CHAPTER VI

PRATYĀHĀRA

VII.1 INTRODUCTION.

Pratyāhāra the fifth stage of Āstāṅga-Yoga, is the borderline of Bhiraṅga-Sādhana of Sādhana Pāda and Antaraṅga Sādhana of Vibhuti Pāda. Though Pratyāhāra is a technical term the meaning of the term itself expresses the activity expected from Pratyāhāra which is necessary at that stage of practice of Yoga where physical and psychological practice is completed and then intellectual and spiritual practice starts. Therefore, Pratyāhāra is the appropriate word to express essentiality of that stage where the aspirant has to withdraw his senses from their respective objects and turn the mind towards the object given for concentration. Then only he will be able to practice the higher grade of Yoga, which leads to Samādhi. Pratyāhāra is the base line, which one has to follow; then only the further advanced practice of Yoga, is possible.

VI.2 THE GENERAL MEANING AND GRAMMATICAL DERIVATION

i) This is actually a term used in other literature than Yoga as a technical term having different meanings. The word is derived from the root Prati Ā Hṛi-Harati and it means to draw in or back, or to withdraw (the senses from worldly
objects). And this meaning is related to *Pratyāhāra* described in *Pātañjala Yoga Sutra*.¹

ii) In Grammar *Pratyāhāra* is the comprehension of a series of letters or roots etc. into one by combining for shortness the first member with the *Ahubundha* (sub voce i.e. the ward in the *Sanskrit* order) of the last member, a group of letters etc. So combined as ‘ac’ or ‘hal’ in the *Siva Sutras* represents all *svaras* and ‘Vyāñjanas’ respectively. So instead of giving all the svarsar or *Vyāñjanas* every time one can only say ‘ac’ or ‘hal’ and that is enough to express the meaning expected. Therefore *Pāṇini* has termed it as ‘*Pratyāhāra*’ which is not at all related to the meaning of the ward *Pratyāhāra*.²

iii) In *Vadāntas* again, *Pratyahara* is used as withdrawing of created things, re-absorption dissolution of the world.³

iv) In dramatic language *Pratyāhāra* is name of a *partic*, part of the *Purva raṅga*.⁴

v) In *Sāhitya Darpaṇa* it is used in the sense of speaking to or addresses (ram *kri* with gen. To speak to a person). In this way the term *Pratyāhāra* is used in various text with various meanings.⁵
vi) Now let us see how the term is described in Yoga Philosophy as withdrawal of sense organs from the objects. In Yoga Sutra and Yoga Upanisads there are definition of Pratyāhāra. Patanjali defines the term only in one Sūtra. And in next Sūtra he describes the benefit of that state. He does not explain it in detail. But the definition itself is sufficient to describe the expectation from that state of mind. The stage of Pratyāhāra is fifth among eight stages of Yoga and the position of the term is appropriate and essential. At that stage of practice of Yoga, when the practitioner is on the urge of going towards higher steps of Yoga, controlling the mind is very important and before that attainment of last stage of Prāṇāyāma i.e. keval kumbhaka is also essential which is control over Prāṇa. So for Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samadhi, Pratyāhāra is the prerequisite. Then only mind will be able to stay at the given object and that steadiness of mind helps the aspirant in the process of Dhāraṇā.

vii) Yoga Upanisads have a different interpretation of the term. They have discussed the term in detail and in various manners to understand the term in better sense. The description is helpful for the aspirant to know the importance of the stage of Pratyāhāra in his life, which reflects the meaning as
retention in various ways. Yoga Upaniṣads defines the term as the meaning of the word i.e. Pratyaharati that is withdrawing back, but unable to express the exact nature of ‘Citta’ which is the main aspect of Yoga. The Yoga Upaniṣads are more concern about the day to day life regarding this stage of Yoga and relate it with other stages of Yoga.¹⁰

VI.3 DESCRIPTION OF PRATYAHARA IN YOGA UPAŅISAD.

