

# Yoga and Vedanta

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**Seeker:** I was wondering if you could help me out. I'm trying to understand where/when Vedanta and the dualistic *yoga* started to diverge, historically speaking. Any insights would be awesome.

**Ramji:** They were always divergent. They deal with two different topics, action and knowledge. The *Upanishads* present both topics, but the relationship between them is not always clear, so *rajasic* people assumed that they could do their way to *moksa*. So *yoga* developed. *Sattvic* people are knowledge-motivated, so they were attracted to the knowledge and they made the relationship clear. Knowledge is for *moksa* and action is for purification of the mind. You can't do anything to get free, except pursue Vedanta, because freedom is your nature. Vedanta uncovers it.

**Seeker:** Also, do you feel like the word *yoga* is often misinterpreted as "union" of the *jiva's* consciousness with the Self (universal consciousness) as if they are separate (duality).

**Ramji:** Yes, indeed.

**Seeker:** I heard you interpret *yoga* as "union," but you defined union as understanding once. Do you think *yoga* is meant to be interpreted as the understanding that the *jiva's* consciousness and the universal consciousness are one (non-dual)?

**Ramji:** Yes. *Yoga* is an action word. But you can present knowledge with experiential language, although it is not recommended, because it is confusing. The *Gita* does it because Arjuna is *rajasic*. It is one reason you need a teacher who is clear on the relationship between action and knowledge.

**Seeker:** Lastly, do you think that using the name Vedanta is better than saying *jnana yoga*, even though they are synonymous, since *jnana yoga* includes the word *yoga* and may have some dualistic connotations?

**Ramji:** Yes. But *yogis* often develop an interest in knowledge, so *jnana yoga* is a term that they can relate to.

~ Love, Ramji