

# PATANJALI YOGA SUTRAS AND PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH: EXPLORING MATCHES AND MISMATCHES

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This presentation addresses interrelationships between concepts and practices described in the Patanjali *Yoga Sutras* and certain conceptualizations, research methods, and empirical findings within the discipline of parapsychological research. My aim is to describe ways in which Indian psychophysical practices and principles, as illustrated in the Patanjali *Yoga Sutras*, both inform and are supported by psi research and theory, and to indicate instances in which aspects of yogic practice and parapsychological research match or mismatch each other. In this presentation, *psi* is used as a theoretically neutral term for psychic functioning.

## THE PATANJALI YOGA SUTRAS AND THE AIMS AND PRACTICES OF YOGA

The Patanjali *Yoga Sutras* is a collection of 196 interrelated sutras or aphorisms, organized into four chapters or books (*pada*). The first chapter (*samadhi pada*) consists of 51 sutras that deal in a general way with special forms of attention and consciousness that are the goals of yoga. The second chapter (*sadhana pada*) consists of 55 sutras that describe the most important practices of this spiritual discipline. The 56 sutras of the third chapter (*vibhuti pada*) describe the extraordinary powers or attainments (*siddhis*) that can result from intense yogic practice. The fourth and final chapter (*kaivalya pada*), which some believe to be a later addition to the earlier three chapters, consists of 34 sutras and describes the independence and emancipation that can be the fruit of diligent yogic practice.

The filling out and interpretation of the sutras took the form of *commentaries*. In the case of the *Yoga Sutras*, important early commentaries were the *Yogabhashya* of Vyasa (sixth and seventh centuries), the *Tattvavaisaradi* of Vacaspati Mishra (ninth century), the *Rajamartanda* of King Bhoja (eleventh century), the *Yogavarttika* of Vijnana Bhikshu (sixteenth century), and the *Maniprabha* of Sarasvati Ramananda (sixteenth century) (see Eliade, 1975). Modern English translations of the *Yoga Sutras*, along with selected commentaries, can be found in Rama Prasada (1910/2003), Woods (1927), Mishra (1963), Prabhavananda and Isherwood (1969), Taimni (1975), Vivekananda (1982), Brown (1999), and Govindan (2001).

Yoga builds upon the metaphysical foundation of the ancient Samkhya system, but whereas Samkhya is intellectual and theoretical, Yoga is experiential and practical. The goal of Yoga is bivalent—to achieve emancipation from conditioned matter and mind (*prakriti*) and to achieve oneness or union with unconditioned, pure consciousness (*purusha*). This bivalent aspect also is operative, more mundanely, in the practice of

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ordering and unifying the usually dispersed and undisciplined activities of the mind in order to eventually transcend even this more organized and controlled mental condition.

The *Yoga Sutras* provide step-by-step instructions for ceasing to identify with the fluctuations or modifications (thought waves, whirlpools) of the mind (*citta-vritti*) and for ultimately achieving complete independence and isolation from matter/mind and liberation as pure consciousness. In the course of this spiritual discipline of constant practice (*tapas*) and detachment (*vairagya*), one encounters various obstacles or hindrances (*klesas*, afflictions) that disturb the equilibrium of the mind: ignorance (*avidya*), egoism (*asmita*), attachment (*raga*), aversion (*dvesa*), and clinging to life (*abhinivesa*). These five hindrances are the chief causes of confusion and suffering in life. Patanjali identified eight practices that help one overcome the hindrances, increase discriminative discernment, and move forward in one's psychospiritual development. These are the eight limbs (*ashtanga*) of yoga praxis: abstentions or restraints (*yama*), observances or disciplines (*niyama*), posture (*asana*), control of breath/prana (*pranayama*), withdrawing sensory activity from control by external objects (*pratyahara*), concentration (*dharana*), meditation (*dhyana*), and absorption (*samadhi*). By engaging in these practices diligently and intensively, the yogin can acquire progressively greater control of body, senses, emotions, and thoughts; recognize and discriminate these limited and limiting disturbances (the seen) from one's true Self (the Seer); become capable of direct supersensory knowing; and ultimately become fully Self-realized in attaining liberation (*kaivalya*). At certain stages of the yogin's progressive development, various attainments or accomplishments (*siddhis*, powers) emerge. It is with these *siddhis*, the practices with which they are associated, and their relevance to parapsychology, that this presentation is chiefly concerned.