The description of Pratyāhāra in Yoga Upaniṣad is more elaborated, clear and detail which is an aid for better understanding the concept. In Yoga Upaniṣads many types of Pratyāhāra-s are described. To some extent they are similar to each other but some of them are totally different. This also may be recorded that the definitions and the explanations of the concept in different Yoga Upaniṣads, though vary in terminology, convey the similar meaning. In this regard Darṣanopaniṣad is clearer and describes various types of Pratyāhāra in every stage of Yoga.¹¹

In Darṣanopaniṣad Pratyāhāra is defined as follows :-

इन्नियाणं चिरंता विषयेषु स्वभावतः;
बलावहरणं तस्या प्रत्याहारं स उच्च्यते II ¹²

The forcible bringing back of the senses, which in virtue of their very
nature, roam about among the objects of sensual pleasure is what is known as Pratyāhāra. This is the basic definition of Pratyāhāra given by the seer and after that he describes its different forms. Here in this definition the word used is ‘Balādaḥaraṇam’ and it is translated as forcible bringing back.13 It may be observed in this regard that the act of Pratyāhāra, though it is very difficult to attain or to follow, should not be done forcefully; but it should be attained in a natural spontaneous way. So the ward ‘balāt’ may be interpreted as firmly and not forcefully. After the attainment of ‘Keval Kumbhaka stage, the aspirant is already away from the affection and other attraction due to the practice of Yoga.14

But for him the activity of withdrawing the senses is essential for the practice of Dhyāna, which is the pathway towards Samādhi, the ultimate aim of the aspirant. Therefore he knows the importance of controlling the mind which leads to Dhāraṇa. According to Patānjalī after attaining the state of Keval Kumbhaka the practice of the aspirant is matured enough that his mind is now qualified to practice Dhāraṇa15 But Yoga Upaniṣads like Darśana and Śāṅkilya do not relate the state of Pratyāhāra to the state of Keval Kumbhaka. And explain the state as part of the aspirant’s life style and not one of the stage in the practice of Yoga16 They also do not link up the term with the further stages of Yoga but explain it as the way of retention.17
Yoga Cudamai also defines the term in similar way but does not add the word ‘balāt’.

चर्तां चक्षुवद्दीलां विषयेषु यथाक्रमम्
तत्त्रत्त्वाहरणं तेषां प्रत्याहारं: स उच्चाते II 18

When the eye and other organs of sense are roaming at large in the gratification of sensual pleasures pertaining to each, their withdrawal is what is known as Pratyāhāra. It also explains the importance of Pratyāhāra with one Simile. The seer says:

यथा तृतीयकाले तु रवि: प्रत्याहरेत भास्म्
तृतीयाक्षेत्रतो योगी विकारं मानसं हरेत् II 19

He says even as the sun withdraws his lustre at the commencement of the third quarter of the day; Similarly the Yogin should withdraw all mental transformations, remaining detached in the third of the stages. In the commentary of Upaniṣad Brahmayogin, explains the three stage of life as 1) infancy, adolescence and youth or 2) the gross, subtle and casual bodies or 3) Inset, Mobility and Rhythm, as 4) celebrate, householder and anchorite in religious life. The yogī with the full knowledge derived by the denial of everything but the Brahman, the non-differentiated one essence and simultaneously there with becomes the Brahman alone 20

In Yogatattvopaniṣad the seer explains Pratyāhāra in a similar
manner as of other Yoga Upanisad. It defines it as:

इन्द्रियायनीनिद्रायात्मयो यत्रात्मायार्थं स्पर्शम्
योजी कृमिकमास्थाय प्रत्याहारः स उच्चयते ॥ ॥ 21

The withdrawal of organs of perception and action from the object of pleasure is Pratyāhāra of the simple variety, but for the Yogi, the withdrawal through the performance of Kumbhaka is what is called Pratyāhāra. After describing the definition of Pratyāhāra the seer further explain how Pratyāhāra is practiced and also describe the duration of it, through which the aspirant may attain some Yogic powers. But also warns the Yogi to keep those powers as secrets.

VI.4 THE CONTRADICTION OF TITLE REGARDING THE EXPLANATION OF PRATYAHARA

The explanation about Pratyāhāra in Yogatattva Upanisad is similar to Śaṅḍilya Upanisad and Darsanopaniṣad regarding the practice of Pratyāhāra. It is as follows:

Yogatattvopaniṣads says:

यद्यत् पश्याति चक्ष्युर्या तत्तदात्मेति भावयेत् ॥ ॥ 22

and Śaṅḍilyopaniṣads says:

यद्यत् पश्याति तत् सर्वमात्मेति प्रत्याहारः ॥ ॥ 23

and Darsanopaniṣad Says:

