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Patanjali's Yoga Sutras II.34 & II.35

II.34 speaks on harmful action of varying degree as arising from three *kleśhas* (greed, anger or delusion). The passage highlights the inescapable nature of karma; whether done by you, caused by you, or approved by you, you will accumulate negative karma all the same. This is due to the fact that although karma may be considered 'action', it is your intentions that are truly important. Through either committing or approving harmful actions, you are satisfying harmful intentions. These intentions are what stem from greed, anger, or delusion, and promote cyclical suffering and ignorance (of the true metaphysical reality). Patanjali is not referring to the suffering of the one who has been dealt a harmful action, but the karmic suffering of whomever caused/approved/enticed the suffering, as they are operating under conditions of the mind that will continuously breed them negative karma and feel their *samsaric* cycle. Proper observance of yamas and niyamas are set to destroy these sources of suffering, and therefore the sources of harmful action. This is discussed in Sūtra II.35, where Patanjali explains that in fact practice of sublime meditation will result in most impeccable observance (establishment) of the yamas and niyamas, not the reverse. This is to say that through meditations, one will naturally begin to follow the yamas and niyamas, and only then will be free of harmful intentions (perverse thoughts). Once Samadhī is achieved one tastes true reality and delusion fades, triggering resolution of greed and anger based in ego, leading to absorption into yamas and niyamas.

I find these principles useful in my own life as they help me monitor my mental states mindfully, for thoughts become intentions, and intentions become actions. When I am in a negative state of mind, or catch myself with potentially harmful thoughts of any degree (towards others or myself), I consider the possible origins of these emotions, and it is easier to let them go. Even something small as a judgement towards another, I see as a seed of something bigger. Sometimes you come upon situations where it may be tempting to lean on these negative habits of the mind, but the outcome will be better with calm thoughts and actions that stem from wisdom (*prajna*), generosity (*dana*), and kindness (*metta*). Sutra II.35 reminds me that I have that capability to overcome these emotions, through my practice. The peace and contentedness I

attain in my practice soothes my mind, and reaches other people through my actions and my teachings. It will also make me able to recognize these subtle seeds of negativity, which are easy to passover and ignore.

Speaks against complacency