to an object, which in most cases, is the other.\(^{47}\) Consequently, one’s need to make a connection with the other, and how this connection translates into life experience, is a determining factor in whether one is able to achieve some degree of mental freedom. Once again, one is left with reciprocity between individual freedom and a person’s internalisation of their place in the collective. For Yoga, *asmitā* is the self one creates, particularly in respect to one’s

\(^{41}\) ibid.
\(^{42}\) ibid.
\(^{43}\) ibid.
\(^{44}\) ibid.
\(^{46}\) Honderich, p. 829. As Charles Darwin argued we are social beings and need each other to survive.
\(^{47}\) Freud, *Civilization and its discontents*, p. 10.
perceived place in the world. Thus, asmitā is a state of being relative to one’s desires, in particular, the desire to belong.

In contrast, in *Christian Buddhist dialogue*, Steindl-Rast connects the unity and purpose of religion to the simple desire to experience a true sense of belonging, to avoid feelings of alienation. Steindl-Rast links the need to feel a part of something greater than oneself with Maslow’s peak experience: a state achieved through what Maslow terms self-actualisation. This is understood as a feeling of self-acceptance—a state free of irrational fears. In *The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga*, Feuerstein describes samādhi (ecstasy) as ‘perfect forgetting’; something one could relate to a peak experience. ‘Forgetting’ ideas in the mind, that cause conditionality, is the quintessential objective of Yoga practice.

Steindl-Rast maintains that a human being seeks a religious path in order to know what it is to be ‘fully human’ or fully alive. He describes all religious journeys as the soil that reaps a spiritual harvest. In other words, the seed is the desire for realisation or a sense of belonging and the harvest is the realisation of a peak experience. Steindl-Rast’s sense of spirituality is something that inspires hope. A mystic would say that this is something akin to the cosmic breath, that the warmth one person feels for another human being is part of one’s connectedness to the whole. Human tenderness demonstrates that the heart has the capacity to hold immeasurable love and strength, that such feelings are something to be treasured and appreciated. Nonetheless, this unity can be corrupted by strict religious doctrines. In such cases doctrines may be based on condemnation or judgement, where one only accepts another under certain conditions, that is, they are only accepted as equals when their beliefs overlap.

Although I have presented Yoga as a philosophical and practical system for living, not a religion, whether Yoga is a religion is often the subject of debate amongst modern scholars. The inclusion of Patañjali’s īśvara (The Lord) reflects the presence of a

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51 Steindl-Rast.
52 *ibid.*
higher being. Feuerstein explains īśvara as abiding ‘in the heart region of all beings’, claiming it is ‘untouched by the causes-of-affliction’. He adds that Patañjali regards īśvara as ‘the first teacher’. According to Whicher, like the term “buddha”, īśvara refers to an ‘extremely enlightened state’. Whicher recognises the complexity associated with Patañjali’s concept of īśvara. The relation of īśvara to the yogin can be described as:

A one-way affair in which the believing yogin emulates īśvara’s condition, which is co-essential with the condition of the inner-most Self.

One could use this as an analogy for any kind of religious or spiritual worship, that is, to emulate or perhaps even attempt to personify a specific state of existence—a revered way of being, something found beyond fear, and if one was to use a religious perspective, this would be associated with a higher power.

In religion, faith is used to overcome fear: faith in something beyond mundane existence. Faith usually relates to an ultimate power that has the capacity to heal, grant wishes and protect. But, this invites the question: Does one’s faith in a protector, a saviour, set one free by taking away one’s fears, or does this belief itself, through biased doctrines and judgements, create an element of bondage that negates freedom? By blindly accepting teachings that claim to lead to salvation, does one shift the emphasis off individual responsibility and free will?

According to Taimni, Patañjali leaves room for free will. Taimni says that ‘freedom of movement…makes it possible for the future to develop along one of the many possible lines which open out from moment to moment’. Logic validates this assumption, considering that in order for the individual to be able to overcome the kleśas there must be a potential for this to be achieved. If all reality was predetermined what would be the point of any attempt to change?

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Sceptics might argue that what is written by the powers that be may include any change, hence thoughts, actions, feelings are pre-ordained. However, why give an individual free will if it is just a moot point? My contention is that for one to say something like: “That is just the way life is”, or “This is the life I am meant to live”, is perhaps just the mind conforming to avidyā, by denying the presence of a potential for something else. To Yoga, closed-mindedness stifles any potential energy, reducing its flow. The very practice of Yoga leaves one open to new possibilities.

There is an old saying that every time a person utters a silent plea for help they are saying a prayer. Asking the universal forces, an unknown saviour, for help is sometimes seen as one’s only hope, the only chance to end suffering. It appears that an essential part of being human is to want some kind of guidance. In Yoga, this guidance comes from within, though some would argue that it is inspired by a greater source. Many theorists maintain that the unification process of Yoga is ‘the establishment of perfect harmony between the everyday self and its spiritual source’. On a practical level the goal of Yoga is an integration of mind, body and spirit. As mentioned in the preface, Classical Yoga’s concept of freedom reflects a conundrum that bondage is an illusion and freedom only exists in contrast to bondage. Ignorance is the veil of this illusion it represents a lack of awareness, an absence of knowledge.

According to Russell, people accept religion on ‘emotional grounds’. Issues of sin, punishment and wickedness conjure up images of fear in the indoctrinated mind. Russell states:

If I were to suggest that between the Earth and Mars there is a china teapot revolving about the sun in an elliptical orbit, nobody would be able to disprove my assertion provided I were careful to add that the teapot is too small to be revealed even by our most powerful telescopes.

He goes on to say that if the existence of that teapot had been affirmed in ancient teachings and taught as a ‘sacred truth every Sunday’, not believing him would be seen

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59 Taimni, p. 404.
61 Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, p. 61.
62 Russell, The basic writings., p. 576.
as an ‘eccentricity’: emphasising the pressure the individual has to conform to mass belief.\(^{64}\)

Fear is a huge motivator. The idea of being singled out as a non-believer is a frightening prospect. Russell argues that religion is founded on fear, ‘on a narrow set of rules of conduct that have nothing to do with human happiness’.\(^{65}\) According to Russell, a belief is ‘rendered true or false by relation to a fact’, not religious-based myth.\(^{66}\) Russell concludes that human intelligence is the key to overcoming the terror threatened through sin and punishment. In ‘Is there a God?’ He writes:

> It is customary to suppose, that if a belief is widespread, there must be something reasonable about it. I do not think this view can be held by anyone who has studied history.\(^{67}\)

Although many concepts of God are created by ancient despotism the concept of a higher power is often one that is benevolent and forgiving.\(^{68}\) Historically religion attempts to answer fear with a promise of revelation and redemption. In *Freud along the Ganges*, Salmon Akhtar highlights Mortimer Ostow’s ‘three archaic contributions to the religious instinct’: awe, mysticism and apocalypse. Ostow states:\(^{69}\)

> The sense of awe derives from the newborn’s nondeclarative memory of his impressions of his adult, giant parents. The tendency to mysticism derives from the infant’s wish to undo the process of separation-individualisation, that is, to merge back into the mother. Apocalyptic thinking is created by externalization of early mood swings, before, and to the extent that it fails to achieve, perfect homeostasis. Together, awe and mysticism create an affect that is generally described as religious.\(^{70}\)

Within a cross-cultural context it could be argued that, each individual’s sense of self is based on forces unknown—on childhood fears, or early life experiences—and that for the most part the individual unwittingly allows these forces to control or determine their

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\(^{64}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{65}\) Russell, *The basic writings*, p. 577.


\(^{67}\) Russell, ‘Is there a God?’

\(^{68}\) Russell, *The basic writings*, p. 693 & 578.


\(^{70}\) S Akhtar, p.326.
choice. As a consequence, these seeds of burden create bondage in the form of conditionality.

According to Darwin, the evolutionary instinct to survive compels a human being to merge on a social level. Logic suggests that without the ability to live a civilised life, as individuals, we condemn ourselves to mayhem. Yet many human beings appear to consciously choose not to obey societal demands. To live a happy and productive life an individual needs to reach some kind of societal equilibrium (assuming that the individual does not suffer from a clinical psychological condition) and learn to compromise or control their ‘instinctual drives’. One’s freedom, both physically and psychologically, will depend on the cessation of ignorance, through an understanding of the reciprocal ethical relationship between oneself and society. The concept of ignorance, which Yoga associates with suffering, proposes that what one does not know or understand restricts one’s choices and therefore restricts one’s freedom.

4.3 Morality, survival and stress

The cyclic and often destructive nature of what Yoga refers to as a conditioned existence not only creates a burden for the individual, it also sows the seeds of a wider burden, one that rests with society. Without the ability to choose with awareness, moral concepts can become confused with the subjective nature of experience: causing a clash between what one wants and what one needs to do to maintain social equilibrium. To be human is to be a “thinking-feeling” being, yet one could argue that freedom, whether physical, mental or emotional, comes with an inherent responsibility to abide by the wisdom of moral constructs.

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71 ibid. Charles Darwin’s theory of ‘natural selection’ explains the logical progression of the human race through an evolutionary path of development.
72 Such as criminal activity.
74 Feuerstein, The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga, p. 45. The cessation of ignorance is the ultimate goal of both Yogic and Buddhist philosophies.
75 In respect to the term “wisdom of moral thinking” I refer to behaviour that supports human survival through abiding by moral values in support of human life.
In *The descent of man*, Darwin hypothesises that natural selection requires the development of a level of intelligence and that this intellectual faculty helps ensure the survival of the species. For Darwin, those with the highest intellect are more likely to survive because they find a way to adapt: to live in peace and harmony within their environment. *Asmitā* obstructs this higher discriminating faculty because it focuses on the *wants* and *needs* of the desiring mind (*manas*) rather than the more discerning faculties (*buddhi*) reflected through Yoga’s *yāma* and *niyāma* (as discussed in section 1.7). Darwin’s more scientific and clinical approach to survival recognises the inherent impact of the natural world, but it also links individual survival to intellectual and adaptive aspects.

German social scientist Friedrich Engels criticised Darwin’s theory, claiming that natural selection and the survival of the fittest cannot be lumped together. He counter argues:

1. Selection by the pressure of over-population: Perhaps the strongest survive in the first place, but they can also be the weakest in many respects.

2. Selection by a greater capacity of adaptation to altered circumstances: This is where survivors are better suited to particular circumstances. Yet adaptation as a whole can mean regress just as well as it can mean progress.

With this in mind, one could argue that a higher level of intelligence and the ability to adapt may not necessarily ensure survival; that brawn rather than brain may determine survival, and that selection or survival may not result from qualities such as good character or mental capacity, but may just be purely attributed to brute strength. Psychologist Daniel Goleman’s theory adds another perspective to this argument—that of emotional intelligence—in other words, the human capacity to feel is linked to intelligence and awareness and is a vital part of human life, and therefore survival.

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Darwin’s ideas suggest that individual survival is dependent on the safety provided by the collective environment. In other words, because of the reciprocal nature of human life, survival is not always in the individual’s hands—it is often in the hands of the other.²⁹ Therefore, the instinct to survive compels one to seek the protection social existence offers.³⁰ This social development provides the motivation for morality, which is something that may be linked back to the conception of religion—religious doctrines provide a shield from mundane existence in the form of divine protection.³¹ In such cases one’s freedom is often subject to God’s will.

Darwin’s theories indicate that freedom in the literal sense of autonomy is ironic because freedom demands responsibility, the setting of boundaries. This is reflected in Yogic tradition by the view that all human beings are connected by a natural life-force, or prāṇa. Consequently, one person’s actions are ultimately threaded, one way or another, through all life. This tenet of unity is also at the heart of religious ideology, which explains why some scholars present Yoga as a religious endeavour. However as I have argued, if one applies a religious nuance to freedom one risks becoming bound by religious doctrine, for religious convictions differ between religions.

As discussed in section 1.3, one could literally translate freedom as a love of justice, mirroring freedom through a myriad of positive qualities such as order, decency, compassion and fairness: a view that reflects Aristotle’s idea that friendship is the highest form of justice.³² As I previously argued, freedom can be associated with a mind free of fear and a cognitive-emotive state of peace (friendship); both of which require the absence of ignorance, for to welcome friendship one must have feelings of camaraderie toward the other (thereby achieving the attenuation of the kleśas). To attenuate the kleśas, a person’s mind must be ordered: free from chaos, or as Yoga would say it needs to be still. This is something that requires great effort and discipline. These views imply that freedom of mind is connected to the way one perceives and acts within the boundaries of responsibility.

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²⁹ Darwin, p. 102.
³⁰ Contrary to this argument, in Civilization and its discontent, Freud suggests that civilisation itself creates conflict within the individual as it acts to suppress instinctual drives.
³¹ Darwin, pp. 71 & 166.
Mental freedom is not a term conducive to Freud’s theories; indeed within the process of psychoanalysis, concepts such as freedom are considered unrealistic. To Freud, a human being will always be subject to the influence of primal drives. Freud explains ‘drives’ this way:

A drive might accordingly be seen as a powerful tendency inherent in every living organism to restore a prior state, which prior state the organism was compelled to relinquish due to the disruptive influence of external forces.  

Freud suggests that drives express the ‘conservative nature of organic life’, and that when it comes to the human psyche, there is really no such thing as normality. Nor can one expect to claim mental freedom through finding a cure for what ails one. Freud was reluctant to endorse a concept of ‘psychic normality’, in contrast he argued that: ‘we can at best...adapt to that which makes us incapable of adaptation.’ To go any further would be to cure ourselves of being human. In other words, the best one can do is to acknowledge, and perhaps restrain, the urges and drives that tend to dominate. Patañjali’s philosophical treatise provides a method of this restraint, proposing that meditative practices subdue primal instincts, freeing the individual from the restrictive and demanding elements of instinctual urges: empowering the individual to “construct” a more positive emotional life. (Meditation achieves this purpose by chipping away at fear and anxiety on a non-conscious level. See Chapter Eight.)

According to Ellis and MacLaren, human beings are ‘constructivists’. In other words, although often disturbed by external influences the individual also contributes significantly to maintaining their own dysfunctional ‘thinking, feelings and doings’. Ellis and MacLaren claim that, although a person may maintain negative thought tendencies, the person does not necessarily control them. On the contrary, in such cases, thoughts control the individual.

83 Freud, Beyond the pleasure principle, p. 76.
84 ibid., p. 76.
86 Freud, Civilization and its discontents, p. xxii.
87 Freud, Civilization and its discontents, p. xxii. Freud is speaking in terms of a psychoanalytic framework.
88 Ellis & MacLaren, p. 10.
89 ibid.
Ellis and MacLaren admit that various philosophies, including Buddhism and Classical Greek philosophy, have inspired Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT). They explain that psychoanalysis fails to fill that gap between identifying the cause of destructive thinking and creating a positive change in the individual’s life, enabling a sense of control.⁹¹

Yoga, REBT and psychoanalysis share a common tie: that it is what the individual believes that ultimately determines the quality of their mental and emotional life. An individual’s belief system defines them as a human being. Fear plays an important role in limiting potential for mental freedom because it has an exhaustive influence on the thought processes. When it comes to being human, fear often relates to what the individual does not know; fear is fuelled by uncertainty—clouded by ignorance. Hungarian endocrinologist Hans Selye’s research relates emotional stress to this lack of certainty. He claims that the study of stress deals with the defensive mechanisms of one’s own body: the fear response.⁹² Where social Darwinism implies that fear relates to the survival instinct, Freudian theory connects fear to guilt or insecurity (and to the need for protection). Yoga expands on these theories suggesting that fear and ignorance has a reciprocal relationship, one that is connected to perception.⁹³

4.4 The “me” myth—the subjective truth

*When I discover the promises made and kept which are the hidden root of my sense of basic trustworthiness of the world and my consequent freedom to commit myself to action. I discover my links to the past; I find the “once upon a time” which is the beginning of the story I must tell to be myself.*

*S Keen and A Valley-Fox⁹⁴*

In Yogic philosophy the “I” has many faces —*ahamkāra*, the ‘I maker’, and *jīva*, ‘the psyche’ or individualised self (also referred to as ego⁹⁵). Yoga tends to present the “I” as a façade that veils one’s pure Self: a Self that is above the trivialities of mundane

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⁹² Ibid., p. 9.
⁹⁴ Partridge, p. 163. The origin of the word fear relates to danger – impending doom.
⁹⁶ Not to be confused with Freud’s ego.
existence. To Freud the concept of “I” is created through the complex relationship between the three levels of the mind: each aspect of the mind is intrinsically linked to the other and is constructed from an intricate arrangement of past associations.\textsuperscript{96} Some theorists would argue, such as Sartre, Freud and Russell, that human life is immersed in myth, that the “I” or “me” is something constructed by an individual’s life story. Everything a person is, everything they believe in, is founded on their personal history. Much of what a person comes to believe is instilled in them through their environment, or an external force that, once internalised as truth, conditions a person to believe one thing over another. Human history is full of myths. The myths of the past will always be part of the present, so one might well ask when it comes to “I” or “me”, is this perception of self, individualisation, just another myth?

In order to understand the relationship between one’s individual form of reality and society’s collective myths one must first examine the meaning of the word “myth”. Briefly, a myth is a story retold. Myths can be legends—mystical, ancient stories passed down from generation to generation—and are quite often in opposition to any normal sense of reality. One definition of a myth is offered below:

The word ‘myth’ was first used in English in the early nineteenth century. Under the influence of nineteenth-century science, ‘myth’ came to signify anything opposed to reality—a sense that connects with ancient Greek usage. Muthos (fable) was contrasted with logos (rational discourse) or historia (history).\textsuperscript{97}

As well as the concept that a myth is a fable, it could also be argued that ordinary reality is somehow represented within a myth; that a myth is not just a cosmological or supernatural narrative, instead, its purpose is to reflect and build the moral fibre of society: myths provide examples of good and bad behaviour. Myths illustrate the follies and the wisdom of the past and in doing so they help society to prevent making the same mistakes in the future: fairytales are a good example of this. Most adults understand that such tales are not real, that they have been constructed to amuse or to instruct in some way, albeit to serve a purpose. Yet there are other forms of myth that influence one’s life. There are the stories one develops in the mind—stories that perturb one’s sense of wellbeing by creating conditionality—myth-based illusion. In respect to

\textsuperscript{96} See Chapter Four.
\textsuperscript{97} Deakin University, \textit{Myth and ideology: classical antiquity}, Deakin University, Geelong, 1999, p. 13.
avidyā, much of what one comes to think about in everyday life is based on illusion: fabricated from what one wants or needs to believe.

Freud argues that an individual’s “me-ness” is largely determined by the way they internalise past experiences. So on a bigger scale society’s myths are a reflection of its dominating desires, fears, loves and passions. Each society or culture is influenced by the one before it, and to a degree, each myth transcends time. Each individual constructs who they are through the foundations laid by their experiences: experience that conditions their existence. A person’s character grows from their experiences, not everything they come to believe is destructive, only the myths that keep them bound by conditionality.

For better or for worse, each person’s reality is based on their sense of what “me” is, and “me” is the totality of everything experienced. The myths of civilisation can inspire and provide hope but they can also instil fear and despair. One person’s pleasant reality can be another person’s nightmare. This existential approach to philosophy upholds that experience determines one’s becoming: that being depends on the experience of becoming. Although there are deeper layers to the Yogic concept of “becoming”, from a practical standpoint (everyday life), Yoga reflects a deterministic view—everything in the present is an effect caused by the past. Classical Yoga proposes that myths that perturb one emotionally are created by the klesās that veil thought. If the nature of reality is purely subjective, one may well ask, how can anything be judged as representing Absolute Truth? Is it possible for “me” to be anything other than a subjective being? If each “me” has their own sense of reality, that reality is always reality as experienced by that individual.

To a Marxist “me-ness” is moulded by society; for an Existentialist “me-ness” is a self-imposed invention; a Freudian considers “me-ness” to be something directed by the unconscious mind; whereas a Jungian claims that “me-ness” is largely determined by inherited characteristics. Undoubtedly, each of these views has merit—all of these explanations for the construction of “me-ness” appears reasonable, yet it should be

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99 Kaufmann, Existentialism from Doestoevsky to Sartre, p. 37.
100 Freud, Civilization and its discontents, p. 53.
noted that the philosophy behind each of these premises has been influenced by the
myths that are part of human existence—all of these frameworks are based on the
subjective nature of a particular theory and how it is perceived. Lives are forged from
historical narratives, often colourful accounts of the struggle between good and evil.
Myths are the basis of our customs, rites, stories and rituals. The essence of inherited
consciousness, they give meaning and direction to culture.

Freud’s theory suggests that each person acts out their individual mythic struggle in
contrast to an opposing force: the superego with the id, conscience with desire, the will
to live (Eros) with the need to end suffering (Thanatos). In relation to myth Carl Jung
writes:

I asked myself, “What is the myth you are living? And found that I did not
know. So...I took it upon myself to get to know “my” myth, and I regarded
this as the task of tasks...I simply had to know what unconscious or
preconscious myth was forming me.

One might propose that the world’s mythic path has become governed by an excess of
“isms”: fascism, communism, racism, sexism, nationalism, fundamentalism—often with
prejudice and judgement dictating the reigning myth and, in the case of violent conflict,
causing one individual to stand against another. When it comes to politics, every
resolute stand threatens to invalidate the other. Each culture plays out its own view of
the world and declares its own concept of human purpose. Fear of being judged or
persecuted ties the tongues of those who might speak out. Wars are fought on the basis,
say, of religion, economics and politics, all contrasting opinions claiming their own
powerful “Truths”.

In the Western world, the over-emphasis of taboos inhibits sexual freedom, creative
freedom, economic freedom and spiritual freedom. The world’s historical narratives
(myths), however true or false, influence one’s view of the present. Myths can serve as a
sense of stability and security; they can also cause bias and prejudice, creating narrow,
rigid thinking. Myths, along with truths, are a legacy carried from generation to

102 Funk and Wagnells standard dictionary, Funk and Wagnell Company, New York. 1961, pp. 431 & 1300. Eros is often used to refer to the life instinct, also in Greek Mythology – the God of Love – the youngest of the Gods, son of Aphrodite and Zeus. Thanatos in Greek Mythology means the God of death.
103 Jung, p. 60.
generation through cultural, religious or family values. Although dominating myths can sometimes manipulate thinking and cause negative circumstances, myths are undoubtedly a necessary part of life. Some of our most treasured traditions and ceremonies evolve from myths. French anthropologist and ethnologist Claude Levi-Strauss describes the function of myths this way:

Myths keep oppositions in harmony: to order what would otherwise be a site of disorder and conflict. So, in telling and listening to myths, people explain society to one another and also explain away its contradictions.104

Myths are also a tool for learning; one learns from one’s mistakes and from the mistakes of others. But sometimes the myth can go beyond reason, beyond rational judgement.

Aristotle maintains that 'all friendly feelings for others are extensions of a man's feelings for himself', which supports the necessity for self-acceptance and self-love.105 In his introduction to The Nicomachean ethics, philosopher Jonathan Barnes tells how utilitarians, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, accused Aristotle's ethics of 'egoistic eudaimonism' because they advocate that happiness is an individual not collective goal.106 But the question is: how can anything be collective without first being subjective? Aristotle suggests that the ability to honour one’s self is the only true way for human beings to ever learn to fully honour each other. He writes:

It is right for the good man to be self-loving, because then he will both be benefited himself by performing fine actions, and also help others.107

Aristotle indicates in this quotation that it is through self-love that one can best love others: yet self-condemnation is often the result of myths that teach the individual that they must put others first: that they must be self-sacrificing.

What makes an individual who they are? Surely, an individual’s identity is the result of belief systems that are produced from phenomenological experience. If one grows up believing that it is wrong to be happy, then the idea of happiness may cause a feeling of

104 Deakin University, p. 15.
106 ibid., p. 31.
107 ibid., p. 302.
shame. If one grows up believing that putting one’s needs ahead of others is “bad” then striving to fulfill one’s needs may cause self-reproach. If one grows up believing that sex is a sin then by satisfying one’s sexual desires one may experience feelings of guilt. Such considerations imply that any degree of mental freedom requires an understanding of human belief systems.

Part of a person’s belief system is their internal moral code, or conscience. A conscience is a positive thing; it is a necessary part of the human ethical guidance system. However, apart from being a positive force for inspiring socially constructive behaviour, it can also be a negative force that creates an unnatural sense of guilt. According to Freud, the way one interprets the directions given by one’s conscience can be healthy or unhealthy, constructive or destructive.\textsuperscript{108}

According to Ellis and MacLaren, there are healthy negative feelings or anxiety-driven responses that prompt an individual to act wisely to dangerous situations for example, jumping out of the way of an on-coming car.\textsuperscript{109} Moreover, some negative or unhappy responses are just a natural and rational reflection of one’s feelings—regret, annoyance, frustration and sorrow, say.\textsuperscript{110} Contrariwise, there are destructive elements or unhealthy feelings associated with anxiety that obstruct one’s ability to attain peace of mind—for instance, anger, rage, agitation and self-pity, say. And all of these, according to Ellis and MacLaren, serve only to cause further anxiety.\textsuperscript{111}

Ellis and MacLaren suggest that the unfortunate thing about human belief systems is that they have become so immersed in self-sacrifice and self-condemnation that the guilt one imposes on oneself often has devastating consequences: threatening a person’s sense of worth.\textsuperscript{112} Classical Yoga also recognises the fallibility of human belief systems and the destructive elements of unnecessary self-imposed guilt.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{108} See Chapter Four.
\textsuperscript{109} Ellis & MacLaren, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{110} \textit{ibid.}, p. 21.
\textsuperscript{111} \textit{ibid.}, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{ibid.}, p. 86.
\textsuperscript{113} Internal referencing refers to the ability to make judgements based on reasoning skills, logic, and rational deductions rather than external referencing where one might constantly make judgements through comparing oneself with ‘the other’. External referencing is also created by societal indoctrination.
4.5 Inner dialogue and mental bondage

We often feel that we lack something, and seem to see that very quality in someone else, promptly attributing all our own qualities to him too, and a kind of ideal contentment as well. And so the happy mortal is a model of complete perfection—which we have ourselves created.

Johann Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther

It is impossible to discuss mental freedom without exploring the effects of an individual’s inner world. The importance of this concept is emphasised in Sutra 2:33 of the Yoga Sūtras, which recommends changing inner dialogue from destructive to constructive. Various types of therapy work with this kind of self-talk as a means to help the individual cope with emotional disturbance. Although psychoanalysis aims to identify the underlying reason for emotional disturbance, rational emotive behavioural therapy (REBT) maintains that psychoanalysis, or any kind of therapy for that matter, should be able to offer the patient a systematic approach to making positive progress in achieving peace of mind. REBT proposes that the main benefit of psychoanalysis is in identifying the origin of the patient’s problem; but that when it comes to managing emotional disturbance, it falls short in the area of instruction and/or methodology: it fails to provide a practical way to short-circuit emotional disturbance and replace inappropriate, destructive thoughts with new and helpful ways of thinking. With this problem in mind, REBT uses a technique designed to defuse emotional disturbance, to help the patient create a more productive “core” belief system.

In his research Ellis discovered that Eastern theories of mind provided ways to effectively control the thought processes. REBT’s techniques aim to enable the patient to reach a level of freedom whereby their emotional demands no longer stifle their ability to live a rational and pleasurable existence. A study of REBT is important to the concept of freedom as this therapy recommends internal dialogue (self-talk) as a means to influence the quality of emotional experience. And, like REBT Yoga recognises that unhelpful internal dialogue can lead to emotional suffering. REBT uses

115 Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, p. 82.
116 Ellis & MacLaren, pp. 7-10.
117 ibid., p. 21.
118 ibid., pp. 10-11.
the Socratic approach for dealing with distorted beliefs; an approach that assumes that it is one’s core belief system (conscious/non-conscious) is the cause of emotional perturbation. Ellis and MacLaren write.\(^{120}\)

When people are disturbed, they think-feel-act in a dysfunctional, self-defeating manner and when they undisturb themselves they almost invariably change some of their cognitions, change their emotional reactions, and change their activities.\(^{121}\)

REBT maintains that, short of a clinical condition, emotional perturbation is the result of irrational thinking—negative internal dialogue.\(^{122}\) Yoga uses “observer awareness”—the practice of observing one’s own thought processes: apperception—to observe and control internal dialogue.\(^{123}\) In Sutra 1:15, Patañjali refers to this as self-mastery,\(^{124}\) and he relates self-mastery to non-attachment. Feuerstein writes:

[Self mastery] represents a genuine achievement securely anchored in the depths of one’s being—not simply world flight but world transcendence; not neurotic self-encapsulation but the conscious re-alignment of one’s entire life in the light of higher values; the quenching of the craving for ephemeral things.\(^{125}\)

This concept of reflected thought or self-mastery is an important part of Yogic philosophy, especially in relation to liberation or mental freedom.\(^{126}\)

REBT’s techniques provide a method of identification—thereby reducing emotional disturbance (perturbation) through understanding its origin: enabling a degree of self-mastery. This is something REBT describes thus:

(A) Identifying an adversity or actuating event;

(B) Pinpointing the core belief behind the thinking process;

\(^{119}\) ibid., pp. 32-36.
\(^{120}\) ibid., p. 59.
\(^{121}\) ibid., p. 3.
\(^{122}\) Ellis & MacLaren, p. 10. Ellis’s definition of irrational thinking is thought processing that is unhelpful—destructive to happiness and well being, whereas rational thinking is life-affirming and productive. “Disturbance” is not used here in a clinical sense.
\(^{123}\) ibid., p. 10.
\(^{124}\) Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, p. 36.
\(^{125}\) ibid., p. 36.
\(^{126}\) RājaYoga’s “science of the mind”.

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(C) Understanding the consequences of those thoughts (e.g. feelings/emotions like depression, anger etcetera that lead to negative behavioural patterns).

(D) Dispute the validity of the core belief;

(E) Evaluate the view (put thoughts into a rational perspective).  

The therapist starts with C, the consequence, or the individual’s feelings. From there focus is drawn to A, the activating event or adversity that initiated the feeling. And then the therapist attempts to find the irrational core belief, B, behind the feeling. Once the irrational core belief is uncovered, the next step is D: to dispute its validity. After disputing the negative core belief the next step is E, an evaluating process: a way of putting thoughts into rational perspective. REBT aims to establish an internal dialogue that is helpful to the individual and works to improve the quality of their life. It maintains that through this system of therapy the individual will eventually change ‘ingrained’ core beliefs, inspiring more positive thoughts and actions and eliminating self-defeating self-talk.

In effect, REBT works to help the individual to examine events from an internal reference point rather than allowing external stimulus to constantly affect the way that one thinks about oneself and the world. Again, this is the main aim of Yoga: restraining whirling mind-stuff by the use of various processes, including apperception—looking at the actual event objectively and not relating that event to a core belief that requires self-rating or self-condemnation. REBT identifies three primary (negative) emotional responses—anger, depression and anxiety—suggesting that the irrationality associated with these primal responses have the power to distort and deconstruct positive societal values.

127 Ellis & MacLaren, p. 10.
128 ibid.
129 ibid. In Ellis’s earlier writings (A) stands for ‘adversity’ however, his more recent teachings relate the (A) to an ‘activating’ event.
130 ibid., p. 10.
131 ibid., p. 70.
132 ibid., p. 10.
133 Ellis & MacLaren, p. 133.
134 ibid., p. 59.
135 ibid., pp. 27 & 54.
4.6 Frustration, perturbation and irrational beliefs

People are disturbed not by things but by the views they take of them!

Epictetus

REBT puts irrational beliefs into three categories. The first is the need for approval. In this case, an individual’s irrational belief is that they must have other people’s approval and if they don’t then they must be unworthy of approval. The second is perfectionism, which is the belief that an individual needs to be perfect in order to prove their worth (once again there is a connection to the other and the individual’s sense of self-worth). The third irrational belief-system is “low-frustration tolerance” (LFT). REBT maintains that frustration is not necessarily a negative thing. It can, in fact, be described as something that inspires persistence, motivation or determination (something referred to by Selye as “eustress” or “good” stress). Yet prolonged frustration can cause emotional disturbance, it can manifest in an inability to relieve anxiety. Yoga practice aims to relieve the physiological effects of anxiety. Its health benefits are widely documented, particularly in relation to controlled breathing and how it aids the parasympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system (see chapters seven and eight). REBT describes frustration as the distance (process) experienced between the want or desire (X) for something and the attainment of that thing (Y), as follows:

(X) \rightarrow \text{---------} \rightarrow (Y)

Positive process = action leads to positive results in a clear and definitive way.

\[\text{ibid., p. 10.}\]
\[\text{ibid., p. 41.}\]
\[\text{D Di Mattia, Certificate in cognitive behaviour therapy level 1, Study guide, Centre for Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Melbourne, 2005.}\]
\[\text{A Kidman, From thought to action, Biochemical and General Services, Sydney, 1988, p. 5.}\]
\[\text{Selye, p. 40. Hans Selye coined the term “distress” to emphasise the negative aspects of stress, that is, worry and anxiety, whereas “eustress” or good stress is a positive attribute: motivation.}\]
\[\text{M Stiles, Structural Yoga therapy: adapting to the individual, Red Wheel/Weiser, San Francisco, 2005, p. 49.}\]
\[\text{Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) Australia, Study guide, Melbourne, 2005.}\]
\[\text{ibid.}\]
When the distance between (X) and (Y) is too great the frustration is prolonged and this causes a level of anxiety that may result in avoidance tendencies (escapism), where the individual finds a way of self-soothing their frustration through addictions or through compulsive or neurotic behaviour, as follows.

\[(X) \rightarrow \text{Negative process = prolonged desire and unresolved events lead to frustration and self-soothing acts as a way of alleviating this continual state of frustration.}^{144}\]

REBT argues that these kinds of behavioural tendencies (self-soothing such as smoking, over-eating, gambling, drugs or any other addictive behaviour driven by suppressed frustration) commit society to a particular type of belief or thought/action process: one that restricts human progress and stifles the positive aspects of intellectual evolution.\(^{145}\)

Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapist Antony Kidman argues that LFT is rampant in modern society.\(^{146}\) For instance, road rage is a form of LFT. He claims that the desire for instant gratification has become a cultural demand reflected in the world’s technological development: fast food, the internet (Facebook, Twitter, and the like), ATMs, online banking, mobile phones (texting): everything nowadays is at our fingertips. Kidman describes LFT as a belief that one should have things a certain way, a self-compelled emotional demand.\(^{147}\) He maintains that in many different cultures today society has become conditioned: individuals expect their needs to be met quickly, resulting in impatience and intolerance. This cultural dynamic creates the belief that one must or should have things instantly in order to be satisfied, and when one’s needs are not met promptly the tension builds, culminating in emotional disturbance, sometimes driving one to the point of anti-social behaviour.

In many ways, the concepts of freedom and conditionality correspond well with REBT. For instance, Cognitive Behaviour Therapist Dom Di Mattia, from the Centre of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy in Melbourne, maintains that, ‘freedom, put simply, is not needing anything’.\(^{148}\) By this he means that, on an emotional level, one’s freedom is

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\(^{144}\) *ibid.*

\(^{145}\) *ibid.*

\(^{146}\) Kidman, p. 5.

\(^{147}\) *ibid.*, p. 5.

\(^{148}\) Di Mattia.
determined by what one thinks one needs in order to be content. Freedom is dependent on one’s view of the world and one’s place in it. Both REBT and Classical Yoga help the individual to become an overseer of their own thoughts—a “mind” watcher or “apperceiver”—much like the theory of observation related to quantum physics. This new paradigm suggests that the observation process itself, in any given circumstance, shapes and affects the results of the observation. In other words, the individual can actually change their thoughts in a way that changes their circumstances, thereby breaking the barriers created by conditionality.

