

**4.2.46:** For the purpose of attaining *apavarga*, there should be self-purification by means of yogic restraints (*yama*) and observances (*niyama*) and by psychological instructions and methods taught in yoga.

Vātsyāyana [280.4–8]: For the purpose of attaining to *apavarga*, “final beatitude,” self-purification is to be done by means of yogic restraints (*yama*) and observances (*niyama*). The restraints are virtuous equally for those of different stations of life. The observances, in contrast, vary with life circumstances. In all cases, self-purification removes unrighteousness and increases virtue. Psychological instructions are to be studied according to yoga science (*śāstra*). They include asceticism, breath-control, sensory withdrawal, meditational practice (*dhāraṇā*), and meditation proper (*dhyāna*). And the practice of sensory withdrawal (*pratyāhāra*) is for the purpose of removing attraction and aversion. The methods mentioned in the sūtra, however, are rules about yogic practice more generally.

*From this passage, we see that Nyāya embraces a yogic ethics: leading a virtuous life makes one fit for yogic accomplishment, including “final beatitude.” This thesis is implicit throughout the foundational Nyāya work of Gautama and Vātsyāyana if not with some later Naiyāyikas of so-called New Nyāya, who often write as philosophical technicians. An implicit yogic ethics is also common in many schools of classical philosophy, although details vary from school to school. Here we are told that practicing yogic restraints contributes to virtue (dharma) whatever one’s stage of life. In other words, they are universal standards, as Manu, for example, also says. They are not spelled out by Vātsyāyana, but Vācaspatimiśra (636.13) confirms that the five ethical principles that comprise the first limb of the aṣṭāṅga-yoga of the Yoga-sūtra are precisely what are meant: non-injury, truth-telling, refraining from stealing, sexual restraint, and non-possessiveness.*

*It is interesting that the practice of pratyāhāra, “sensory withdrawal,” is highlighted by Vātsyāyana because, although empiricist, Nyāya’s theory of concept formation is thoroughly realist, as we have seen. We form the concept of*

*cowhood through direct experience of individual cows, Bessie and Flossie and Śābalya. A verbalizable perception of a cow has its intentionality directed towards the real cow, not towards mental intermediaries such as sense-data, what some would call sensory objects proper such as sounds, colors, and shapes. Here with pratyāhāra, we see the idea that it is possible to turn away from the external world and direct our attention inward by redirecting the manas (“mind”) towards the self. This is one of the roots of Nyāya’s doctrine of apperception, anuvyavasāya, where the mind or manas takes cognition, a mental state, as its own object. Thus the immediate object of experience would be, for instance, a particular sensory quality. And proper sensory objects, sounds, and so on would be in focus as opposed to, for instance, the drum making them. This is an immensely important concept for moves made by later Naiyāyikas in philosophy of mind. And its soteriological importance for Nyāya and other schools—including, to be sure, Buddhist traditions—probably cannot be overemphasized, since it is crucial to meditation and, as Vātsyāyana says, control of desire.*

*As a final topic for this chapter, let us look again at the philosophic method called nyāya and its connection to yoga practices. We see that the last two sūtras of the chapter, 4.2.50 and 51, depart dramatically from the themes not only of the proximate set of sūtras on yoga but also from all the themes of the second “lesson” of the fourth chapter, which centers on soteriology (see Appendix A). The topic of 4.2.50 and 51 is debate, especially the differences among its three major kinds. At first blush, this seems out of place. But our contention is that this is not strange if we look upon debate—and specifically the procedures called nyāya—as contributing to the goals of yoga, or, even more significantly, as forms of yogic practice. The intervening three sūtras, 4.2.47–49—between the section explicitly on yoga and the two sūtras on debate—concern the importance of learning systematic teachings (śāstra). These are perhaps, as Vātsyāyana suggests, teachings about the self in the Upaniṣads, but also perhaps yoga-śāstra, which is mentioned in the immediately preceding sūtra, 4.2.46. These three sūtras in any case highlight the intellectual dimension of the path towards final beatitude. The*

context supports the idea that acquiring an intellectual understanding of the difference between the self (*ātman*) and the body and so on is a form of yoga. Such a reading seems entirely consistent with the way in which removing misconception is said to be an aid to ultimate beatitude according to the commentaries on Nyāya-sūtra 1.1.2 (see again the beginning of this chapter). Thus yoga would include not only debate for the truth, *vāda*, which is guided by *nyāya*—roughly philosophic or critical method—but also other forms of debate where it is especially important to be able to identify fallacies. Fallacies are of course the primary topic of Nyāya-sūtra chapter five. If this reading is correct, then several strands of Gautama's teaching are tied together through the idea of yoga practice.

**4.2.47: For the purpose of attaining *apavarga*, there should be repeated study of that science as well as discussion with those who know it.**

Vātsyāyana [280.11–16]: According to context, the words, “For the purpose of attaining *apavarga*,” should be carried over from the previous sūtra. . . . The word “science” (*śāstra*) in the sūtra means knowledge of the self, that is to say, the science concerning the self. Study of it consists of learning and memorization. The word “repeated” in the sūtra means that one should engage continually in actions of learning, listening, and reflection.<sup>4</sup> The words “as well as discussion with those who know it” are directed to the purpose of bringing that wisdom to maturation. Such maturation, in turn, destroys doubt, making one know things not known previously, as well as giving one full command of things already understood. The word “discussion” means conversation or debate aimed at consensus.

The phrase “as well as discussion with those who know it” is not entirely obvious. To clarify, the sūtra-maker says:

**4.2.48: The one who knows the science of the self should be admitted into the discussion along with pupils, teachers,**

<sup>4</sup> This echoes a famous verse from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (2.4.5): “The self (*ātman*) is to be learned from hearing about it, it is to be reflected upon, and it is to be made immediate in meditation.”

and colleagues, those well-wishers who are distinguished by their seeking the supreme good.

Vātsyāyana [281.3–5]: Just reading the words of the sūtra is sufficient to get the correct sense. And if one should worry that the bandying about of theses and countertheses would be offensive to one's interlocutor, the sūtra-maker advises:

**4.2.49: Alternatively, people who have no countertheses of their own are also to be admitted, to further the purpose of the discussion, if they seek the truth and the supreme good.**

Vātsyāyana [281.7–13]: The words, “are to be admitted,” have to be supplied. Wanting to acquire knowledge and wisdom from the other, one can make known one's desire to know the truth without advancing a position of one's own, in order to correct and certify one's views overall as well as opponents' philosophies that are mutually contradictory.

And there are some who transgress the method of philosophy (*nyāya*) out of passionate attachment to their own views. Concerning them, the sūtra-maker says:

**4.2.50: To protect truth that has been ascertained, disputation (*jalpa*) and destructive debate (*vitandā*) may be employed, in the way one would protect seeds and sprouts by covering them with thorns and branches.**

Vātsyāyana [281.16–282.2]: This would be appropriate for those who have not yet achieved knowledge of the truth (of the self's distinction from the body), whose flaws remain undiminished, but who are working towards the goal nevertheless. And when an opponent would malign or demean the truth out of indifference to real knowledge or for any other reason, then one should engage him in:

**4.2.51: Disputation by attacking through those two (*jalpa* and *vitandā*).**

Vātsyāyana [282.4–5]: The word in the sūtra, “attacking,” means to engage with a desire to prevail, not with a desire to ascertain knowledge of the truth. All this should be done for the purpose of protecting real knowledge, not for gain, honor, or renown.