यत् पश्याति तु तत् सर्व ब्रह्म पश्यन् समाहितः ।
प्रत्याहारो भवेदप्र ब्रह्मविद्धि पुरोविद्धिम् ॥ ॥ 24
The first verse quoted above describes in \textit{Yoga Tattvopanishad}, one can observe the similarity between above three verses still in the text of \textit{Yoga Upanishad} with commentary by Sri \textit{Upanishad Brahmayogin} that description is described as \textit{Dhāraṇā Svarūpa} and not \textit{Pratyāhāra}. And above verses from Śāṇḍilya and Dārsana\textit{Upaniṣads} are described as part of \textit{Pratyāhāra}. Therefore it can be stated that the above verse in Yogatattvopanishad is not the \textit{Svarūpa} (nature) of \textit{Dhāraṇā} but the description of \textit{Pratyāhāra}. In the English translation of above text also it is translated as form of \textit{Dhāraṇā} and \textit{Yogic powers} attainable through \textit{Dhāraṇā} and not \textit{Pratyāhāra}. In the above verse the expression is used as ‘\textit{Bhāvayet}’ and not ‘\textit{Dhārayet}’. But in the last verse the verb \textit{Dhārayet} is used instead of ‘\textit{Bhāvayet}’ but this can be called as a textual mistake or printing mistake. Because in another text of \textit{Yogatattvopanishad} i.e. \textit{Upaniṣad Sangraha} the verse is quoted as follows:

\textbf{एवं ज्ञानेन्त्रियाणां तु तत्सौरूख्यं सुसाधयेत् II} 28

So the verb may not be ‘\textit{dhārayet}’ but ‘\textit{Susadhayet}’ and not ‘\textit{Tat Atmani}’ but ‘\textit{Tatat Saukhyam}’. According to the above description it is observed that, it is not a form of \textit{Dhāraṇā} but description of \textit{Pratyāhāra}. There is also one additional point, which gives support to the above statement. If the seer describes ‘\textit{Svarūpa of Dhāraṇā}’ in detail then why he does not describe types of \textit{Dhāraṇā} after that
immediately? Instead of explaining it after the twelve verses about attainment of power, particularities about the practice of Yoga and also the state of formality ‘Paricayavasthā’, he should explain it along with ‘Dhāraṇā Svarūpa’ but he does not do that.²⁹ Therefore it can be stated that the explanation given as ‘Dhāraṇā Svarūpa’ is not actually related to Dhāraṇā but Upaniṣad Brahmayogin has given the wrong tittle, actually it is the description of Pratyāhāra.

Now let us see how one should practice Pratyāhāra according to Yoga Tattvopaniṣad. The seer says: whatever the Yogin sees with his eyes, he should conceive of all that as Ātman. Whatever one hears with his ears, he should conceive of all that as the Ātman. Whatever he smells with his nose, he should conceive of all that as the Ātman. Whatever taste he feels with his tongue, he should conceive of all that as the Ātman. Whatever he touches with his skin he should conceive of all that as the Ātman.³⁰ In this way the aspirant properly obtains felicity of the organs of perception. After that though it is obtained one should practice it for atleast three hours everyday with effort and without laziness, there would arise marvelous sagacity in Yogi’s Citta, then only the aspirant will attain various Yogic powers.³¹

If one has followed up the method of above discussed Pratyāhāra he will also able to fix his mind for concentration, which leads to
meditation and *Samādhi*. So *Pratyāhāra* is very essential stage in the path of Yoga, which teaches how to control the mind and sense organs. If the aspirant will not able to conceive all that he perceives belongs to *Atman*, then each organ of perception has many objects, which may attract attention and may disturb the process of concentration e.g. if one who is practicing *Dhyāna* without *Pratyāhāra*. What will happen? When he will sit in front of the statue of Deity and with all the material for worshiping God, when he sees the God he may remember the similarity of the statue with another one which he has seen before. Or if he smells the fragrance of flowers kept for offering the previous memory of that smell may be awakened and then he will starts correlating that smell with that memory and this will happen with every organ of perception. When it attaches to its object immediately knowledge occurs and concentration process breaks and that will be the end of *Dhyāna*. So to avoid this to happen in the practice of *Dhyāna* one should learn how to withdraw the sense organs from their respective object and also if they come in contact with their objects the knowledge perceived by the organ is all that as the *Ātman* and not actually what he perceives. This is the beginning of acquiring the knowledge of Brahman the ultimate truth and falseness of the universe.