4.7 Shoulds, oughts and musts—perceived righteousness

Ellis and MacLaren define emotional disturbance as a state that stops a person from attaining positive goals, arguing that it can lead to physical symptoms, obsessive behaviour, substance abuse, depression and poor quality of life: making a clear distinction between disturbance and mere dissatisfaction. For instance, a person might go for a job interview and not get the job and experience a feeling of disappointment, which is a rational reaction. In contrast, this may have been the tenth job interview and the person may now see themselves as a failure, resulting in more disturbing behaviour and perhaps a deeper level of depression, anxiety or hostility.

REBT proposes that beliefs, and the way one applies those beliefs, create unrealistic demands. This instils a sense of should, ought or must: that is, the things one thinks should, ought and must happen. This is significant to the concept of freedom, for many beliefs are built on the foundation of shoulds, oughts and musts, such as the strict moral judgements established by some religious convictions.

Freud relates the notion of demands to drives—to the relationship between the demands of the id and the demands of the superego (conscience and the ego-ideal)—see Chapter

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150 Ellis & MacLaren, p 32
151 ibid.
152 Holy Bible, King James Version, Universal Book and Bible House, Philadelphia, 1945, Genesis 3, p. 9. For example, “original sin” (Genesis)—guilt carried over the centuries.
For example, the conscience, by demanding moral or ethical dictates, creates a plethora of shoulds, oughts and musts. The id is the powerhouse of unconscious demands and desires and, regardless of whether these drives are satisfied or remain unsatisfied, one suffers the consequences of punishment as they translate through the filter of the conscience (super ego). Psychoanalysis, like REBT, recognises that it is human nature to chastise oneself for what one should have done. According to Freud, just the thought of doing something can create a sense of guilt. This influence is something Ellis relates to as ‘demandedness’: thoughts attached to emotions inspiring guilt, depression, frustration, anxiety and anger. Obviously, this tendency towards moral arbitration is a natural part of being human; society compels the setting of moral boundaries. Nevertheless, according to REBT one’s initial emotive reaction to a certain circumstance can result in spiralling effects, producing a secondary emotion that evolves from the primary cause.

REBT admits that it is impossible to achieve freedom of mind as long as one continues to have thoughts that become compounded—that tend to ‘awfulize’ one’s situation. Ellis and MacLaren argue that one tends to say things to oneself like: ‘I can’t stand it’ (can’tstandinitis), which is a tendency to think of things as unbearable. This kind of ‘catastrophizing’ creates consequences resulting in emotional perturbation. There is a tendency to confuse the concept of feeling with thinking—one says “I feel disappointed” whereas the actual concept of being disappointed is a thought not a feeling: ‘you feel the way you think.’ Thoughts and feelings are ‘intrinsically related’. REBT suggests that each individual determines what they do and say, and how they think, feel and act.

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153 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle.*, p. 119. According to Freud’s theories the superego is the home for the person’s moral code.
154 Ibid., p. 140.
155 Ibid.
156 Ellis & MacLaren, p. 28.
159 Ibid., p. 28.
160 Ibid., p. 29.
161 Ibid., p. 29.
162 Ibid., p. 126.
163 Ibid., p. 111.
164 Suffering from victimisation or persecution are obvious exceptions.
In some ways the human cognitive faculty could be compared to a wild elephant. Human thought processes are often wild, incredibly unruly, vast and expansive; containment is only possible with training: training built on trust, reinforcement and consistency. Yoga understands that to be human is to be at the mercy of one’s cognitive processes and unless these processes are restricted (tamed) one is likely to become caught up in unhelpful emotions. Krishnamurti attributes emotional problems to a tendency to observe the present in terms of the past. How one feels today, depends on the degree in which one is still emotionally invested in the past. Consequently, it is not thought itself that is the enemy, what is problematic is the nature of thought, and the ways in which thoughts affect emotions.

In The passions, Solomon maintains that ‘emotions are subjective,’ he writes: ‘the object of our emotions, are the objects of the world experienced (and projected) through “our” concerns and values’. Solomon suggests that judgements can be rational or irrational: irrational judgements are wrought with self-deception. In The joy of philosophy, Solomon states, ‘how we talk about ourselves is only a partial indication of how we think about ourselves’. He claims:

Nothing is more immediate to us than our own emotions...nothing...more prone to self-deception.

In The art of being, Fromm maintains that the problematic nature of human life is the tendency to identify the self with things outside oneself. If one says “I am a man” one has identified with the masculine, and if one says “I am a student” one has identified with the ideas gathered in the mind, and, in addition, if one says “I am wealthy” one has identified with one’s bank account. Fromm refers to awareness as a state of pure consciousness or mindfulness, where one no longer identifies with these things as a source of one’s being. This is emphasised by Winnicott when he writes:

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165 Yoga often uses the analogy of the horse and the rider.
168 ibid., pp. viii-xi.
170 ibid., p. 28.
171 E Fromm, The art of being, Continuum, New York, 2005, p. 120.
172 ibid., p. 120.
173 ibid.
The alternative to being is reacting, and reacting interrupts being and annihilates.\(^{174}\)

In this quotation Winnicott indicates that being is a state of present-mindedness, not one of reaction, proposing that ideas need to be intuitive rather than derived. Reacting implies deriving one’s feelings about the moment from past judgements. Being and reacting are two distinct things: one is focused on the present and one on the past.\(^{175}\)

From a Yogic perspective, a mind filled with the past brings with it all the feelings and responses attached to past judgements, whereas when devoid of attachment one acts rather than reacts, guided by the present moment, rather than the past.

4.8 I am—the consciousness beneath

Awareness takes us from the property mode of existence, or:
I am what I have,
to a breakthrough mode of existence, where:
I am what I do,
to the sense of unalienated activity, or simply:
I am what I am.

Erich Fromm\(^{176}\)

Fromm’s view (above) recognises that to be is not necessarily to be mindful. He links human awareness to moving beyond concepts such as, “I have” and “I do” to the simple affirmation, “I am”.\(^{177}\) The phrase “I am” is often associated with consciousness and spirituality: perhaps because, conceptually, this phrase is both simple and complex: raising the eternal question of just what “I” is. Spiritually, “I am” is often used to reflect the union between the self and the world. “I am” is quite distinct from the “I-sense”. One denotes an existence that transcends the mundane; the other reflects the sense of “I” attached to the material world.

A problem arises in what one considers to be the self. In Yogic terms the self is often interpreted as a higher, more enlightened aspect of consciousness or often, depending on the school of thought, a personified spiritual power. And this is a view that tends to shy

\(^{174}\) M Epstein, Going on being, Continuum, New York, 2001, front matter.

\(^{175}\) ibid., front matter.

\(^{176}\) Fromm, p. 120.
away from recognising the individualised self as important. Deikman refers to the following Vedantic parable:

A group of travellers forded a river. Afterwards, to make sure everyone had crossed safely the leader counted the group but omitted himself from the count. Each member did the same and they arrived at the conclusion that one of them was missing. The group then spent many unhappy hours searching the river until finally a passer-by suggested that each person count their own self, as well. The travellers were overjoyed to find that no one was missing and all proceeded on their way.\(^{178}\)

Deikman explains that ‘like the travellers, Western psychology often neglects to notice the “one” that counts. Until it does, its progress will be delayed’.\(^{179}\) Aristotle understood that one must first be true to oneself. Aristotle maintains that by having regard for oneself, one can then share this regard with others, resulting in: ‘one soul in two bodies, as true friends have all things in common’.\(^{180}\)

Chapple and Kelly connect one’s cognitive state to ‘intention’: or, intentionality.\(^{181}\) Intentionality, we know, denotes what is in the mind and how this mental content is directed at an object, albeit another person or thing.\(^{182}\) Solomon’s theory of emotion claims that this process of direction need not be random, wild and chaotic.\(^{183}\) He maintains that emotion can have integrity, a premise reflected by Yogic philosophy. In order to tame the wild elephant that is the human mind awareness and understanding are necessary. The individual’s internal realities (what they believe) are, it is true, coloured by habitual ways of thinking and emoting, which in turn motivates their choices.\(^{184}\) Yoga concedes that these choices, when not motivated by discernment, are motivated by the object of one’s attachment.

\(^{177}\) *ibid.*, p. 120.

\(^{178}\) Deikman, p. 330.

\(^{179}\) *ibid.*


\(^{182}\) *ibid.*

\(^{183}\) The third kleśa “attachment” (rāga) reflects this relationship between the mind and the object.

\(^{184}\) Colour, colouring and colourisation are terms used in some translations of the Yoga-Sūtras to describe anything that “colours” the way one sees (interprets) things.
CHAPTER FIVE

Rāga (attachment)—the incarcerated mind

5.1 Attraction, pleasure and the unconscious

The attraction, which accompanies pleasure, is Rāga.

I. K. Taimni¹

Rāga is defined by Taimni as ‘the attraction one feels towards any person or object when any kind of pleasure or happiness is derived from the person or object’.² This is a natural part of the desire for pleasure. Yoga suggests that one seeks this pleasure from the external world because it is difficult to source internally: the veil of avidyā overrides one’s ability to feel the joy (ānanda) inherent to human nature. For obvious reasons this kleśa has links to Sigmund Freud’s theory of the unconscious.³

There are a variety of views regarding Freud’s research. His theories were controversial at the time, and to this day they are often debated. Some say he was a natural scientist. Others say that his approach was hermeneutical: that it all had to do with meaning; that he wrote in metaphors and that science was simply a mask. I recognise these different interpretations and acknowledge that my view is just one approach. I concentrate on Freud’s theory of psychic energy: inner forces and their influence on human life. Freud’s theories are particularly significant to my research because his philosophical and scientific analysis reveals much about the makings and psychical associations of the human mind—the freedom or bondage imposed by its unconscious workings.

According to Freud, human beings are ‘more comfortable living with delusions and superstitions than with the truth’.⁴ Freud recognises the cyclic nature of thinking, ‘the influence of society, on man and man on society’ that passes from generation to

² ibid.
³ I do not intend to provide a comprehensive explanation of Sigmund Freud’s theories.
generation, one that often defies logic and reason\(^5\). His work follows a process of evolution as he constantly re-evaluates his own conclusions. For instance, the concept of libido began as a purely psychical sexual energy and extended to the life and death instinct\(^6\). When discussing the mental life of a child Freud states in *The future of illusion*:

The libido follows the paths of narcissistic needs and attaches itself to the objects which ensure the satisfaction of those needs. In this way the mother, who satisfies the child’s hunger, becomes its first love-object and certainly also its first protection against all the undefined dangers which threaten it in the external world — its first protection against anxiety, we may say\(^7\).

For Freud, this desire for protection has a major controlling influence in the growing child’s life (a concept that recognises fear as the major source of anxiety). Eventually, the mother may be replaced by the father and this need for a ‘father figure’ is something Freud identifies as the underlying foundation of religious belief\(^8\).

The need for protection is based on fear, on a perceived threat, and fear is undoubtedly the greatest challenge to freedom. Fear serves an obvious and necessary function; it prompts a person to avoid danger. However, the fear Freud recognises here is what remains unconscious (often resulting in neurosis)\(^9\). This concept of fear is paramount to both Eastern and Western philosophy and it will be discussed in greater detail throughout this thesis. For now, I will proceed by outlining Freud’s theories and how they relate to Classical Yoga.

In analysing mental freedom it is important to examine motivating factors, something Freud equates to drives\(^10\). Freud’s analysis of the human personality reveals a great deal about the barriers to mental freedom; his work establishes a methodology or approach

\(^{7}\) *ibid.*, p. 24.
\(^{8}\) *ibid.*, p. 24.
\(^{9}\) AM Colman, *Dictionary of psychology*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 503. The word neurosis comes from the Greek word neuron, a nerve, and osis indicating a process or state, that is, a nervous state—a mental disorder with predominately distressing symptoms without apparent organic aetiology. S Freud, *The unconscious*, trans. G Frankland, Penguin Books, London, 1978, p. 3. ‘The neurotic turns away from reality because he finds either the whole or parts of it unbearable’.
\(^{10}\) See section 4.5 for a definition of Freud’s ‘drives’. 171
aimed at defusing controlling influences by providing an insight into the surreptitious nature of the unconscious mind.

In *The ego and the id*, Freud divides the psyche into three realms:

1) The conscious;
2) The pre-conscious;
3) The unconscious.\(^{11}\)

The conscious realm represents what is inside one’s awareness. Freud explains that thoughts that are no longer conscious in the mind become ‘latent,’ referring to this state as the ‘pre-conscious’ (memories that can be recalled at will).\(^{12}\) He refers to what remains non-conscious as ‘the unconscious’.\(^{13}\) Freud explains that the pre-conscious is ‘much closer to the conscious than the unconscious’.\(^{14}\)

In response to his critics, Freud highlights the difficulties of reconciling a ‘consciousness-based psychology’ within a paradigm that analyses what is revealed through processes such as word association, dreams and hypnosis.\(^{15}\) The unconscious operates and exists outside of consciousness: certain forces actively oppose the conscious realisation of what is latent.\(^{16}\) The effect on mental freedom is obvious. Freud, himself, claims that ‘psychical freedom’ is not realistic, for without one’s knowledge the unconscious mind continues to manifest itself even in the most innocent ways, for example by parapraxes, or slips of the tongue.\(^{17}\)

Freud’s psychoanalysis aims to neutralise disturbing unconscious forces thereby making what is unconscious conscious.\(^{18}\) And this process of deactivating the predominance of these inner forces is also an objective of the Eastern philosophy’s meditation, which will be examined further in Chapter Eight. Analysing freedom requires a definition for

\(^{14}\) *Ibid.*
\(^{15}\) *Ibid.*
\(^{16}\) Colman, p. 735.
bondage both mentally and emotionally. Although not actively using these terms, Freud provides a method of understanding the governing forces of the unconscious world. He derives his notion of the ‘unconscious from the theory of repression’—forces that oppose conscious recognition—describing what is repressed as resistance.\(^{19}\) The opposite end of this spectrum is consciousness.

To Freud, ‘consciousness constitutes the outer surface of the psychic apparatus’.\(^ {20}\) In other words, it is a part of the psyche-system that is closest to the external world. Freud characterises consciousness as ‘the surface of perception’: what one senses and feels.\(^ {21}\) He also refers to it as the ‘thought processes’, establishing a connection between thinking and feeling.\(^ {22}\) Freud’s theories indicate that the dynamics of these thought processes and how they relate to the structure of the personality influence emotional and psychological balance; or, for the purpose of this study, mental freedom.

### 5.2 Freud, dynamic energy and attachment

A person is a complex being made up of a million individual smells, tastes, memories, and hopes. Listen for a few minutes to the voices that run through your mind. Every psyche is a private theatre filled with scenes and characters. Listen and you will hear your father, mother, brothers, sisters, children, lovers, friends, enemies, teachers, and heroes acting out their dramas on your stage. Hearing the multiple voices within yourself will remind you that you belong to a special clan. Your people still inhabit you.

* S Keen and A Valley-Fox\(^ {23}\)

Freud highlights the inner conflict in the human condition. He seeks to identify a process of the mind that Eastern philosophy suggests is veiled in ignorance. Freud’s psychical energy is an important aspect of my research because his theory recognises that the determining forces of the personality often remain unknown to the observer. The concept of observation is imperative to the structure of Eastern philosophy, particularly in relation to freedom or liberation. Individual observation implies a

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18 Colman, p. 735.
20 *ibid.*, p. 110.
21 *ibid.*
22 *ibid.*
relationship between the individual’s experiences of the world and the interpretive filters used to assimilate these experiences, something Freud and Patañjali link to pleasure and pain. The psychologist Gustav Theodor Fechner’s insights led Freud to question if the pleasure principle has dominion over the psyche. Fechner writes:

Insomuch as conscious impulses are always associated with pleasure and unpleasure, we may suppose that pleasure and unpleasure, too, are linked psycho-physically to conditions of stability and instability.

In contrast to Fechner, Freud proposes that the pleasure principle purely ‘exists as a strong tendency’. In making this conclusion, Freud developed a conceptual model for the human personality, applying the laws of physics. In his first year at the University of Vienna, Freud received supervision by German physiologist Ernst Wilhelm von Brücke who, in collaboration with physicist Hermann von Helmholtz, formulated the first law of thermodynamics (the law of conservation of energy). This theory expounds that all living organisms (energy systems) are also governed by this principle. Freud then proceeded to create a dynamic theory of psychology based on the distribution and disposal of psychic energy within the personality, hence the ability to think with any degree of clarity or freedom relates to the formation of the personality and the distribution of psychic energy within that personality. He uses the term “libido” to refer to this psychic energy; an energy fuelled by thought processes and sexual urges, and as he later determined the life and death drives.

Freud argues that the mind has a fixed amount of this psychic energy: it cannot create or destroy this energy but only transfer it from one kind of function to another. According to Freud, an individual’s personality is determined by the changes, balance and interaction of this psychic energy within the mind and that imbalance in this energy cause neuroses. The id is the source of this psychic energy. It is this concept of energy

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24 Patañjali’s prāna and Freud’s dynamic energy (see Chapter Eight).
25 Freud, Beyond the pleasure principle., p. 46.
26 ibid., p. 47.
27 Freud, Beyond the pleasure principle., p. 110.
29 Freud, Beyond the pleasure principle., p. 110.
distribution, amongst other things, that connects Freud’s view to Eastern philosophy. As mentioned earlier, Patañjali teaches that the body and the mind are dependent on the free flow of prāṇa for vitality and wellbeing. Like Patañjali, Freud connects the health and wellbeing of the individual with dynamic distribution of energy within body-mind system.\textsuperscript{32} Freud stresses that perceptions come from without (sense perceptions) and within (sensations or feelings), ultimately, linking psychic energy-flow with the concept of pleasure and pain.\textsuperscript{33} Freud explains thus:

Sensations of a pleasurable kind generate no pressures at all; unpleasureable sensations, on the other hand, exert pressure to an extreme degree. They press for change, for release, and because of this I believe that unpleasure entails an increase in energy-cathexis,\textsuperscript{34} [and] pleasure a decrease.\textsuperscript{35}

To understand this further it is important to consider Freud’s organisation of the personality more fully. Freud claims that the energy system of the personality is made up of three major systems—the id,\textsuperscript{36} the ego\textsuperscript{37} and the superego.\textsuperscript{38} These systems are made up of psychic energy, which is drawn from the body’s innate and vital energy source.\textsuperscript{39} As previously explained, this psychic energy cannot be destroyed: if it disappears from one part of the personality it must reappear somewhere else. Hence, the healthy distribution of this psychic energy is crucial to the individual’s ability to be free of mental perturbation.

To Freud, who a person becomes, as an individual (and in context with this thesis the degree of freedom one achieves), is a direct product of the distribution of energy within the organisation of the personality. A healthy and well-adjusted person achieves balance and harmony between the id, the ego and the superego, allowing the person to achieve equilibrium and to have productive dealings or transactions within their environment. In other words, an individual is subject to ‘realistic anxiety’ rather than neurotic anxiety.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{32} Freud, \textit{Beyond the pleasure principle.}, p. 110.
\textsuperscript{33} ibid., p. 110.
\textsuperscript{34} ibid., p.134. The term “energy-cathexis” refers to the libido’s charge of energy.
\textsuperscript{35} ibid., p. 113.
\textsuperscript{36} Freud, \textit{The unconscious}, pp. 106. The id is the primary process of the psyche. The goal of the primary process is to create a discharge of energy (quantities of excitation/or tension). This energy is released into the organism through stimulation caused by either internal or external means.
\textsuperscript{37} Freud, \textit{Beyond the pleasure principle.}, p. 115. This need for compromise necessitates a new formation in the psychological system—the development of the ego as the mediator.
\textsuperscript{38} Freud, \textit{Beyond the pleasure principle.}, p. 119.
\textsuperscript{40} Freud, \textit{Introductory lectures.}, pp. 441-446.
These three systems work together cooperatively in a healthy individual. An imbalance in these energy systems ultimately leads to maladjustment and disharmony, or neurotic anxiety. Freud explains this concept of anxiety thus:\footnote{41}{Ibid., p. 441.}

Realistic anxiety strikes us as something very rational and intelligible...it is a reaction to the perception of an external danger—that is, of an injury, which is expected and foreseen. It is connected with the flight reflex and it may be regarded as a manifestation of the self-preservation instinct... The second form of anxiety...is bound psychically and attached to particular objects or situations. This is the anxiety of the extremely multifarious and often very strange 'phobias'.\footnote{42}{Ibid., pp. 441-446.}

The deflection of the libido from its usual employment is the cause of the latter form of anxiety. When the three systems of the personality work in harmony the individual is able to have satisfactory transactions/interactions with their environment. In contrast, when the individual is dissatisfied with themselves and the world, their ability to think with freedom and clarity is substantially reduced.

5.3 The attachments of the id and the ego—pleasure versus reality

Instinctual cathexes seeking discharge,—that,
in our view, is all that the id contains.


The id creates a discharge of quantities of (excitation) energy or tension that is released in the organism through stimulation by either internal or external means.\footnote{44}{Freud,\textit{ Beyond the pleasure principle}, p. 45. The ‘discharge of quantities of excitation of energy or tension’ is also the goal of \textit{Hatha Yoga} practices.} The id fulfills the primordial principle of life—‘the pleasure principle’.\footnote{45}{Ibid., p. 45.} The pleasure principle aims to rid the individual of tension. It represents the tendency found in all living organisms, when faced with external or internal disturbances, to relieve tension and return to
homeostasis (balance with the system). In *The principles of anatomy and physiology*, physiologists G. J. Tortora and B. H. Derrickson explain that homeostasis is a ‘state of relative stability of the body’s internal environment’. Fechner refers to this state as ‘the tendency to stability’.

In Freud’s words, ‘these processes strive towards gaining pleasure; psychical activity draws back from any event which might arouse unpleasure’. He claims that there is ‘a powerful tendency inherent in every living organism to restore a prior state’, a state that the organism may have been compelled to relinquish because of problematic external forces. Freud refers to this tendency as ‘a kind of organic elasticity’. This need to restore status to a prior state explains the ‘drives’ behind the ‘pleasure principle’, in other words, the pleasure one seeks may not be pleasure in its truest sense, it may well be a return to what is “comfortable” to the psyche.

Freud uses an analogy for the psyche’s desire to reach a state of resolution. He refers to Plato’s classic story of human origin as told in *Symposium*. In this tale, the world once contained androgynous beings, which were made up of double the parts of a single human. As the story goes, Zeus decided to cut these beings in half creating a longing by each half for the other and, ultimately, the desire to return to one living thing, venturing the hypothesis that because this living matter was divided it longed to reunite by way of sexual drives. Freud also connects this theory to the ancient writings of the Upanishads (800 BCE), Indian chronicles that claim that the self fell ‘into two parts’. This, along with Freud’s conjecture regarding the relief of tension (anxiety), creates interesting parallels between the East and West. Yoga emphasises a need or balance

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46 G Tortora & B Derrickson, *Principles of anatomy and physiology*, John Wiley and Sons Ltd., Danvers, Massachusetts, 2006, p. iv. Homeostasis—a medical term used to describe the body’s state of wellbeing or balance; where all the bodily functions are working in harmony (see Chapter Six).
48 "Homeostasis" is from the Greek: *homeo*, meaning unchanging, and *stasis*, meaning standing.
49 Tortora & Derrickson, p. 1.
50 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, p. 47.
52 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, p. 76. *ibid.*, p. 76.
53 *ibid.*, p. 45.
54 *ibid.*, p. 97.
56 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, p. 97.
between the male and females energies in the *bodymind* and like Freud’s theory, Yoga aims to reduce tension in an organism to achieve health and wellbeing.

Freud’s theories link one’s psychological development to the degree of dissatisfaction or discomfort experienced when tension is not discharged. For instance, the baby’s desire for food and the baby’s inability to satisfy this desire is connected to the development of the id, which results from the frustration experienced, something Freud calls the primary process.\(^58\) Freud connects this process to perception. According to Freud, when the “perception system” is activated, one takes stock of the environment through sight, sound, taste, touch, smell.\(^59\) The “memory system” stores that information in the form of a memory image.\(^60\) One’s perception system, what is experienced through the senses, creates a memory trace that represents the object of the experience as a memory image.\(^61\) This is similar to the Yogic view that a memory image is something one reproduces from a past perception.\(^62\)

When there is a need for the discharge of tension—and there is not an immediate satisfaction—the primary process attempts to reduce or discharge the tension by what Freud refers to as an ‘identity of perception’.\(^63\) This means that the actual memory image and the perception are seen as one and the same thing. In other words, ‘the id fails to distinguish between a subjective memory image and an objective perception of the real object’, as in the case of a hungry baby where the baby sucks his thumb.\(^64\) Hence, the id does not distinguish between a real object and a subjective memory image. Thus, the id identifies this with a perception of the real object, that is, food.\(^65\)

Freud also relates a need for satisfaction to the dream process. He writes: ‘The study of dreams may be regarded as the most reliable approach route for those seeking to  

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\(^{57}\) *ibid.*, p. 252. This theory can also be related back to Jung’s male and female aspects of the psyche and Yoga’s *ūdā* and *pingalā*, see Chapter 5:5.

\(^{58}\) Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, pp. 74-75.

\(^{59}\) Hall, p. 25.

\(^{60}\) Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, pp. 74-75.

\(^{61}\) *ibid*.

\(^{62}\) Feuerstein, *The Yoga tradition*, p. 72. Memory imprint is known as subliminal activators because they motivate action.

\(^{63}\) Hall, p. 25.

\(^{64}\) *ibid*.

\(^{65}\) Freud, ‘Formulations on the two principles of mental functioning’, pp. 301-302.
understand the deep-level processes of the psyche’. The primary process is at work when one dreams. Dreams help to discharge the pressure that has built up through the day through a series of images that reduce the tension, allowing the reliving of memories and events in a way that creates gratification on a psychic level. Freud refers to this image of a tension reducing object as a wish-fulfillment, and dreams, for example, are an attempt at wish-fulfillments. In other words, one may dream about the things that one wants to have or to experience, but this is not always obvious for the dreaming process uses symbols as a substitute for the original objects.

The primary process does not always fulfill the direct need or desire for the object, in which case the primary process becomes illusionary; by fantasy it allows one to imagine the fulfillment of desire. The secondary process, the formation of the ego, produces a sense of reality. Where the id is disorganised and impulsive and relates to basic instincts, the ego (which is formed from the id) is a kind of supervisor, working to oversee the id. Also, the secondary process affords recognition between internal and external fantasies, allowing the developing child to distinguish between real and imagined objects. The secondary process also creates a distinction between two or more desired objects, creating a degree of calculation within the child’s psyche and allowing for the deferment of satisfaction. Freud argues:

One might compare the relations of the ego to the id with that between a rider and his horse. The horse provides the locomotive energy, and the rider has the prerogative of determining the goal and of guiding the movements of his powerful mount towards it. But all too often in the relations between the ego and the id we find a picture of the less ideal situation in which the rider is obliged to guide his horse in the direction in which it itself wants to go.

Because the id is actually driven by the need for satisfaction or instinctual needs (which relates to the pleasure principle) it is not governed by laws of morality or reason. In fact,

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68 *ibid.*, p. 387. This is explains why lack of sleep can become a serious issue for one’s wellbeing.
69 *ibid.*, p. 181.
70 *ibid.*
71 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, p. 108.
72 *ibid.*
73 M Sharpe, *Class discussions*, Faculty of Arts and Education, School of International and Political Studies, Deakin University, 2005.
the id has two possible ways of discharging tension; it can attempt to discharge tension by wish fulfillment or by action. Or alternatively, it can bow down to the influence of the ego, in which case, the energy is subdued rather than discharged immediately. It is the job of the ego, to find a way to resolve the tension without succumbing purely to ‘innate drive impulses’.\(^75\)

The id exists in the inner world of the individual—a primordial state of being—and it exists before one’s experience of the external world.\(^76\) The id relates to reflexes and instincts that are innate.\(^77\) Undoubtedly, this was an influential component in Carl Jung’s theory of the collective unconscious.\(^78\) One could regard these inherent instincts and reflexes as the preliminary foundation for primitive archetypes of the collective unconscious, for Freud suggests that the id is subject to permanent deposits in the personality due to the repetition of intense experiences from generation to generation.\(^79\) Moreover, new deposits are made during the individual’s lifetime resulting from the mechanism of repression.\(^80\) In Freud’s Totem and taboo he argues:

> Without the assumption of a mass psyche, or a continuity in the emotional life of mankind which permits us to disregard the interruptions of psychic acts through the transgression of individuals, social psychology could not exist at all. If psychic processes of one generation did not continue in the next, if each had to acquire its attitude towards life afresh, there would be no progress in this field and almost no development.\(^81\)

Freud maintains that certain psychic dispositions are inherited.\(^82\) This possibility poses obvious threats to mental freedom, implying an inability to be free of the effects of conditionality: the past creates the interpretive filters through which one sees the world. Although Freud claims that an individual possesses a mental apparatus that allows him to interpret the reactions of others, this is sometimes distorted, whereby an individual

\(^{71}\) Freud, ‘The anatomy of the mental personality’.
\(^{72}\) Freud, Beyond the pleasure principle., p. 48.
\(^{73}\) ibid., p. 8.
\(^{74}\) ibid.
\(^{75}\) CG Jung Memories, dreams, and reflections, Collins Fount Paperbacks, 1961, p. 160. ‘Collective unconscious’ is a term used by Jung to describe an archetypal connection between all human beings on an unconscious level.
\(^{76}\) Also see section 5 of this chapter.
\(^{77}\) Freud, Beyond the pleasure principle., p. 106
\(^{79}\) ibid., p. 39. The concept is discussed in J Wiesner, ‘Emotional genetics: habitual emotional tendencies, well-being and Yoga therapy’, Australian Institute of Yoga Therapy and CAE, Melbourne, 2008. (See chapters eight and nine).
pressures themselves to the point of over-morality and self-condemnation. In such cases a tendency towards self-punishment is initiated by mere impulses: temptations one has only felt and not acted on. This issue, the influence of the past, is something both the id and the superego have in common. Within the context of this thesis, this commonality relates to two of the greatest influences on freedom: conscience and desire.

The id is the world of subjective reality in which the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain are the only things that count. Following this premise, when one acts impulsively one is, in fact, being dominated by the id. Freud argues:

In popular language, we may say that the ego stands for reason and circumspection, while the id stands for the untamed passions.

By Freud’s analysis of the human condition, particularly in relation to the id, psychological freedom is difficult. Any attempt to ascertain if mental freedom is possible, requires a discussion of the formation of the ego. Freud writes:

I have evolved the notion of a coherent organization of the psychic processes present within each individual and I call this organization their ego.

Where the id certainly accentuates desire it does nothing practical to gain the desired object. It works on creating a demand and fulfilling that demand with a substitute—a memory image. Yet the individual must learn to survive in the world, to negotiate life and find an on-going way to discharge tension and reduce the anxiety caused by tension. Existence, itself, dictates the need for a degree of compromise, a compromise between the individual and the world—between intentionality and extensionality—and it is this need for compromise that necessitates a new formation in the psychological system, thus the development of the ego as the mediator. The ego is described by Freud as ‘the arbiter that controls all the psyche’s constituent processes’. Freud states:

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84 ibid., p. 212.
86 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, p. 100.
87 S Freud, ‘The anatomy of the mental personality’.
88 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, p. 108.
89 ibid., p. 108.
I have come to appreciate that the ego is particularly subject to the influence of perception, and that in broad terms one can say that perceptions have the same significance for the ego that drives have for the id. At the same time, however, the ego is also susceptible to the influence of drives, just like the id — of which, of course, it is but part, albeit a specially modified one.\textsuperscript{90}

According to Freud, in the case of a well-adjusted person the ego is the controlling element of the personality. In other words, the ego drives the id and to some extent the superego, nonetheless Freud maintains that ‘the ego is also susceptible to the influence of drives’.\textsuperscript{91} In a way, one could refer to the ego as a diplomat between the internal and external world: it maintains a positive communication line between the interests of the total personality and the personality’s ability to exist in the external world in a satisfactory manner.\textsuperscript{92}

Freud claims that the ‘ego represents what may be called reason and calm consideration, in contrast to the id, which harbours the passions’.\textsuperscript{93} One could refer to the ego as the ‘executive’ of the personality.\textsuperscript{94} Harmony and adjustment are evident when the ego is performing its executive functions well.\textsuperscript{95} As previously discussed, the ego develops out of the id and is governed by what is called the reality principle.\textsuperscript{96} The reality principle relates to what actually exists, and it aims to postpone the discharge of energy or tension by creating a plan that enables a viable answer for the problem at hand. Without the reality principle, order would not be possible. It is the reality principle that stops one from eating inedible objects when one is starving: it postpones eating until something eatable is found. Clearly, the ego is the more discerning part of the personality. Freud writes:

There is no doubt…that displacement of the pleasure principle by the reality principle can be held responsible for only a very few experiences of unpleasure, and for none whatever of the most intense ones.\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{90} ibid., p. 130.
\textsuperscript{91} ibid.
\textsuperscript{92} ibid., p. 116.
\textsuperscript{93} ibid.
\textsuperscript{94} Hall, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{95} When the id or the superego overwhelms the ego, and the ego surrenders its control, maladjustment and disharmony inevitably occur.
\textsuperscript{96} Freud, Beyond the pleasure principle., p. 75.
\textsuperscript{97} ibid., p. 48.
In some Eastern theories an interpretation of the word “ego” relates more to narcissism than mediation. To Freud, narcissistic tendencies have to do with ‘self-preservation drives’.98 The ego is a rational faculty, since it discriminates and therefore is more concerned with practicalities.99 Freud claims:

The ego endeavours to bring the influence exerted by the external world fully to bear on the id and its designs, and makes every effort to substitute the reality principle for the pleasure principle that reigns supreme within the id.100

In essence, if the reality principle or the ego is in power it means that there has been a suspension of the demands of the id in the interest of reality.101 The reality principle does not set out to depose the pleasure principle but instead, to safe-guard it.102 Freud argues that the primary process creates a desire or picture of the object of need, whereas the function of the ego introduces a secondary process which realistically creates a plan to acquire the object of satisfaction.103 The secondary process is a problem solving state, the process whereby one can plan how to get what one wants. It is able to separate the subjective nature of the desire from the object, or from the objective world (physical reality). In *Freud along the Ganges*, psychoanalyst Salmon Akhtar writes:

The conscious aspect of the ego is the “executive organ” of the psyche, responsible for the integration of perceptual data and decision making. The unconscious aspect of the ego contains mechanisms, such as repression, which are necessary to counteract the powerful drives of the id.104

It seems plausible that the successful development of the secondary process results in a more discerning, aware and effective individual and provides a way to master impulses. Freud’s theories suggest that one has certain potentialities for reasoning and thinking that are inherent or inborn. Individuals are actually able to realise these potentialities through a process of maturation: experience, education and training. Education, if based on truth and reason, helps one to be an effective thinker.105 Hence, to be able to think

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98 ibid., p. 91. Often to society’s detriment altruism is overshadowed by the desire for power.
100 ibid.
101 ibid., ‘Formulations on the two principles of mental functioning’, pp. 301-302.
102 ibid.
103 ibid.
105 ibid.
effectively means that one is able to recognise the truth. Therefore, when looking for a link between mental freedom and Freud’s theories it is most likely found in the premise of the ego state: in one’s ability to recognise the truth: one’s capacity to see what could be called objective reality rather than subjective reality. Nevertheless to establish some kind of objective reality, common sense indicates a need for freedom from the constraints of guilt, or at least some kind of reconciliation regarding the reason for one’s guilt. Thus this investigation comes to the next step in Freud’s theory, the superego.