## THE AIMS, METHODS, AND FINDINGS OF PSI RESEARCH

Parapsychology, or what might appropriately be called *psi inquiry*, addresses three major types of paranormal experiences and phenomena. The first type is *receptive psi* or *direct knowing*, in which one acquires accurate knowledge or information about events or experiences beyond the reach of the conventional senses. This form of psi has been described as *extrasensory perception (ESP)*, *psi cognition*, or *anomalous cognition*. Receptive psi can manifest itself as *telepathy* (paranormal knowledge of the mental content or experiences of others, often at a distance; a kind of direct mind-to-mind communication), *clairvoyance* (paranormal knowledge of some objective events, objects, or occurrences, often at a distance; a kind of mind-to-object interaction), *precognition* (paranormal knowledge of future events; a kind of foreknowledge or future-telling beyond what is possible through rational inference), and *retrocognition* (direct, paranormal knowledge of events in the past, especially of events that one might not have personally encountered, and which, therefore, are beyond the range of personal memory). Recently, the terms *remote viewing* and *remote perception* have been used to describe cases of clairvoyance, and *premonition* and *presentiment* sometimes are used to describe cases of precognition.

The second form of psi can be described as *active psi* or *direct mental influence*, but the most commonly-used terms are *telekinesis* (movement at a distance) and *psychokinesis (PK)*; mind-induced movement or mind-over-matter). Recently, the term *anomalous perturbation* has been used to describe these instances in which physical events apparently are influenced—directly and often at a distance—without the use of conventional muscular or motor systems or by their extensions or tools. Psychokinetic

influences may manifest as gross movements or any other changes in remotely or distantly situated objects or living systems or as more subtle changes (especially in large numbers of randomly varying events) that may not be immediately obvious to the naked eye but can be revealed through statistical analysis.

The third form of psi can be described as *survival* (of bodily death) or *afterlife evidence*. This refers to various kinds of experiences or occurrences that suggest that some form of personality, individuality, or consciousness might survive the death of the physical body. Phenomena and experiences suggestive of postmortem survival include apparitions, hauntings, poltergeist occurrences, mediumistic communications, physical mediumship phenomena, some out-of-body experiences, near-death experiences, and past-life recall and reincarnation memories.

Scientific and scholarly inquiries into psi experiences and phenomena have been carried out using four major approaches: case studies, field investigations, experimental/laboratory studies, and experiential explorations. These four approaches—in their own distinctive ways—have yielded two major types of findings: (a) proof-related findings that simply demonstrate the existence of certain forms of psi, and (b) process-related findings that indicate the modulating influence of particular physiological or psychological variables on the strength or likelihood of psi. A description of these many findings is beyond the scope of this presentation. I will address here only certain process-related studies and findings that involve variables directly or indirectly related to the principles and practices of the Patanjali *Yoga Sutras*. Additional comprehensive and detailed information about psi functioning may be found in the following resources: Braud (2003); Edge, Morris, Palmer, & Rush (1986); Griffin (1997); Krippner (1977, 1978, 1982, 1984, 1987, 1990, 1994); Kurtz (1985); Parker and Brusewitz (2003); Radin (1997); Rammohan (2002); Rao (2001, 2002); Targ, Schlitz, and Irwin (2000); Thalbourne and Storm (2005); and Wolman (1977).

## **INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF YOGA SUTRAS, SIDDHIS, AND PSI RESEARCH**

Various exercises described in the *Yoga Sutras*, especially in the second and third chapters, are quite relevant to research in parapsychology. These practices—which have variously been described as forms of royal (*raja*), eight-limbed (*ashtanga*), or action (*kriya*) yoga—are designed to systematically and progressively free the practitioner from disturbances or distractions at various levels—social, environmental, somatic, emotional, and cognitive. Their chief applicability to psi inquiry is that these practices might help practitioners become generally less distracted and calmer in body and mind, and this increased quietude, accompanied by a more inwardly-directed focus of attention, might facilitate access to more subtle, internal carriers of psychically-sourced information. Honorton (1974, 1977, 1981) likened the Patanjali yogic practices to a systematic program of psychophysiological noise- or distraction-reduction that might help reduce factors that ordinarily interfere with or mask psi “signals.” Braud (1975, 1978) identified several sources of psi-interfering “noise” or distractions and described methods for reducing interferences at these various levels. Many of these noise-reducing, psi-conducive procedures closely resemble the yogic self-regulation practices described by Patanjali. In addition, some of the attainments (*siddhis*) themselves, described in the third chapter (*vibhuti pada*) of the *Yoga Sutras*, closely resemble forms of psi that are of great interest to parapsychologists.