*Darsanopanisad* explain this view from many angles. The seer says

1) *Pratyāhāra* in *Yama* and *Niyama* whatever one does,
whatever pure and impure till the moment of his death all that he should do unto the Brahman

II) One should perform his daily ceremonial observances and other rites intended for the accomplishment of his duties, with the mental attitude that they are for the propitiation of the Brahman.

III) Pratyāhāra through Prāṇāyāma after drawing in the air, he should confine it in place after place, from the root teeth thence at the throat should he confine the air, from the throat thence at the chest, drawing it in from the chest he should confine it at the naval region, drawing it in from the navel region he should confine it at the kundali, from the region of kundali confine it at the Mulādhāra, then out of the Apāna (vital air) he should confine at the two hips, thence similarly at the middle the thighs, thence at the two knees, at the shanks and the big toes of the feet he should confine it. This has been said to be Pratyāhāra by knowers of Pratyāhāra of yore. The above-described Pratyāhāra regarding vital air is similar to Śāndilya Upaniṣad. 32

Here it is observed that above description of Pratyāhāra where everything or every activity has been related, and contributed to
Brahman because then only the Yogi will get rid off the pain and pleasure. If he doesn’t think so he will always think about the effect and also the result of his every activity. But when he has already understood the fact that is ‘Brahma Satyam Jagan Mithyā’ he will be able to detach himself from day to day activity. While doing so he may face some problems or difficulties but still he will think, that is also Brahman. This is totally a new view of YogaUpaniṣad looking towards Pratyāhāra. The withdrawal of feelings as well as desires has been taught through Pratyāhāra. And to learn this technique, the Yoga Upanisad suggests that one should start withdrawing the mind from the daily activities and duties and should perform them as it is a part of life and should not get involve in them. Pratyāhāra is one of the ways of ‘Vairāgya’ (renunciation). And Darśan Upaniṣad deals with the detailed exposition of the eight folds Yoga, along with the acquisition of the knowledge of the Supreme Brahman. Therefore in every stage of Yoga the seer speaks about Brahman and relates every activity with that. So Pratyāhāra is also described in that way. I.e. when one thinks about only Brahman he will easily renunciate and detach himself from the worldly affairs which leads to the path towards attainment of supreme Brahman. In a similar way Yoga Tatvā and Sāndilya Upaniṣad deal with the attainment of the state of Brahman.
and therefore describe eight fold of Yoga helpful in attaining the Supreme State. And thus both the Upaniṣads also describe every stage of Yoga relating to Brahman.

Some definition of Pratyahara in Sandilya Upanisad

1) विषयेषु विचिरताम् इन्द्रियाणां बलादाहरणं प्रत्याहारः 
2) यथा व प्रत्याति तत्त सर्व मात्मेति प्रत्याहारः 
3) नित्यविघ्नकर्मकलापा: प्रत्याहारः 
4) सर्वविषय परास मुखत्यं प्रत्याहारः 
5) अव्यवहारु मर्मस्थानेषु क्रमाध्यारणं प्रत्याहारः 

Sāndilya Upaniṣad also describes five kinds of Pratyāhāra, suggesting as similar to Darsanopaniṣad.

I) The giving up of the fruits of the observance prescribed for every day in Pratyāhāra.

II) Turning one’s face away from all sensual pleasures is Pratyāhāra.34

Here one observes that any activity which gives pain or pleasure if surrendered to Supreme Brahman one automatically withdraws oneself from that activity and also does not get attach to that. And this is the way one should learn to renunciate in the life. Patanjali also describes it as ‘renunciation’ the practice of detachment from desires.35
And Pratyāhāra is one of the way of doing so, therefore the Yoga Upaniṣads describe various kinds of Pratyāhāra to achieve the state of total non-attachment which leads to final liberation (Mokṣa).