5.4 The superego—an attachment of origin

*The superego’s differentiation from the ego was by no means a chance event: it reflects the most significant developmental features of both the individual and the species; indeed, by giving lasting expression to the influence of the parents, it perpetuates the existence of the factors to which it owes its origins*  

*Sigmund Freud*  

Freud’s third system of the personality, the superego, is the realm where moral judgements are made. Therefore, one could refer to the superego as the home for a person’s moral code. The superego develops from the ego and is a result of the child’s assimilation of parental directives and judgements. It evolves from one’s interpretation of what one’s parents believe to be good or bad, the standards or principles they demonstrated. According to Freud, ‘religion, morality and a social sense’ are ‘acquired phylogenetically’. In other words, one’s principles and values are a part of one’s psychic evolution and filter one’s view of the world. This is significant when analysing the possibility of freedom, for it calls to question one’s ability to perceive objectively given that the foundations of one’s psyche are created experientially—the child within is always present.

In most cases, a child is under parental guidance or supervision for quite some time. As the personality develops a child begins to replace the parental authority of the external

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106 ibid. Freud defines the truth as ‘that which exists’, proposing science as a reference for the truth.  
107 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*., p.125.  
108 ibid., p. 124.
world with their own internal authority and it is this process that creates the superego. The superego has two aspects called the ego-ideal and the conscience. The development of the superego is also affected by the pleasure principle because the child seeks to create pleasure by developing an internal gauge that supports the approval of their parental influence. This internal gauge allows the child to avoid the displeasure of the parents albeit the internal representation of the parents. The ego-ideal reflects the virtues of the parents. What the child adopts through the ego-ideal corresponds with what the parents consider to be morally good. For instance, if the child is rewarded in some way, the reward gained by the child becomes an ego-ideal.

In contrast, the conscience aspect of the superego relates more to the disapproval of the parents—what is considered morally bad: whatever experiences result in punishment. Thus if a child was punished for a particular act, they would then consider that act to be morally bad. Naturally, this may cause disturbing behaviour when the child is punished for something that is not usually, or reasonably, thought of as morally bad. For instance, if the child was severely punished for just holding hands with another child then, in the extreme, he may come to view all physical contact as morally bad. Freud explains it this way:

The normal, conscious, type of guilt feeling (conscience) is easily understood: it has its basis in the tension between the ego and the ego-ideal; it is the manifestation of the fact that the ego has been condemned in some particular respect by the critical entity within it. The feelings of inferiority that are so familiar in neurotics are probably not very far removed from this.

When it comes to the formation of the child’s superego, there are two kinds of reward and punishment, psychological or physical. In respect to the psychological, this may relate to withholding approval or in the child’s mind the withdrawal of love. For example, one may point to the disapproval of the parent, or the emotional rejection of

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109 ibid., p. 127.
110 ibid., p. 124-143.
111 ibid.
112 ibid.
113 ibid.
114 ibid.
115 ibid.
116 ibid., p. 140.
117 In Chapter 3.1, participant 0029 provides an example of this.
the child by the parent through words or facial expressions. With regard to the physical, this may be demonstrated by an actual spanking or by taking away the things that the child might want (deprivation, acts of denial or aggressiveness). Freud claims:

As each child grows up, the role of the father is taken over by teachers and other authority figures, whose commandments and prohibitions remain powerfully alive in the ego-ideal—and in due course exercise moral censorship in the guise of the conscience.

For Freud, a person desires the approval of their parents because they believe that their parents are responsible for providing for their needs. The desire to have their parent’s approval is linked to their own need to survive. This relates to the modification of the pleasure principle by the reality principle in the attainment of survival needs, such as food, shelter, warmth. Parents direct their reward or punishment by either withholding their approval or being demonstrative in their behaviour and expressing their approval. Such punishments or rewards are situations that can either result in the reduction of tension or the increase of tension in the psychological system.

The superego creates a system of reward and punishment upon the ego. In a way, the superego resembles the id because it does not make a distinction between what is subjective or objective. A thought is the same as a deed to the superego. A person who leads a very virtuous life may still be punished by the superego just for the occasional “bad” (taboo) thought. Freud writes:

Helplessly besieged on two fronts, the ego battles in vain against the demands of the murderous id on one hand, and the reproaches of its punitive conscience on the other.

118 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, pp. 124-143. It may also be suggested by the child’s interpretation of the situation as discussed by participant 0022 in Chapter 3.1.
119 Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, pp. 124-143.
120 *ibid.*, p. 127.
121 *ibid.*
122 *ibid.*
123 *ibid.*
124 *ibid.*
125 *ibid.*
126 *ibid.*, p. 31.
127 *ibid.*, p. 143.
Freud suggests a large degree of the misfortune that one experiences in life is due to the punishing nature of the superego. This idea is linked to Freud’s concept that there are no accidents, that everything that happens to a person, supposedly accidentally, is really a manifested punishment by the conscience, the superego. According to Freud, parapraxes and chance actions have this in common.¹²⁸ He claims:

The phenomena can be traced back to incompletely suppressed psychical material, which although pushed away by consciousness, has nevertheless not been robbed of all capacity for expressing itself.¹²⁹

This point in itself shows a strong connection between Freud’s views and that of Eastern philosophy; both claim that what is psychical will eventually manifest on a material level one way or another, what one believes one deserves will become reality (such as evident in the notion of karma). To Freud, even the loss of an object, misplacing something, relates to an unconscious desire for punishment. Nevertheless, although Freud relates misfortune itself to a form of self-punishment, he emphasises that the person involved is not aware of the guilt experienced by the conscience, therefore when they have an accident or some kind of misfortune it is not a deliberate act on their part.

On a psychological level rewards and punishments are manifested by the superego. In the case of rewards there may be feelings of pride and esteem and in the case of punishment there may be feelings of guilt or inferiority.¹³⁰ Freud equates pride and esteem with self-love, relating guilt and inferiority with self-hate.¹³¹ The way children react to other authority figures depends on what they have assimilated from their parents.¹³² With this in mind, perhaps psychological freedom relates to how one interprets the messages received and dispersed by the developing conscience, particularly in relation to punishment. Figuratively, the conscience strives to protect one from unsociable behaviour by creating moral codes and ethical gauges. Obviously, the

¹²⁸ Parapraxes’ is a term Freud uses for errors, slips of the tongue, forgetting, bungled actions, mishearing, slips of the pen, or mislaying.
¹²⁹ Freud, Introductory lectures on psychoanalysis, p. 76.
¹³⁰ Freud, Beyond the pleasure principle., p. 124-143. This is expressed by participant 0008 when he discusses his strict upbringing and its effect on his adult life (refer Chapter 6.1). He writes, “If I had a conversion now with my parents I have to control myself because it brings back emotions.” He continues in relation to early adult life: “I felt like an outsider.”
¹³¹ ibid.
¹³² ibid.
superego’s conscience is a valuable tool for creating stability in society, restraining the individual. However, it could also be said that the corruption of the conscience is at the root of conditionality, and eventually this has a destructive influence on society. The self-imposed punishment one instigates towards oneself for breaching self-imposed moral boundaries comes from a system of internalised arbitration borne from societal issues of taboos. In other words, one’s *interpretation* of evil may result in a corrupted psyche. Freud claims that a sense of guilt is ‘the most important problem in the development of civilization’. He writes:

I often speak of a ‘consciousness of guilt’ instead of a ‘sense of guilt’… the sense of guilt forces itself stridently on the consciousness, dominating both the clinical picture and the patient’s life, and allowing hardly anything else to appear beside it …I speak of an unconscious need for punishment, in which the sense of guilt expresses itself.\(^\text{133}\)

In short, the conscience has the power to manifest a form of unconscious, guilt-induced punishment, and from an Eastern perspective, this may lead to a state of conditionality or emotional bondage. The psychic energy used in the expression of an emotion, such as aggression, is dispersed from the id and appears in the superego in the form of guilt.\(^\text{134}\) Freud claims that how a person relates to others and how this relationship is reciprocated is crucial to one’s development.\(^\text{135}\) He argues that in infancy human beings are fully dependent on others to satisfy their needs, and that this desire for satisfaction initially drives one to learn to communicate with others, so that one has a way of impressing one’s needs upon others.\(^\text{136}\) Freud’s Oedipus complex arises out of the infant’s desire to be everything, be all important, to their care-giver.\(^\text{137}\) But unfortunately the guilt associated with this desire, a desire which the infant learns to consider illicit or immoral, can create conflict between the ego and the libido. It is this sense of guilt that causes conflict between a child’s sense of morality and their wishes.\(^\text{138}\) Faced with this guilt the child then buries these supposedly “sinful” thoughts

\(^{133}\) Freud, *Civilization and its discontents.* p. 72.

\(^{134}\) *Ibid.* Again, this is demonstrated by participant 0022 when she discusses the guilt she experienced as a child in relation to her adoption and the subsequent effects of this guilt in later years. She writes, “I am a contradiction … I have great empathy and compassion but then I can be quite hard and critical … then I feel guilty."

\(^{135}\) *Ibid.*


\(^{137}\) *Ibid.*

in their unconscious.\textsuperscript{139} To Freud what is 'unconscious in mental life is also what is infantile.'\textsuperscript{140}

Freud substantiates his claims by emphasising the fact that human beings adopt their individual sense of morality from society's influence.\textsuperscript{141} As one grows up one’s 'superego' or parent ego directs one to act within the boundaries of morality set up by one’s own beliefs. Freud argues that:

There can be no doubt that the Oedipus complex may be looked upon as one of the most important sources of the sense of guilt by which neurotics are so often tormented.\textsuperscript{142}

As I previously discussed, the repression of these unsatisfied taboo desires, into the unconscious, causes neurosis.\textsuperscript{143} Neurotic symptoms develop when the individual experiences an internal conflict between desire and conscience.\textsuperscript{144} For social survival there is a need to regulate one’s impulses. But in many ways the corruption of the conscience (superego) is responsible for the extent of an individual’s anti-social behaviour. For instance, when a distorted sense of guilt is manifested from the conscience state, such as the case where the child is punished for holding hands with another child, the child may grow up to think of themselves or their actions as evil. They may be physically or emotionally impotent, or, alternatively, they may try to achieve physical contact in any way possible (even violently) because of the internal conflict imposed by the distorted belief of the conscience. Freud’s analysis of the human personality demonstrates how hard it is to experience a sense of freedom when the unconscious mind is poised to punish.

The id, the ego and the superego are interactive components of the total personality, with different processes or functions designated to each system.\textsuperscript{145} This hermeneutical approach suggests that in a healthy or well-adjusted individual, the personality is

\textsuperscript{139} ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} ibid. Given the focus of this research there is limited space for indepth discussion of the Oedipus complex. In basic terms, this theory presents the idea that every individual is subject to the remnants of their sexual development as reflected by a placement of sexual objectification on the parent of the opposite sex (named after Sophocles' story of Oedipus).
\textsuperscript{141} ibid.
\textsuperscript{142} ibid.
\textsuperscript{143} ibid., p. 375.
\textsuperscript{144} ibid.
integrated as a whole and is not absorbed by one process.\textsuperscript{146} Eastern philosophy also advocates an integrative process, an integration of the mind, body and spirit. Philosopher and theologest Padmasiri de Silva argues in \textit{Buddhist and Freudian psychology} that Freud’s work and the \textit{Pāli} texts of early Buddhism, demonstrate a spirit of humanism.\textsuperscript{147} De Silva claims that the Buddha and Freud both understood the cause of human suffering. Although the terminology used by these two theorists is vastly different, the humanistic characteristics of their philosophies are deeply evident: they offer a prescription for ‘what ails us’.\textsuperscript{148} However, Akhtar argues that Freud’s notion of self ‘eschews any form of spiritual transcendentalism’, proposing that Freud’s prescription is more practical and less spiritual.\textsuperscript{149}

Buddhism highlights one’s ability to ‘control the forces at work within’ through ‘the law of dependent origination’: that is, the ability of a person to control the dynamic forces of the past and present and make the future different from what it would otherwise be.\textsuperscript{150} The law of dependent origination allows the individual (practitioner) to be ‘master of his own fate’, and as such mirrors apperception, for to master one’s own fate one must first master one’s thoughts.\textsuperscript{151} De Silva claims that Freud’s therapy parallels Buddhism in that it ‘is based on the assumption that man can acquire the means to cope with his problems rationally’.\textsuperscript{152} The Buddha taught that the ‘psychological and even the social conflicts of man are expressions of the in-built features of the human predicament’.\textsuperscript{153} Furthermore, the idea of \textit{duḥkha} (suffering) indicates that ‘such conflicts and anxieties are universal, and found in everyone in different degrees’.\textsuperscript{154}

The Buddha, Patañjali and Freud advocate that the human predicament is centred on the conflict between pleasure and pain. Human history demonstrates the struggle between individual needs and the needs of the collective. Buddha claims this struggle is won by ‘the middle way’: finding the balance between the material and the spiritual, which is

\textsuperscript{145} ibid.
\textsuperscript{146} Akhtar, p.363.
\textsuperscript{147} P de Silva, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{148} ibid.
\textsuperscript{149} Akhtar, p.363.
\textsuperscript{150} De Silva, p. 3. This represents the opposite of conditionality.
\textsuperscript{151} ibid.
\textsuperscript{152} ibid.
\textsuperscript{153} ibid., p. 171.
\textsuperscript{154} ibid.

Freud has a tragic view of civilization. On the one hand, much individual and social neurosis and misery derives from the creation of civilization, which requires renunciation of so many of our fundamental drives. The normal civilized person is neurotic—Freud’s psychoanalysis is therefore politics. On the other hand, primitive life without civilization would be, as Hobbes put it, nasty, brutish, and short, even though many of our basic drives would not need to be repressed. In Stoic fashion Freud wanted to deconstruct illusion and live in reality.

As Kirsner points out, for Freud, society is destined to be psychically imprisoned by the traces of its cultural childhood. Kirsner quotes Freud’s famous argument during World War I:

Our mortification and our painful disillusionment on account of the uncivilized behavior of our fellow citizens of the world...were unjustified. They were based on an illusion...In reality our fellow-citizens have not sunk so low as we feared because they had never risen so high as we believed.

Yoga claims: ‘as the mind, so is the man’. Freud’s philosophy of life recognises the inner battle of the human mind. His outlook is bleak when it comes to freedom—suggesting that an individual is almost powerless against the pull of the drives. In contrast, Yoga claims that transformation is possible. Yet Freud would most likely view this transformation as ‘sublimation’: he writes: ‘we can perform valued tasks such as artistic creation and intellectual inquiry—the subservience of the pleasure principle to the demands of reality’. Kirsner writes:

[Freud’s] much criticized concept of sublimation is to do with the giving up of pleasure for long-term benefits.

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157 ibid.
158 ibid.
161 ibid.
Freud proposes that ‘our mutual hostility constantly threatens our civilization with disintegration’.\textsuperscript{162} Yoga would argue that this tendency towards disintegration is a product of the kleśas—overwhelming the individual with fear and ignorance. Kleśas produce latent tendencies and just as in a seed germinating the vṛttis become perpetual (conditionality).\textsuperscript{163}

These Eastern and Western correlations discussed imply that the desire for survival and a need for protection is something inherent in being human. As Kirsner notes, Freud’s notion of the death drive ‘vitiates the possibility of a harmonious cultured human unity’, emphasising that the ‘history of civilization is the struggle between Eros and Thanatos, between the life and death drives’.\textsuperscript{164} One could use Yoga’s concept of the Guru as a metaphor for Freud’s death and life drives respectively: the dark and the light (the light is the destroyer of darkness).\textsuperscript{165} One could equate Thanatos to the darkness of duḥkha (suffering); suggesting that mokṣa (liberation) reflects the light of Eros: life.\textsuperscript{166} Chapple explains in Yoga and the luminous that ‘themes of light and luminosity pervade’ the Yoga-Sūtras,\textsuperscript{167} proposing the ‘shining forth’ of ‘witness consciousness’,\textsuperscript{168} which he admits is generally associated with the cessation of active engagement in the world.\textsuperscript{169} Such lightness is a far cry from civilisation’s current reality. One could argue that because of technological advancement, many of us are more engaged in the world than ever before, yet critics might argue that technology has also served to alienate the individual from a deeper understand of the self.

Kirsner notes that for Freud, civilization is, at best, a compromise.\textsuperscript{170} And, like the REBT model, frustration is a side-effect of this compromise.\textsuperscript{171} Frustrations, according to Freud, that develop from suppressing sexual instincts and internalising one’s

\textsuperscript{162} ibid.
\textsuperscript{164} Kirsner, pp. 354–366.
\textsuperscript{166} In Yogic terms this notion of life is more than existing, it is living as one is meant to live: in the light (illuminated by awareness).
\textsuperscript{167} CK Chapple, Yoga and the luminous: Patañjali spiritual path to freedom, State University of New York Press, Albany, 2008, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{168} ibid., p. 72.
\textsuperscript{169} ibid.
\textsuperscript{170} Kirsner, pp. 354–366.
\textsuperscript{171} ibid.
tendencies towards aggression as guilt (superego). Kirsner proposes that Freud’s theories reflect an ethical approach, similar to Stoicism, advocating that one’s maturity and mental health relate to the ability to address reality and think rationally. Like Yoga’s theory of the klešas, the centrality of the passions and their struggle with reason is also common to Freud and the Greeks. Apperception is Yoga’s self-applied psychotherapy: its vehicle for reason. Ultimately, this is where Freud and Yoga unite: in the belief that emotions must be guided by the mind.

In a way Freud’s Stoic approach, that of ‘not being dominated by emotion’, lends itself towards the Yogic view that one can control manas through the wisdom of buddhi. The Stoic mind is clear, logical and unbiased. Kirsner writes further of the Stoic philosophy:

> Pursuing the truth was seen as a major virtue without the distraction of anguish and suffering which stood in the way of clear and sound judgment. Although detachment from the passions was prerequisite, this did not preclude suffering from being an intrinsic part of life. Nonetheless, it meant that it did not rule life.

There are obvious parallels between Stoicism and Yogic philosophy, in particular the Buddhist notion of suffering as something that can be overcome if the right path or action is taken. Kirsner writes:

> Reason, logic, and values thus merged for the stoics—objectivity was central to being able to be in control of one’s suffering instead of vice versa.

Common to all of these theorists is the value of the reason in leading the way to freedom, although the word “reason” has slightly different meanings to each theory (and freedom is not word they would necessarily use). Reason signifies the power of thought.

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172 ibid.
173 ibid. This is not dissimilar to the Yogic view, albeit the notion of what is reality, which would be fuel for debate.
175 ibid.
176 ibid.
177 ibid.
178 Buddhism’s Eight-fold Path is: 1) right view, 2) right intention or thought, 3) right speech, 4) right action, 5) right livelihood, 6) right effort, 7) right concentration samādhi and 8) right mindfulness.
in transforming a human being’s psyche to an instrument of hope for the future. Kirsner explains thus:

[Freud] regarded “our best hope for the future” as lying in the intellect or reason being able to establish in time “a dictatorship in the mental life of man.” Freud postulated the crucial role for “such a domain of reason” that it would prove “the strongest uniting bond among men and lead the way to further unions”.  

Akhtar discusses Winnicott’s theory regarding the false and the true self, explaining that the false self develops from the child’s over adaptation to parental and environmental influences.  

The child ‘sacrifices his true self to adapt to external demands or environmental failures.’ Accordingly, one sees the ‘tragedy of the individual who cannot successfully live up to his parents’ expectations, respond to teacher’s demands, or do what his friends expect him to do’. Referring to the Japanese term ‘tsukuri-warai’ which means ‘a staged or a forced smile’, Akhtar proposes that ‘the secrets of the heart are handled as an event that took place in the “backstage” of life’, where true feelings are hidden.

5.5 The unification of male and female energy

One isn’t born one’s self. One is born with a mass of expectations, a mass of other people’s ideas —and you have to work through it all.

V.S. Naipaul

Swiss psychotherapist Carl Jung expanded on Freud’s concepts, adding another dimension to Freud’s theory of the personality. Jung’s ideas emphasise the presence of male and the female elements in respect to the unconscious. He calls these counterparts the anima and the animus: the anima representing the female element of

180 ibid.
181 S Akhtar, Freud and the Far East, Jason Aronson, Landam, Maryland, 2009, p. 93.
182 ibid.
183 ibid.
184 ibid.
186 I do not intend to provide a comprehensive explanation of Carl G. Jung’s theories.
the male unconscious and the animus representing the male element of the female unconscious. Jung claims that these two elements of the psyche are balanced in a healthy individual. This integration of the male and female psyche is reflected in Yogic physiology through energy channels [nāḍīs], in particular idā and pingalā (two of the three primary nāḍīs: this will be discussed further in Chapter Eight). In *The Lord who is half woman: ardhanārīśvara in Indian and feminist perspective*, philosopher and theologian Ellen Goldberg describes it thus:

The metaphysical symbol of a bipolar god/dess, and the absolute assimilation and unity between male and female principles, conveys the normative Śaiva understanding of the ultimate reality, as well as the essence of the inner self.

In contrast to my thesis, Goldberg’s research is approached from a more cultural perspective. Nonetheless, the symbolism is reflective of a simple unity or balance between the two poles of human life: male and female. Where Jungian theory relates these male and female counterparts to elements of the psyche, Yoga relates them to the subtle body. The left side of the body is a representation of the female (idā) that is, passive, cool energy (moon), and the right side of the body is a representation of the male (pingalā) that is, active, hot energy (sun). This current of life-force corresponds to the autonomic nervous system on a physical level: restoring the body to homeostasis in the event of a nervous disturbance. Balance between the male and the female is imperative to the quality of human life (wellbeing), hence one’s mental freedom, as an important part of wellbeing, is vitally linked to the free flow of energy in the subtle body. Wilhelm Reich, for instance, was acutely aware of the impact of the autonomic nervous system on both the body and the mind, and his theories are heavily based on his understanding of homeostasis (see section 5.6 for more on Reich).

Yoga’s freedom is inherently linked to the cessation of the cycle of conditionality—liberation from past conditioning. Likewise, in psychoanalysis the past plays a pivotal

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188 Also see chapters eight and nine, the glossary for more details.
190 Tortora & Derrickson, p. 1.
191 It is important to note that bandhas, which are a process of yoga that is based on creating energy locks in the body, is primarily aimed at freeing the flow of energy by bringing the energy to the area of focus in
role in a human being’s present-day wellbeing. Both Freud and Jung recognise the significance of what is repressed. Yet this concept of the past is taken another step further through the idea of Jung’s ‘collective unconscious’.

Jung’s collective unconscious reflects the associations and images from the past that are ‘an integral part of the unconscious, and can be observed everywhere’. According to Jung this is something that Freud calls ‘archaic remnants’, that is, ‘psychic elements surviving in the human mind from ages long ago’. Jung disputes this and suggests that Freud’s notion of archaic remnants present the unconscious as a ‘trash can that collects all the refuse of the conscious mind’. Jung argues that Freud’s notion infers that these remnants are ‘lifeless or meaningless’, whereas Jung considers them as a bridge between one’s current form of expression and more primitive and more colourful, pictorial forms of expression. Jung claims that these ‘historical associations are the link between the rational world of consciousness and the world of instinct’.

Jung discusses the contrast between the ‘controlled thoughts’ one has in waking life and ‘the wealth of imagery produced in dreams’. Like Freud, Jung recognises that concepts that take shape in the conscious mind have a corresponding unconscious association and these associations vary in intensity and in complexity and are not always obvious, such as the symbolism of dreams. Both Freud and Jung consider the world of dreams to be a window to the unconscious. Jung claims that ‘dream language’ is the product of psychic energy, describing dream language as picturesque and vivid because it is unrestrained by the rational limitations of the conscious mind. Jung suggests the main function of a dream is an attempt to restore psychological balance, and that one’s dream material re-establishes, very subtly, ‘total psychic equilibrium’.

Yoga works to achieve this kind of equilibrium using practical techniques such as meditation. Meditation offers relief from the unresolved tensions of the unconscious

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193 ibid.
194 ibid.
195 ibid.
196 ibid.
197 ibid.
198 ibid.
199 ibid., p. 29.
200 ibid., pp. 33 & 29.
mind, the same tensions that unwind through the dream process. Jung refers to the subliminal aspects of the unconscious mind as ‘almost the invisible roots of our conscious thoughts’, adding that ‘commonplace objects or ideas can assume such powerful psychic significance in a dream’. Yoga recognises these invisible roots of conscious thought, suggesting that subliminal imprints are often carried from the past into the present through the process of karma. Although karma could be referred to as a deterministic force—paying for the sins of the past so to speak: in reality it is a changeable force, a malleable process of cause and effect. Yoga maintains that through the wisdom of the present (buddhi) one can dissolve the tendency to repeat the past.

5.6 Muscular armour—the physical attachment of emotion

In his book Character analysis, Austrian psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich explains certain concepts that reflect Yoga’s mind-body connection. Reich’s ‘dynamic-economic conception of the character’ is based on his theory of ‘orgone energy’, or the theory of orgonomy previously referred to as vegetotherapy. Reich describes orgone energy as a ‘universal primordial energy’. According to Reich, the orgone energy field exists beyond the skin surface of the organism, which is something one might relate to an aura. Reich explains that, when it comes to wellbeing, the function of ‘orgone energy is seen in bions, blood cells and at the field meter’. On a more universal scale orgone energy is life-energy or life-force itself, something akin to chi or prāṇa. Similar to

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201 ibid., p. 34.
202 ibid., p. 49. In psychoanalysis these tensions are linked to anxiety and neurosis.
203 Jung, Man and his symbols, p. 29.
204 See Chapter One.
205 W Reich, Character analysis, translated by V R Carfagno, edited by M Higgins and CM Raphae, MD, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1990, p. 48. I do not intend to provide a comprehensive explanation of Wilhelm Reich’s theories. It is also important to acknowledge that much of Reich’s work was devoted to the biopathy of cancer—due to word-economics, this is not discussed within the context of this thesis.
206 ibid., pp. xxiv & xii.
207 ibid., p. xiii.
208 ibid., p. 471.
209 W Reich, Selected writings: an introduction to orgonomy, trans. D Huth, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1961, pp. 187 & 199. Reich’s theories developed from experiments carried out on bions over a period of approximately 10 years. According to Reich, ‘bions are forms of transition from inorganic to organic matter; they can develop into organized living forms such as protozoa (micro-organisms), cancer cells, etc. They are vesicles filled with fluid and charged with energy’. Hence, a bion is an energy vesicle.
these Eastern approaches to life-force, Reich explains orgone as a cosmic energy source that is present in all organisms; it is this energy flow that determines the health of the organism.

Reich’s character analysis was initially developed as a psychiatric aid to understanding the ‘bio-energetic core of emotional function’.\textsuperscript{212} He maintains that:

\begin{quote}
The psychoanalytic arrangement of the mental functions...ego, the superego, and the id has to be sharply distinguished from the biophysical arrangement of the functions of the total organism according to the functional realms of \textit{bio-energetic core} (plasma system), \textit{periphery} (skin surface), and \textit{orgone energy field} beyond the body surface.\textsuperscript{213}
\end{quote}

To Reich, this theory of biophysics is an extension of psychoanalytic theory, something grown from psychoanalysis and developed into the theory of an integrative bio-system.\textsuperscript{214} Reich explains thus:

\begin{quote}
There is only \textit{one} meeting point of the two theoretical schemata, i.e., the “id” of psychoanalytic theory, where the realm of psychology ends and that of biophysics \textit{beyond} psychology begins.\textsuperscript{215}
\end{quote}

According to Reich, emotions are the ‘manifestations of a tangible bio-energy, of the organismic orgone energy’.\textsuperscript{216} Reich links this energetic system to sexuality, claiming that the streaming of pleasure (sexual orgasm), or the lack of this streaming, serve as releasing or inhibiting factors in the flow of orgone energy.\textsuperscript{217} He writes:

\begin{quote}
The bio-energetic system continues to increase in energy unless periodic releases of energy take place. And the only way of \textit{full} release of built-up bio-energy is, as we well know, that of full orgastic convulsions during the natural process of mating.\textsuperscript{218}
\end{quote}

Because Reich’s theory associates the release of this energy with the orgasmic process, his research raised issues that the value-system of the time (circa 1940s-60s) could not

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{211} Reich, \textit{Character analysis}, p. 536. \textit{Prāṇa} will be discussed further in Chapter Eight.
\textsuperscript{212} \textit{ibid.}, p. xi.
\textsuperscript{213} \textit{ibid.}, p. 403.
\textsuperscript{214} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{215} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{216} \textit{ibid.}, p. xi.
\textsuperscript{217} \textit{ibid.}, p. 409.
\textsuperscript{218} \textit{ibid.}, p. 471.
\end{footnotes}
easily accept. Yoga argues that this release can also be achieved through the resolution of unconscious activators through meditative processes, and/or through the free flow of energy created by Hatha Yoga practice.219

Reich’s character armour might be best explained as a physical build up of emotions manifesting in the organism as a state of muscular tension. Reich explains thus:

It is not a matter of “muscles” or of “breathing” or “tension,” but it is a matter of understanding how cosmic orgone energy came to form plasmatic moving substance, and how cosmic orgonomic functions are present and active in the human animal, in his emotions, in his thinking, in his irrationalism, in his innermost experience of himself.220

Muscle tension, breathing difficulties and other manifestations of tension are the result of the stagnation in this vital energy source, and ‘respiration, breaking of muscular blocks, resolution of rigid character armor are tools in this process of reintegration of the organism’. 221

According to Reich, a restriction of breath, the inability to expand and retract the breath with full vigour, produces an energy blockage.222 Muscular armour arises as a type of physical defence mechanism: manifesting unconsciously in response to strong emotional reactions.223 Reich’s techniques include helping the individual to be able to stream the flow of biological energy, releasing the emotion responsible for the armouring.224 Muscular armour is created by a blockage of energy that bio-physically anchors the individual to a historical experience (a past emotional upheaval).225 This energy is restricted and unable to move in the armoured domain. Reich refers to this as ‘stalemated or immobilized life energy’.226

219 Discussions regarding Yogic physiology and the information contained in this section draws upon the teachings of the Australian Institute of Yoga and the curriculum of the Advanced Diploma of Yoga Teaching and the Graduate Certificate in Yoga Therapy (AIY and CAE). See Chapter 8.4 for a more detailed explanation of the principles of Hatha Yoga practice.
220 Reich, Character analysis, p. 447.
221 ibid.
222 ibid., p. 409.
223 ibid.
224 ibid.
225 ibid., p. 446.
226 ibid., p. 455.
5.7 Orgone and prāṇa

The parallels between Reich’s orgone and Yoga’s prāṇa are obvious. Yoga works to release the flow of this life-force/energy keeping it moving so that tension does not intensify to such a point that it results in illness or dis-ease. Yoga is the ‘harmonious integration of mind, body and spirit’, thus it recommends controlled breathing, meditation and physical practices to dissolve tension: working with the circulation of oxygen, bloodflow and the subtle energies of the bio-system.²²⁷

For Reich, emotional release is complex as there is often a more superficial emotion fighting off a deeper emotion, hence the therapist must work through these emotions; separating them.²²⁸ Reich provides the example of sorrow blocking rage. In this instance, he suggests that to release the rage the therapist needs to encourage the patient to cry. One might do this by encouraging the patient to hit a couch.²²⁹ Reich warns of the danger of using such techniques, as it is imperative that the actions are ceased at the moment of emotional release and not allowed to get out of control.²³⁰ Reich maintains that the release of these armouring emotions allows a positive change in both the emotional and the physical state of the patient.²³¹

The basic premise of freeing the flow of life energy within the bodymind is a concept that is important to wellbeing. Reich suggests that the human species must aim to soften armoured character structures: and understand ‘the existence of a Life Energy’.²³² This concept of energy-flow and its relationship to the emotions, and to dis-ease, provide a compelling argument in respect to a negation of freedom, especially considering the side-effect of tension produced by Yoga’s kleśas (this tension is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight).

Freud, Jung and Reich’s theories provide significant insights into the unconscious and its influence on wellbeing. Jung connects inherited characteristics to the myths that

²²⁸ Reich, Character analysis, p. 446.
²²⁹ ibid.
²³⁰ ibid., p. 409. A Yoga therapist might use strong asana work to act as an initial release mechanism for such emotions: breathing techniques may also be used (with caution, as breathing conditions such as asthma may be aggravated by emotional response).
²³¹ ibid.
²³² ibid., p. 536.
shadow one’s sense of self. Reich’s proposes that a person develops character armour to mask or stifle their fears, whereas Freud suggests that the individual has a tendency to repress, subliminate or disguise their fears.

Reich openly declares his strong political, ethical and philosophical values, many of which were met, at the time, with staunch criticism. An example of one of Reich’s polemical views is reflected by his reference to humanity, in general terms, as ‘homo normalis’,233 shedding a disparaging light on what he terms ‘normal’ human beings, casting them as limited in vision, lacking understanding and oblivious to their own evasive natures. In fact, from years of working with schizophrenics, Reich concludes that the schizophrenic mind displays a level of clarity that homo normalis lacks. He writes:

I claim, after thirty years of thorough study of schizophrenic minds, that they look through our hypocrisy, our cruelty and stupidity, our fake culture, our evasiveness, and our fear of the truth. They had the courage to approach what was commonly evaded.234

Reich saw an element of truth in the delusions of those that society labelled ‘crazy’, believing that the emotional storms of said unstable minds reflected the inherent mechanisms that give rise to great creativity and wisdom.235 But instead of being able to develop their genius they withdraw into an inner world, unable to cope with strong emotions. Reich’s view of the schizophrenic mind is an example of bondage at its worst, where the forces of emotion are too much to bear and the only thing left to do is to bury them. Reich maintains that this process of denial is at the core of dis-ease because it immobilises bio-energetic functions.236 Again, he claims that the most effective way to mobilise bio-energetic function is through the intensity of orgasmic convulsions. As previously discussed, it is not my intention to overlay Reich’s theory of bio-energetic functions, such as orgasmic convulsions, onto a Yogic framework, particularly given that Yoga’s Yāma, more specifically brahmacarya, denotes chastity. However, both theories place considerable importance on relieving physical and emotional tension: albeit approached from different perspectives.

233 ibid., p. 459.
234 ibid.
235 ibid.
236 ibid., p. 461
Reich also uses the term “affliction” when he refers to what he describes as society’s ‘emotional plague’. His main contention is that society is plagued with certain unhelpful emotions, and that these emotions manifest in psycho-physical blockages that cause the individual to experience a dis-ease of the body and mind. Reich’s emotional plague reflects unfulfilled, unexpressed or misunderstood emotions: emotions that keep an individual a prisoner to their past. In Chapter Eight, I will discuss the physicality of emotional life in more detail.

5.8 Affliction, sexuality, guilt and sublimation

There is only one thing that I know for certain: the value judgements of human beings are undoubtedly guided by their desire for happiness and thus amount to an attempt to back up their illusions with arguments.

Sigmund Freud

To Patañjali, attachment is the basis of anxiety: fear of losing the source of one’s pleasure. The individual may fear losing love or losing money, or even losing their life. Every experience, whether pleasurable or painful leaves an impression. Habituation represents the impressions created by one’s experiences. The impressions resulting from attachments afflict one’s ability to move forward, as further anxiety is created by change. Life is change, and the individual is constantly exposed to that change. Conflict arises between the individual’s nature and their state of mind: the ‘tendency of consciousness to identify itself with its vehicles’. Patañjali sees all of these afflictions as inherent and suggests that the illusions created by affliction consequent ignorance. A child’s need for love and protection, and the subsequent association of that need with carer-givers, leads to a vehicle of anxiety when a separation occurs. The inevitable development of a child into an adult, and the growing distance this creates from the

237 Reich, Character analysis, p. 538.
238 Freud, Civilization and its discontents, p. 81.
239 Taimni, p. 151.
240 ibid., p. 149.
241 ibid., p. 151.
242 ibid., p. 149.
243 ibid., p. 155.
244 ibid.
care-giver, contributes to the development of these afflictions, as does the experiential nature of life itself.

