



# WHAT IS YOGA?

By Mallory Slyder | August 2023

**According to yogic philosophy, every individual possesses both a small self and a Supreme Self.**



The small self comprises the superficial human aspects with which we tend to over-identify, such as our mind, body, and intellect. These aspects are heavily influenced by our five senses and the information we receive from our interactions with the world around us. However, at the core of every individual lies a Supreme Self, an all-pervasive consciousness or divinity that exists deep within all sentient and non-sentient beings.

As we progress through life, we become separated from our ability to perceive our true nature, resulting in a sense of disunion with our Supreme Self.

**The term “yoga” is derived from the root word “yuj”, meaning to unite. Yoga is a lifelong embodied practice.**

It teaches us, through the mind, body, and intellect, we can move beyond our limited identifications and experience union with our true nature, divinity itself.

As the Bhagavad Gita states, “Yoga is the journey of the self, through the self, to the self.”

**However, it is important to exercise caution when referring to yoga solely as a state of union.**



While yoga does lead us to experience union of the mind, body, and spirit, it also involves moments of disunion when we break free from exterior limitations and connect with our divine consciousness.