Amṛt Nāḍopaniṣad defines Pratyāhāra differently, which does not express the meaning of the term. The Upaniṣad describes it as first stage of Yoga but doesn’t explain the stage along with the definition. The seer says:

शब्दवादि विषयात् पश्च मन्मचैवातिच्छलम्
चिन्तयेकात्मनो रघमीलू प्रत्याहारः स उच्चते ॥ ३६

That is known as Pratyāhāra where in one deals with the five objects of the senses, such as sound and the like, as also the very unsteady mind, as the reins of his Ātman. Here the seer doesn’t explain what he expects in the stage of Pratyāhāra. But in further discussion about Keval Kumbhaka he again describes the state of a Yogi which he calls ‘Praśānta’ which is similar to the stage of Pratyāhāra described in other Yoga Upaniṣads. ३७ But the seer does not call that state as the stage of Pratyāhāra. The Upaniṣad describes the state as:

अन्धवत् पश्च रूपाणि शब्द बविरवच्छसु ॥
काष्ठवत् पश्च येन ते राजान्तस्येति लक्षणम् ॥ ३७
The above description of ‘Praśānta’ is described after the state of Keval Kumbhaka and Pratyāhāra is also described in Patanjala Yoga Sutra after attainment of the state of Keval Kumbhaka. And the description of Praśānta is also similar to stage of Pratyāhāra. Therefore one can say that, the description of ‘Praśānta’ is the stage of Pratyāhāra. Because it is described as to see forms like a blind man, to hear sound like a deaf man, and to took upon the body as on a peace of wood. Such is the description of a Praśānta the Yogi with his senses tranquilized. And this is what one has to do in Pratyāhāra. This is the state of ‘Praśānta’ described in ‘Bhagvat Gita’ as Sthitaprajñā, who has controlled all the sense organs, and left all the desires and has not expect anything other than Ātman. His super intelligence is stabilized; so he has become very calm and quiet and lives in total satisfaction, which leads to state of pure bliss. And this is what expected from the aspirant who has reached upto the stage of Pratyāhāra. Therefore Pratyāhāra is called as foundation of Dhāraṇā Dhyāna and Samādhi. But Kurikopaniṣad suggests to perform it before starting practic of Prāṇāyāma. The seer gives the simile of tortoise and says: withdrawing his organs of sense, even as a tortoise does its limbs, controlling the mind in his heart rendering it free from the effects of the breathing exercise, sensual desires etc, one should sit in a suitable posture and perform Prāṇāyāma. And similarly Darśanopaniṣad
also describes Pratyāhāra through Prāṇāyāma. The Upaniṣad describes various parts of the human body from the sole of the feet to the chest. Then it says that one should drawing in the breath through the nostrils and should retain it on those parts. which is described in the present mark. Darsānopaniṣad also describes the higher level of Pratyāhāra, which deals with Ātman, and the seer describes it as a perfect Pratyāhāra, one should practice thus, nothing is unattainable.

The seer says one who has mentally abstracted the idea of the Ātman in the body, with his mind well under control, the knowing yogi should confine his Ātman in the non-dial indeterminate Ātman (the Brahman). This is known as actual Pratyāhāra by those well versed in the Vedānta.40

VI.5 THE FRUITS OF PRATYAHARA

Darsānopaniṣad and Yogatattvopaniṣad describes fruit of Pratyāhāra but they are totally different from each other. Darsānopaniṣad describes very simple benefits attainable by the Yogan. The Upaniṣad describes that all sins as well as the diseases of worldly existence will perish altogether with the practice of Pratyāhāra.41 But Yogatattvopaniṣad describes various Yogic powers attainable after practicing Pratyāhāra for three hour's everyday in a given manner42
They are as follows:

i) Clairaudience

ii) Clairvoyance

iii) Transporation across vast distances in short time

iv) Yogic Vocal Powers

v) Yogic powers of transforming one’s self into any form desired
Yogic method of making oneself invisible

vi) The power of transmuting iron and other baser metals into
gold by smearing with the Yogin’s urine and excreta these
will be acquired by the Yogin.

vii) The power for moving through Takasa or ethereal space will
also be generated.43

Those Yogic powers Patanjali has described will be attainable only
after mastering ‘Samyama’ on given object and not after practicing
Pratyāhāra. Samyama means practicing Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna and
Samādhi altogether on one given object and one masters that then only
achieves Yogic powers.44

But both Yoga Sūtra and Yogatattvopaniṣad warn the aspirant
that these yogic powers should be considered as obstacles to the
attainment of the Great Siddhi of Yoga.45 So one should not demonstrate
his sagacity to any one, keep them as a secret. The aspirant should not reveal in them. The only he will be able to attain the final liberation (Moksa). So in this way Yoga Upaniṣads describe Pratyāhāra in every stage of life from day to day activity to retention of breath and also suggest not involving in the fruit of Pratyāhāra. This is called 'Yoga;' Yoga gives the practitioner various types of benefits but always suggest not to reveal in them, because, basic aim of Yoga is not attaining those benefits but to attain the state of pure bliss i.e. Kaivalya.