To Freud the development of the psyche is connected to sexual development. He relates discontent to the repression of drives and the guilt one associates with desire, or wish fulfilment.\(^{245}\) Freud writes thus of the ‘two layers of guilt’:

1) One [is] due to fear of the external authority;
2) The other [is due] to fear of the internal authority.\(^{246}\)

According to Freud, ‘a sense of guilt is fundamentally nothing other than a topical fear of the super-ego’.\(^{247}\) He claims that the latter sense of guilt can ‘control the whole of consciousness’ or it can remain ‘completely hidden’: manifesting itself as an unease or a discontent. One of the most significant aspects of Freud’s theory, in relation to the *kleśas*, is his argument that guilt arises from intention as well as from action. An individual can carry the burden of guilt without ever having acted on a desire.\(^{248}\) Freud attributes a ‘sense of guilt’ to the ‘tension between the stern super-ego and the ego’: suggesting that this ‘manifests as a need for punishment’.\(^{249}\) Here the individual is caught between desire and conscience. Nietzsche reflects this view when he writes: ‘A human being is a rope stretched between animal and deity’.\(^{250}\) Nietzsche and Freud’s critical theories recognise the struggle between the individual and their own internal demands regarding right and wrong.

Yogic theory is not necessarily free of this type of demand. Indian traditions over the centuries have described the ‘five sins’ that the yogin must ‘cut off’.\(^{251}\) There are many variants relating to this theme, but generally they are listed as: sexual desire, wrath, greed, fear and sleep, however these theories are not considered in my thesis. Yoga’s many facets include the mystical and the magical, as well as the spiritual. In fact, one could present Yoga practice as a method of sublimating sexual desire. Moreover, like


\(^{246}\) *ibid.*, p. 73.

\(^{247}\) *ibid.*, p. 72.

\(^{248}\) *ibid.*, pp. 74-75.

\(^{249}\) *ibid.*, p. 61.


many theories Yoga has its contradictions between traditions, where sexual desire is termed a sin in some teachings, it is also revered as a mystical technique in others, such as Tantrism.\textsuperscript{252}

Yoga’s freedom is sometimes measured as freedom from morality, but as Eliade writes: ‘Everything depends on what is meant by freedom.’\textsuperscript{253} Many of Yoga’s traditions refer to liberation or freedom as abandonment of the individual soul to the Supreme Soul, where the individual loses individuality, obtains immorality, and experiences eternal bliss.\textsuperscript{254} Although I respectfully acknowledge this more spiritual element of Yoga, as well as the beliefs associated with the varying traditions of Yoga, I remain removed from these aspects: I explore Yoga as a vehicle for transformation on a practical level. Yoga’s practices appear to enable the individual to transcend the trials of mundane reality and reach for the freedom of an unconditioned existence. Yoga’s approach to karma suggests that without freedom from Freud’s self-punishing guilt the individual remains subject to conditionality: freedom in this sense is liberation from self-imposed torment.

Freud claims that, as a society, we have gone too far: that ‘\textit{homo homini lupus}…man is a wolf to [his fellow] man’.\textsuperscript{255} Recognising the aggressive elements of human nature, Freud’s theory implies that the pressure one individual applies to another, often in the form of a collective (society) in the case of war and persecution, could be described, metaphorically, as a scavenger’s attempt to prevail. His theories imply that the human drive for aggression and self-destruction is inflamed by the guilt and insecurity.\textsuperscript{256} Perhaps this is reflected by Yoga’s \textit{abhiniveśa} to ‘the will-to-live’ (clinging to life—this will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Seven).\textsuperscript{257} This clinging to life is associated with fear, for “to cling” implies a desperate need.

Feuerstein points out that a human being is much more than just a collection of biological needs and urges and that the portrayal of this kind of nature has resulted in

\begin{flushright}
\begin{verbatim}
\textsuperscript{252} \textit{ibid.}, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{253} \textit{ibid.}, p. 364.
\textsuperscript{254} \textit{ibid.}, p. 140.
\textsuperscript{255} Freud, \textit{Civilization and its discontents}, pp. 64-69.
\textsuperscript{256} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{257} Taïmni, p. 150.
\end{verbatim}
\end{flushright}
the shame of the flesh in many religious doctrines.\textsuperscript{258} According to Feuerstein, religious doctrines promote the deflection of ‘libidinal striving from its original goal and its rechanneling to a “higher” socially valuable goal’.\textsuperscript{259} However, by repressing and denying what is naturally human—succumbing to this type of guilt—the individual can become trapped in a cycle of conditionality. There is no freedom found in self-condemning beliefs. Being aware and accepting moral concepts of right and wrong is certainly a quality necessary for human survival. Yet it is the intense inner conflict created by “what one wants” and “what one does not want”—particularly as qualified by moral judgement—that causes an individual angst. This topic brings this study to the next kleśa, which is dveśa (aversion or hatred).

\textsuperscript{258} ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{259} ibid.
CHAPTER SIX

Dveṣa (aversion)—the flip side to rāga

6.1 Dveṣa and the path to misery and suffering

The repulsion that accompanies pain is Dveṣa.

I.K. Taimni

When considering this kleśa in the kleśa tree, one is compelled to stress how intrinsically related each kleśa is to the other. If one experiences a dislike (dveṣa) that results in perturbation on an emotional level, it is undoubtedly linked, in some way, to fear, ignorance, attachment and one’s sense of self. In relation to the empirical research carried out, the feedback regarding dveṣa is quite revealing; it is especially significant when recognising rāga as the flip side of dveṣa. In the following pages I will discuss dveṣa, providing a clear definition of what it means. But at the same time, I will also include various aspects of the empirical data, the details of which are imperative to this study for it clearly shows how the kleśas are prominent in the formation of conditionality. This chapter is quite small. This is because in many respects what is associated with dveṣa also relates to rāga, which I have already covered in more depth.

Hatred is a destructive and unhelpful emotion, one that is primarily linked to ignorance and fear. Dveṣa is fundamentally connected to rāga, as one’s aversions (what one hates) are the opposite of what one desires (what one is attached or attracted to). As already discussed, there is a reciprocal relationship between the kleśas. Dveṣa (hatred) has obvious connections to fear: fear of experiencing displeasure or pain, and in respect to rāga a fear of not having what one wants. Avidyā is at the core of all of the kleśas. Avidyā’s veil of ignorance accentuates the “having” or “not having” of an object, circumstance or person: assigning happiness to illusion. And finally, when it comes to

asmitā, the I-sense, the vehicles of consciousness create a sense of “I hate” which is constructed by the mind’s aversion to pain and desire for pleasure.

Taimni recognises that it is a natural reaction for one to feel repulsion towards anything that brings pain and unhappiness.² Taimni confirms that what is said about rāga is also true of dveṣa because each represents the opposite of the other: dveṣa is simply rāga in reverse.³ These two kleśas are described as prominent causes of misery and suffering because they tend to condition one’s life, and one could argue that they are the foundations of conditionality.⁴ Taimni writes:

Unconsciously or consciously we think, feel and act according to hundreds of these biases produced by these invisible bonds and there is hardly any freedom left for the individual to act, feel and think freely.⁵

The empirical data gathered during this research strongly agrees with this. The responses detailed in the questionnaires and interviews reflect emotional conditioning, and innumerable examples are revealed. Participants in the empirical study identified trauma and hardships experienced in their past that they carried with them throughout their life. These upheavals contributed to the formation of various dislikes, and, reciprocally speaking, these dislikes were often the result of said upheavals.

For instance, participant 0002 identified a strong fear of being alone and a deep fear of being rejected because of her father’s violent behaviour towards her during her childhood. She now has an aversion to swearing and confrontation, and an intense aversion to any kind of aggression (whether expressed overtly or covertly [passively]).⁶ Her whole life has been affected by the frustration her father demonstrated towards her so many years ago.⁷ Aversion and fear, brought on by this experience, constantly colour her life.

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² ibid., p. 148.
³ ibid.
⁴ ibid.
⁵ ibid., p. 149.
⁶ Deakin University research questionnaire and follow-up interviews carried out 2009-2012, participant 0002.
⁷ ibid.
Participant 0008 identified his need to ‘keep the peace’, created from an aversion to conflict.\(^8\) This need drove him to stay married to an unfaithful partner rather than cause friction.\(^9\) He speaks of a strong tendency for avoidance and a discomfort arising from the threat of any kind of confrontation.\(^10\) This participant went from domineering parents to having a domineering wife, and his aversion to confrontation made him keep his emotions ‘in check’.\(^11\) He adds:

> Holding it all in breeds something inside you that changes your thinking, it puts a cap on things (feelings).\(^12\)

It took him ten years to finally break free of this very destructive relationship, but not until he experienced two long periods of depression. He attributes this breakthrough to a change of diet, exercise (specifically Yoga) and therapeutic massage for muscular tension. Renewed health gave him the courage he needed to change his life.\(^13\)

One’s attractions and repulsions vary considerably even to the extent of being overpowering, but it is the less obvious effects of these kleśas that have the power to dominate one’s life through various kinds of conditionality, as conscious and unconscious desires demand satisfaction.\(^14\) Both repulsions and attractions have the power to bind the individual. According to Taimni, one is tied to the person one hates more then the person one loves because love is less difficult to let go of than hatred which can generate emotional venom that tends to linger.\(^15\) Taimni writes:

> These attractions and repulsions are really the breeders of desires pertaining to the lower life they naturally keep us tied down to the lower worlds where consciousness is under the greatest limitations.\(^16\)

Taimni suggests that one must transcend both dveṣa and rāga simultaneously, as these two kleśas are as ‘two sides of a coin’. He adds that a ‘free and unconditioned mind

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\(^8\) *ibid.*, participant 0008.
\(^9\) *ibid.*
\(^10\) *ibid.*
\(^11\) *ibid.*
\(^12\) *ibid.*
\(^13\) *ibid.*
\(^14\) *ibid.*
\(^15\) Taimni, p. 149.
\(^16\) *ibid.*

*ibid.* One could interpret this statement literally or one could suggest that “lower worlds” refers to lower levels of awareness.
does not oscillate from side to side...it remains stationary at the centre’.\textsuperscript{17} As discussed in Chapter Four, the identification of consciousness with its vehicles creates a veil of avidyā and this veil may be based on feelings that attract or repel, but as one begins to control or eliminate the extremities of attractions and repulsions this veil is removed.\textsuperscript{18} These kleśas tend to be experienced acutely and the misery and suffering they create result from an intense experience of passion, for this reason Yoga advocates dispassion (vairāgya). This is not dispassion in a sense of “unfeeling”: instead, it is a detachment from the emotional extremes of conditionality. Dispassion is not meant here as a denial of feeling; it represents a rational and aware state between the extremes of uncontrolled destructive emotional reactions, a place free from the effects of kleśas.

\textit{Kleśas} can be attenuated by the practice of Patañjali’s Kriyā-Yoga. The three preliminary aspects of Kriyā-Yoga are austerity (tapas), self-study (svādhya) and surrender (īśvara-praṇidhāna), which are achieved through meditation, contemplation and absorption. Through such processes one is able to achieve freedom.\textsuperscript{19}

### 6.2 Aversion and its extremities

\textit{I often feel hatred towards someone for the injustice they have supposedly extended to me.}  

\textit{Participant 0001}\textsuperscript{20}

\textit{Kleśas} are categories of emotion and therefore represent all manner of feelings. As a consequence, hatred has many dimensions. When one looks at this kind of emotion, it is hard to separate it from its corresponding emotional effects—feelings like resentment, anger, and frustration. And, like other emotions, hatred or aversion has its extremes: extremes that range from irritation to annoyance, from disdain to pure unadulterated scorn. Because hatred is the extreme expression of dislike, it is often expressed through anger (krodha), both consciously and non-consciously.

\textsuperscript{17} Taimni, p. 149.
\textsuperscript{18}\textit{ibid.}, p. 149.
\textsuperscript{19} Taimni, p. 130.
\textsuperscript{20} Deakin University research., participant 0001.
When it comes to justice, anger can be a justified emotion. A person might be outraged by treachery, they may be furious about various forms of discrimination, and they might become irate when they hear that someone is being persecuted. In these cases, anger can be viewed as a healthy expression of a love of justice. In contrast, hatred may also be associated with feelings of personal injustice: feeling persecuted, victimised, powerless or unworthy. Regardless of motivation, rationality recognises that what manifests as hatred is detrimental to an individual’s happiness and wellbeing unless addressed openly and logically, or in short, unless controlled. According to Aristotle, justice relates to reciprocity between fairness, equality and freedom: the sense of which is completely destroyed by kleśas.\(^{21}\)

Fenner claims that the Buddhist view of the kleśas is quite comprehensive, they involve various complexities and reflect categories of emotional reaction: kleśas.\(^ {22}\) Buddhism speaks of six root kleśas or (emotional) predispositions. Like Patañjali’s theory, the Buddha recognises that kleśas arise ‘in dependence on a consciousness that is afflicted by avidyā.\(^ {23}\) Buddhism’s kleśas are presented as desire, anger, pride, ignorance, mistaken views and doubt.\(^ {24}\) There are parallels between both versions. Many of Buddhism’s dispositions could be considered to be sub-categories of Patañjali’s kleśas. For instance, “pride” could be related to attachment and it could also be related to the I-sense, ignorance or even fear (e.g. fear of not measuring up due to mistaken views about one’s worth). One can see quite clearly how doubt could be related to fear, and anger to aversion. This is evident in the empirical data collected where the participants, themselves, made these connections:

- That’s probably where the fear of expressing myself comes from as I wasn’t able to express my anger or resentment or whatever was built up there (participant 0002);
- Nearly all of my life has been controlled by fear. I dislike my attachment to fear (participant 0003);


\(^{23}\) *Ibid*. Note, there is a difference between how and where the word “afflicted” is used in both Buddhism and Classical Yoga.

\(^{24}\) Fenner, pp. 217-227. It is interesting to note that other theorists put ignorance and mistaken views in the same category.
• I dislike and fear change (participant 0031);
• I have an aversion to change—any change is scary (participant 0002);
• I often blow things out of proportion because of my fears—aversion can make me bitter and angry, being attached to certain outcomes makes me feel powerless when they don’t manifest (participant 0007);
• Fear stops me from doing a lot of things in life—aversion makes me miss out on opportunities, it stops me from seeing life clearly (participant 0021);
• I experience a range of troublesome emotions…and I truly believe these emotions all relate to my fears (participant 0007).²⁵

There are obvious cross-overs between the kleśas: the reciprocity between these emotions is demonstrated above. Buddhism links its six root kleśas to neuroses, which culminates in feelings like: ‘non-shame, non-embarrassment, jealousy, miserliness, excitement, guilt, lethargy, languor, anger, concealment, deceit, dishonesty, arrogance, spite, resentment and aggression’.²⁶ Some could be an action rather than a feeling. For example, concealment might be better described as an act arising from an emotion. In Western terms, some of these feelings could be viewed as conditions resulting from more primary emotions, for instance, arrogance, spite and resentment might stem from anger.²⁷ Regardless of how one presents the theory of kleśas there is an underlying theme that represents, albeit in different ways, feelings that cause one pain and suffering. To add to the confusion, Yoga refers to emotions like anger as an ‘unwholesome deliberation’, suggesting a deliberate thought rather than a primitive feeling.²⁸ Greed and infatuation are also listed under unwholesome deliberations but one can clearly link these feelings to attachment.

In short, these variations indicate a large crossover of elements or categories of emotion, emotions that share the common theme of causing pain, cognitive-emotive reactions

²⁵ Deakin University research questionnaire and follow-up interviews carried out 2009-2012.
²⁶ Fenner, pp. 217-227. Buddhism links some of these emotional dispositions to mental events that one might call ‘wishes or motivations’.
²⁷ ibid.
²⁸ Feuerstein, The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali, p. 83.
that are presented in a multitude of ways, depending on the theory expounded. These theories clearly work towards a single point: that emotions need to be understood and directed for peace of mind to be achieved. All these interpretations assume that one’s emotional life is subject to extremes. Various components of Eastern and Western philosophy acknowledge that extremes in emotion hinder one’s ability to function in a healthful manner.

Some emotions have the power to leave an individual feeling powerless and miserable.29 Buddhism considers all of the *kleśas* to be a form of ‘mental disturbance’.30 Such disturbances are borne from an emotionally reactive state: leading to a state of perturbation (unrest, discomfort or unhappiness). This should be demarcated from a more clinical or unquantifiable state of mental illness (which is not the subject of this discussion).

### 6.3 Aversion—lack of control

*Choice gives you a sense of power. The choice to accept the consequence of your decisions is very calming and centring. The belief that you have no choice contributes to the belief that you are ruled by an external source over which you have not control.*

*Participant 0016* 31

Yoga understands that outward demonstrations of hatred may be masking feelings of unworthiness or self-hate created by the pain of some past experience. As a form of attachment, hatred comes at the cost of emotional freedom. Fear may be the governing force in unhelpful emotions. The empirical data collected during my research suggests that some people experience aversion when they feel badly about themselves, and when they fear being powerless: not in control. For example, participant 0030 discussed her aversion to people who are overweight, which she attributed to her own eating disorder. Her loathing for herself was extended to others. She writes: ‘I associate being fat with laziness and greed’, a laziness and greed she also associated with herself.32 Participant

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29 Something Freud relates to the formation of neurosis.
31 Deakin University research., participant 0016.
32 *ibid.*, participant 0030.
0017 spoke of an aversion to people who she believed were ‘controlling’. She attributed this to the “them and us” attitude adopted by her family while she was growing up: as a result she grew up with a strong fear of other people. Participant 0031 spoke of an aversion to ‘change’. Having lost her nineteen year old daughter to cancer in 2001, this participant had an intense desire to control the small things in her life, in order to feel that she had control over something. This participant also linked her intense need for control to her own childhood. She had lived a nomad lifestyle with her mother (a sole parent): moving from house to house, place to place. This shifting around caused her to experience a feeling of powerlessness: having no control over her life.

More examples include participant 0019 who spoke about her strong aversion to flying, and claimed that she ‘hates anything that might be risky’. She linked this fear to a severe fear of dying. Participant 0028 discussed an acute aversion to conflict. She connected this to her fear that conflict might signal the end of a relationship. Her mother had left the family when she was very young and she felt as if she was responsible for her mother leaving. She experienced feelings of abandonment throughout her life.

According to the data collected, power—or more to the point a lack of power—has a significant relationship to aversion. The participants generally had aversions to things that related in some way to their fears. Many of the participants discussed being attached to the need to feel secure and protected and, as a result, they were inclined to avoid change.

6.4 The poison of dveṣa

Everyone who acts in anger acts in pain.

Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics

33 ibid., participant 0017.
34 ibid., participant 0031.
35 ibid., participant 0019.
36 ibid., participant 0028.
37 Aristotle, disk 5:19.
Taimni suggests that *dveṣa* poisons one nature, and as such it is difficult to remove.³⁸ Taimni writes that the ‘subtler workings of these *kleśas*…permeate the whole fabric of our worldly life [and can] prevent us from having any peace of mind’. Nonetheless, he adds that knowledge or awareness of the effects of *dveṣa* and *rāga* can help the individual to attenuate them. The participants in the study who have experienced Yoga claim that it was beneficial in helping alleviate feelings like insecurity and fear. Many say that working with the physical body has helped them deal with the emotional turmoil they have experienced in their lives. Unfortunately, the poison of *dveṣa* has a profound affect on one’s wellbeing. The fierce and acute feelings produced by their aversions have ultimately resulted in intense desires for particular things or specific outcomes (based on their attachments).

6.5 Aversion and Freud

*I feel that all emotional troubles have an origin in the past.*

*Participant 0005*³⁹

Freud would be likely to link *dveṣa* to attachment, because his theories are based on the drives that dominate one’s life through what one wishes for or desires. Furthermore, as I have established *dveṣa* is linked to *rāga*, as what one does not want is defined by what one wants. It is important to note that *dveṣa* and *rāga* are formed by childhood and ongoing life experiences and have an obvious relationship with ‘the pleasure principle’.

6.6 Aversion and Ellis

*Rational emotive behavior therapy is based on the assumption that cognition, emotion, and behavior are not disparate human functions but are, instead, intrinsically, integrated and holistic.*

*Ellis and Maclaren*⁴¹

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³⁸ Taimni, p. 149.
³⁹ Deakin University research., participant 0005.
Ellis would likely suggest that aversion is best battled through self-dialogue, that its roots lie in one’s core beliefs, implying that by changing the nature of this dialogue one can break the cycle of conditionality. Whether one calls what motivates behaviour, unconscious drives, core beliefs, or conditionality, there are obvious connections between these concepts. In the most part, what becomes apparent is the power of fear; how it can dominate one’s life through guilt, shame, insecurity and habitual thinking.

6.7 Aversion and Reich

If today or tomorrow the authoritarian state organization were suddenly abolished so that people could do as they pleased, chaos, not freedom, would result. Years of utter disorientation would have to pass before the human race would learn to live according to the principles of natural self-regulation

Wilhelm Reich

Reich’s theories suggest that what he calls muscular armour is a side effect of kleśas such as aversion. He writes: ‘it is a layer of cruelty and hate that lies between man and his goals of peace and goodness’. Reich claims that life becomes distorted in the realm of ‘arming’. As previously discussed, muscular armour is the result of holding on to particular emotions: emotional energy trapped in the body as physical tension. This tension hardens and forms muscular armour, which he directly relates to a destructive influence on wellbeing. Reich states: ‘Only human beings with a structure capable of freedom can live in a self-regulatory, truly free manner’. He adds that it is not only muscular armour that stops the individual’s freedom it is the fear associated with facing a different way of living. It is facing the ‘complete anxiety-ridden loss of [one’s] biological life-orientation’ that constitutes the greatest obstacle. Reich argues that if one’s sensory apparatus is not disturbed, i.e. fragmented or armoured, one’s emotions—

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43 ibid., p. 136.
45 Reich, *Either, God and Devil: Cosmic Superimposition*, p. 135.
which he terms “‘impressions’ of the movement of life”—are able to reflect their correct ‘expression’.\textsuperscript{47} Reich fiercely objects to the concept that all emotions are irrational.\textsuperscript{48} He claims that this is a ‘mistaken belief’, a belief that is ‘catastrophic to the well-being of life’.\textsuperscript{49} Reich claims that the armoured individual is physically ‘on guard’, although they are not aware of this.\textsuperscript{50} According to Reich, the armoured organism evades and impedes spontaneous, direct expression.\textsuperscript{51} As previously discussed, Reich links this armour to ‘dammed up biological sexual energy’. It is not possible to do justice to Reich’s complex theory on emotion in such a short overview. What is important to note is that this muscular armouring restricts the individual to a life of bondage: bondage in the form of unrelieved physical-emotional tension. Yoga follows a similar line, in as much as it recognises the emotional connection between the body and mind. The empirical research gathered supports the view that what one holds in the mind, one also holds in the body. The participants indicated that their aversions, their fears, and their insecurities influenced how they felt physically.\textsuperscript{52}

6.8 Aversion and fear

[I] was always on the look out for what could go wrong...fear of failure, of not meeting [the] expectations of others

\textit{Participant 0015}\textsuperscript{53}

Again, dveśa is closely linked to fear; one “hates” to feel powerless. In contrast, hatred can motivate the most cruel and inhumane actions, as demonstrated by those who wield power over others as a weapon of fear and destruction. Perhaps aversion is better understood in contrast to what it is not: love, affection and acceptance.

The \textit{Bhagavad-Gita} (2.63) proposes that anger causes confusion, memory loss, and bewilderment, affecting one’s grasp on reality.\textsuperscript{54} As a result, to battle hatred one must

\textsuperscript{46} ibid., p. 136.
\textsuperscript{47} ibid., p. 54.
\textsuperscript{48} ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} ibid.
\textsuperscript{50} ibid., p. 61.
\textsuperscript{51} ibid., p. 67.
\textsuperscript{52} See Appendix 2 for details of the empirical data collected.
maintain awareness, clarify one’s perception and lessen the impact of volatile emotional reactions. Getting angry can just be an effort to control what cannot be controlled, which is why hatred thrives on feelings like insecurity and fear.

Interesting, only a few participants admitted to feelings of hatred, instead, they tended to describe what they wanted or liked rather than what they fiercely disliked, although many admitted to experiencing fear. This tendency to avoid recognising their aversions could well mask fear: a fear of being shunned as a person, fear of the shame associated with what one might consider to be a dark emotion. Fear, which in Classical Yoga is best represented by abhiniveśa, is one of the most significant kleśas. Patañjali describes abhiniveśa as the fruit of the tree of the kleśas and it is the subject of the next chapter.

51 Deakin University research, participant 0015.
52 Prabhupada, Bhagavad Bhagavad-Gita as it is, The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, Los Angeles, 1997, p. 82.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Abhiniveṣa (fear, the will to live)—clinging to life

We can live without religion and meditation, but we cannot survive without human affection.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

7.1 Freedom and fear

Unhelpful habitual thoughts are fuelled by fear and as such are at the heart of conditionality. There are obvious links between Western theories of the mind and the Eastern concept of conditionality. For instance, Ellis connects cyclic patterns of thought with core beliefs that plague the individual with feelings of unworthiness, frustration and guilt: these all fall under categories of kleśas. Freud links a conditioned existence with unconscious drives: something Yoga reflects through saṃskāras. Each of these theories relates back to fear: to the individual’s inability to experience life without being fearful. Each of the kleśas represents a fear. All of the kleśas are interrelated. In particular the next kleśa, abhiniveṣa, or fear, is at the core of all kleśas. Like dveṣa (aversion), abhiniveṣa reflects a duality of expression: the intense desire for life and an extreme fear of death—although both have the same end they arrive from different means, desire (one might even say, love) and fear. Fear of death can also relate to the death of certain aspects of life, such as the loss of a relationship, the loss of a lifestyle, the loss of money and so forth. In other words, the fear of death can be both a literal and an abstract concept.

Links to Freud are found in the parallel between his concepts of Eros (the life instinct) and Thanatos (the death instinct). To Freud, these two drives are the greatest source of

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1 A Krishna, One earth, one sky, one humankind: celebration of unity and diversity, PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama Publishing, Jakarta, 2009, p. 118.
motivation for human behaviour and the latter he relates to destructive urges. Taimni refers to *abhiniveśa* as the last derivative of *avidyā*. In other words, it is part of the veil of illusion created by ignorance. Most Classical Yoga theorists relate *abhiniveśa* to ‘the will-to-live’ (or clinging to life). But again, it means so more when one considers it in contrast to attraction, in particular each person’s dependence on the other.

The will to live is a ‘universal force inherent in life’, something natural and apparent in all creatures, yet its negative connotations derive from the intensity of this clinging: again, a fear of loss. According to Taimni, Yoga proposes that one ‘sits lightly on life’ rather than becoming immersed in attachment. He expresses it thus:

> According to Yogic philosophy this force [clinging] is rooted in the very origin of things and it comes to play the moment consciousness comes in contact with matter and the evolutionary cycle begins.

Taimni also suggests that the answer to the cessation of this clinging is not a matter of intellect, for the philosopher who is acutely aware of life’s problems, and the ordinary individual ignorant of such things, may both be equally attached to life. Taimni refers to ‘the learned but not the wise’ (*viduṣaḥ*), emphasising that intellect alone is inadequate when it comes to ‘freeing a man from his attachment to life’, or to put it another way, freeing a person from the fear of lack, or loss. Until the tree of the *kleśas*—roots, truck, branches, leaves and fruit—is destroyed using ‘the systematic course of Yogic discipline’ one’s attachments to life, whether great or small, will continue on and grow.

Again, the desperate need to cling to life, to objects or even to one another is the result of fear. Although the desire to live is a natural thing, an intense, irrational attachment is the result of the *kleśas*. Patañjali claims that those who are subject to the greater dominance of the forces of attractions and repulsions, particularly those subject to

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3 ibid.
5 ibid.
6 ibid., p. 151.
7 ibid., p. 150.
8 ibid., 151.
9 ibid.
10 ibid.
11 ibid.
violence, are more likely to be attached to life.\textsuperscript{12} In other words, the less the threat the less the attachment experienced. Unfortunately, it does not only take despotism and tyranny for the individual to feel such threats, sometimes they are purely the result of conditionality. Genevan philosopher, writer and composer Jean-Jacques Rousseau writes:

\begin{quote}
Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains.
\end{quote}

Jean-Jacques Rousseau\textsuperscript{13}

The quotation above can have two interpretations. Firstly, that freedom is a physical thing, that one’s “chains” are a tangible force. And secondly, that freedom is a state of mind and the chains that bind a person can be constructed by the mind, which comes back to the question raised by this thesis: how free is the human mind? How much do one’s self-assessments or self-beliefs rely on the processes of comparison as reflected through the other?

The world is filled with uncertainty, and this uncertainty can threaten a person’s sense of freedom—influencing one’s ability to think without prejudice. In ‘The dominance of fear over hope in the life of individuals and collectives’, psychologists Maria Jarymowicz and Daniel Bar-Tal refer the anxiety caused by uncertainty as ‘fear orientation’.\textsuperscript{14} According to Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal, fear orientation is a collective thought pattern that creates a tendency towards fearfulness: in other words, “fear orientation” is created by a society in which there is a threat of ‘intended’ harm (intended harm imposed by the other).\textsuperscript{15} The seemingly unfounded emotional turmoil of many individuals who are not subject to this threat of intended harm, suggests that there need not be any real threat from the other for fear to become a habit-orientation.

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} ibid., p. 152.
\item \textsuperscript{14} M Jarymowicz and D Bar-Tal, ‘The dominance of fear over hope in the life of individuals and collectives’, European Journal of Social Psychology, vol. 36, 2006, pp. 367-392, retrieved 8 August 2006, Wiley InterScience, p. 367. Fear orientation refers to society involved in intractable conflict that is dominated by fear. This will be discussed further later in this thesis.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, pp. 367-392.
\end{itemize}
7.2 Freedom, choice, ethics and fear

The organizing myth of any culture functions in ways that may be either creative or destructive, healthful or pathological. By providing a world picture and a set of stories that explain why things are as they are, it creates consensus, sanctifies the social order, and gives the individual an authorized map of the path of life. A myth creates the plotline that organizes the diverse experiences of a person or a community into a single story.

S Keen and A Valley-Fox

Yoga suggests that an individual’s life story, how one fits into society and how this position is affirmed or denied by the other, is affected by conditionality: by one’s experience of the kleshas. The voluntary or involuntary nature of this influence raises a question of choice. Does one’s life experience confirm or negate choice? Or, does choice create one’s life experience? According to Yoga, choice must be guided by ethics, and therefore it is always connected to the other. Hence, if one associates the ability to choose with freedom, then one must connect freedom to ethics.

Sartre argues that the act of choice implies, as its condition, the recognition of a purpose or goal (desideratum). He writes:

Human reality cannot receive its ends, as I have seen, either from outside or from a so-called inner “nature.” It chooses them and by this very choice confers upon them a transcendent existence as the external limit of its projects. From this precedes and commands its essence—human reality in and through its very upsurge decides to define its own being by its ends.

Whether a human being’s choice comes from a position of freedom is a matter for debate, for one’s choices will always be determined by one’s belief system. But for Sartre, this point is clear: one chooses what to think. In Classical Yoga, awareness of choice is imperative to freedom. Yoga also emphasises the significance of one’s ‘inner

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18 ibid.
nature’, something Sartre denies.\textsuperscript{19} To Sartre, a human being is self-invented:\textsuperscript{20} a being-for-itself.\textsuperscript{21} Sartre claims that an individual is self-defined and always free to choose.\textsuperscript{22} Sartre’s existentialist theory claims that a human being has no essence apart from what is created through existence.\textsuperscript{23} Yoga would argue that at the core of this beingness is an innate essence that can transcend wants, needs and desires, thereby giving the individual a transcendent form of freedom. According to Sartre, a human being comes to be who they are by engaging in the world; in other words, as one actuates, one becomes from nothingness.\textsuperscript{24} For instance, a piece of wood is an ‘in-itself’: it is not conscious and therefore, cannot change. In contrast, a human being is conscious and can change. The problem is that a human being may see themselves as if a piece of wood, which is a self-deception.\textsuperscript{25} Sartre sees freedom as fundamentally to do with choice: with the ontology of being.

Sartre connects anxiety to the inability to face up to freedom: to the need to escape being free. He claims that one is ‘condemned to be free’.\textsuperscript{26} Sartre writes:

\begin{quote}
My fear is free and manifests my freedom; I have put all my freedom into my fear, and I have chosen myself as fearful in this or that circumstance. Under other circumstances I shall exist as deliberate and courageous, and I shall have put all my freedom into my courage. In relation to freedom there is no privileged psychic phenomenon. All my “modes of being” manifest freedom equally since they are all ways of being my own nothingness.\textsuperscript{27}
\end{quote}

For Yoga, fear is seen as an illusion and freedom is negated by fear. Whereas, to Sartre the mere fact that one can experience fear is a choice. Yoga maintains that fear results from a conditioned existence. Fear then, is not a conscious or deliberate choice, but the result of one’s ignorance, an inability to understand one’s thought processes and the emotions these thoughts generate. Sartre considers that one’s greatest challenge is to overcome the pull of the passions: he considers ‘every human reality...a passion’.\textsuperscript{28} Sartre argues that human beings invented God, not only from a need to ‘lose oneself’,
but also out of a desire to avoid responsibility for one’s own actions. Moreover, despair is linked to the realisation that one is ‘abandoned in the world’: that one is responsible for one’s actions but cannot control the consequences of those actions. Sartre writes thus:

I find myself suddenly alone and without help, engaged in a world for which I bear the whole responsibility without being able, whatever I do, to tear myself away from this responsibility for an instant.

Sartre’s freedom is found in this recognition. He adds that most of the time one flees fear and anguish in ‘bad faith’.

To Freud, fears are intricately linked to one’s unconscious and the idea of fear in relation to choice is complex. He claims that fear is a psychical phenomenon attached to particular objects or situations, and that mental stability depends on one’s ability to reconcile one’s relationship to the “object” of desire. Freud’s theories contend that it is difficult to achieve any measure of mental freedom, and overcome fear, unless liberated from the psychological conditioning of what is repressed. One could ask: how can a human being have ‘freewill’—in the sense of a will that is free—if unable to understand and control the mind: if every thought is conditioned by the last? Again, from this standpoint, freedom is not simply the ability to choose to act; it is about what motivates that choice, and whether one is ultimately bound by those motivating forces.

Freud and Sartre share a common thread proposing that an individual’s self-perception, and their fear, is directly related to their relationship with the other. In Sartre's play No

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29 ibid., p. 710.
30 ibid.
31 ibid.
32 ibid., p. 711.
33 ibid.
37 A Flew, A dictionary of philosophy, Pan Books, London, 1984, p. 125. In philosophic terms, the word freewill is best defined by describing the difference between freewill and its opposing concept, determinism. Freewill denotes that we are free to choose and act according to our own volition. Whereas, determinism claims that all events, including those that result from human action, are pre-determined.
38 G Feuerstein, The Shambhala encyclopaedia of Yoga, Shambhala Publications Inc., Massachusetts, 1997, p. 254. The Bhāvaviveka-Upanishad (5.8) suggests that volition (sāmkāpa) and the “I maker” (abakāra) characterise the finite personality.
Exit, he implies that a person’s choice is morally linked to the other; that an individual is ultimately accountable for their actions. The play is centred on three people condemned to hell for their actions towards others during their respective lifetimes. In Sartre's depiction of hell, there are no mirrors and the characters are forced to act as mirrors for each other: a person's merit or worth is reflected through the eyes of the other. Sartre proposes that the full weight of society rests with the individual and it is the action of the individual that sets an example for all of society: when man 'commits himself... he is deciding for the whole of mankind'.

According to Sartre, one’s anguish (fear) arises from the recognition of one’s responsibility not only for one’s self, but also for the other. A sense of abandonment is a consequence of being faced with the fact that one is left alone to make choices, and therefore must invent one’s own code of morality. Despair is created by a realisation that although one chooses, one cannot guarantee the fulfilment of that choice, for choice is invariably subject to 'elements of probability'. A more deterministic philosophy might offer a human being the reassurance of salvation, such as, “reaping what one sows”, but Sartre's existentialism leaves no room for a saviour, other than oneself. In Yogic terms, this is reflected by the karma created by one’s choices.