The first five limbs (*angas*) are preparatory and set the stage for the successful practice of limbs six, seven, and eight—the three inner limbs (*antar-angam*) that constitute yoga proper. Their practice reduces internal, cognitive distractions. When *dharana*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi* (concentration, meditation, and profound absorption) are practiced together, the composite process is called *samyama*. *Samyama* might be translated as *constraint*; *thorough*, *complete*, or *perfect restraint*; or *full control*; it might also be translated as *communion* or *mind-poise*. *Samyama* conveys a sense of knowing through being or awareness through becoming what is to be known. Through mastery of *samyama* comes insight (*prajna*), and through its progressive application, in stages, come knowledge of the Self and of the various principles of reality (*tattvas*). With increasing yogic practice come a variety of mystical, unitive experiences, states, conditions, or fulfillments—the various *samadhis*.

## THE SIDDHIS

The third chapter (*vibhuti pada*) of the *Yoga Sutras* describes the various attainments or accomplishments (*siddhis*, powers) that arise when *samyama* is applied in various ways and to particular objects. Patanjali provides a selective listing of these attainments. Some (e.g., Taimni, 1975) have suggested that Patanjali may deliberately have introduced incomplete and even misleading information into the *siddhi* listings, in order to minimize their misuse by inappropriately prepared or ill-motivated practitioners. It might also be argued that some of these *siddhis* might best be understood not literally but metaphorically or analogically, instead.

Some of the *siddhis* are relatively mundane, some physiological, some psychological, some paranormal, some spiritual and mystical. Some of these might be understood as the fruits of ordinary deep thinking or pondering, whereas others might be resultants of other forms of knowing—direct knowing, insight, intuition, or revelation. Some of the *siddhis* (e.g., knowing the thoughts of others; clairaudience, knowledge of the subtle, concealed, and remote) are identical, or similar, to forms of receptive psi previously mentioned.

The relevance of the *siddhis* to psi inquiry becomes clear. Study of the *siddhis* could help in elaborating the nature of some psi manifestations already familiar to psi researchers and also could help reveal other forms that have not yet been explored in parapsychology. Of greater interest, in the context of process-related psi studies, examination of the eight-membered (limbed) path of yogic practice—in the course of which the *siddhis* are believed to spontaneously or deliberately manifest—could reveal methods through which psi functioning might be fostered or enhanced. A greater production of psi experiences could, in turn, facilitate both the study and understanding of psi.

## YOGIC PRACTICES AND PSI RESEARCH

In certain areas of process-related psi research, researchers have explored the possible psi influences of factors directly or indirectly related to the eight major forms of yogic praxis. Representative examples of these areas, and their correspondences with the eight practices, are presented in Table 1.

**TABLE 1: AREAS OF PSI RESEARCH AND CORRESPONDING “LIMBS” OF YOGIC PRACTICE**

<b>Psi Research Areas</b>	<b>Yogic Practices</b>
	<i>Yama</i> (restraints) <i>Niyama</i> (observances)
Relaxation research Hypnosis research Physiological research	<i>Asana</i> (postures) <i>Pranayama</i> (vital energy/breath control)
Dream telepathy research Ganzfeld research	<i>Pratyahara</i> (sensory withdrawal)
Concentration/visualization in receptive psi Concentration/visualization in active psi Meditation research Absorption research	<i>Dharana</i> (concentration) <i>Dhyana</i> (meditation) <i>Samadhi</i> (absorption)

Table 1 is organized simply to indicate concentrations and patterns of research, rather than precise one-to-one correspondences; it is recognized that the various yogic practices are interrelated, as are the processes at work in the various psi research areas.

**SOMATIC QUIETUDE.** The cluster of relaxation, hypnosis, and psychophysiological psi studies are related to the cluster of *asana* and *pranayama* practices in that all of these involve a reduction in somatic distractions. The muscular, autonomic, and emotional quietude that accompany *asana* and *pranayama* praxis have been produced, in psi research, not by those particular techniques but have been mimicked by related methods of progressive muscular relaxation, autogenic training, hypnosis, biofeedback, and self-regulation procedures. In receptive psi studies, research participants have been asked to describe hidden pictorial targets under conditions of induced relaxation, and relaxation results were compared with those obtained under suitable control or contrast (nonrelaxed or tension-induced) conditions. In some cases, degree of relaxation was monitored via electromyographic recording. Analyses of bodies of research using relaxation techniques have yielded strong evidence for accurate psi functioning under conditions of relaxation, and some studies indicated significant positive correlations between degree of relaxation and degree of psi accuracy (see Braud, 2002; Honorton, 1977; Storm & Thalbourne, 2001).