VI.6 DESCRIPTION OF PRATYAHARA IN YOGA SUTRA

Patañjali describes Pratyāhāra as fifth stage of Yoga, which binds two quests, external quest i.e. Yama, Niyama, Āsana and Prāṇāyāma and internal quest i.e. Dhāranā, Dhyāna and Samādhi. For the attainment of Samādhi all seven stages are prerequisites and essential. One can not drop any of them. And Pratyāhāra joins stages of practicality to stages of spirituality. Therefore very much important and essential for every aspirant. Through the practices of Yama, Niyama, Āsana and Prāṇāyāma the body and its energy are mastered and the next stage, achieves the conquest of the senses and mind. When mind becomes ripe for meditation, the senses rest quietly and stop importuning the mind for their gratification. Then the mind, which hitherto acted as a bridge between the senses and the soul, frees itself.
from the senses and turns towards the soul to enjoy its spiritual heights. 

Pratyāhāra is the result of first four stages and forms the foundation for Dhārāṇā, Dhyāna and Samādhi. Therefore it is very essential for the aspirant to attain that state. Patanjali describes Pratyāhāra after achieving the state of ‘Keval Kumbhaka’ the natural state of Prāṇāyāma. In that state the Yogi neither inhales nor exhales and sit for longer duration (atleast 3 ½ hour) stand still. So he has already achieved the control over external limbs through Asana and retention of breath through Prāṇāyama\(^7\) (VayuvrittiNirodha) And then the Yogi masters the physical body and wants now to control the mind and sense organs. Therefore the stage of Pratyāhāra is described by Patanjali.

I) Patanjali defines Pratyāhāra as follows: -

स्वदिष्टवस्त्रस्नायुष्ठिताः स्वत: सत्यामर्गान्त: \(\text{Pratyāhāra}\)।

Withdrawing the senses, mind and Citta from contact with external objects and then drawing them inwards towards the seer, is Pratyāhāra. This activity is very difficult to achieve. Because contact between object and subject is a natural process, which produces sensation (Samvedana) which goes into the respective center of that sense organ in the brain taps the memory center and then knowledge of a special kind occurs. So this process of acquiring knowledge is necessary on every stage of life. So, how
can one withdraw the senses from the respective object? How it will be possible? And the answer is Patañjali does not expect from the aspirant that he should not have any contact between the subject and the object, but he wants detachment from the knowledge, which arise from the contact. Therefore he uses the word 'Asamprayogi' i.e. disengagement. So one should not get involve in that contact and try to be aloof. And this is renunciation. Therefore Pratyāhāra is the foundation of the path of renunciation. As bird can not fly without its wings in case of Sādhaka, the two wings of Yoga are practice from Yama to Prānāyāma, and renunciation, from Pratyāhāra to Samādhi. For flight, both are necessary. Then the yogi dwells in his soul perceiving all things directly, without the intervention of Citta, the conscious faculty. Pratyāhāra is always related to withdrawal of sense organs but actually it is not the sense organs, which get attached to the object but the mind, which is called as eleventh organ of perception (Antar Indriya) which is a part of Antahkarṇa, i.e. mind complex. If the mind is not involved in the activity done by any organ of perception, one cannot have the right knowledge. And if mind is with that sense organ which is contacted with the object, it produces pain and pleasure.

Now lets see one example to understand the importance of
mind with the sense organ for acquiring knowledge. If a person who is reading a novel which is very interesting gets engrossed in the activity in such a way that he cannot hear voice of his friend who is talking to him. Here the organ of perception is ear, which is present; the man who is reading the book is not asleep. So he hears what his friend is talking to him but his mind is involve in another activity which is more interesting therefore, he cannot answer the question of his friend. Because at that time mind is not attach to ear and he replies that he heard only the voice of his friend but could not understand what he said. And asks the friend to repeat the sentence. Here what has happened? He heard the voice of his friend, his dialogue but could not understand it because his mind is involved in some other activity. So mind is the main constraint which misleads the organs of perception and that leads to lack of concentration in any activity.