Whatever one fears (other people, uncertainty, loss or alienation, say); fear is a crippling emotion. All of the kleśas relate to fear in some way, or at the very least they are instrumental in creating fear. An element of fear is present in: a distorted sense of self (I-am-ness—asmitā), the things or people one hates (aversion—dveṣa), the things one cannot live without (attachment—rāga), the false beliefs one hangs on to (nescience — avidyā) and in the desperation to cling to life (the will to live—abhiniveśa). As I previously ascertained, fear itself is motivated by ignorance, for unless the result of an actual threat, fear is produced by false or misleading beliefs and according to Sartre by the overwhelming responsibility of choice.

40 ibid.
42 ibid., p. 300.
Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal write in this vein about fear:\footnote{Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, pp. 367-392.}

Fear...reflects an adaptation mechanism that automatically protects homeostasis and life. At the same time it may operate irrationally and destructively because defensive reactions are not only evoked as a result of cues which directly imply threat and danger, but also by conditioned stimuli which are non-threatening in their nature.\footnote{ibid.}

\section*{7.3 Contrasting fear through hope and meditation}

Fear, as a primary emotion, is grounded in the experienced present and based on the memorized past, processed both consciously and unconsciously.\footnote{ibid.}

\textit{M. Jarymowicz and D. Bar-Tal} \footnote{ibid.}

What tools does one need to combat fear? From a Yogic perspective fear is diminished by the silence that permeates one’s being when immersed in meditation and other calming practices. On a more intellectual level hope is a necessary component for overcoming fear. Fear is an instinctive primary emotion. In contrast, hope is a secondary emotion, which involves ‘cognitive activity’, necessitating anticipation and a search for new ideas. Hope is therefore based on ‘a complex process of creativity and flexibility’.\footnote{ibid.}

Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal’s paper examines why fear dominates hope in the life of individuals and collectives. Again, ‘fear orientation’ describes societies involved in intractable conflict: dominated by a collective fear.\footnote{ibid.} The latter is not discussed in this thesis as it requires in-depth research into sociology, politics, religion, culture and other fields of study. My concern is with ‘conditioned stimuli which are non-threatening in their nature’; in other words, stimuli constructed from the cycle of conditionality and which result in emotional reactions that perpetuate the seemingly endless nature of this \footnote{ibid. Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal claim that, “this orientation is functional for society’s coping with the stressful and demanding situation [of intractable conflict]—but it may serve as a psychological obstacle to any peace process, once it starts.”}
cycle.\textsuperscript{49} Hope is a major aspect in the dissolution of these unhelpful conditional processes, and Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal state:

\begin{verbatim}
While there is fear there is mindlessness and misery.
While there is hope there is rationality and progress.\textsuperscript{50}
\end{verbatim}

Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal suggest that hope can replace the memories associated with fear, instilling new beliefs and behaviour, and this is what the practices of Yoga promises the individual. One such practice is meditation. The process of meditation reduces the psycho-physiological effects of fear, leaving room for hope and peace. Meditation is presented in various forms in the West. Even traditional forms of relaxation are now often referred to as meditation. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi introduced Trancendental Meditation (TM) to Western society.\textsuperscript{51} His first global tour began in 1958 and his meditation technique grew in popularity in the 1960s and 1970s. This form of meditation involves sitting quietly with the eyes closed and repeating an individualised mantra (word/phrase) silently in the mind.\textsuperscript{52} Meditation counteracts the body’s reaction to fear by reducing effects of the general adaptation syndrome (flight or fight response).\textsuperscript{53} The flight or fight response alters the body to prepare it for action when faced with a threat (the opposite of homeostasis). This threat may be real or perceived. In this altered state the body initiates certain biological changes such as an increase in blood flow (this will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter).

Meditation, as well as other Yoga practices such as controlled breathing techniques, has the power to return the body to homeostasis. In her paper ‘Transcendental Meditation: A Prescription for Lower Blood Pressure?’ Neuroscientist Hilary Weiss states that clinical analysis indicates that meditation helps control ‘involuntary functions, such as heart rate, blood pressure, skin temperature, and brain waves’.\textsuperscript{54} Scientists now believe that meditating long-term reduces ‘stress hormones and, as a result, lowers cholesterol

\textsuperscript{49} ibid.
\textsuperscript{50} ibid.
\textsuperscript{51} HB Weiss, ‘Transcendental meditation: a prescription for lower blood pressure?’ Vanderbilt University, 2010, retrieved 17 August 2011, http://www.vanderbilt.edu/ans/psychology/health_psychology/transcendental_meditation.htm, pp. 1-25. I refer here to TM specifically. There were obviously other encounters with meditation prior to this, for example Swami Vivekananda in 1893.
\textsuperscript{52} T Honderich, The Oxford companion to philosophy, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, p. 520. Honderich describes a mantra as a “holy word” that if “meditated upon can save us”.\textsuperscript{53} See Chapter Eight.
\textsuperscript{54} Weiss, pp. 1-25.
and blood pressure’. She quotes Dr Herbert Benson who claims that: ‘Meditation is a vital complement to the medical treatment of depression, anxiety, hypertension, cardiac arrhythmias, migraine headaches, insomnia, and other various conditions’ (see Chapter Eight).\textsuperscript{55} The physical effects of fear have a reciprocal effect on the mind. Yoga has understood this process and for centuries and has used simple breathing techniques and meditation practices to restore the body and the mind to a state of balance. In short, meditation works with the mind to reduce the negative effects the body experiences through fear and stress.

By reducing the level of tension in the body, one reduces the level of tension experienced in the mind. This contention has been proven in both Eastern and Western theories of wellbeing (evidence of which is provided in Chapter Eight). In fact, research has proved that after prolonged meditation practice one becomes less inclined to be reactive.\textsuperscript{56} Weiss explains how during meditation the practitioner remains both a relaxed and alert. She writes: ‘As the body benefits form a deep state of rest, the mind goes into a state of inner tranquility and awareness’.\textsuperscript{57} Perhaps meditation aims to move the individual away from the ‘mindlessness and misery’ of fear towards the ‘rationality and progress’ of hope.\textsuperscript{58}

7.4 Fear and conditioning

British philosopher Ted Honderich recognises the dichotomy of fear,\textsuperscript{59} he claims that on one hand fear is a distressing emotion, which arises from the threat of impending danger, yet on the other hand fear often provides important motivation that can result in improving the quality of human life. Fear plays a profound role in philosophical studies.\textsuperscript{60} For example, a fear of consequence provides one with a motive for doing what is considered to be “right”.\textsuperscript{61} For Aristotle, fear was something to be overcome and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{55} \textit{ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{56} SW Lazar, CE Kerr, RH Wasserman, JR Gray, DN Greve, MT Treadway, M McGarvey, BT Quinn, JA Dusek, H Benson, SL Rauch, CI Moore & B Fischl. ‘Meditation experience is associated with increased cortical thickness’, \textit{Neuroreport}, vol. 16, no. 17, 2005, pp. 1893-1897.
\item \textsuperscript{57} Weiss, pp. 1-25.
\item \textsuperscript{58} Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, pp. 367-392.
\item \textsuperscript{59} Honderich, P, 270.
\item \textsuperscript{60} \textit{ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{61} \textit{ibid.}
\end{itemize}
it is how one manages fear that is the measure of one’s courage. Honderich also discusses English philosopher and political theorist Thomas Hobbes’ notion that fear of death and of one another is a ‘state of nature’, and it creates the foundation for society via social contract; furthermore, Honderich notes the central role fear plays in emotions and cognitive science.

Fear turns out not to be a mere ‘feeling’ but necessarily exhibits ‘intentionality’, requires a ‘formal object’ (i.e., something fearful) and therefore can be said to have a cognitive ‘structure’.

Delgado claims that fear is the result of stimulus interpreted as either a physical or psychical threat. He adds that fear and rage are often intermingled: the main difference between the two is that rage offers some means of overcoming a threat by the use of force, and when this is not possible fear is the more likely reaction. Delgado notes that fear is a popular subject in the studies of emotion. Research proves that fear is easy to produce in an animal by simply conditioning the animal to expect something unpleasant, for instance a light or sound is used to preempt (or threaten) an electrical shock. This kind of study led to the discovery of a ‘conditioned avoidance response’ where the animal learns to press a lever in order to avoid the electrical shock.

Delgado claims that studies conclude that ‘punishment and reward constitute the most powerful determinants of behavior’. Pain and pleasure, which are usually considered to be sensations rather than emotions, constitute ‘essential aspects of emotional reactions’, for behaviour is inevitably ‘oriented towards the repetition or avoidance of experiences’. This is an important aspect in relation to the reduction of fear, particularly in respect to freedom because what one continually fears (with regard to perception not physical threat) is the result of conditionality. In other words, conditioning the individual to experience fear, based on the memory (conscious or non-conscious) of previous experiences, is the psycho-physiological constitution of conditionality itself, and explains why fear is such a pivotal aspect of the kleśas and is vitally important to overcome.

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62 ibid.
63 ibid.
64 ibid.
66 ibid.
7.5 Concepts of fear—questionnaires and interviews

The 35 questionnaires and 20 interviews carried out as part of this research reflect the problematic nature of conditionality. Participant 0023 described a fear associated with her husband’s infidelity, and an underlying fear of how this would affect her children. She believed that this fear came from witnessing her father’s infidelity and the emotional devastation this had caused her as a child and teenager. She spoke of an underlying fear, relating to trust, that had dominated her life and distorted her views. She explained that this fear also caused her to react physically (with stomach cramps) whenever she was faced with having to deal with her fears. Eventually, she was able to overcome this reactive behaviour by using Yoga’s controlled breathing techniques.\textsuperscript{67}

Fear provides a person with a learning experience. It helps them to grow. But if one dwells continually on fear it can dominate one’s life. For example, participant 0028 explained how her mother deserted her when she was only two and a half. Because of this feeling of abandonment she became very attached to preserving her relationships, and because of this early loss she was left feeling as if she had done something wrong: that she had done something that provoked her father to leave. This fear of losing her relationships meant she developed an aversion to conflict and would avoid it at all cost, fearing that conflict would lead to the end of a relationship. She became so sensitive to relationship issues that even an unreturned phone call would leave her feeling abandoned. This woman had a period in her life when she meditated regularly. During this time she was happier than she had been before. (This may also have been due to the fact that she was eating well and exercising regularly—nonetheless, regular meditation practice is likely to heighten one’s awareness regarding beneficial health practices and influence one’s choices regarding food and exercise).\textsuperscript{68}

The empirical data collected has shown that fear has had a significant influence on the participants. For instance, participant 0021 claimed that he had been reluctant to end a destructive marriage because of his fear of confrontation. Participant 0019 explained that she had become overly attached to the concept of home and family because of her

\textsuperscript{67} Deakin University research., participant 0023.
\textsuperscript{68} ibid., participant 0028.
father’s abandonment, which also led to a fear of not being good enough and blaming herself for him leaving. She feared that people would think badly of her. She connected this fear with an underlying belief that she was unworthy: not good enough. Participant 0021, a single mother, became dependent on Marijuana, valium and sleeping tablets in an effort to recover when her mother rejected and abandoned her when she had fallen pregnant. Her emotional stress caused her to chew the skin off her fingernails until they bled. She now fears the loss of her new boyfriend: she believes that she became conditioned to think that people will always leave her. This participant felt that Yoga’s relaxation techniques have helped her overcome her fears.\(^69\)

Participant 0010 discussed a fear of the future or of what might happen. Her first husband was an alcoholic. After they split up he committed suicide. On top of this she recently found out that when her daughter was six she had been molested by a family friend. This participant experienced a deep sense of remorse and guilt over the sexual assault on her daughter. She believed that she should have known: that there were signals she had failed to recognise. This participant now believes that, because of these negative changes in her life, she has become attached to the idea of things not changing. Her father’s aggressive behaviour when she was a child also created an aversion to particular people, especially people who are loud or aggressive. She goes on to say that although she was tentative about filling out the research questionnaire in the first place, she realises now that it actually helped her put her feelings into perspective.\(^70\)

Participant 0011’s family struggled during Australia’s depression in the early twentieth century and as a consequence he remembered his early family life being filled with anxiety and fear: focused on lack. Growing up he became increasingly attached to the “material” because of his family’s emphasis on holding on to what you have to avoid losing it.\(^71\) As a child he was always sick. This constant illness signalled the onset of a heart condition: a congenital defect that eventually required two open heart surgeries. Because of the seriousness of this heart condition this participant was taught by his parents to be overly cautious and ‘mindful’ in relation to health issues: he interpreted this as the need to be ‘fearful’.\(^72\) He felt rejected and abandoned during his childhood as

\(^{69}\) ibid., participant 0021.
\(^{70}\) ibid., participant 0010.
\(^{71}\) ibid., participant 0011.
\(^{72}\) ibid.
both his mother and grandmother were not expressive people. He could not remember ever being hugged as a child. He believed that his experiences created an aversion to being close to others: a reluctance to open up emotionally. As a child he experienced high levels of anxiety and panic attacks because he feared the reoccurrence of his illness.\(^{73}\) As a child these feelings dominated his life. They cast a shadow of fear over his childhood experiences. As an adult he became prone to ‘anger borne out of some form of self protection’. He relates this back to a feeling that the other person that he was angry at was diminishing or devaluing his opinion: which he related back to feeling rejected. As a teenager this man was introduced to meditation and Yoga. He states: ‘the whole stopping and slowing down and relaxing [Yoga initiates], [makes it] much easier to be reflective [and to reason]—it changes the emotional behaviour at the time’. He eventually became a Yoga Teacher and Yoga Therapist and now trains other individuals in Yoga and Yoga Therapy.\(^{74}\)

Participant 0003 felt that her whole life has been controlled by fear. She grew up believing that her mother hated her: she felt unwanted and unworthy. Because of this she felt that she did not have a sense of self while growing up. She wrote: ‘My mother was disapproving, unloving, judgemental—there was never any pleasing her’.\(^{75}\) This participant spoke of feeling ‘unwanted and under attack’, claiming that for much of her life she had felt ‘under threat’.\(^{76}\) She talked about her extreme aversions to particular objects of fear, giving an example of her overwhelming aversion to Huntsman spiders (which she later worked on and overcame).\(^{77}\)

Fear was expressed as a dominant emotion by all of the participants, and this chapter is representative of many of the overall results (see Appendix 2). The participants’ feelings of aversion were inevitably linked to the basis of their fears, such as participant 0011’s aversion to ‘closeness’ because of his fear of being rejected.\(^{78}\)

\(^{73}\) *ibid.*
\(^{74}\) *ibid.*
\(^{75}\) *ibid.*, participant 0003.
\(^{76}\) *ibid.*
\(^{77}\) *ibid.*
\(^{78}\) *ibid.*
7.6 Fear, hope and an ideology of peace

Those whose hope is weak settle down for comfort or for violence; those whose hope is strong see and cherish all signs of life and are ready every moment to help the birth of that which is ready to be born.

Erich Fromm

Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal remain optimistic that hope can overpower fear. Their ideology for peace is found in what they term ‘personalization’. They argue that this requires the evolution of a ‘new cognitive system’ that will lead to ‘a new type of emotion’. What they say is that in order to ‘reinforce the ideology of peace a set of different beliefs is necessary’. They claim that for any positive change to take place one must have a new outlook on the past—a revision of one’s ‘collective memory’. In other words, on a societal level, when faced with conflict the best way forward is to adopt an ethos of peace as a substitute for an ethos of conflict. Although they make these claims in respect to societal conflict, they also consider that the same principles can be applied to the individual’s inner realm or belief system. They acknowledge that the evolution of hope is a difficult undertaking as society is subject to violent expressions, dangers and threats and even when an orientation towards hope evolves ‘the roots of fear are not eliminated’. However, they say, to accept fear as the basis of one’s belief system is to surrender one’s hope for the future.

Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal claim that on a collective level, experiences of fear lead to an expectation of fear, and that experiences of peace lead to an expectation of hope. This principle is at the core of Yoga, although perhaps not in such an obvious way. Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal argue that it possible to develop an ethos of peace based on a change in thinking. This premise is at the core of Yogic philosophy: that peace is achievable by putting an end to kleśa-based conditionality. Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal write thus:

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80 Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal, pp. 367-292.
81 ibid.
82 ibid.
83 ibid.
84 ibid.
85 ibid.
86 ibid.
The orientation for hope needs not only to inhibit the automatic activation of memories associated with fear, but also to replace these memories with new beliefs and behaviors. These new beliefs must be attended, comprehended, accepted, learned and practiced, before they can serve as an alternative to the automatically activated fears.  

Yoga recognises that when the individual changes, the world changes. This is reflected by Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal thus:

Individuals and collectives are not condemned to suffer from fear, but have the ability to overcome it and develop an orientation of hope. Nevertheless, this struggle can be won only if people will use the rationality, logic and intellectual skills that characterize them as human beings and do not yield to the automaticity and spontaneity of fear.  

Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal conclude by saying that it is vital that as a human being one uses the best of one’s capabilities and not allow circumstances, conditions, leaders, or media to push a natural tendency to be dominated by fears.

### 7.7 Biology, violence and fear

Is virtue a choice, or is one’s behaviour ultimately compelled by biology? As discussed earlier, apart from the cognitive, there is also a physiological process involved in emotion. In his paper ‘The neurological basis of violence’, Delgado suggests that aggressive behaviour has three components:

- The individual’s environmental circumstances (factors acting upon the individual);
- How this information is received through sensory pathways—interpretation by the mechanisms that trigger emotional feelings and behavioural responses;
- Performance of the individual—social responses (the observable manifestations [acts] of violence).  

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87 *ibid.*
88 *ibid.*
Delgado explains:

Both neuro-psycho-behavioural and social sciences are very active areas of research, but their present rate of growth is too slow and their objectives too limited to improve significantly our perilously unbalanced civilization, which is dedicated to the material exploitation of nature without giving parallel attention to the mind as [the] power source of human intelligence.\(^9\)

What Delgado says is as true today as when he wrote this in 1971. Delgado claims that behavioural traits can be changed, and he argues that although ‘intracerebral mechanisms are initially structured by genetic endowment, they are then decisively moulded by early experience’.\(^9\) Delgado argues that an individual can actively filter, encourage and reject stimuli presented by their environment—the first step towards freedom.\(^9\)

Delgado recognises that although genetic selection is decisive in a human being’s physical formation, mental and emotional development depends significantly on environment. He writes: ‘without this nourishment [environmental input] the greatest potential genius—the geneticist’s dream child—would be an idiot’.\(^9\) This view implies that habits of thought are moulded by experience and that the human mind is shaped by the interpretation of one’s environment. On a social and environmental front, Delgado argues that although overcrowding and lack of food can drive a human being to antisocial behaviour, they need not necessarily lead to violence, as some of the most underprivileged societies are also the most peaceful.\(^9\) In contrast, in other settings, ‘a single incident or false rumour has mushroomed into riots involving thousands of people and resulting in massive property destruction and random killing’.\(^9\) Delgado argues that cultural imprinting has a remarkable capacity to produce radical behavioural changes.

For Delgado violence is a product of cultural environment, and this extreme form of aggression is quite distinct from both the self-expressive requirements of development

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\(^9\) Ibid.
\(^9\) Ibid.
\(^9\) Ibid.
\(^9\) Ibid.
\(^9\) Ibid.
and survival under normal conditions. He argues that although it is human nature to have certain basic instincts (for instance, to urinate when one’s bladder is full) one learns to control such instincts, hence what is distinct in the human quality of cerebralisation is control of behaviour through education. Delgado explains that extreme behavioural violence is the result of living in an environment that channels one’s potential for competitive energy into a destructive force. Consequently, freedom requires divorcing oneself from the binding nature of cultural imprinting that has manifested as destructive or life-negating tendencies.

7.8 Fear and ignorance—the root of the kleśas

When we consider how unsuccessful we have been at preventing suffering [the social source of suffering]...the suspicion arises that here too an element of unconquerable nature may be at work in the background—this time our own psyche.

Sigmund Freud

According to Taimni, avidyā is ‘the root of all kleśas and abhiniveśa is merely the fruit or the final expression of the chain of the causes and effects’. Yet one can clearly see how, in a real sense, fear is reflected in every part of the kleśa tree. It is hard to separate ignorance (nescience: uneducated, unaware) from fear (clinging to life), especially considering that the empirical data collected shows that irrational and unhelpful fear often spring from insecurity, or from what one does not know or cannot control. Fear is often the result of a perceived lack of power, of control, of comfort and of love. One could suggest that education, or lack of education (nescience), in terms of life skills and thought processes, determines how an individual perceives their circumstances. Irrationality is something that is bred from fear and both irrationality and fear perpetuate ignorance.

95 ibid.
96 ibid.
97 ibid. Sociobiology claims that there is a biological basis for all social behaviour. Sociobiology is often referred to as a deterministic view, one that creates an element of pre-destiny (see Chapter Eight).
99 Taimni, p. 151.
The participants in the empirical study describe unhelpful fears, such as fear of: abandonment, change, loss, social situations, uncertainty, confrontation, loneliness, poverty, rejection, relationships, death, letting go, as well as, and not least, fear of not being lovable or worthy. These are just a selection of the fears reflected by the participants. What is apparent from the evidence gathered is that at times through their lives, these fears have held the individual back, influenced their judgement, directed their choices and created habits of thought that have led them to dissatisfaction and perturbation: in short dominated their life experience. And all of these fears, they insistently say, contribute to a lack of wellbeing, implying that freedom, as a mind-state is conducive to wellbeing, enabling the individual to live a life that is unencumbered by the conditionality created by irrational fear.

Sanskrit scholar Barbara Stoler Miller claims that the ‘discipline of yoga’ generates a possibility for ‘complete psychological transformation’. In the next chapter I discuss the practical ways in which Yoga aims to achieve this transformation.

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Part Three—The subtleties of Yoga and thesis conclusion
CHAPTER EIGHT

The discipline of Yoga

Love, work and knowledge are the well-springs of our life. They should also govern it.

Wilhelm Reich

8.1 Discipline and restraint

Yoga encompasses a vast array of theories and practices. The popularity of Yoga in the West is a demonstration of its versatility. Schools of Yoga have evolved from different systems and traditions and they cover a diverse range of practice and theory. Many share a commonality of purpose, which is to restrain the modifications or fluctuations of the mind, something that can be achieved through Yogic processes that include personal discipline (niyama), social restraint (yama), physical postures (asana) and controlled breathing (pranayama). These aspects are four of Patanjali’s eight limbs of Yoga.

From a moral perspective, there is an obvious connection between yama and niyama and the concept of freedom (friendship and justice). Considering the responses gathered by the participants in the empirical study, it becomes apparent that their sense of being is mirrored through their relationships. The participants strongly emphasised the need to gain the love and approval of the other; they displayed a need for a sense of personal justice. Although the participants have successfully managed their lives in spite of hardship (some more than others), particularly in the way they have learned from their experiences, it is still obvious from the responses that their past lives on for them and continually features in their thought patterns or habits. However, those participants who

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2 Yama—moral observance. Yama, the first of Patanjali’s eight limbs consists of five attributes—ahimsa (non-harming to the self and to others), satya (truthfulness), asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (chastity/self-discipline) and aparigraha (greedlessness/non-grasping). Niyama—self-restraint. Niyama, the second limb taught by Patanjali, consists of five attributes—shauca (purity), santosha (contentment), svadhyaya (self-study), ishvara-pranidhana (devotion), tapas (austerity (strictness, seriousness and simplicity), severity or perfection of the body—usually means extreme practices such as fasting).
found an avenue of expression and have embraced various philosophical practices appear to have succeeded more than others to liberate themselves from their past.

Many of the participants have experienced Yoga in one form or another and have applauded its benefits, although only a few have embraced it with any real commitment. All of the participants acknowledged that how they felt and thought about their situations often resulted in physical outcomes. In the following sections I examine the connection between physiology and emotive-cognitive function—a process vital for understanding freedom.

8.2 Understanding energy—the freedom in being

*When the mind suffers, the body cries out.*

*Mario Puzo and Francis Ford Coppola*®

Life-energy is the heart of Yoga—the quality and flow of this energy is largely improved through awareness. To Yoga, energy is the source of all life. The word “energy” comes from the Greek word *energos*, meaning ‘being at work’, and ‘containing work’ or to ‘be active’. Energy is the source of existence: it is *life* at work. Yoga is concerned with the quality of energy’s becoming. To be in an active state is simply ‘to be’, ‘to exist’ or ‘to become’.® The word “being” has Sanskrit origins to *bhava*, which translates as ‘condition, nature, disposition or feeling’,® reflecting the connection between *being* and *feeling*. To be is simply the manifestation of energy; and to be emotional (as state of action) is to manifest the energy created by feeling.

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3 This is reflected by their comments regarding heartache and ill-treatment at the hands of others.
4 These are discussed as the chapter unfolds.
7 From the Medieval English word “been”.
8 Partridge, p. 42.
9 *ibid.*
Considering the bodymind reciprocity in emotional life, one can assume that thought not only influences feeling, it also directs how one feels (consciously and non-consciously). Human beings tend to acknowledge emotions by universal standards, although they differ in intensity and degree depending on the individual, emotions like love, hate, anger, joy and sadness, are common elements of being human. Emotions reflect one’s humanness and are, in essence, energy in motion: emotional reactions constantly distribute and redistribute energy within the bodymind.

As the results of the empirical study indicate, the nature of being tends to become habitual (conditionality). With every emotion experienced, a physiological response is usually initiated—sadness produces tears, joy a smile and anger, a frown. This expression is reflected in the chemistry of body. The feelings that accompany these expressions are considered to have a generality about them: a commonness, although the degree of experience and the intensity of experience is unique to the individual. Yoga respects this reciprocity of mind and body. It recognises that emotions are learned responses, as the theory of the klesas confirms, and are often passed down from generation to generation. Yoga also accepts that emotional responses can be un-learned or restrained through the vehicle of thought and through physical practices. To understand how this is so requires a look into the biology of the stress response.

The technical term for physiological arousal is stress. In The stress of life, Selye describes stress as the ‘nonspecific response of the body to any demand’ (the general adaptation syndrome). One could associate un-freedom to the prolonged experience of this fight or flight response: When one’s emotional response remains unrelieved and involuntary, the body’s reaction continues long after the event has passed. As discussed earlier, the first law of thermodynamics demonstrates that energy cannot be destroyed: ‘whenever a certain amount of energy disappears in a system, an equivalent amount of

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11 A phrase often used to describe emotion. In fact Wilhelm Reich referred to emotion in this way in Ether, God and Devil: Cosmic Superimposition, Doubleday Canada Ltd., Toronto, 1973, p. 54.
12 The duality of emotion—cognition and physiological response.
13 Note, this may not always be the case as some individuals can hide their feelings and not express them overtly.
15 The meaning of the word “stress” has undergone transformation over the decades but initially it simply meant having a physical reaction to a demand.
energy must appear elsewhere. Like Freud’s idea about the way psychic energy organises the personality, the Yogic model suggests that energy deployment is integral to the human bio-system, and its operation influences one’s potential for health and wellbeing on all levels. When it comes to un-freedom, energy distribution remains unexpressed and pressure builds to a point of eruption. Excessive emotional reactions (kleśas) have the power to change one’s physical and psychological status therefore, conditionality is a psychophysiological process.

As previously discussed, in Yoga tradition prāṇa moves with the breath throughout the bodymind and by using the practices and techniques of Hatha Yoga prāṇa flow is enhanced: this is achieved through a combination of movement and breath. Although prāṇa is not identical to the breath, according to Stiles, ‘it is most readily discovered through the discipline of respiratory function’. There are a number of subtleties expressed through the breath and Yoga uses inhalation, exhalation and pauses at the end of the inward and outward breath to initiate changes in the body and mind: using the breath to restore balance. Breathing is a process that reflects how a person feels. A physical reaction to pain will cause the breath to halt temporarily, a shock will cause a gasp, a tense situation will often result in the breath being held, constant tension often results in a continuum of shallow breathing and a panic attack makes the breath exaggerated and laboured. In contrast, relaxed breathing is slow and steady, and unlaboured. The breath has an important connection to freedom, for it has a significant effect on wellbeing, and as the empirical data reflects, wellbeing is intrinsically linked to emotional life.

Yoga’s theory proposes that when one experiences tension in the bodymind the flow of one’s vital force is restricted, this ultimately causes blocks that lead to dis-ease. With this in mind, in order to understand how Yoga can assist a person’s health and wellbeing and help them overcome conditionality and achieve freedom, it is important to examine

17 JP McEvoy & O Zarate, Introducing quantum theory, R Appignanesi (ed.), Icon Book, Cambridge, 2006, p. 17. Scientist James Prescott Joule (1818-89) discovered that a quantity of heat can be equated to mechanical work; heat converts to work (action) and must therefore be a form of energy.
18 Note, the psychophysical mind has a fixed amount of this psychic energy
21 ibid.
22 ibid.
the physiology of Yoga in more depth. For instance, when prāṇa is restricted, due to the tension experienced, there is a negative impact on the nervous system; here energy blocks lead to dis-ease because of the effect this blockage has on the immune system. Yoga assists with the release and flow of this vital energy to achieve wellbeing. To understand this further requires a basic knowledge of the concept of the kośas and doṣas.

The word “kośa” translates as ‘sheath’. According to Yoga teacher and Yoga therapist Leigh Blashki from the Australian Institute of Yoga and Yoga Therapy, there are five sheaths or planes of existence associated with the human body. The physical body ‘has subtle bodies of finer substance surrounding it (etheric sheaths enveloping the body)’. In Yogic tradition, each individual has the ability to function on ‘any number of these planes’. It is the energy-body appropriate to each plane (sheath) that is known as a kośa. The kośas are the planes in which consciousness expresses itself—consciousness permeates through (and requires) nourishment, energy, thought, knowledge and peace/joy. The five kośas are:

- **Anna-maya-kosha** (the food sheath): the body’s physical substance; relates to the five elements (earth, water, fire, air and space [or ether]);
- **Prāṇa-maya-kosha** (vital energy): infusing life into the physical body—this is the domain of sensory experience;
- **Mano-maya-kosha** (mental/psychological): experienced via the thoughts (linked to sub-conscious); constructed from lower nature (manas)—associated with destructive emotions such as anger, doubt, lust, depression, etc;

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24 ibid.
25 Some of the information gathered in this chapter physiology comes from the ancient Indian tradition of Vedie medicine known as Ayurveda.
26 Similar to Reich’s theories discussed in Chapter Five linking the bio-energy of the human body to pathology, Michel Foucault also suggests the same, he writes: “Passion or Pathos is the root of pathology”.
27 Sūtras 2:49—2:55 discusses how Prāṇāyāma practice (controlled breathing techniques) works to still the modifications of the mind and to enhance the flow of prāṇa.
29 ibid.
• *Vijnana-maya-kosha* (intellectual/body of knowledge): formed from higher knowledge; associated with the concept of *Buddhi* (the higher mind)—the faculty of reason;

• *Ananda-maya-kosha* (spiritual): ānanda translates as joy—through this plane we experience joy, happiness, serenity, peace and bliss.  

When it comes to the health and vitality of the bodymind, balance, awareness and flow are imperative components of each plane of existence. Even if one disagrees with this more esoteric understanding it is a reasonable assumption that the essential elements are all a part of the human condition and therefore must have a strong bearing on freedom within the context of this thesis.

### 8.3 Yoga’s nervous system

Just as Western biology recognises the need to keep the nervous system in balance, Yogic tradition is also focused on balance. In Yoga, the nervous system is expressed through the nādiṣ, which are the manifestation of prāṇa-maya-kosha. The nādiṣ are a network of subtle energy channels that sustain the physical body. There are approximately 72,000 nādiṣ in the body, which include three primary channels, and energy centres known as chakras. The seven main chakras (Sanskrit for wheel, from the root car, ‘to move’) are psycho-energetic centres and they are arranged vertically along the axial channel or spine.

According to Feuerstein, the central channel—the *susumṇā* (most gracious channel)—runs along the spinal cord and serves as an axis for the other two primary channels, which wind around the *susumṇā*, and these are called *idā* and *pingalā*. As discussed in Chapter Five, the *idā* current of this life force corresponds to the parasympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system on a physical level. *Idā* represents the left

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30 Blashki.
33 *G Feuerstein, The Yoga tradition*, Hohm Press, Arizona, 1998, p. 469. In yogic tradition, it is said that there is a serpent-like channel of energy entwined around the spine called the *Kundalinī*. It is only when each chakra is clear (unblocked) that the flow of energy can be completed along the *Kundalinī*, leading us to the highest level of consciousness.
34 Feuerstein, *The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga*, p. 496.
side of the body: it relates to the female, passive, cool energy (moon). This is the process where the body is restored to homeostasis in the event of a nervous disturbance.\textsuperscript{35} Pingalā corresponds to the sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system which prepares the body for fight or flight in the event of a threat. Pingalā represents the right side of the body and relates to the male, active, hot energy (sun).

The fight or flight response has a global effect on the body’s feedback loops because during this process the homeostasis of the body is disrupted on a multitude of levels.\textsuperscript{36} As the body prepares to fight or flee in response to a threat, it changes as follows:

- Increased heart rate and force of beat;
- Constriction of blood vessels of most viscera and skin;
- Dilation of blood vessels of the heart, lungs, brain and skeletal muscles;
- Contraction of spleen;
- Conversion of glycogen into glucose in the liver;
- Sweating;
- Dilation of airways;
- Decrease in digestive activities;
- Water retention and elevated blood pressure.\textsuperscript{37}

According to Blashki, ‘the practical techniques of Yoga involve awakening the energy of the subtle body or mind called the kūṇḍalinī (coiled or serpent energy/power)’.\textsuperscript{38} This happens when balance is found in the solar and lunar nāḍīs.\textsuperscript{39} Theologist David Gordon White describes the kūṇḍalinī this way:

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{35} GJ Tortora & B Derrickson, \textit{Principles of anatomy and physiology}, John Wiley and Sons Ltd., Danvers, Massachusetts, 2006, p. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{36} \textit{ibid}. This feedback system (or loop) is a cycle of events in which the status of a body condition is monitored, evaluated, changed, reevaluated, and so on. Each monitored variable, such as body temperature, blood pressure, or blood glucose level, is termed a \textit{controlled condition}. Any disruption that changes a controlled condition is called a stimulus.
\item \textsuperscript{37} Tortora and Derrickson, p. 652.
\item \textsuperscript{38} Blashki.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Feuerstein, \textit{The Shambhala encyclopedia of Yoga}, p. 496.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
In **hatha yoga**, the **kundalini** serpent is...the fire that is latent...once awoken, she is the spark that bursts into manifestation through the “churning” of yogic practice.\(^{40}\)

As discussed earlier, the psychophysical health and wellbeing of the individual depends on the dynamic distribution of energy within the system.\(^{41}\) The mind cannot create nor destroy this energy but only transfer it from one kind of function to another,\(^{42}\) a transfer that can be constructive or destructive (helpful or unhelpful) depending on its nature. This approach suggests that an individual’s personality is “determined” by the changes, balance, and interaction of this psychic energy within the mind and that imbalance in this energy causes instability.

Again, Freud ascertains that in a person’s inner life certain forces actively oppose the conscious realisation of what is latent, thus causing repression, unconscious thoughts that remain inaccessible to the consciousness. This ‘resistance’\(^{43}\) manifests in the body as tension—it is the ‘tendency to strive against the transition of repressed thoughts, feelings or wishes from the unconscious to consciousness’.\(^{44}\) An imbalance of one’s energy system ultimately leads to disharmony, something reflected in Freud’s theory as ‘phobias’ (fears or neurotic anxiety).\(^{45}\) The id strives to discharge pent-up tension, excitation or energy and return the organism to homeostasis. Hence, one’s psychological development (freedom) is linked to the degree of dissatisfaction or discomfort experienced when tension is not discharged.\(^{46}\) The goal of Yoga is to overcome a sense of alienation and to unify one’s being: stimulating the essential life-energy and relieving the build up of tension that depletes the health-giving properties of the **bodymind**: tension that keeps the body and mind in a state of un-freedom.