Hypnosis studies are relevant, here, because of the strong relaxation component present in most hypnotic conditions. Reviews and meta-analyses of research findings indicated that hypnosis was conducive to receptive psi functioning (see Braud, 2002; Honorton, 1977; Schechter, 1984; Stanford & Stein, 1993).

Somatic quietude also is reflected in reduced physiological arousal, as indicated by reduced sympathetic nervous system activity. A review of relevant laboratory studies

indicated enhancement of receptive psi under conditions of reduced sympathetic nervous system activity (Braud, 1981b, 2002).

**SENSORY RESTRICTION.** In the yogic practice of *pratyahara*, attention is withdrawn from external objects that usually provide stimulation of the senses. Two conditions that duplicate this sensory restriction process have been studied extensively in the laboratory, and both have been found to be psi-favorable. These two conditions are the nocturnal dream and the *Ganzfeld* procedure. In both of these, there is a reduction in the processing of external sensory information, an inward-turning of attention, and an increase in imaginal activity and (internal) visual imagery. Receptive psi has been studied in the laboratory under both of these conditions. In dream-telepathy studies, persons were monitored in a sleep laboratory and awakened and asked to describe dream content when electrophysiological monitoring equipment indicated the presence of dreaming (rapid eye movements, an activated electroencephalographic pattern, and reduced muscular tension). In *Ganzfeld* studies, uniform visual and auditory fields were produced by means of unpatterned light and sound stimulation; such sensory restriction or privation can produce an altered state of consciousness that resembles the twilight (hypnagogic/hypnopompic) state between waking and sleeping. In both sets of experiments, the research participant's task was to become psychically aware of the content of a visual target picture hidden from normal sensory access—i.e., placed at a distance or viewed by another person at a distance. Reviews and meta-analyses of the results of many dream telepathy and *Ganzfeld* telepathy experiments indicated that both of these conditions of sensory restriction/sensory withdrawal were favorable to receptive psi functioning (see Braud, 2002; Child, 1985; Rao, 2002).

**COGNITIVE QUIETUDE.** Like bodily, emotional, and sensory quietude, cognitive quietude—a stilling of the thought ripples that can disturb a quiet, tranquil mind, such as the condition that can accompany meditation—also might be psi-favorable. This inference that meditation might be psi-conducive is supported by findings that meditation tends to be accompanied by reduced muscular tension and reduced autonomic (sympathetic) arousal, and also by traditional Indian beliefs and anecdotal observations that paranormal events (*siddhis*) may occur spontaneously at certain stages of meditative practice (see, e.g., Kanthamani, 1971; Rao, Dukhan, & Rao, 1978; Smith, 1966). With these possibilities in mind, Honorton (1977) reviewed 16 experimental studies of psi performance during or immediately following meditation and found that 9 of the 16 studies yielded significant evidence for psi (in both receptive [ESP] and active [PK] forms). Some of this research was further reviewed by Rao (2002), who warned that some of these studies—like studies of meditation and other processes—suffered from a lack of appropriate control or contrast conditions. Another review—focusing on the possible role of meditation in psychokinesis performance—found that results of all but one of eight studies were consistent with the expectation that the practice of meditation would be favorable to the occurrence of psychokinetic effects (Braud, 1989). It should be pointed out that in many of the meditation-psi studies, the “meditation” process studied has been of a rather “mild” form, rather than the much more intensive forms of *dharana*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi* (and their conjoint practice, as *samyama*) treated in the *Yoga Sutras*.

Related to meditative conditions is the construct of *absorption*, as used in psychological research. In the latter, absorption typically is defined as “a ‘total’ attention, involving a full commitment of available perceptual, motoric, imaginative, and ideational resources to a unified representation of the attentional object” (Tellegen & Atkinson, 1974, p. 274). Note that this form of absorption is not necessarily identical to the form of absorption that may occur in the yogic practice of *samadhi*. A standardized measure of

(the psychological form of) absorption has been used in some psi studies. Only some of these studies (e.g., Stanford & Angelini, 1984) have found significant positive correlations between psi performance and absorption. However, Stanford (1987) has suggested several aspects of the psi-absorption studies that might have obscured the predicted relationship between these two variables.