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\(^{41}\) AM Colman, *Dictionary of psychology*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 620. Freud contributed to the concept of psychosomatic illness, which “relates to certain organic disorders, such as hypertension, that are believed to be caused or aggravated by psychological factors such as stress”.


\(^{43}\) Colman, p. 652.

\(^{44}\) Freud, *Beyond the pleasure principle*, p. 106.

\(^{45}\) Colman, p. 652.


*ibid.*, pp. 74-75.
8.4 Homeostasis—balancing the life-force

Although science can measure energy in many forms, it generally remains invisible to the eye.\textsuperscript{47} Physical and emotional energy is something produced, received and experienced through internal and external exchanges within the body and the mind, and as already discussed, this energy can be a helpful or unhelpful in terms of health and wellbeing, resulting in a state of freedom or un-freedom. Tortora and Derrickson claim that disruptions in homeostasis necessitate corrective cycles—a feedback system—in order for the body to be restored to a condition supporting health and wellbeing.\textsuperscript{48} This feedback system is the process in which the body regulates its own internal environment:

A feedback system [or loop] is a cycle of events in which the status of a body condition is monitored, evaluated, changed, re-monitored, re-evaluated, and so on. Each monitored variable, such as body temperature, blood pressure, or blood glucose level, is termed a controlled condition. Any disruption that changes a controlled condition is called a stimulus.\textsuperscript{49}

The three basic components of a feedback system are receptors, a control centre and effectors. The cycle begins with stimulus disrupting homeostasis by either increasing or decreasing a controlled condition (such as in the case of a fear response), which is monitored by a receptor that sends input (either nerve impulses or chemical signals) to a control centre.\textsuperscript{50} The control centre receives this input and then provides output (again either nerve impulses or chemical signals) to effectors that bring about change or response. This then alters the controlled condition.\textsuperscript{51} Homeostasis only returns when the response brings the controlled condition back to normal (note, it is important to re-state that homeostasis is profoundly affected by the breath).\textsuperscript{52} For instance:

\textsuperscript{47} Nevertheless, we often see its effects visually as manifested by body language—for example, agitated movement, a nervous tick, a slumped stance or a shaky voice. These are all demonstrations of nervous energy experienced in the bodymind.
\textsuperscript{48} Tortora & Derrickson, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p. 1. Stimulus is also referred to as stress.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., p. iv.
The brain [a control centre] sets in motion a range of values within which a controlled condition should be maintained, evaluates the input it receives from receptors, and generates output commands when they are needed. Output from the control center typically occurs as nerve impulses. The brain [a control centre] sets in motion a range of values within which a controlled condition should be maintained, evaluates the input it receives from receptors, and generates output commands when they are needed. Output from the control center typically occurs as nerve impulses.

There are two types of feedback loop. A positive feedback loop strengthens and reinforces the change in the body’s controlled condition, whereas, a negative feedback loop reverses the change. When stability in the bodily processes is disturbed, dis-ease or disorder occurs. The table below demonstrates the flow of emotional energy from the perspective of freedom and conditionality.

Table 7. This table was developed by the author to demonstrate the mind-body processes of freedom and conditionality (within this context the term reflexive is akin to apperception—reflecting awareness and clarity).

External prompters or life experiences lead to internal prompters, sensory and cognitive experience. Internal prompters do not require an external source, for they can be created from conscious and non-conscious sources (repressed memories). In this model, perception can take two paths, and the path taken will result in a particular psycho-

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53 Tortori & Derrickson, p. 9.
54 ibid., pp. 10-11. This is when the homeostatic imbalance is moderate, when it is severe death may result.
physiological response. It should also be noted that the body can receive both a sympathetic signal and a parasympathetic signal at one time, so this response is quite complex. Nevertheless, on a simplistic level, path one leads to conditionality, which results in the sympathetic response of the autonomic nervous system (the fight or flight response) where the body prepares itself to take action or flee (naturally, when on a purely emotional level the fight or flight response is experienced by the degree of emotional impact).\(^{55}\) Path two leads to freedom, which results in the parasympathetic response of the autonomic nervous system. This state, sometimes described in Western terms as rest and digest, allows the body to return to homeostasis: maintaining balance and reverting back to the natural functions of a resting state. (This is the state meditation aims to sustain.)

Depending on the cognitive-physiological path taken, the resulting emotions can either be troublesome (reactive) or reflexive/apperceptive (aware). These emotional states feed back into the process as internal prompters. Yoga practice is aimed at producing or maintaining the parasympathetic response, thereby restoring balance in the body and mind and further creating a reflexive process of emotional experience.

On a chemical level, both psychological and physical health and wellbeing (homeostasis) depend on a healthy exchange in ‘energy currency’, as every chemical function is fuelled by an exchange in energy.\(^{56}\) Like the psychical energy exchanged in the psyche, the body is also made up of an energy system referred to as ATP (adenosine tri-phosphate), which is the currency of a living system.\(^{57}\) There are ‘two principal forms of energy’—potential energy or kinetic energy.\(^{58}\) Tortora and Derrickson describe it thus:

> Potential energy [is] energy stored by matter due to its position. Kinetic energy [is] energy associated with matter in motion. For example, the energy stored in water behind a dam or in a person poised to jump down some steps is potential energy. When the gates of the dam are opened or the person jumps, potential energy is converted to kinetic energy. Chemical energy is a form of potential energy that is stored in the bonds of

\(^{55}\) Note, this is an instinctive reaction, meant to initiate a process or action as a way of avoiding harm.

\(^{56}\) Tortora & Derrickson, p. 55.

\(^{57}\) *ibid.*, p. 55.

\(^{58}\) *ibid.*, p. 37.
compounds and molecules. The total amount of energy present at the beginning and end of a chemical reaction is the same.\textsuperscript{59}

As I discussed earlier, the human body’s working system is made up of feedback loops. Organs such as the brain, heart and kidneys all act as control centres that receive input (receptors) and determine output (effectors).\textsuperscript{60} As seen with Freud’s energy system of the psyche and with the Yogic theory of prāṇa, the bodymind is like a processing plant constantly shifting energy where it is needed. In a healthy body and a free mind this energy is balanced and moves freely allowing. In contrast, an unhealthy way of being keeps the individual caught up in an unhelpful feedback loop.

Yoga claims that prāṇa’s fields of energy (such as chakras) are like ‘pools of life energy, vibrating at different rates’.\textsuperscript{61} Such energy can be understood in Western science through its discovery of field theory: an electromagnetic energy that gives scientific credibility to the human aura. Scientists can now measure electromagnetic fields with a device called SQUID (Superconducting Quantum Interference Device). SQUID measures the magnetic fields around an object. Drs. Burr and Northrop at Yale University used SQUID to measure the energy field around a plant seed.\textsuperscript{62} By examining this energy field, the doctors could tell how healthy a plant would be if grown from that particular seed. Hence, the quality of this field measures the potential quality of life. Yoga’s meditative and relaxing practice affects the status of this potential life-energy. Instead of being stored as an anxiety driven tension, one’s potential energy becomes balanced and health-producing, leading to a healthier expression of kinetic energy.

As the general adaptation syndrome demonstrates, the human bodymind has its own unique way of reacting to stress, and these processes are fuelled by the tension and release of energy within the human bio-system. Selye differentiates between the harmful and unpleasant state of ‘distress’ (bad stress) and one’s motivational reaction to a challenge: ‘cushress’ (good stress).\textsuperscript{63} He claims that the intensity to which a person responds to stress determines whether it is good or bad (helpful or unhelpful):

\textsuperscript{59} ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} ibid., p. 1.
\textsuperscript{61} Feuerstein, The Yoga tradition, p. 469.
physically and psychologically. On a practical level, this concept relates to American neuroscientist Candace Pert’s theory of emotional chemistry. In *Molecules of emotion*, Pert discusses the ‘chemical substrates of emotion’, linking emotions to chemicals in the body, highlighting the reciprocal relationship between the chemicals produced in the body and the emotions one experiences.

### 8.5 The stress response

As established, Yoga and Western theories of emotion acknowledge that emotions have two components: physiological and cognitive. Western science claims that the depth of emotional feelings directly relates to increases in hormones (adrenaline) in the body. When experiencing the stress response adrenaline floods the body and this increases the intensity of the feeling. Under perception of a threat nerve impulses coming from the hypothalamus to the sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system initiate the flight or fight response, preparing the body for immediate physical activity.\(^\text{65}\) (The hypothalamus is an essential part of the body’s endocrine system, the primary function of which is homeostasis.\(^\text{66}\)) The second phase of this process is the resistance reaction. Even if the fight or flight response is short lived, the resistance reaction is a longer-lasting response. This process leads to a stimulation of the adrenal cortex and results in an increase in the release of cortisol. The resistance stage can persist long after the stressor has been removed (a stressor is the name given to any stimulus that produces a stress response).\(^\text{67}\)

When the body remains in the resistance stage for too long it enters a state of exhaustion, a prolonged resistance phase resulting from unresolved tension.\(^\text{68}\) High levels of cortisol created in the resistance stage lead to muscle wastage, failure of pancreatic beta cells and ulceration of the gastrointestinal tract, as well as suppression of

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\(^{63}\) ibid., p. 74. “Dis” is Latin for bad and “Eu” is Latin for good.

\(^{64}\) Pert, p. 25.

\(^{65}\) Tortora & Derrickson, p. 652.

\(^{66}\) It is interesting to note that the para-sympathetic and sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system is also presented in Yoga through *idā* and *pingalā* (two of the prime *nadis* – see glossary for details).

\(^{67}\) Tortora & Derrickson, p. 652.

\(^{68}\) *ibid.*
the immune system.\textsuperscript{69} Cortisol has an immunosuppressive action, and it also increases blood pressure and blood sugar levels. Although cortisol does have a part to play in healthy living, very large amounts can lead to dis-ease.

Higher and more prolonged levels of cortisol in the bloodstream (like those associated with chronic stress) have been shown to have other negative effects. These include impaired cognitive performance, suppressed thyroid function, blood sugar imbalances such as hyperglycaemia, decreased bone density, decrease in muscle tissue, higher blood pressure, lowered immunity and inflammatory responses in the body, and increased abdominal fat, which is associated with a greater amount of health problems than fat deposited in other areas of the body.\textsuperscript{70} These altered functions in the body create a tension that reduces the body’s ability to function in a normal healthful way. Impaired cognitive function may be linked back to a tendency to experience the effects of conditionality, which see the ability to reason hindered and minor psychological irritants exacerbated.

Yoga’s tension-release strategies counteract the effects of the fight or flight response. Yoga’s physical and subtle practices, such as posture work, relaxation, controlled breathing and meditation, initiate the relaxation response;\textsuperscript{71} during this process adrenaline is regulated and mal-adaptive emotions become less intense, inducing the parasympathetic division of autonomic nervous system (this process is directed by the hypothalamus):\textsuperscript{72} this restores all bodily functions to balance.

Emotions are of course a part of being human. Emotions reflect the helpful and the unhelpful aspects of “humanness”. The way one emotes has much to do with the way one thinks and how one thinks has a dramatic effect on how one feels. As a natural human experience emotions involve a complex process of thinking/feeling/reacting. What manifests as one’s personal reality is a product of the distribution of energy within the bodymind and reciprocally, how one presents on a psycho-physiological level is reliant on this energy distribution. The multi-faceted processes of Yoga practice reduce

\textsuperscript{69} Tortora and Derrickson, Principles of Anatomy and Physiology, p. 654.
\textsuperscript{70} ibid., p. 405.
\textsuperscript{71} ibid. Again, the relaxation response is induced by the parasympathetic division of the central nervous system, whereas the fight or flight response is induced by the sympathetic division of the central nervous system.
\textsuperscript{72} Tortora & Derrickson, p. 652.
the impact of conditionality by returning the *bodymind* to a state of homeostasis, which by its very nature diminishes one’s tendencies towards anxiety. Evidence of this has been validated by the responses of the research participants who undertook the questionnaires and interviews. Participants describe how they felt a particular physical reaction or condition when experiencing deep emotions. These conditions include headaches, depression, anxiety and pain. The side-effects of unhelpful emotions include:

- Sleeplessness;
- Indigestive/stomach problems;
- Diarrhea;
- Laryngitis;
- Chronic insomnia.

Participants highlighted feelings that include:

- Tense;
- Sick in stomach;
- Sweaty;
- Shaky.

Such findings demonstrate a clear connection between emotional and physical wellbeing. Participants who used a relaxation process (approximately 80% of which related to Yoga techniques) declare that they were able to achieve a feeling of wellbeing (restore homeostasis) through the relaxation process.

### 8.6 The three guṇas

Freud introduces three stages of the personality. Patañjali’s discusses three aspects of the mind, while Maclean discusses the three phases of evolution. Likewise, Yoga’s building blocks of nature are also represented by three aspects: the three *guṇas*. According to Feuerstein, the *guṇas* are three distinct power potentials that provide the
structure of the universal energy field (primary-constituents). The guṇas are ‘the three classes of forces that make up the energy field of prakṛti’ (nature/matter). Patañjali (Śūtra 2:10) relates the guṇas to the yogin’s personal involution (return to origin). In other words, once the fluctuations are restricted the primary-constituents flow back into the cosmic matrix (pratiprasava—counterflow or process of involution). Although portrayed as a spiritual process, this also reflects the practical aspects of nature—the cause and effect of nature’s cycle of existence—the birth, death and rebirth of nature. In his analysis of Śūtra 2:18, Feuerstein suggests that:

The three principal modes of manifestation (ṣīla) are a clear reference to the interdependent activity of the primary-constituents (guṇa). ‘Brightness’ corresponds with sattva, ‘activity’ with rajas and ‘inertia’ with tamas.

In his book Yoga: for body, breath and mind; a guide to personal integration, Indian Yoga teacher and author A. G. Mohan claims that the ancient Indian system of medicine known as Ayurveda is based on balancing the three guṇas: brightness, activity and inertia. These aspects are sometimes referred to as the ‘three characteristics of the mind’. During the course of the day one’s energetic system responds to surrounding stimulus, and one perceives according to which of the guṇas is the most dominant in one’s mind. On a practical level, this concept is similar to Pert’s theory of emotional biology, which is something Yoga physiology reflects by the varying frequency and dispositions of the guṇas. Transformation, or change itself, is the interaction of the guṇas.

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74 ibid., p.16. To Feuerstein, the practicalities of Patañjali’s Yoga necessitate that īśvara, like puṇḍara, ‘stands for a certain class of experience’.
75 Feuerstein, The Yoga-Śūtra of Patañjali, p.16.
76 ibid., p. 71.
78 ibid.
79 ibid.
80 Pert, p. 25. The chemical component of the bodymind is also manifested or expressed via the kośas.
81 Mohan, p. 11.
Where Yoga links one’s personality traits with the guṇas, similarly Pert recognises the link between one’s physiological makeup and one’s psychological state, theorising that “evil” itself may one day be explained in terms of bad chemistry. Pert connects pain and suffering to the mind’s ability to produce ‘good’ or ‘bad’ chemical reactions or feelings, suggesting that the feelings created from one’s consciousness interface with a complex, universal information system, a system that exists on a biological and subtle level.\footnote{\textit{ibid.}, p. 271.}

This line of reasoning links back to biology’s feedback loop and Yoga’s nāḍīs. In essence, one’s consciousness is connected to one’s biological reality: thought patterns cause different biological reactions in the body, producing chemicals that alter one’s physicality. Like Yoga, Pert maintains that these effects are reversible: not only can one’s consciousness produce chemicals in the body the physical production of chemicals can alter one’s consciousness.\footnote{Pert, p. 261.}

\section*{8.7 The chemistry of emotions}

According to Pert, each individual is connected, physically and psychically, to an energy, or substance, contained in all things: an energy that has infinite potential.\footnote{Feuerstein, \textit{The Yoga tradition}, p. 133.} Although Pert’s approach is extremely scientific, she ultimately relates this energy to spirituality, and in so doing equating it to the life force of many Eastern philosophies (such as \textit{prāṇa} or \textit{chi}).\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 331.} Pert’s theories reflect Feuerstein’s view that this life force is not only accessible through consciousness but it is also consciousness itself, and can therefore be altered by one’s experiences.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}.} Similar to Reich, Pert’s theories claim that disease is the result of a blockage to the flow of the necessary chemicals (energy) needed to keep the body healthy.

To Pert, the mind and body are very much one entity and she argues that consciousness could be described as the force or power that drives the \textit{bodysmind}.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}.} Evidence of the human body’s innate information process is provided by its multitude of functions. The human \textit{bodysmind} can digest food, pump blood, produce hormones, develop an embryo, all while composing a symphony and fighting an infection. Pert describes the human
bodymind as a biological network of systems that are interconnected and consciousness as something that continues to change and grow.\textsuperscript{88} She supports her theory by acknowledging other theorists such as scientist Robert Gottesman, particularly his claim that everything one thinks and does in life is subject to feedback. Each step forward is altered or judged by the present status and altered again according to the feedback of information: resulting in a changed thought.\textsuperscript{89}

Every time the individual experiences something new, the information is fed back into the pool of the individual’s information which changes the direction of the future thoughts—just as the chaos theory suggests that the wings of a butterfly fluttering in one part of the world can cause a tornado in another, for every ripple of thought there is a consequence, or an outcome, that brings about change.\textsuperscript{90} Gottesman suggests that, ‘we don’t have a consciousness, but consciousness has us’.\textsuperscript{91} Pert claims that one’s consciousness can be altered by the ability to access information: through channelling Gottesman’s “info-realm”.\textsuperscript{92}

According to Pert, one’s physical health is just a manifestation of the bodymind’s response to thought.\textsuperscript{93} Every thought one has produces an accompanying emotion that triggers the release of ligands (information molecules).\textsuperscript{94} Ligands bind to the cell’s receptors and pass information into the cell. These ligands can be in the form of antigens (toxins, viruses or bacteria), drugs, hormones, peptides, neuropeptides and/or neurotransmitters. Ligands are vehicles of communication between cells and organs in the body.\textsuperscript{95} Pert identifies neuropeptides and their receptors as molecules that are the biochemicals of emotion,\textsuperscript{96} claiming that these molecules are in constant

\textsuperscript{87} Pert, p. 184.
\textsuperscript{88} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{89} \textit{ibid.}, p. 258.
\textsuperscript{91} Pert, p. 259.
\textsuperscript{92} \textit{ibid.}, p. 259. Inforealm is a term coined by Pert to describe the feedback processes.
\textsuperscript{93} \textit{ibid.}, p. 262.
\textsuperscript{94} \textit{ibid.}, p. 144, 184-185.
\textsuperscript{95} \textit{ibid.}, p. 184.
\textsuperscript{96} Pert, p. 25. Neuropeptides are neuronal secretions; informational substances. Receptors receive information into the cell. Pert uses this analogy: ‘a cell is an engine that drives life, receptors are buttons that push the control panel of the engine and the peptide (a kind of ligand) is the finger that pushes the button’.

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communication with the immune system.\textsuperscript{97} Thus, what one thinks can manifest in either health or dis-ease, depending on the chemicals released into the system.

In Pert’s language, consciousness does not only exist in a mental/spiritual realm, it also exists in the physical body on a molecular level. The \textit{bodymind} connection is a continuum: one’s emotions affect the state of tension in the body and equally, physical tension affects emotions. Pert’s theory suggests that emotions are influenced by the information one accesses, she adds that the circuitry in which one’s tendencies arise is a malleable system. Pert explains thus:

When a receptor is flooded with a ligand (information molecule), it changes the cell membrane in such a way that the probability of an electrical impulse travelling across the membrane where the receptor resides is facilitated or inhibited, \textbf{thereafter affecting the choice of neuronal circuitry that will be used}. These recent discoveries are important for appreciating how memories are stored not only in the brain, but in a \textit{psychosomatic network} extending into the body…The decision about what becomes a thought rising to consciousness and what remains an undigested thought pattern buried at a deeper level in the body is mediated by receptors…memory is encoded or stored at the receptor level [which] means that memory processes are emotion-driven and unconscious (but, like other receptor-mediated processes, can sometimes be made conscious).\textsuperscript{98}

Where Pert refers to behaviourism in biology, Pavlovian conditioning refers to behaviourism in psychology; by definition, ‘conditioning is the way in which new connections between stimulus and response are learned and forms basic learning patterns’.\textsuperscript{99} Yoga claims, and the empirical data suggests, that the way in which one’s circuitry is programmed can be changed via the body or via the mind, as ultimately what affects one affects the other. This is why Yoga’s \textit{āsana} (postures), \textit{dhyāna} (meditation) and \textit{prāṇāyāma} (controlled breathing), and the like, work with the integrated \textit{bodymind}. At this point one might well ask for a closer examination of Yoga processes by which one changes one’s circuitry? As reviewed early in this chapter there are various practices that enable the \textit{bodymind} to claim its freedom, such as physical practice and breathing techniques that initiate the relaxation response. But in particular,

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{97} Pert, p. 189.
\textsuperscript{98} \textit{ibid.}, p. 143.
\end{flushright}
modern scientific research has discovered a link between control of the emotions and meditation.

8.8 Meditation—the power of silence

The experience of many hours of meditation is not easy to articulate. No matter how one attempts to articulate the experience associated with meditation (or other forms of Yoga practice), words inevitably sound contrived, exaggerated or unreal. Meditation is aimed at achieving a level of Self-realisation (Enlightenment). One could describe Self-realisation as:

- Reaching the pinnacle of meditative practice;
- Achieving freedom;
- Being totally devoid of fear;
- Intuiting beyond mundane reality;
- Knowing the peace and stillness of silence;
- A feeling of connectedness, or simply
- Bliss.

Although accurate, the descriptions offered above create a certain paradox as meditation, itself, is simple yet complex. Larson explains Yoga’s liberation, which is something achieved through meditation and other Yogic practices, as the individual gaining access to ‘intuitive discrimination’ (which Sāṅkhya Yoga describes as the puruṣa itself). Larson writes thus:

One dwells in a pure, translucent consciousness, but this consciousness is radically emptied of all content. It is, thus, a kind of pure, translucent emptiness which transcends everything in the manifest and unmanifest world.100

In a study carried out by a diverse group of medical professionals specialising in neurology and headed by Sara Lazar of Harvard University, it was concluded that long-
time meditation results in changes in the brain’s physical structure. The results were published in the paper: ‘Meditation experience is associated with increased cortical thickness’, in which the following conclusion was reached:

"Our initial results suggest that meditation may be associated with structural changes in areas of the brain that are important for sensory, cognitive and emotional processing. The data further suggests that meditation may impact age-related declines in cortical structure."

This data supports the view that Yoga, in particular meditation, has the ability to alter an individual’s consciousness. This is explained thus:

"It has been hypothesized that by becoming increasingly more aware of sensory stimuli during formal practice, the meditation practitioner is gradually able to use this self-awareness to more successfully navigate through potentially stressful encounters that arise throughout the day. This eastern philosophy of emotion dovetails with Damasio’s theory that connections between sensory cortices and emotion cortices play a crucial role in processing of emotionally salient material and adaptive decision making."

The Harvard research referred to above reflects the aim of Yoga: helping the individual to break free of controlling and unhelpful emotions and in doing so balance the bodymind’s bio-energy. Yoga’s breathing techniques, and meditative and physical practices, allow the body to relieve any physical or psychic tension amassed as a result of unhelpful emotion responses. Once free of the controlling influences of wayward emotions, and the tension they produce, the individual is better able to make accurate observations. Yoga teacher and author T.K.V. Desikachar writes:

"The ultimate goal of yoga is to always observe things accurately, and therefore never act in a way that will make us regret our actions later."

To summarise, a classic dictionary definition explains emotion as: ‘a disturbance or strong manifestation’ of the conscious or non-conscious mind, a process that is

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100 GJ Larson, Classical Sāṃkhya an interpretation of its history and meaning, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1979, p. 208.
102 ibid.
103 ibid.
‘typically involuntary and one which often leads to complex bodily changes and particular forms of behaviour’.\textsuperscript{104} Yoga’s freedom comes through its ability to de-fuse this process: break the circuit of conditionality. In the next chapter I summarise and conclude this thesis.

CHAPTER NINE

The responsibility of freedom

9.1 Attenuating the kleśas

In this concluding chapter I summarise and review my findings. To encapsulate, the Yoga- Sūtras focus on a simple premise, which Stoler Miller describes below:

Yoga is the cessation of the turnings of thought
When thought ceases, the spirit stands in its true
identity as observer to the world.
Otherwise, the observer identifies with the turnings of thought.

Barbara Stoler Miller

This premise reflects the purpose of Yoga: to achieve freedom. Conditionality, ‘the turning of thoughts’, stands in the way of this freedom. Self torment (Reich’s ‘emotional plague’) is at the heart of conditionality. The empirical data collected suggests that unhelpful cycles of thought are fuelled by, and continue to produce unhelpful emotional reactions (kleśas), indicating that quality of life is determined by how one receives, understands and processes information. Participant 0032 said in response to the questionnaire and interview:

I was an only child. I had an alcoholic and violent father. He was physically abusive. One time he held me by the ankles and bashed my head against the floor (I was about 8). I was frightened of him...He made me feel ashamed...I was embarrassed [in front of other people] because of his drinking. I think I withdrew because of this feeling of embarrassment. It has

2 ibid.
3 ibid.
made my ability to be emotionally “open” difficult. I find it hard to express my feelings of love towards my kids.\textsuperscript{6}

The abuse experienced by this participant affected his ability to show his feelings towards his loved ones. He says that he is conscious of how he behaves but is unable to change his way of being. Patañjali’s theories suggest that this participant’s way of being is burdened by the seeds of the past. Taimni’s analogy of a tree suggests that any seeds left in the mind can grow into a new tree of personal torment. The only way to completely stop this growth is to scorch (eradicate) the seeds and render them incapable of germinating.\textsuperscript{7} But even the Indian sages agree that this is a difficult task, a more achievable goal is to reduce them to a weak state.

My research and the empirical data collected suggest that Yoga’s four afflictions need to be understood and controlled if freedom is to be achieved. The four afflictions—change, anxiety, habituation and inner conflict—were demonstrated, in one way or another, by the participant’s responses to the survey. These aspects of their emotional lives link back to a sense of fear or personal injustice, as many explained how they felt unloved, guilty, unworthy and afraid. Most of the participants connected emotional perturbation back to their childhood development; others identified specific events in their lives as a pivotal cause of emotional angst. In each case there was a common thread: the other. The way a person’s sense of self is mirrored by their relationships has a significant effect on their emotional wellbeing, and unless kleśas are attenuated, or made dormant, they stand to threaten the quality of these relationships.

In The integrity of the Darsana: reconsideration of Classical Yoga, Ian Whicher maintains that kleśas can be reduced to a dormant or attenuated state through the process of involution (pratiprasava).\textsuperscript{8} Whicher explains that one can apply an ‘epistemological’ rather than an ‘ontological’ emphasis to pratiprasava. He describes it as a process ‘that involves cognitive and moral cleansing or purification of the body and mind...leading to a state of liberating knowledge’.\textsuperscript{9} Pratiprasava is achieved through

\textsuperscript{6} Deakin University research questionnaire and follow-up interviews carried out 2009-2012, participant 0032.
\textsuperscript{9} ibid.
the practice of Kriyā-Yoga—austerity, self-study and surrender. The preliminary aspects of Kriyā-Yoga are achieved using tools such as dhārāna (contemplation), dhyāna (meditation) and samādhi (one-pointedness), which constitute Samyoga (all of which relate to meditation). Collectively, such processes assist the individual to be reflective, to calm mental activities, and overcome the destructive effects of mental habituation. Larson explains Samyoga thus:

When the yogin has mastered the threefold “comprehensive reflection”, then the light of the insight (prajñā-āloka) shines forth.

According to Larson, there is an etymological link between the word “Yoga” and “concentration”. Larson describes the five states of concentration as: ‘distracted, torpid, partially distracted, one-pointed, and restricted’. Larson highlights the last two states as relevant for the practice of Yoga. He explains that only the last two states are largely dominated by sattva (brightness). One-pointedness refers to correct awareness, whereas restriction refers to restriction of consciousness (niruddha). In other words, through one-pointedness or concentration one finds a restriction of the whirls of consciousness. It is only through the practice of this restriction that the kleśas can eventually be attenuated—using the process of Patañjali’s Kriyā-Yoga. As Larson explains:

What the yogin seeks to accomplish in meditation is the “cessation of the functioning of ordinary awareness” citta-vrtti-niruddhah...so that the “witnessing” presence of consciousness (draśṭa) may show itself in its sheer translucent excellence.

According to Larson, this realisation is nothing ‘otherworldly or mysterious’. He explains it thus:

The undoing of the confusion between “awareness” and “consciousness” simply allows for the yogin to attain an experiential realization of the

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10 ibid.
13 ibid.
14 ibid.
15 ibid.
16 Taimni, p. 130.
17 White, p. 78.
18 ibid.
presence of a radical freedom at the heart of sentient existence, an experiemental clarity that radically transforms self-understanding, thereby providing relief from the suffering that has been brought about by the afflictions attendant upon mistaken or muddled awareness.\(^{19}\)

Taimni points out that a *kleśa* can assume many forms of expression, when one form is suppressed another can present itself, which is why Yoga takes a wholistic approach to the attenuation of *kleśas*. Dormant seeds left by *kleśas* can resurface, therefore attenuating the *kleśas* is likely to require ‘the whole technique of Yogic discipline’.\(^{20}\) The *karmas* (or seeds) of the past will inevitably bear fruit in the future, and in the tradition of conditionality, *kleśas* are responsible for the incessant generation of these *karmas*.\(^{21}\) It is only when the individual is able to see through ignorance and illusion—a revelation that requires the self-discipline of meditative practices—that a state of apperception is achievable.

### 9.2 *Yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*

Yoga relies heavily on phenomenological experience, rather than scholarly undertaking. The Guru’s goal is to help the student’s understanding to gradually unfold through the application and observation of the timeless principles, insights and processes of Yoga. The mind, in this context, is more intuitive than intellectual, and its aim to achieve *citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ* is a testimony to this.\(^{22}\) Yoga is a process of knowing, not intellectualising. However, historically, masters and adept Yogis produce commentaries that express their insights and understanding and these are shared through scholarly endeavours. Yet, it is also arguable that to truly know Yoga, one must live Yoga. As this research has discovered, the transformation of feelings into *kleśas* is a process influenced by a complex array of phenomena, such as history, chemistry, biology, conditionality and disposition. Delgado writes:

> The individual mind is structured without its own choice by elements originating in its material and cultural environment, which subsequently will

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\(^{19}\) ibid.  
\(^{20}\) Taimni, p. 153.  
\(^{21}\) Taimni, p. 144.  
determine individuality and personal choices. Where then is the freedom of
the mind? 23

Yoga provides an answer to Delgado’s question through a multifaceted approach to
living: it recognises the deterministic elements of subjective experience and heightens
awareness using processes that still the mind with a quiet ease. Yoga suggests that for
freedom to be achieved one must transcend the material and cultural influences that
determine individuality by their limiting and restrictive indoctrinations. Freedom is
liberation from irrational or unhelpful fears; to be free one must find a way to combat
fear-based emotional over-reactions. What is evident from my research is that freedom
is not achievable if fear reigns, if one constantly dwells on the fear-based tremblings of
past impressions. Freedom comes when one brings awareness back to the quality of
being: a perceptive state of clarity.

Yoga’s darśana (vision) is a life of stability, strength and awareness. This reflects
‘vision in a literal and metaphorical sense’. 24 Patañjali teaches:

Yoga-Sūtra I.1: Now [begins] the discipline of Yoga.

Yoga-Sūtra I.2: Yoga is the cessation of [the misidentification with] the
modifications of the mind. 25

Yoga-Sūtra I.3: Then [when the cessation has taken place] there is abiding
in the Seer’s own form (intrinsic identity).

Yoga-Sūtra I.4: Otherwise [there is] conformity to (i.e., misidentification
with) the modifications [of the mind]. 26

According to Whicher, one who fails to restrict the modifications of the mind, or
misidentifies with these fluctuations, surrenders to an ‘extrinsic, deluded, and confused
self-identity’. 27

24 G Feuerstein, The Shambhala encyclopaedia of Yoga, Shambhala Publications Inc., Massachusetts,
1997, p. 81. It is generally accepted that book one encapsulates or condenses the sum total of the theory
behind the Yoga-Sūtras.
25 The restriction of the whirling mind-stuff.
26 Whicher, The integrity of the Yoga Darśana, p. 47.
27 ibid., p. 47.
9.3 Revisiting concepts

It is evident that ancient wisdom from both the East and the West hold the key to the understanding freedom and conditionality. Stoicism suggests that ‘excessive impulse’, which overwhelms reason, perpetuates the cycle of conditionality.\(^\text{28}\) This is clearly in line with Yoga, which demonstrates that excessive emotions, such as hatred, fear and possessiveness, afflict the individual’s wellbeing, clouding their sense of self with a veil of ignorance. Hellwell and Putnam’s research indicates that excessive emotional reactions jeopardise the reciprocity and trust needed for strong social ties.\(^\text{29}\) This does not mean that strong emotions are a negative thing. On the contrary, strong emotions are the basis of many deep and compassionate feelings like love, friendship and respect. It is important to be able to express genuine and honest emotions without fear of repercussion. One learns by contrast: warmth is known by experiencing coldness, dark is known by experiencing light. However, in contrast to the beauty and compassion that some human emotions reflect, kleśas cause unnecessary pain and suffering and are destructive to wellbeing, because they are extreme emotional reactions fuelled by irrational thought.

Hume’s view that emotions are digested through the senses (experience) then analysed via thought (ideas) suggests that, given the right circumstances, feelings can be moderated in line with mental processes. Accordingly, mental freedom is enhanced by the quality and integrity of ideas—by controlling the impressions formed—and it is achieved through the ultimate aim of Yoga: a peace-filled mind, a freedom Krishnamurti suggests is found in the stillness between ideas.\(^\text{30}\)

Existentialism maintains that one’s actions result from intention (this may not be conscious intention) and that action implies a goal, suggesting that an understanding of, and attachment to, an outcome or goal determines one’s ability to experience freedom.


In Sartre’s view an individual is self-invented, with no inherent tendencies, thus any quest towards freedom lies in the ability to recognise and discern the scope of one’s choices. Yoga agrees with the concept of discernment and choice but disagrees with the notion that there is nothing inherent in one’s tendencies. Where Sartre would argue that human reality ‘defines its own being by its ends’, by its choices, Yoga would add that any choice that takes one away from reason and discernment is over-shadowed by fear.\(^{31}\) Yoga’s ultimate aim is to overcome ‘dissatisfaction, fear and misidentification’, and as Whicher affirms Yoga is concerned with ‘self-definition, moral integrity and spiritual renewal’.\(^{32}\)

To live without fear (emotionally and physiologically) is at the core of freedom and, as this research concludes, mental freedom is determined by the quality of thought. Freedom requires mental functioning that is without fear: a cognitive-emotive state based on friendship and justice. This is something REBT connects to one’s view of the world and one’s place in it.\(^{33}\) Essentially, it is the ability to make objective clarifications in the mind, beliefs that are not controlled by conditionality, that allow the individual to experience a deeper connection with the other. And, as this thesis has argued, the cyclic process of conditionally is closely linked to the body’s feedback system. The receipt, control and effect of stimulus are influenced by the processes of the flight or fight response, hence one’s way of being in the world—habits or patterns of thought that create a stress response—affect wellbeing.

The duality of tension (fight or flight) and release (rest and digest), mirrored through male/female, active/passive energies, is reflected in various East/West theories. For instance, both Plato’s tale of the “split apart” and the Upanishads\(^{34}\) scripture of the “two parts” echo an age-old longing for union: for resolution, for a connection.\(^{35}\) Jung’s anima and the animus reflect the male and female counterparts within the individual, suggesting two essential qualities of one’s nature. Yoga’s \textit{idā} and \textit{pingalā} support this
notion, reflecting a synergy, or as Goldberg puts it, ‘the absolute assimilation and unity between male and female principles’. This longing for unity, along with a will to survive and a desire for protection, explain the human desire for a spiritual life—a longing for Freud’s oceanic feeling—feeling connected and unalienated. Essentially, these reflections of unison all signify a need for synthesis: a return to oneness or collectedness.

History, culture and religion are aspects of human life, but in a modern society of technological allure, where communication is global and information comes in excess, there are inevitable changes afoot in the way culture and religion are administered. Sermons may be sought on-line. Mobile phones, iPads, iPods, and the like, appear to be forming a new culture of accessibility, a culture of chatter or constant noise: albeit often unspoken. A risk to freedom comes in the tendency to look outside oneself for answers or to blindly follow the resolve of others. Regardless of the quality of one’s faith, the stability and wisdom needed to achieve freedom suggests an intuitive element, a need for a self-education and self-regulation based on awareness: a faith free of indoctrination. Yoga’s liberation is something that is founded on self-understanding: the ability to see through the distractions of a rapidly changing and often chaotic world. Yoga’s peaceful silence can only come from within, not from saviours and redeemers, but from the discernment and wisdom that culminates from understanding one’s own mind.

The evidence provided in this thesis indicates that human happiness is closely linked to societal acceptance and approval, consequently one might contend that to reach a state beyond fear one must be equipped to stand alone (emotionally independent), and to find a strength to overcome fear of rejection. Such a state is not determined by one’s place in society, but rather by an understanding of the self. In the following quotation, Douglas Kirsner aptly demonstrates Freud’s depiction of a human being’s struggle with “the self”:

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[Freud’s] 3 great blows to human narcissism—that the earth moves around
the sun, that we are descended from the apes and not the angels and that of
psychoanalysis that the ego is “not even master in its own house”. This final
blow was hardest to take in as it committed us to the greatest change in our
attitudes and behavior, with, not surprisingly, the least chance of success.\textsuperscript{37}

More optimistically, in \textit{Practical Yoga}, Ernest Wood claims that Classical Yoga aims to
‘explore consciousness for its very essence, to delve beneath thoughts for that out of
which they are initiated’.\textsuperscript{38} This is where self-mastery begins.

\section{9.4 The evolving mind}

\begin{quote}
There is no need for temples,
no need for complicated philosophers.
My brain and my heart are my temples;
my philosophy is kindness.
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
His Holiness the 14\textsuperscript{th} Dalai Lama\textsuperscript{39}
\end{flushright}

Wood maintains that the goal of Yoga is the enriched development of the individual’s
life, something inspired ‘by evolution and by Nature’.\textsuperscript{40} Solomon’s theories suggest that
such enrichment requires emotional integrity—self awareness—that is, awareness and
understanding of the nature of thought, which in context relates to freedom. In
particular, it requires an understanding of the \textit{vṛttis}, out of which \textit{kleśas} arise. In Yoga
tradition, freedom is the ability to be liberated from one’s fears: to be detached from
emotional extremes. In fact, the word “\textit{buddha}” originates from the word “\textit{bhikkhu}”,
meaning “fear seer”.\textsuperscript{41} Freud’s theories relate fear to a suppression of the self, a need for
protection and a heightened sense of guilt,\textsuperscript{42} to Yoga these fears come back to
ignorance.

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{37} D Kirsner, ‘Freud, civilization, religion, and Stoicism’, \textit{Psychoanalytic Psychology}, the American
\textsuperscript{39} A Krishna, \textit{One earth, one sky, one humankind: celebration of unity and diversity}, PT Gramedia
\textsuperscript{40} \textit{ibid.}, pp. 15-16.
103 and 71.
\end{footnotes}
If I was to use the next few pages to sum up Yoga, as an abstract concept, they would be left completely blank, for although Yoga promotes the studious exploration and examination of one’s self (svadhyaya/self-inquiry), its main premise centres on stillness and silence—a nothingness—the gap between thought: where peace abides. Once again, Yoga is about “feeling” rather than “intellectualising”. Telling someone how to feel or how not to feel, is a waste of words. Each individual is the result of a complex array of experiences. Yoga uses meditative techniques to help stop the barrage of thoughts that inevitably trigger destructive/unhelpful feelings: applying a level of objectivity to subjective influences.

Yoga understands that the mind must rest. It also recognises that to be free one must experience life as source of awe and inspiration, rather than a constant source of fear and threat. Reactive behaviour—thought and feeling without restraint—strips away at emotional integrity because it creates a potential threat in every perceived situation. Defensiveness and aggression are the result of a reaction to a perceived threat. Delgado maintains that behavioural freedom is dependent on the normality of mental functions, upon the ability to receive and process environmental sensory inputs effectively, and on the ability to evaluate and compare these inputs with previously stored inputs. 43 Together these create the capacity to choose. 44 ‘Without awareness, without the possibility to decide between different alternatives, there is no freedom’. 45

Delgado proposes that one’s ability to decide depends on the functional trinity of sensory inputs, behavioural responses and intracerebral processes: the healthy functioning of this trinity is paramount to freedom of mind. 46 With this in mind, personal freedom is not a matter of inheritance, nor is it something gifted by nature. 47 Personal or mental freedom represents the highest goal of the civilised world, and is something that must be worked towards. According to Delgado, mental freedom requires substantial intellectual and emotional training and a heightened awareness that allows one to choose intelligently, consciously and ethically from the alternatives life.

44 ibid.
45 ibid.
47 ibid.
Yoga approaches this from a slightly different perspective, by emphasising the benefits of silencing the mind and relieving the body of tension, in order to enhance clarity and awareness.

Both Eastern and Western theories agree that the psyche (mind) and soma (body) have a reciprocal relationship: the intensity of one’s emotional reaction depends on the extent of one’s physiological arousal. Yoga uses a combination of mental and physical practices to control the unrestrained mental activities and the chemicals they produce, thereby enhancing the quality of life. Aristotle argues that eudaimonia (happiness) is not a psychological pleasure: it is the fulfillment of various goals that produce a life of quality. Aristotle clarifies thus:

No one tries to live well for the sake of some further goal; rather, being eudaimon [living well] is the highest end, and all subordinate goals—health, wealth, and other such resources—are sought because they promote well-being, not because they are what well-being consists of.

Yoga’s living well is reflected in a heightened level of awareness: applying objectivity and discernment in the face of Delgado’s choice.

9.5 Fear and the self

Wood interprets the process of Self-awareness as the unification between the Looker and the ‘instrument of looking’. The instrument of looking, or consciousness, is a process that identifies with thoughts—one’s way of looking at or seeing the world—it thinks, feels and acts, and consists of a collection of habitual emotions and ideas that create the self-personality. In contrast to this, the ‘Looker’ represents true and pure

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48 Ibid.
51 Wood, pp. 70-71.
awareness, uncoloured by affliction: free from the subconscious web of whirling mind-stuff.

Yoga aims to free the individual from all that binds: producing a feeling of contentment or peace. Contentment is, by its very nature, purely the absence of fear. Fear is a natural response to danger but in the case of extreme emotions, fear is a vehicle for ‘toil or trouble’ (klešas). Delgado claims that although fear can be appeased by emotional education, the educational standard must avoid being too permissive (making the individual a slave to their emotions), nor should it be too authoritarian (creating a tyranny of conformism and inhibitions). Instead, it must aim to teach the individual to achieve self-determined goals, to understand the cerebral mechanisms and, in doing so, provide a feedback that allows the modification of these mechanisms, thereby introducing an element of ‘conscious determination’. Conconscious determination is not an easy process. As the empirical evidence gathered in my study has determined, fear can have a tight hold on the individual. Some fears continue to remain, constantly re-manifested through conditionality, but as the evidence has also proven, these fears can be overcome through practices that engage the parasympathetic processes, altering the body’s chemistry and releasing the tension perpetuated by a conditioned response. With this in mind a final syllogism might read:

**Syllogism 4.**

1. Mental freedom necessitates freedom from conditionality.
2. Conditionality is a treadmill of unhelpful thoughts (whirling mind-stuff).
3. Fear activates this treadmill.
4. Therefore, mental freedom requires the absence of fear.

My research has established that emotionally constructed fears (klešas-based conditionality) are a threat to one’s freedom. Such fears result from a perceived lack of justice and from a fear-based perception. The research gathered from the questionnaire and interview process demonstrates the perpetual motion of conditionality as an

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52 ibid.
55 ibid., pp. 27-35.
instrument of fear. Action implies, as its condition, the recognition of a purpose or goal.\textsuperscript{56} The goal or purpose of conditionality is to recreate the familiar, and unfortunately “the familiar” is often based on fear.

### 9.6 Justice and freedom

All the evidence gathered suggests that the \textit{bodymind} is a thinking-feeling unit that must overcome tension in order to achieve any kind of freedom. It is unrealistic to think that a human life can be without hardship. But how one internalises hardship is at the heart of freedom. No life is perfect. However, torment and anguish carried from the past to the present create an unnecessary burden: one that stifles freedom. My empirical evidence suggests that this anguish is the result of a sense of personal injustice: alienation, rejection or abandonment. My research also suggests that when things are at their worst, on an emotional level, the \textit{kleśas} are in an expanded condition, and as such one’s emotional life resembles ‘the waves on the surface of the sea in a storm’.\textsuperscript{57} Yoga’s calming influence “stills” the surface of this unrest.

\textit{Freedom} comes with a demand: a demand for justice. Each individual act is inevitably threaded through the whole of humanity, and a reciprocal existence—where there is consideration of the other—demands the application of ethical boundaries. Until the individual experiences a sense of justice—fairness, acceptance, respect, kindness and the like—they are likely to be citizens of a world of unrest.

If one’s mind is impressed through the senses, and subsequently these impressions are embellished by ideas, then it becomes evident that every individual is the product of impressions and ideas: a learning process that is the means to one’s end and for freedom to be achieved, justice, as perceived by the individual, must be that end. This is a heightened and profound awareness that Bohm maintains goes way ‘beyond the imagery and intellectual analysis of our confused process of thought’.\textsuperscript{58} Yoga understands that to be human is to be at the mercy of one’s cognitive processes and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{56} J Sartre, \textit{Being and nothingness}, Methuen and Co. Ltd., London, 1976, p. 433.
  \item \textsuperscript{57} Taiwni, p. 139.
\end{itemize}
unless these processes are *tamed* the individual is destined to be caught up in a cycle of conditionality. Mental freedom is only attainable by taming the wild elephant that is an “uncontrolled thought”, and as such freedom is dependent on perception. Whether one is free on a psychological level depends on one’s perceptions or conceptual constructs. It is perception, without bias, that leads to an uncoloured mind—to apperception—observer awareness is an important step on the journey to freedom.

If each human being is ‘a servant of the earth’, then the obligation one inherits from this responsibility is to be productive, creative and supportive, and as such focus on enhancing quality of life in every sense, and survival instincts demand this responsibility must extend to the other. As Winnicott suggests, *being* is a state of present-mindedness, not reacting or deriving one’s feelings about the present moment from past judgements. *Being*, in this sense, is a state of wisdom, devoid of fear-based attachments.

To be totally free from attachment is a difficult, perhaps impossible task. And, human attachments are what love and consideration are founded on. Nevertheless, conditionality is the negative side of attachment, which has been confirmed by the empirical data gathered. To combat the pull of the *kleśas* and the process of conditionality, Yoga aims to achieve ‘perfect forgetting’. Meditation, breathing techniques and āsana practice are the tools Yoga uses. Both V. S. Naipaul and Jean-Paul Sartre claim that one is not born oneself; one becomes oneself after sorting through the expectations and ideas presented by the environment. The self one becomes can be a choice or an unwelcome burden depending on the extent of one’s forgetting.

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63 This concept of “forgetting” can be linked to other forms of psychotherapy.
9.7 The insight of Yoga

Yoga provides insights into human nature, insights that have been explored and expanded on by various Eastern and Western thinkers over the centuries, albeit through different frameworks. Freud, Reich, and others realised the need to relieve tension in the bodymind in order to achieve health and wellbeing. Such theories relate mental health, even joy or bliss (or in Freud’s case just the ability to overcome neurotic or hysterical misery), to the release of this tension. For Freud and Reich this release is achieved through the resolution of unconscious sexual inhibitors, repressed memories and armoured musculature, and for Patañjali, it is through achieving the simplicity of being—being in stillness. Whether this tension is initially created by an innate struggle for power, the intensity of sexual drives, an ineffective relaxation response, a biochemical infusion or whether it is purely the aftermath of unresolved emotions, it is evident from the research provided that the quality of human life is enhanced by the release of tension and this is where Yoga focuses its attention.

My decision to avoid using cultural or religious frameworks as a basis for this study is reaffirmed by Delgado’s research. He claims that cultural influences hinder freedom of mind, proposing that the mind is not formed at the moment of birth, that the mind requires sensory inputs: that ‘individual’ identity and personal behaviour are a function of learning and of sensory reception, and that violent behaviour results from previous sensory inputs: from an experience of violence. Culture, religion, politics, as well as other social influences, come from external indoctrination, as opposed to independent, self-reflection and awareness: one’s innate wisdom. Delgado’s theory gives one choice, but only if the individual is educated or instructed (through practice) in a way that allows them to overcome the pressure of environmental conditioning.

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64 Delgado, ‘The neurological basis of violence’, p. 34. With the exception of a clinical condition.
My research suggests that, in many ways we pass on our emotional “victim-hood” from one generation to the next—whether victims of real or perceived injustice—for this reason, conditionality is extremely difficult to overcome. It is what one experiences, believes and accepts that governs one’s thoughts and ultimately determines the level of freedom one achieves. Considering that the education system does not teach children about their own thought processes or emotional life, it is not surprising how difficult it is for a person to break free of conditionality. This educational omission may be a result of the obvious stigma associated with teaching people how to think. This in itself, is a dangerous process, especially if put in the wrong hands. Yet this lack of direction leaves the child to learn by example: an example set by parents, care-givers and others, individuals who have experienced, and carry with them, their own emotional seeds of burden.

Obviously, culture, religion, and other societal influences have enormous bearing on individual thought: these influences are predominant. The empirical data collected shows a definite lack of emotional education on the part of the individual and their childhood carers. My research suggests that any template for mental freedom, or framework through which to strive to achieve it, must understand and acknowledge the burden of environmental influences and the need for education in this area, it must strive towards the development of apperception: an awareness-based thought process. Optimistically, Pert’s research suggests that the mind is not set in its ways and new neuro-pathways can be mapped—changing the substrates of emotion—thereby levelling out the rollercoaster of experiential pleasure and pain. Taimni’s quotation below highlights the power of choice:

All experiences are either actively or potentially full of misery to the wise person whose spiritual perception has become awakened.

According to Freud, the ‘purpose of life’ is centred on ‘the program of the pleasure principle’: a program that ‘dominates the mental apparatus from the start’. The nature of this program creates a world where the individual is at ‘loggerheads’ with their

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65 Pert, p. 271.
66 Taimni, p. 139. This spiritual perception is an intuitive and discerning awakening.
environment, and as such happiness is virtually unachievable. Kirsner emphasises Freud’s view that unhappiness is in constant supply, emanating from ‘three sources: from the ravages of the body, from the external world, and most painfully, from other people’. Although there is a desire to fulfil one’s wishes and simultaneously fulfill a social contract, the likelihood of wish-fulfillment is minimal, especially considering the effect of Patañjali’s afflictions—change, anxiety, habituation and conflict.

Delgado, Aristotle and Russell (and many others) suggest that education is the key to a life without fear. Russell writes:

Educators in the past tended too much to believe in original sin, and to think that the child ought to be made into something quite different from what nature would make it...An Educator should think of a child as a gardener thinks of a plant, as something to be made to grow by having the right soil and the right amount of water. If your roses fail to bloom, it does not occur to you to whip them. If your children fail to bloom, you should treat them as you would the roses...The important thing is what children do, not what they do not do. And what they do, if it is to have value, must be a spontaneous expression of their own vital energy.

The practices of Yoga, with an emphasis on self-awareness and value of life, provide a comprehensive program of transformation that allows a spontaneous expression of the individual’s vital energy, nourishing the body and the mind and giving the spirit of a person the “soil and water” it needs to grow. Russell adds:

You can...prepare children for a military life by teaching them all to do the same thing at the same moment when they hear the word of command. If you do, they will grow up thwarted and stunted and full of a deep-seated anger against the world—no doubt useful if they are to be soldiers employed in killing, but not if they are to be happy citizens of a world at peace.

Education is a vital component of the quest for freedom. Understanding consciousness is the most significant goal of being human. Yoga is a vehicle for self-study and a catalyst for emotional growth, and as such has much to offer society in terms of improving health and wellbeing.

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68 ibid.
69 ibid.
70 ibid.
72 ibid.
If one was to take the insights of the Western philosophers discussed, along with the wisdom of the Eastern philosophies analysed, it would appear that there are nine basic principles to follow in the path toward freedom: the need to:

1. Experience a sound education—free of condemnation and conditioning;
2. Understand the basic psycho-physiological workings of the human bodymind—learn how to utilise the life-force at one’s disposal in a way that promotes health and wellbeing—enabling the release of any tension that hinders homeostasis;
3. Eradicate the irrational guilt associated with sexuality and religious belief—dissolving the self-degrading aspects of the conscience, where notions of right and wrong, good and bad cause feelings of inner-conflict and shame;
4. Develop apperception (observer awareness) in order to understand one’s own thought processes;
5. Understand and direct one’s emotions—free from unhelpful conscious and non-conscious motivators;
6. Learn to express genuine emotions honestly;
7. Live nobly and consider others—promoting a community that is “just” and bonded by friendship (something that comes automatically with a heightened level of awareness);
8. Understand and control one’s “will to power” and its connection to self and the instinct for survival;
9. Live free of ancient fears—free from the binding nature of conditionality.

In many ways these points resonate with the eight limbs of Yoga.

9.8 The freedom of Yoga

The experiential nature of Yoga means it is best understood in relation to feeling, suggesting that no amount of theorising can take the place of experience: of being rather than postulating. An intellectual dissection of Yoga promotes an approach that demands a theoretical answer to intrinsic questions—a black and white explanation for something
that cannot be explained in words. Referring to the literal—statistical and academic studies—to prove Yoga’s abstract concept of freedom presents an apparent oxymoron; a calculated epiphany.

Qualities such as logic and reason require one’s thoughts to be presented by the language of understanding, whether through images or words. This understanding is only capable of explaining or expressing itself in the form of subjective opinion, but what lies beneath this language is where Yoga’s insights begin. In the end, release from conditionality is not only a cognitive function it also requires the physical and cognitive disarming or of biological and psychological inhibitors: the release of unhelpful tension in the bodymind. Without reducing this pent-up tension a human being is at risk of becoming dominated by unexpressed feelings, compelled by the whirl of regurgitated mind-stuff that is conditionality. Ironically, from a social perspective freedom is conditional, for given the need to survive one cannot live in a state of freedom (emotionally or physically) without the support of the other. To survive one requires cooperation from the society in which one lives. For this reason, freedom is always bound to attract moral and ethical implications.

For me to claim that Yoga will put an end to conditionality appears to contravene the very nature of freedom—imposing the constraints and judgement of my own subjective opinion as the author of this thesis. However, the benefits conveyed by practitioners of Yoga (including myself) suggest that Yoga has the potential to provide a means to end the cycle of conditionality, albeit a means that requires individual development and the promotion of a collective awareness—a reciprocity of trust. Reciprocity is the key, it would seem, to finding freedom: firstly, the reciprocity between the mind and the body, and secondly, the reciprocity of human interaction (amicable relationships).

Pert’s theories, supported by Yoga’s theories of physiology, give credibility to the need for a bodymind approach to wellbeing. Scientific studies confirm the influences of feeling on thought (and on biological memory on a cellular level): proposing an interwoven process of bodymind reciprocity to achieve wellbeing. If, as Pert suggests, cellular memory directs thought and cellular memory results from environmental experience, then for freedom to be achieved society (as a collective) must improve its

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73 Helliwell and RD Putnam, pp. 1435-1446.
level of awareness, starting with the individual. This kind of awareness and understanding is reflected by Goleman and Solomon’s emotional intelligence/integrity, proposing a paradox: the inevitable conditions imposed by freedom.

According to Krishnamurti, virtue is the path to freedom: in contrast, un-virtue creates confusion.\(^7\) He adds that ‘truth is not cumulative. It is moment to moment.’ He relates the accumulated to memory and adds that memory is based on time—past, present and future—it is a product of intellectualising. Krishnamurti argues that the individual can become suffocated by ideas.\(^6\) He questions how one can discover the new if carrying ‘the burden of the old’, adding that the cessation of this burden is important to discovery of the new.\(^7\) In other words, there is no peace in a constant state of unrestrained thought; where the individual is perpetually drowning in unrest. Memories themselves are a natural part of being human and can be joyful and helpful, promoting wellbeing. Each individual has the potential to learn and grow from their experiences, but there is freedom to be attained from being able to direct one’s mind away from the burden of unhelpful memories. Yoga works to achieve this aim.

The hypothesis proposed by this thesis is reflected in the following words from Bertrand Russell:

> A good world needs knowledge, kindliness, and courage; it does not need a regretful hankering after the past…words uttered long ago by ignorant men. It needs a fearless outlook and a free intelligence. It needs hope for the future, not looking back all the time towards a past that is dead.\(^7\)

It needs to be noted that Russell would be likely to have regarded the traditions and teachings of Patañjali and Yoga as ‘words uttered long ago by ignorant men’, and the various religious approaches to Yoga would undoubtedly be at radical at odds with his philosophical treatise. However, Yoga’s freedom from conditionality, and I am not speaking here of its concept of freedom in the traditional sense of the cessation of mind/body materiality, is simply “free intelligence”. For Yoga, this intelligence is not the intellect of the Western world; instead it is a much deeper wisdom—something

\(^{74}\) Pert, p. 143.
\(^{75}\) Krishnamurti, *The first and last freedom*, p. 161.
\(^{76}\) *ibid*.
\(^{77}\) *ibid.*, p. 289.
\(^{78}\) Russell, *The basic writings of Bertrand Russell*, p. 578.
inherent and eternal—intelligence understood through intuition, insight and awareness. And again, in Larson’s words this is not something ‘mysterious or otherworldly’. Practical Yoga simply deals with one’s ability to function with clarity and wisdom.

Arguably, scholarly examination of Yoga can take place on an historical-critical level, or on a fundamental and practical level. Rukmuni confirms Yoga’s paradoxical rudiments, when she writes:

> It is best to accept [Yoga] as a discipline to be followed rather than to be understood intellectually.  

Although Yoga has the power to change one’s journey from a state of bondage to a state of freedom, on a day-to-day level such aims are inevitably challenged by indoctrination, misconception and misinformation. In essence, freedom consists of friendship and justice, in the essential quality of the word itself, for only in a just world can fear be diminished and the falsehoods of life be revealed. Only in a just world can there be an absence of fear. Freedom may, realistically, be difficult to achieve, especially in a world where constant illusion is promoted by the persuasive, inductive and seductive powers of society, politics and religion; in a world where right and wrong are cast in the shadow of “dos and don’ts”; in a world where “shoulds, oughts and musts” are constructed by society’s reigning powers and built on the tenet of denying self-centred activities.

Nevertheless, a society solely built on self-regulation requires a level of “self” education that, at this point, has not been achievable. Both Russell and Aristotle argue that the answers to society’s problems lie in education, and that human happiness is not a sin to be shunned but a goal to be achieved. Yoga’s self-study is pivotal to achieving emotional balance (wellbeing) and is more effective than any outside pressure to conform. Krishnamurti claims that happiness can only be achieved when ‘activity from the centre’ ceases; peace of mind can only come when the whirling mind-stuff becomes still.

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81 Friendship as equated to Aristotle’s supreme good and justice as exemplified by a respect for all life.
82 Krishnamurti, *The first and last freedom*, p. 127.
With this in mind, and again to attempt to answer the question: “Is mental freedom possible?” I would have to say “yes and no”. Although freedom is possible, the veil of illusion, with its many kleśa-driven fears and anxieties, makes freedom, although conceptually possible, difficult on a practical level. Yet if it is possible, Yoga is more than likely a means to achieving that end. Yoga creates wellbeing by relieving tension in the bodymind, producing wholeness on a physical, mental and emotional level. Yoga aims to create effective cognitive function as opposed to being burdened by the emotional afflictions of conditionality.84

Where psychoanalysis and other forms of therapy offer a vast exploration of and reconciliation with the past, Yoga seeks, from the start, to leave the past behind, thus allowing the individual to move forward. Moreover, although mental freedom is something separate to societal freedom, the two are bound to influence each other particularly when awareness is stifled by conditionality. Participant 0007 wrote:

I’ve felt my whole life like something was missing. I’ve tried to fulfil myself through other people—rating myself by their respect, or lack of it. Every time something goes wrong in my life I ask God “why me?” but at the same time I tend to think “I deserve it”.85

In essence, freedom begins with the individual, but it is only when the individual has the capacity to realise this freedom that freedom itself is possible. Self-realisation is not something that comes easily. It requires an educated level of understanding, insight and awareness. Socrates argued ‘no one does wrong voluntarily’.86 It is only through ignorance that one remains in a state of un-freedom.

The research carried out as a result of this study shows how difficult, and complicated, freedom is. The pain and hardship experienced by the participants is real and cannot just be thought away. Yet this research has established that the habitual processes of subjectivity can be successfully transcended using Yoga’s practices: creating a circuit-breaker for the cycle of conditionality. Yoga practices can help the individual to heal, through processes that relax the body and mind, and as such enhance wellbeing.

83 ibid.
84 See Chapter Three.
85 Deakin University research, participant 0007.
86 Honderich, p. 838.
amount of pain society experiences as a whole really comes down to the individual. How society deals with, and assists each individual through their pain is paramount to society’s stability—as demonstrated by Helliwell and Putnam’s social ties of reciprocity and trust.  

Darwin saw both the randomness and the order of nature. On an emotional level perhaps the *randomness* of pain (created by fear) can be healed by the *order* of empathy and compassion. In other words, through understanding others we understand ourselves, and through understanding ourselves we are best able to help others. In *The birth of tragedy*, Nietzsche describes the human struggle between *reason* (Apollonian) and *intoxication* (Dionysian). For over 3,000 years Yoga has recognised this struggle: recognising the conflict between emotional life (intoxication expressed through the passions) and mental faculties (the ability to reason). Yoga proposes that there are multiple layers to the human experience, and although Yoga has the power to help an individual, this in no way devalues the suffering of many who are unable to access this help for one reason or another.  

In the *Symposium*, Plato’s Socrates provides an analogy for the extremes of emotional life when he describes *Eros* (*desire*, some say *love*) as a child of resource and poverty. These two extremes reflect the conflict arising from what one wants, as opposed to what one has—creating emotional upheaval borne from discontent: which is at the core of a fear-filled existence. Yoga was designed to control mental activities and to reduce the impact of emotional upheaval—to facilitate awareness and alleviate human suffering—a suffering that begins with the individual and ends with society. Suffering and injustice are one and the same.  

Aristotle’s justice is contrasted against two extremes: being unjustly treated and treating people unjustly. The individual’s ability or inability to understand their own thought processes has a significant effect on their personal experience of justice and this effects

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87 Helliwell and Putnam, pp. 1435-1446.  
how they treat others. Mistaken views of the world on one hand, or the ability to modify or restrict thoughts and thereby control unhelpful fears on the other, decide the individual’s experience of injustice or justice. This can influence an individual’s capacity to accept or deny friendship, which has a significant influence on the society in which the individual lives. From the perspective of conditionality, freedom rests with perceptual justice, because for any kind of freedom to exist there must be an absence of the fear associated with personal injustice.

From an etymological perspective the word “freedom” derives from friendship and justice. Conditionality is a side-effect of individual injustice. Without justice for the individual, there can be no justice for the masses. Our incredible capacity to feel is a two edged sword. As Aristotle so eloquently put it, human anger (and the other emotions [klesas] that anger produces) comes from pain. Freedom from conditionality is relief from pain and Yoga provides the vehicle to attain that relief, to achieve what Chapple terms: ‘responsible freedom’.92

*Everything depends on what is meant by freedom.*

*Mircea Eliade*93

Appendices
Appendix 1—Questionnaire

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

TO: The Participant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questionnaire (also see the Plain Language Statement)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date: 3rd October, 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full Project Title: Freedom and Conditionality; analysing psychological and yogic models of freedom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principal Researcher: Karen Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Researcher: Jane Wiesner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate Researcher(s): n/a</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(This questionnaire is 10 pages long. Please make sure you have all the pages. This questionnaire is accompanied by a Plain Language Statement 7 pages long.)

Dear Participant,

This is an anonymous questionnaire. Please ensure that you do not write your name, or any other comments that will make you identifiable, on the attached.

By completing the questionnaire you are consenting to take part in this research. As such you should first read the Plain Language Statement accompanying this questionnaire carefully as it explains fully the intention of this project.

Important Note:

In answering these questions please use as much space as you need - i.e. delete lines and type over the dotted area if answering via computer. If answering via email, to avoid losing your alterations, please remember to save the questionnaire to your hard drive before filling it out and emailing it back. Altering a document straight from your email program can cause data loss. If filling out this questionnaire in writing please use the reverse side of the page if you need more space but please remember to identify (i.e. number) the question you are answering.

Thank you for your participation. It is greatly appreciated and will make a significant contribution to studies on the quality of human life.

**Questionnaire**

1. Do you sometimes experience one or more of the following emotions?
   1) **attachment** (desire for something/someone - clinging to an object or person)
   2) **aversion** (a strong dislike of something or someone)
   3) **fear** (an anxious, extremely insecure, threatened or worried feeling)

☐ Yes
☐ No (if no, then skip to question 3)
2. If yes, please rate these emotions in order of significance, 1, 2 & 3 – (1) being the emotion that you are most likely to feel, and (3) being the emotion that you are least likely to feel (please write the number in the square [or beside it if typing]) - marking (0) if you never experience this emotion.

☐ attachment
☐ aversion
☐ fear

3. According to Classical Yogic theory these kinds of emotions are the source of our troubles. Would you agree with the term ‘the source of troubles’ to describe these kinds of emotions (i.e. attachment, aversion and fear)?

☐ Yes
☐ No (if no, then skip to question 5)

4. If you answered yes, in what way would you describe these emotions as ‘troublesome’? (How have they affected your life?)

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5. Can you identify any other predominate ‘troublesome’ or unhelpful emotions that you tend to experience? (other than those already mentioned)

☐ Yes (if yes, please detail below)
☐ No

If yes, please list here:........................................................................................................................................
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6. Do you feel your more ‘troublesome’ emotions are sometimes seeded in the past? (i.e. that the emotions you experience in the present often relate to thoughts about past events)

☐ Yes
☐ No (if no, then skip to question 8)
☐ Other - please elaborate:........................................................................................................................................
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This Questionnaire is Accompanied by a Plain Language Statement for Participants  Page 2 of 10
Please return the questionnaire to: Jane Winner, Reply Paid 166, Black Rock Victoria Australia 3193 (refer to PLS for more details)
7. If you answered yes (i.e. that you sometimes re-live past events mentally or emotionally in the present) please explain how these memories/emotions influence your life.

8. Do you feel there is a relationship between how you feel physically and the emotions you experience?
   □ Yes
   □ No (if no, then skip to question 11)

9. If yes, please describe how particular emotions make you feel physically. (These emotions may range between being unhelpful/troublesome/painful or pleasurable/enjoyable/painless.)

10. What phrase best describes your body when you are affected by unhelpful/troublesome/painful emotions?
    □ Relaxed and at ease
    □ On edge and physically tense
    □ None of the above (in this instance please provide your own description of how you feel):
11. Please tick one of the boxes below to demonstrate your physical fitness. “0” representing no physical activity and “10” representing training as an elite athlete.

(Please tick the box corresponding to your belief or if using the computer just enlarge or colour the font on the number you choose. Please note: if typing over this document via email you will need to ensure that the box below is not separated in the middle over two pages – just insert some lines, above or below the graph, if necessary.)

![Image with a scale from 0 to 10 for physical activity levels]

Comments (please insert here any comments you wish to make about your physical activities e.g. you may be physically disabled or unwell or you may be a professional athlete):

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12. Have you ever practised yoga?

☐ Yes
☐ No (if no, please go to question 17)

13. If yes, please provide some details regarding these practices (e.g. type of yoga, how long, what you liked best about it):

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14. Did your yoga practice incorporate some relaxation techniques?

☐ Yes
☐ No (if no, please skip to question 17)

15. If yes, did you find that the relaxation techniques helped you to deal with the effects of “troublesome” or unhelpful emotions?

☐ Yes
☐ No (if no, please skip to question 17)
16. If yes, how did these relaxation techniques affect you? (feel free to tick more than one)

☐ Physically
☐ Mentally
☐ Emotionally
☐ All of the above

Please explain what techniques you practised and how you felt after the practice: .................................................
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17. Do you feel more relaxed after strenuous physical activity?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Other (please explain): ........................................................................................................................................
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18. Please describe the most effective thing that you do to relieve stress and to help you feel relaxed (if you have absolutely no way of relaxing or unwinding please elaborate below and then skip to question 21).

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19. Please indicate the extent to which you believe your relaxation practice relieves the unhelpful effect of painful or ‘troublesome’ emotions – on a physical level.

(please tick the box corresponding to your belief or if using the computer just enlarge or colour the font on the number you choose. Please note: if typing over this document via email you will need to ensure that the box below is not separated in the middle over two pages – just insert some lines, above or below the graph, if necessary.)

[Graph not visible in text format]

This Questionnaire is accompanied by a Plain Language Statement for Participants. Please return the questionnaire to: Jane Winner, Reply Paid 166, Black Rock, Victoria Australia 3193 (refer to PLS for more details)
20. Please indicate the extent to which you believe your relaxation practice relieves the unhelpful effect of painful or 'troublesome' emotions, on a mental/emotional level.

Please tick the box corresponding to your belief or if using the computer just enlarge or colour the font at the number you choose. Please note: if typing over this document via email you will need to ensure that the box below is not separated in the middle over two pages - just insert some lines, above or below the graph, if necessary.

21. In your opinion, do you believe that your emotional tendencies are often habitual?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Other (please explain): .................................................................
..............................................................................................................
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22. In your opinion, do you believe that your emotional tendencies are sometimes conditional – a reaction to events or experiences?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Other (please explain): .................................................................
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23. In your opinion, do you believe that your emotional tendencies are sometimes inter-generational (learned or passed down from a previous generation)?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Other (please explain): .................................................................
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24. Do you believe the following statement is correct? “I am who I am because of my past”.

☐ Yes
□ No
□ Yes and No

Further comments (please elaborate if you answered ‘yes and no’):

...................................................................................................................................................
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25. Do you believe the following statement is correct? “I will never be completely free of the past”.
□ Yes
□ No
□ Other........................................................................................................................................

If yes, why do you feel that you will never be free of the past?
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26. Do you agree with this statement? “Troublesome emotions are fuelled by fear.”
□ Yes
□ No

If yes, please explain why you think that ‘troublesome’ emotions are fuelled by fear.
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27. Do you feel that your emotional life clouds your judgement (influences the way you see the world)?
□ Yes
□ No (if no, please go to question 29)
□ Sometimes

28. If you answered yes or sometimes, in what way do you feel that ‘troublesome’ emotions cloud your judgement (influence the way you see the world)?
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29. Do you feel that troublesome emotions can sometimes cause you unnecessary pain?