In an early study, Lesh (1970) reported findings that suggested that a group of persons who practiced a form of meditation (Zen sitting meditation, *zazen*) daily for 4 weeks improved significantly in their empathic/affective sensitivity ability. These findings are relevant in that empathy is closely related to psychic sensitivity—especially to telepathy, the original meaning of which was feeling (literally, suffering) at a distance. In the Lesh study, interesting qualitative experiences suggestive of psi (i.e., shared imagery) also were reported.

Concentration has not been formally studied in psi research. More informal observations have suggested that concentration on target events, and then the release of such concentration, often has been used by successful participants as they prepare for their psi “testing” (e.g., White, 1964); and concentration on target events in ESP tests and on desired outcomes in PK tests invariably is present to some degree in nearly all experimental studies. The degree and quality of concentration, in a sense that more closely resembles *dharana*, would seem to be a useful topic for future psi research.

In summary, the roles of the last three limbs of yogic praxis have, thus far, not been tested adequately in contemporary psi research. Work with research participants who have practiced meditation more extensively and intensively is recommended.

#### **YOGA SIDDHIS AND PSI RESEARCH FINDINGS: ADDITIONAL MATCHES AND MISMATCHES**

Findings from experimental psi research studies are relevant to the *Yoga Sutras* comments on *siddhis* in two ways:

1. Certain “attainments” mentioned in the *Yoga Sutras*’ third chapter have, indeed, been found to occur in carefully designed laboratory studies (viz., studies of telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, psychokinesis).
2. Some of the yogic practices mentioned in the *Yoga Sutras* have, indeed, been found to be associated with enhanced psychic functioning. As indicated above, significant evidence for psi functioning has been found in association with at least rudimentary forms of practices (such as sensory withdrawal and meditational or protomeditational techniques) that reduce sensory, somatic, and cognitive distractions or disturbances. Because significant results have been observed in connection with limited forms of these practices, it is possible that more extensive and intensive practice of the same or similar techniques might yield even stronger or more consistent psi results.

There has been a curious absence of systematic psi research on the possible roles of the first two, foundational limbs of yogic practice—*yama* and *niyama*. Additionally, the possible effects of *asana* and *pranayama* have not been directly assessed in formal psi research, although very preliminary and partial forms of such exercises are included in at least some of the psi-conductive procedures employed in psi research laboratories. Finally, the progressive and intensive conjoint presence—as *samyama*—of *dharana*, *dhyana*, and

*samadhi*, has not been adequately explored. Investigations of these neglected areas can be ways in which future psi inquiry might be usefully informed by the *Yoga Sutras*.

Still other psi findings are relevant to the Patanjali *Yoga Sutras* and *siddhis*. There is a nonlocal aspect to psi functioning. Both receptive (ESP) and active (PK) forms of psi can operate at a distance—through space (when distant targets are involved and in findings derived from group or global consciousness studies; see Nelson, 2001; Radin, 1997) and through time (in instances of precognition and retroactive intentional influences; see Braud, 2000). These findings are congruent with *Yoga Sutras* claims of processes that are not bound by the usual constraints of space, time, and agency. In addition, some psychical researchers accept that a case may be made for the possibility of past lives (see Mills & Lynn, 2000), which is consistent with certain reincarnation claims found in the *Yoga Sutras* and elsewhere in Indian philosophy and psychology. Also consistent with some *Yoga Sutras* claims are findings regarding out-of-body experiences (see Alvarado, 2000) and other psi-related experiences and events (see Cohen & Phipps, 1992).

The foregoing findings indicate that psi functioning may be especially likely and effective under special conditions induced by practices similar to those described in the *Yoga Sutras*. However, psi functioning also occurs spontaneously in lived experience and also under more “ordinary” conditions in the laboratory. For example, it has been claimed that no special conditions or psychological preparations are needed for successful “remote viewing.” One of the *Yoga Sutras* (IV:1) suggests that *siddhis* might be the result of birth, herbs, *mantras*, intense practice, and cognitive absorption. Thus, certain individuals might have greater predispositions for psi functioning than others due to genetics (and, in Indian worldviews, “birth” would include possible *karmic* influences from past lives in which yogic or yogic-like practices had indeed occurred) and environmental influences and practices (other than yogic praxis). Forms of “preparation” such as those just mentioned could be responsible for some instances of facile psi functioning seemingly unconnected with formal yogic or yogic-like practice and their resultant conditions. According to Yogic views, although psi might occur spontaneously and sporadically in anyone’s experience, strong, consistent, and controllable forms of psi may require the support of the processes and practices described in the *Yoga Sutras*.