☐ Yes
☐ No (if no, skip to question 31)
☐ Sometimes

30. If you answered yes or sometimes, please explain how troublesome emotions cause you pain (this might be a physical manifestation, such as a neck ache, and/or an emotional/mental manifestation, such as anxiety).

31. Please indicate the extent to which you believe your more unhelpful or ‘troublesome’ emotions have affected your happiness and wellbeing over your lifetime.

(Please tick the box corresponding to your belief or if using the computer just enlarge or colour the font on the number you choose. Please note: if typing over this document via email you will need to ensure that the box below is not separated in the middle over two pages – just insert some lines, above or below the graph, if necessary.)

32. If you have experienced ‘troublesome’ or painful emotions, in what way have these emotions contributed to defining your ‘sense of self’? (i.e. How you see yourself in the world.)

33. Classical yogic theory suggests that being unaware (ignorant) of one’s choices/alternatives/options (life’s cycle of cause and effect) has a big influence on, and is unhelpful to, the state of one’s emotional life. Do you agree with this theory?

☐ Yes
☐ No
Other

Please explain your answer

Thank you for participating in this questionnaire. I would appreciate it if you would please fill out a few questions relating to demographics:

1) Age bracket (please tick or mark beside with an X):
   (18-24) ........ (25-34) ........ (35-44) ........
   (45-54) ........ (55-64) ........ (Over 65) ........

2) Sex (please circle, tick or mark with an X): Male...... or Female......

3) Please state your country of birth:

   Please write below the country in which you have lived most of your life.

4) Please state your education level:

5) Please state your occupation:

6) Please rate your overall wellness below:

   Extremely unwell
   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
   Extremely well

   Thank you so much for your participation
Seeking interviewees

Please note, as part of this study I am seeking the opportunity to conduct personal interviews with some of the people participating in this questionnaire. If you are interested in being interviewed, as a follow-up to this questionnaire, I would be very grateful if you would fill in your details below and I will contact you to make an appointment.

The information provided below will be kept in the strictest confidence and will not be disclosed.

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Title: ........................................ First Name: ........................................ Surname: ........................................

Address: .................................................................................................................................................................

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Phone no: ........................................ Mobile phone no: ........................................

Email address: ...........................................................................................................................................................

Again, any information conveyed during the interview process will make absolutely no reference to your identity. In other words, your name will not appear anywhere on the published material.

Please note, personal details gathered from the interview phase will be coded and kept separately from the transcripts - these will be deidentified after transcription and only deidentified material will be used in publications or other reports, including the thesis itself. Your written consent will be required before this information is collected and the transcript will be given to you for final editing and signing off.

The interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes and will take place at a time and place that suits you (if you prefer I can conduct this interview over the phone). As mentioned above, the recorded information taken from the interview will be given (or posted) to the interviewee to sign and to check for authenticity.

The questions asked will help to clarify the information on the questionnaire. An example of these questions are: ‘You said on question 4... could you please explain what you meant by this?’ or ‘On question 10 you have written... could you please expand on this for me?’ These questions will just be asked to qualify the answers to the questionnaire.

The information collected from the interview will be stored in a secure environment as specified at the beginning of this document.

By completing the personal details above you are consenting to me contacting you regarding an interview nevertheless, that does not mean you are obliged to go ahead. You may withdraw from participating at any time. Again, the personal information provided above will be separated from your questionnaire and linked only via a code. Hence, no identifying marking will be attached to your questionnaire.

Once again, thank you for your contribution.

Kind regards

Jane Wiesner

This Questionnaire is Accompanied by a Plain Language Statement for Participants. Please return the questionnaire to: Jane Wiesner, Reply Paid 106, Black Rock Victoria Australia 3193 (refer to PLS for more details)
Appendix 2 — Questionnaire and interview data

Empirical research findings and graphs
Jane Wiesner
Evidence and Conditionality: Analysing mental and Yogic models of freedom
Deakin University 2012

This research consists of 35 questionnaire participants and 20 interviewees. The interview process was designed to give the participants an opportunity to clarify their original responses and add anything else they wished to say. This process allowed the interviewer to ask questions to build on themes raised through the questionnaire phase.

The responses to the questionnaire were informative. Most of the participants were forthcoming in sharing their feelings about emotions and the part their more unhelpful emotions played in their lives. In contrast, some of the participants were quite reluctant to give much away, answering the questions in judgement of other people’s behaviour rather than referring to their own feelings. These participants were not to answer the questions in the third person: they demonstrated a tendency not to own the answers. Some participants appear to answer the questions with what might be expected to be a morally correct reply. It was duly noted that trained professionals working in the field of psychology or counselling tended to avoid answering the questions directly. They were inclined to concentrate more on the philosophical aspects of the study rather than the personal components. This may perhaps indicate that an individual with an advanced intellectual understanding of what can be revealed about them personally, through their responses, may be reluctant to answer the question with personal candour: thereby avoiding making a full disclosure regarding their feelings.

A number of participants made direct contradictions between their own answers. For instance, one participant makes it very clear that they do not agree with the concept that emotions affect one’s physicality, answering “no” to question eight which states: “Do you feel there is a relationship between how you feel physically and the emotions you experience?” Yet, in response to questions asked later in the questionnaire the same participant describes quite clearly and in detail their physical response to the emotions they experience. Another participant admits a direct relationship between how they react to the present through emotions prompted by the past. However, when asked this question directly the individual claims that they believe that there is “no” link between the past and the present in relation to emotional wellbeing. A possible explanation for this reluctance to be fully disclosing to certain questions may relate to the individual’s inability to be free from the “expectations of others”. In other words, they may be answering the question to be either contradictory or supportive of the question’s theme, either wanting to demonstrate their disagreement with the theme of the questions or answering what they believe the reader wants to hear. The individual may not want to be fully disclosing due to a fear of the reader’s judgement.

Interestingly, evidence of this kind of contradiction is more prevalent with participants who did not agree to a follow-up interview. It is also more common in the questions where a “declarative” question is asked. The participant will say “no” to the declarative question but “yes” to a question that poses the same question but is put in a more non-contentious, less matter of fact, manner. For example, one participant says “no” in disagreement with the statement in question 25, that is, “I will never be completely free of the past.” Yet this same participant makes the comment in question 28 that “I believe we all view the world through a filter that is the sum of our past experiences.” This contradiction indicates a tendency for this individual to shy away from declarative statements although there is an obvious agreement to the premise conveyed.

During the course of the interviews conducted it was noted that people generally were reluctant to acknowledge their aversions, as to admit to a “hating” something was not deemed appropriate behaviour. Generally, they had no difficulty acknowledging their fears and spoke reasonably freely about attachments, but there was a definite disinclination to speak openly about their aversions. When the interviewer offered an explanation of an aversion, as being the opposite of what they liked, adding that it is a natural part of being human to have preferences between likes and dislikes, they became more relaxed and spoke more candidly. Nevertheless, this overall hesitation to talk about what they disliked may well have been an indication of a societal stigma towards strong feelings of dislike.

The following represents the quantitative answers to the questionnaires and interviews. See the thesis for details of the qualitative answers to the questionnaire and interviews. Please note, I have not included the actual questions as asked in these graphs, but instead have used a shortened paraphrase for convenience (the full questions are detailed on Appendix 1).
Empirical research findings and graphs
Jane Wiensner
Freedom and Conditionality: Analysing mental and Yogic models of freedom
Deakin University 2012

**Question 1 - Do you sometimes experience attachment, aversion and/or fear?**

![Pie chart](chart1.png)

Out of the 35 participants only one individual said "no" to this question and "no" when asked if they experienced any other unhelpful or troublesome emotions. Yet later into the questionnaire this participant admits to experiencing intense feelings of sadness that led her to depression, she also admits to experiencing various physical effects which she attributes to the influences of her more unhelpful troublesome emotions.¹

**Question 2 - Rating troublesome emotions**

![Pie chart](chart2.png)

When asked to rate these three aspects of emotional life the result shown 18 individuals who rated fear as their primary unhelpful emotion, 12 individuals rated attachment at number one and 4 claimed aversion to be their more predominate unhelpful emotion. One individual did not rate their emotions.

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¹ Deakin University research questionnaire and follow-up interviews carried out 2009-2012, participant 0020.
Empirical research findings and graphs
Jane Wiener
Freedom and Conditionality: Analysing mental and Yogic models of freedom
Deakin University 2012

Question 3 - In agreement with the term ‘sources of trouble’ for attachment, aversion and fear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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</table>

When asked if they agreed with the term “sources of trouble” for these three emotions 31 participants agreed and four didn’t agree. The four that disagreed suggested that this term was not appropriate because “troubles” imply something negative and these individuals suggested that these emotions were a natural part of human growth and the acquiring of wisdom. This appears to be a reasonable argument however, one could also argue that this emotional growth and wisdom may be achieved without the pain and suffering imposed by one’s more destructive emotions.

Question 5 - The participants were asked if they could identify other ‘troublesome’ emotions other than attachment, aversion and fear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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The graph above shows the results of question five which asks the participants if they can identify other emotions that are unhelpful or troublesome. Twenty-seven participants could, and eight participants couldn’t, identify other unhelpful emotions.
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Question 8 - Are 'troublesome' emotions sometimes seeded in the past?

Thirty out of thirty five participants believe that troublesome emotions are seeded in the past. Two participants said 'no', those that chose 'other' later confirmed that their answer was "yes" and gave an additional explanation for their answer.

Question 8: Do you feel there is a relationship between how you feel physically and the emotions you experience?

Only one participant did not feel that there is a relationship between the mind and the body in regard to emotions.
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**Question 10 - How the body feels when affected by ‘troublesome’ emotions**

- Relaxed and at ease 0%
- None of the above 34% - see detailed answers below
- On edge and physically tense 66%

Some alternate answers with regard to the effects of emotions listed: tiredness, anxiety, tightness, nauseous, contraction, sluggishness, tense, numb, shaky, powerless, lethargic and breathless.

Question 11 asks the participants to rate their fitness level (see below).

**Question 11 - Level of fitness**

![Bar chart showing level of fitness]
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**Question 16 - Effect of relaxation techniques** - 1) Physically 2) Mentally 3) Emotionally 4) All of the above 5) Other

- Physically and emotionally: 5%
- Other: 16%
- All of the above (physically, mentally & emotionally): 77%

Question 16 rates the effectiveness of relaxation techniques tried by the participants, whether they helped on a physical, mental or emotional level.

**Question 17 - Do you feel more relaxed after strenuous physical activity?**

- Yes: 77%
- No: 18%
- Other: 5%

Question 17 asks: “Do you feel more relaxed after strenuous physical activity?”
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Question 19 asks the participants to rate the effectiveness of their relaxation techniques on relieving the physical effects of troublesome emotions.

Question 20 asks the participants to rate the effectiveness of their relaxation techniques in relieving the mental/emotional effects of troublesome emotions.

Question 21: Do you believe that your emotional tendencies are often habitual?
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Deakin University 2012

Question 22: Do you believe that your emotional tendencies are sometimes conditional - a reaction to events or experiences?

Question 23: Do you believe that your emotional tendencies are sometimes inter-generational (learned or passed down from previous generations)?

Question 24 - Is the following statement correct: 'I am who I am because of my past?'
Empirical research findings and graphs
Jane Wiener
Freedom and Conditionality: Analysing mental and Yogic models of freedom
Deakin University 2012

Question 25 - Is the following statement correct: 'I will never be free of my past'

- Other: 5%
- No: 10%
- Yes: 20%
- Participants: 30%

Question 26 - Are troublesome emotions fuelled by fear?

- Yes: 77%
- No: 14%
- Other: 9%

Question 27 - Do you feel that your emotional life clouds your judgement?

- No answer: 5%
- Sometimes: 36%
- No: 14%
- Yes: 45%
Summary

The participants involved in the study described difficulties associated with troublesome emotions. Many demonstrated deep and significant implications with regard to their wellbeing on an emotional, psychological and physical basis. Everyone interviewed showed a clear connection between a lack of freedom and the effects of conditionality. Conditionality has influenced each participant at varying periods of their life.

1 Deakin University research questionnaire and follow-up interviews carried out 2009-2012, participant 0019.
Glossary

Much of the information contained in this glossary was sourced from Georg Feuerstein’s Shambhala Encyclopedia of Yoga or through the teachings of Leigh Blashki (Australian Institute of Yoga Therapy).

Abhiniveśa—The will to live (survival instincts)—one of the five causes of affliction (kleśas).

Adrenaline—Also known as epinephrine (fight or flight hormone) is released from the adrenal glands when a threat of danger occurs. Once secreted into the bloodstream, adrenaline rapidly prepares the body for action—it boosts the supply of oxygen in the blood and glucose in the brain and muscles, while suppressing other bodily functions such as digestion. Epinephrine plays a central role in the short-term stress reaction and it, has a suppressive effect on the immune system.

Ahamkāra—“I maker” or ego (the self we identify with).

Ahimsa—One of the five yāmas—meaning non-harming.

Analysand—A person undergoing psychoanalysis.

Ananda—Bliss or joy.

Aparigraha—One of the five yamas—meaning non-grasping or greedlessness.

Apperceive, apperception or apperceiver—A process where the perceiver is aware of the act of perceiving.

Ardhanārīśvara—Androgynous form of male and female. The Hindu God depicted as half male and half female with a line down the middle.

Āsana—Pose or posture (Yoga exercises)—see eightfold path.

Asmitā—I-am-ness. The individualization self—disconnected from the true Self. One of the five causes of affliction (kleśas).

Ashta-anga-yoga—See eight limbs of Yoga.

Asteya—One of the five yamas—meaning non-stealing.

Ātman—The transcendental Self.

Avidyā—Ignorance (nescience—lack of knowledge)—one of the five causes of affliction (kleśas).

Bodymind—Describes the body, mind and spirit as an integrated whole.

Brahmacarya—One of the five yāmas—meaning chastity.

Buddhi—The higher or discerning mind (feminine form of buddha [the awakened one].
Candra—Moon.

Catheysis—Pseudo-Greek term—cathexis refers to the degree to which a neuron is filled with a quantity of energy and hence in a state of altered readiness for discharge. Freud suggests that the accumulation of large quantities of catheysis in neurons is a direct source of painful sensations ("unpleasure"), and that "pleasure" consists neurologically in a low level of catheysis.

Causes of affliction—See kleśas.

Chakra—Yoga’s energy centres.

Citta (Cit [root])—Mind or consciousness—Chapple translates as ‘perceive’.
(Yogaś) citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ—Sūtra 1:2 “restraint of the modifications of the mind is Yoga” or “Yoga is the control of ideas in the mind”.

Clarity or clarity of mind—Describes an individual’s ability to see life from a rational perspective. It denotes a clear method of thought, unaffected by impulsive desires or compulsive instincts and free of excessively moralistic programming. In this sense, the ‘seer’ is now the objective observer of his/her own thoughts.

Classical Yoga—Period of Yoga associated with Patañjali.

Consciousness—“Consciousness” is derived from conscient (Latin) con ‘together, sharing knowledge, yields conscious’—from conscient arises conscire—to know or be privy to. Consciousness is a complex term that can be interpreted in many different ways. Also see cit or citta (mind or “to perceive”).

Conditionality—Buddhist term that basically means conditioned thoughts that arise from events that then condition further thoughts and events.

Control (or controlling)—Directing or taking charge of, e.g. ‘controlling the ideas in the mind’—directing thought processes.

Constructivist—Not to be confused with the mathematical term, constructivism is a term used by Albert Ellis to describe a human being’s ability to construct his/her own mental disturbances or mental reality. Ellis suggests that human beings are not only disturbed by external influences they also contribute internally to maintaining dysfunctional ‘thinking, feelings and doings’.

Core beliefs—Used by Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapist Albert Ellis to describe the motivation behind human thought—the belief system at the core of one’s thoughts.

Cosmology of Yoga—Yoga’s cosmological forces are puruṣa (Pure Spirit) and prakṛti (nature or creation).

Defence Mechanisms—Freudian term denoting the things one does to camouflage or mask feelings of vulnerability (usually unconscious).

Displacement—Defence mechanism, a process whereby energy is rechannelled from one object to another object (psychoanalytical term).
Dhārāṇa—Concentration—see eight limbs of Yoga.

Dhyāna—Meditation—see eight limbs.

Dis-ease—Unease—the word “disease” comes Latin word *dis* a prefix of Latin origin meaning asunder or apart—Old French origin *aise* meaning comfort—hence, reversing comfort.

Dispasion—See vairāgya.

Disturbance (emotional)—In REBT disturbance is an unhelpful and unhealthy state, which has resulted from negative (self-rating) beliefs. It does not mean that the person is unstable but instead means that the person is unable to function at an optimal level. In contrast, dissatisfaction is a healthy and helpful state that prompts and motivates.

Dosha (dośa)—Ayurveda tradition (from Vedas). A *dosha* is one of three bodily “humors” that make up one's constitution. Doshas could be compared to the ancient Greek and Roman medicine (from Hippocrates onwards) notion of the humors (same terminology used). Doshas are wind, bile and phlegm, whereas the humors refer to black bile, yellow bile, phlegm and blood. Both interpretations relate to qualities of the human constitution influenced by the seasons, the elements and different aspects or qualities of physicality, mental tendencies and spiritual influence.

Duḥkha—Pain and suffering—sorrowful experiences.

Dveṣa—Aversion or hatred—one of the five causes of affliction (*kleśas*).

Eight-fold path—See eight limbs of Yoga.

Eight limbs of Yoga—āshta-anga-yoga—Process of awakening. Patañjali’s eight limbs are: yāma (moral observance), niyāma (self-restraint), āsana (posture), prāṇāyāma (breath control), pratyāhāra (sense withdrawal), dhyāna (concentration), ādhyānta (meditation) and samādhi (enstasy or ecstasy). Not to be confused with Buddhism’s Eight-fold path: 1) right view, 2) right intention or thought, 3) right speech, 4) right action, 5) right livelihood, 6) right effort, 7) right concentration *samādhi* and 8) right mindfulness.

Ego—One of Freud’s three states or levels of mind—the “reality principle”.

Ecstasy—Derived from a Greek word meaning to stand outside one’s self—involves a significant shift in one’s state or sense of identity—to transcend the ego and reach a state of blissfulness—*samādhi/enstasy*.

Emotion—Used to denote a dualist state based on a combination of one’s perception and bodily processes; resulting in a passionate state of varying degrees. Emotions can be simple or complex, singular or multifaceted. For example, one might experience the emotion of fear as a result of a reaction to a loud noise, or as a non-conscious response to the memory imprint (or subliminal impression) of a past trauma.
Enlightened—Syncronisation of the body-mind with Transcendental Reality (the ultimate Reality. In contrast to the ego-personality or individualisation (which is disconnected or separate).

Enstasy—To transcend the ego and reach a state of blissfulness. Samādhi/ecstasy.

Eudaimonia—Aristotle’s term for happiness—result of a purposeful life.

Event-duality—Author’s term to denote the duality between inner and outer effects of an event—inner event (thought), and the outer event (action)—represents the “cause and effect” of human experience.

Extensionality—Anthony Giddens’ term describing one of the two extremes of modernity, that is, globalising influences (see intentionality).

Feeling—Used to denote what is experienced as sensation—what is “felt”, both on a mental and physical level (the result of which is an emotion). Feelings can also be associated with intuition and hunches.

Fight or flight response—Medical term for general adaptation syndrome: a natural instinctive response to threat. Response to stress. Sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system.

Fixation—Used in psychoanalysis where the libido is attached to earlier modes of satisfaction and object-relationships.

Free will—Posits that we are free to control our will—in contrast to determinism (everything is affected by what has gone before), the latter suggesting that free will is impossible because the past will always influence the present and future.

General adaptation syndrome—“Fight or flight” response.

Gloss—Biased overlay (on thought process)—Concept introduced by R. A. Wilson (Wilhelm Reich in Hell).

Guṇas—Strand or quality. Signifies a quality or constituent—the energy quanta or building blocks of nature, that is, sattva (the principle of lucidity; beingness), rajas (the dynamic principle) and tamas (the principle of inertia).

Habit-moulds—Ernest Wood’s description of saṃskāras.

Hatha—Forceful. Describes the practices of Yoga, in particular, āsana and prānāyāma. The word comes from ha reflecting the sun (surya) and tha reflecting the moon (candra). Hatha Yoga practices stretch and strengthen the muscles, massage the body’s internal organs and re-oxygenate the blood: moving energy through the body.

Homeostasis—Medical term used to describe the body’s perfect state of wellbeing or balance—all the bodily functions are working in balance.

Jīva—Usually translated as alive or life—the individualised self or psyche.
Kaivalya—Synonym for moksha in many schools of Postclassical Yoga, although strictly speaking it translate as “aloneness”—the unbroken awareness of the contents of consciousness—that is, being free from bondage.

Karma (or karman)—Action or ritual act. Yoga claims that all that is experienced in the world springs from karma. It is basically the idea that the ‘moral dimension of existence is causally determined’. Refer twin laws of karma and reincarnation—doctrines that formulate universal moral laws; these laws are reflected by the cycle of birth and death underlying human life.

Kleśas (kleshas)—Causes-of-affliction or disturbing emotional reactions. Kleśas are at the foundation of Patañjali’s system of Yoga. They result in a conditional existence. Sometimes referred to as negative emotional reactions, there are five types of kleśa as nescience (avidyā), I-am-ness (asmitā), attachment (rāga), aversion (dveṣa) and ‘the will to live’ (abhiniveṣa). One could think of them in terms of anxiety-based emotions.

Knowledge—The Western approach to knowledge generally refers to information and data collection or the act of knowing certain things. Indian sages typically refer to knowledge as wisdom that leads to the attainment of liberation. Hence, the latter has a more purposive quality.

Kośas (Koshas)—The word “kośa” translates as ‘sheath’—there are five sheaths or planes of existence associated with the human body. In Yoga physiology, the physical body is surrounded by subtle bodies of a finer substance (etheric sheaths that envelope the body). The energy body appropriate to each plane (sheath) is known as a kośa.

Anna-maya-kośa—physical (food) sheath—relates to the five elements (earth, water, fire, air and space [or ether]).
Prāṇa-maya-kośa—vital life-force/ energy (in all things)—infuses life into the physical body and it is where sensory experience emanates.
Mano-maya-kośa—mental or psychological sheath—represented by thoughts, linked to the non-conscious. It is constructed from the lower nature (manas); therefore, it is associated with emotions that can be destructive such as depression, insecurity, doubt, anger etc.
Vijnana-maya-kośa—intellectual (body of knowledge), formed from higher knowledge, associated with the concept of Buddhī (the higher mind—female term for Buddha)—faculty of reason.
Anānda-maya-kośa—spiritual sheath—represented by ānanda (joy)—experience of positive emotions such as joy, bliss, happiness, peace, serenity—highest state of experience while on earth.

The kośas are the planes in which consciousness expresses itself. The koshas are where the Spirit or Self (ātman) manifests itself. In other words, consciousness permeates the five sheaths—food, life-force, mind, awareness and bliss.

Kuṇḍalinī—The serpent-like energy centre that coils the spine like a snake: a serpentine nexus of energy.

Id—One of Freud’s three levels or states of mind—the primitive, instinctual mind state (child state).
Idā—One of the three primary nādiś—idā represents the left side of the body—it relates to the female, passive, cool energy (moon) whereas pingalā represents the right side of the body and it relates to the male, active, hot energy (sun). The current of life force corresponds to the parasympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system on a physical level (response that restores the body to homeostasis (balance) in the event of a nervous disturbance)—see Haṭha.

Indriya—The senses.

Intentionality—Anthony Giddens’ term to describe one of the two extremes of modernity, that is, personality dispositions (also see extensionality). This term is sometimes defined as “aboutness”.

Irrational—Opposite of rational thinking, which supports people with their individual and community goals and purposes. Irrational thinking creates obstructions; it disables progress—it is self-defeating.

Īśvara—The Lord abiding in the heart of all beings.

Īśvara-pranidhāna—One of the five niyāmas meaning devotion.

Liberation—There are two words generally used to describe liberation in Sanskrit—Mokṣa, which translates as “release” and Kaivalya, which translates as “aloneness” or “detachment”—liberation from karmic impressions or samsara (or a conditioned existence). Samsara relates to the cycle of death and rebirth, as ultimately determined by the cause and effect of one’s choices in life. This reflects the cycle of conditionality—a conditioned existence. Yogic concept of liberation has spiritual elements that are not explored within this thesis.

Manas—The desiring mind; “I want” (the lower mind the deals with the information received by the senses).

Māyā—Illusion.

Mental freedom—Freedom of mind. Mental freedom or liberation represents freedom from the obstacles that block the mind and perturb thought; being able to control negative and destructive emotional reactions. Clarity of mind (enlightenment); being free from overly restrictive or irrational psychological programming or conditioning.

Middle Way—‘The middle way’ is the balance between the polarity of the material and the spiritual—the point between these two extremes of existence.

Mind-stuff—Contents of the mind.

Mind-flux—Constantly changing nature of thought (mind chatter).

Mirroring—From Jean-Paul Sartre’s view that we see ourselves as reflected through the other (other people).

Mokṣa (or moksha)—Liberation or release. This relates to a shift in consciousness that transcends all duality. A paradox due to the realisation that both liberation and bondage
are constructs based on perception and ultimately have no significance: there is neither bondage nor liberation, but only the Absolute.

Nāḍīs—The nāḍīs are the body’s circulatory energy system, sometimes referred to as nerve endings (although not in the traditional Western sense). In Yogic tradition, the nāḍīs are the manifestation of prāṇa-mayakosa. The nāḍīs are a network of subtle energy channels that sustain the physical body. There are approximately 72,000 nāḍīs in the body, which include three primary channels and energy centres known as chakras. The central channel, which runs along the spinal cord, is called the suṣumṇā (most gracious channel). Two other primary channels wind around the suṣumṇā, these are known as ḫād (channel of comfort) and pingalā (tawny current).

Negative feelings—In REBT, negative feelings can be both healthy and unhealthy. Without healthy negative feelings we would not try to avoid stressful or dangerous situations. In contrast, unhealthy negative feelings create uncontrollable reactions that are self-defeating that is, rage, resentment, depression, self-pity and panic.

Neurosis—A habit that is maladaptive or in some obvious respect distressing. A neurotic habit is reasonably fixed and resistant to change or modification through normal learning processes. Examples of neurotic habits are: phobias, compulsions, obsessive thoughts, etc. Physical symptoms can result from neurosis such as paralysis or impotence.

Niyāma—Self-restraint. Niyāma (second limb of Yoga) consists of five attributes—shauca (purity), samtosha (contentment), svādhyāya (self-study), ishvara-pranidhāna (devotion), tapas (austerity, severity or perfection of the body—practices such as fasting)—see eight limbs. Also see Yāma.

Pneuma (πνεῦμα)—Greek for "breath, spirit, heart, mind, HOLY Spirit, ghost, wind", which metaphorically describes a non-material being or influence.

Nirvana—Buddhist term describing a state free of suffering, that is, Enlightenment.

Orgone energy—Reich’ term for “universal life energy” (similar to prāṇa). According to Reich, ‘orgone is the bio-energetic core of emotional function’.

Parapraxies—Freudian term referring to a minor error such as a ‘slip of the tongue’ (also things like forgetting something, loosing something—Freud believed that ‘there are no mistakes’, in other words, mistakes reflect something unconscious that is said to reveal a repressed motive).

Parasympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system—The relaxation response, which allows the bodily functions to return to their natural state of balance (homeostasis) from the opposite state: the sympathetic response (fight or flight response). The state bears an important relationship to Yoga philosophy and practice.

Pingalā—One of the three primary nāḍīs—pingalā corresponds to the sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system (this response prepares the body for flight or flight in the event of a threat). The practices and techniques of Yoga aim to awaken the energy of the subtle body or mind call the “kundalini” (coiled or serpent energy/power). This happens when balance is found in the solar and lunar nāḍīs—also see Hatha.
Prakṛti—Nature or creation.

Prāṇa—Means life, life-force, breathing forth—the essence of life. Prāṇa stands for ‘life’ or breath of the cosmic (Purusha). It signifies the universal life force—a psychophysical energy, something similar to pneuma in ancient Greek traditions… It is sometimes referred to as a “vibratory power” or the essence of all life.

Prāṇāyāma—Breath control (breathing techniques)—see eight limbs.

Pratyāhāra—Sense withdrawal —see eight limbs.

Projection—Psychoanalytic term to describe a defence mechanism where intolerable feelings, impulses, or thoughts are falsely attributed to other people.

Psychical energy—Freud’s term to describe the energy system of the human personality.

Psychodynamics—Dynamic interplay of the psychological processes.

Perturbation—Mental disquiet, disturbance or agitation, a state of being perturbed. It also refers to a small change in a physical system.

Puruṣa—A Yoga and Sāṃkhya term for the transcendental Self—Puruṣa is the witness (consciousness) of all psychomental states—the eternal Self (both the seer and the seen).

Rāga—Attachment (one of the five causes of afflictions [kleśas]).

Rājas—Activity—one of the three primary constituents (guṇas)

Rational—Used in relation to REBT. It does not mean unemotional. Used to describe positive, honest, logical and realistic thinking it is a quality associated with making objective and discerning observations. Being ‘efficient and rational in achieving one’s individual and community goals’ (Ellis). Used in this thesis in the universal sense of reason and wisdom.

Rationalisation—As opposed to the act of being relational in the context of psychology, rationalisation is a term used to describe a defence mechanism, more specifically, the act of finding a way to justify an unacceptable attitude, belief or action which otherwise would usually be thought of as unacceptable. For example, an individual who drinks to excess may well rationalise this as something that is a normal occurrence within his/her group of associates.

Reaction formation—Psychoanalytic term for a defence mechanism whereby a person replaces a repressed thought, feeling or behavioural act with one which is diametrically opposite to the original thought, feeling or behaviour—such as a shy person who behaves in an exhibitionist’s manner.

REBT—Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy developed by Dr Albert Ellis.
**Reflexive Self**—Describe a self that is continually aware and conscious of its own presence and nature.

**Reflexivity**—The origin of the word “reflexivity” means bending back on itself. Within the context of this book it means the mind being turned back on itself—self aware.

**Regression**—Psychoanalytic term to describe an attempt to avoid or reduce anxiety by reverting to an earlier, more immature mode of thinking, feeling or behaving.

**Relaxation state**—See parasympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system.

**Repression**—Psychoanalytic term for a defence mechanism whereby unacceptable thoughts or wishes are not consciously recognised, instead, they are banished from the consciousness.

**Sādhanā**—The path to self-realisation—often used to describe spiritual practices (such as meditation).

**Śaiva**—Associated with the Tantric tradition of Yoga.

**Samādhi**—Ecstasy. To stand outside one’s self—involves a significant shift in one’s state or sense of identity—to transcend the ego and reach a state of blissfulness.

**Samskāras**—Subliminal activators, non-conscious imprints or impressions. Emotional imprints/deposits similar to Freud’s concept of the unconscious; these activators make indelible imprints on the non-conscious. Feuerstein explains that they are dynamic forces in our psychic life—they propel us towards action.

**Samkapla**—Volition or intention. *Samkapla*, along with *ahamkāra*, are said to characterise the finite personality (according to the Upanishads).

**Sāṃkyha (Sankhya)**—Translates as number, insight or ‘investigative understanding’. A preclassical tradition developed between 500 and 200 BCE. Sāṃkyha has a close connection to the tradition of Yoga, as both Sāṃkyha and Yoga are said to lead to the same goal. The sage *Kapila* is said to have founded Sāṃkyha. The spiritual path of Sāṃkyha requires the renunciation of everything other than the Self, which is said to be the only principle capable with true consciousness.

**Sanśāra**—Means flow. The phenomenal world of constant change. A state of flux—nothing is permanent (under the domain of *karma* [birth and rebirth] sometimes referred to as cause and effect).

**Santosha**—Contentment. One of the five *niyāmas*.

**Sattva**—Beingness. One of the three primary constituents (*guṇas*)

**Satya**—Truthfulness. One of the five *yāmas*.

**Shaucha**—Purity. One of the five *niyāmas*.  

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Seeded and Seedless—Describes whether one is afflicted with destructive mental habits that are “seeded” in the past or, whether one is able to achieve a state of non-cognitive contemplation where the mind is no longer limited to material boundaries (seedless).

Self—Has many dimensions in Yoga. The Self is said to be the higher consciousness or spirit (purusha) and ātman, which stands for oneself (and is identical with the Absolute brāhma). In addition, ahamkāra is said to be the I-maker, self-identity or individualisation and asmitā is the concept of ego or I-am-ness (identifying with individualisation – this is one of the klesas [causes-of-affliction or sources of trouble]). Also, jīva is used to describe the living being, also describing the finite personality ‘which experiences itself as different from others’. In Western terms the self describes the entity one identifies with, one’s own individuality (similar to jīva).

Sublimation—Psychoanalytic term for a defence mechanism whereby a repressed or unconscious drive, denied gratification, is diverted into a more acceptable channel or form of expression—a process where an otherwise unacceptable urge finds a constructive way to express itself (such as creativity).

Sukha—Pleasure.

Surya—Sun.

Suṣumṇā—One of the three primary nāḍīs. See Haṭha.

Superego—One of Freud’s three levels or states of mind—the parent ego or conscience state.

Sūtra—Su means thread or map and tra means to transcend.

Śvādhyāya—One of the five niyāma. Self-study.

Svarūpa—One’s true nature.

Sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system—See fight or flight response.

Tamas—Inertia. One of the three primary constituents (guṇas)

Tapas—Austerity. One of the five niyāmas.

Tattva—“Thatness”.

Tension—In the body, is created by the fight or flight response, often prolonged after the threat is removed.

The Seer—Cit. The “consciousness” behind the thought.

Uncolouredness (Uncoloredness)—Dispassion (please note, like the interpretation of any word a meaning can arise that may be taken to the extreme—it is not my belief that dispassion is presented as non-feeling and therefore, I do not agree with any interpretation that may present it this way. Again, dispassion does not represent non-compassion.
Unconscious, the—Psychoanalytic term to describe repressed and their representations such as images, ideas and wishes that are not accessible to conscious thoughts.

Non-conscious—Used to represent Yogic notion of the part of the mind that is not conscious of its own experiences.

Vairāgya (dispassion)—Vairāgya is a word used by Patañjali to describe the concept of being free from craving. According to Patañjali, aversion/hatred (dveṣa) is caused by craving for what is not possible—wallowing in what is emotionally painful. Dvesa rests on sorrowful experiences (duḥkha). A human being relates to the environment by either attraction or aversion (with pleasure or pain [as aversion dveṣa leads to pain duḥkha]). Vairāgya is encouraged to avoid the pain caused by aversion.

Vāyus—The panca (five) Vāyus of prāṇa. They all have very subtle yet distinct energetic qualities, including specific functions and directions of flow. The vāyus are as follows: Prāṇa, the ascending breath issuing from the navel or heart and including both inhalation and exhalation; Apāna, the breath associated with the lower half of the trunk; Vyāna, the diffuse breath circulating in all the limbs; Udāna, the “up-breath” held responsible for eructation, speech, and the ascent of attention into higher states of consciousness; Samāna, the breath localized in the abdominal region, where it is connected with the digestive processes.

Viveka-Khyāti—Awareness of “Reality” in direct or immediate contact with one’s innermost consciousness. Avidyā is overcome by this awareness.

Vidyā—Means wisdom or knowledge.

Virodha—Contradiction.

Vṛttis (vrṭts) —Whirl or activity. Fluctuations of consciousness.

Yāma—Moral observance. Yāma, the first limb of Patañjali’s Eight limbs of Yoga, which consists of five attributes—ahimsā (non-harming [to the self and to others]), satya (truthfulness), asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (chastity/self-discipline) and aparigraha (greedlessness/non grasping)—also see eightfold path. Also see Niyāma.

Yogin —Male Yoga practitioner.

Yoginī—Female Yoga practitioner.

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