Yogic techniques reduce sensory, somatic, and cognitive distractions and foster an inward deployment of attention. The reduction of usual sources of interfering or masking “noise” can allow the more facile detection and description of already-present, subtle carriers or vehicles of psi information—i.e., thoughts, images, and feelings that otherwise might be ignored. In addition to reducing noise, the various techniques also reduce various internal and external *constraints* on the brain-mind, de-structuring the brain-mind and allowing changes (of the types we call “psychic”) to occur more readily in the first place (Braud, 1981a). That is, yogic techniques may help the brain-mind become less inert and more labile (freely variable).

With respect to the three *gunas* (fundamental characteristics, qualities, or ways of being of matter/mind [*prakriti*] ) that are prominently described in the *Yoga Sutras*, and the Yoga and Samkhya systems in general, the more labile/freely variable brain-mind that can be fostered by yogic practices would have less of the characteristics of extreme *rajas* (the principle of energy, excitement, force, restlessness, activity, projection), and of extreme *tamas* (the principle of mass, inertia, sluggishness, resistance, passivity, obscurity), and more of the characteristics of *sattva* (the principle of balance, orderliness, information, intelligence, essence, calmness, clarity, expressiveness; a harmonizing of *tamas* and *rajas*). What are viewed, in the *Yoga Sutras*, as optimal conditions for human



psychospiritual development may also correspond to optimal conditions of psi functioning.

## **FUNCTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF SIDDHI EXPERIENCES**

Traditionally, aspirants have been warned of the dangers inherent in the *siddhis*. Although the *siddhis* are said to develop spontaneously during the course of one's intensive yoga practices, the recommendation is that one should not seek these out, pay special attention to them, or cling to them, but rather, one should treat them as natural byproducts of one's psychospiritual work and move forward in that work.

The *siddhis* might become obstacles because they could shift one's attentional focus to outward things and because they might call attention to egocentric concerns. Both of these emphases could tempt and sidetrack the aspirant from the major aim of yogic practice—to reduce and ultimately eliminate the thought waves of one's mind so that one no longer falsely identifies *purusha* with the manifestations of *prakriti* and achieves Self-realization.

However, the *siddhis* also can serve several useful functions. Because these are considered byproducts of proper practice (especially of *samyama*), their appearances can serve as signposts, as indicators of one's psychospiritual progress. They can provide useful assurances and confidence in what one is doing and in the validity of the principles that inform one's practices. Some *siddhis* can help dispel some illusions—e.g., the illusion that one is always and forever bound by space, time, and agency. Further, acquaintance with certain *siddhis* might help an aspirant's understanding of the more subtle realms explored through yogic practice, and may even serve as useful tools in these explorations.

When yogic principles and practices were codified in the Patanjali *Yoga Sutras*, there was widespread acceptance of other ways of knowing, being, and doing, and of spiritual realities; and remarkable feats and powers were not as necessary to convince one of the reality of these other possibilities. In today's more skeptical age, the existence of "signs" such as the *siddhis* can serve as intimations and reminders of alternative, less familiar aspects of reality. The *siddhis* may serve very different purposes for different times, cultures, persons, and phases of life.

A serious student begins exploring Yoga not to acquire curious powers, but to attain a greater understanding of oneself and of reality at large. The *siddhis* might be encountered in the process, but quickly transcended. So, too, parapsychologists can, in time, pass beyond an exclusive interest in the well-recognized psi phenomena and advance to a consideration of larger and more spiritual matters. The *Yoga Sutras* can provide guidance in such a quest. Prior uses of yoga-related processes in psi research might be likened to stealing jewels from temples. A deeper appreciation of these processes might foster a realization of the purposes for which the temples were constructed in the first place.

There has been considerable interest in the possible role of the investigator in psi research—i.e., in psychologically mediated or psi-mediated experimenter effects (Palmer, 2002). The relevance of the *Yoga Sutras* to this issue is that by engaging in yogic practices, themselves, investigators might more thoroughly acquire the preparation and adequacy (*adaequatio*; see Schumacher, 1978) that might allow them to plan and conduct their psi research projects more creatively and interpret their findings more accurately and effectively.

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