Therefore before defining Pratyāhāra Patañjali says :-

धारणाय त योग्यता मनस: ॥ ५७ ॥

The mind also becomes fit for concentration, after achieving the natural state of Prānāyāma. Prānāyāma is not only an instrument to steady the mind but also leads the way to concentration. And that mind control can be further achieved through withdrawing
the sense organs in Pratyāhāra. So mind, which is otherwise very unstable, through Pratyāhāra only, is able to control the mind and the senses no longer importune the mind for their gratification. The sense organs lose tastes and flavours of their respective objects and are drawn back from the external world in order to help the mind in its inner quest. In normal daily life, Citta helps the senses to see the objects of the world with thoughts of acquisition, rejection and resignation. They become hypnotized by them, and are drawn outwards towards pleasure. In Pratyāhāra the senses are directed inwards, towards the realization of the soul. Pratyāhāra is the withdrawal of the mind from its contact with the sense of perception and organs of action, and then its direction is towards the soul. The relationship between the mind and senses is aptly composed to that of bees following the queen bee. If the queen bee moves, the others follow. They do not function independently; similarly when the mind stops wandering, the senses also stops functioning and this is Pratyāhāra. So controlling and stabilizing the mind is the basic need for going towards the path of concentration. And Pratyāhāra works like a friend who releases one from the shares of the external world and leads towards happiness in the delight of the soul. By controlling the senses and mind, the aspirant draws Citta towards its source
the soul – Ātman and through Ātman to Paramātman.

The practice of Pratyāhāra modifies the mechanism of acquiring knowledge. The mind, which bypasses intelligence and approaches it for guidance. Intelligence employ its discriminating faculty to weigh right and wrong, the appropriate and inappropriate, and supports the mind in its struggle to free itself from the claims of memory and imprints. This act of going against the current of memory and mind is Pratyāhāra. Pratyahara is called an external quest because the senses are disciplined by intelligence so that they may begin a journey in reverse and return to their points of origin. This process of weighing one’s instincts, thoughts and action is the practice of detachment or renunciation. Energy is conserved and used only when necessary. The continual longing to repeat old sensations is gradually curbed. Memory collects new and fresh impressions and is subdued. It becomes subservient to intelligence and consciousness (Citta) it is Citta, which grasps intelligence and brings it to rest at the source of conscience. Then the impulses of nature and intuitive insight flows freely. This is the effect of Pratyāhāra.

Pratyāhāra can be divided into four stages, physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual. Withdrawing energy from the organs of
action and senses of perception towards the brain in physical Pratyāhāra. Quieting the fluctuations in four lobes of the brain is mental Pratyāhāra; drawing intelligence towards the stem of the brain is intellectual Pratyāhāra. Directing the energies of intelligence and Citta towards the seat of conscience is spiritual Pratyāhāra. It culminates in the vision of the seer Ātmasāksātkaśra.\textsuperscript{59}

II) THE RESULT OF PRATYĀHĀRA

Patañjali describes Pratyāhāra in only two sutras. First one is the definition and the second Sūtra talks about the result of Pratyāhāra Patañjali says :

\begin{verse}
तत: परम दश्यतेन्नियाणाम् II \textsuperscript{51}
\end{verse}

Pratyāhāra results in the absolute control of the sense organs. The effect of Pratyāhāra is felt when the senses are mastered and the mind is ripe and avoids for its spiritual quest. When the senses have ceased to run after, pleasures obtained from the phenomenal world, they can be yoked to serve the soul. Pratyāhāra sublimes both senses and mind. Somewhere in the literature sense organs are compared with horse. When the horse is stubborn he doesn’t listen the orders of his charioter but if he is lenient he obeys every order of his owner and acts properly.
He stops whenever his master wants to stop and go when his master wishes him to go. He doesn't at all interested in refusing the orders given to him; he works as his master wishes; this is called as Paramāvasyātā. With the practice of Pratyāhāra the aspirant attains the 'Paramāvasyātā' of sense organs. They acts like a leant horse, they go towards the object when the aspirant wishes and withdraw and from the object when he wants to withdraw. And result is: though there are various object around him which otherwise attracts his attention that cannot arise any disturbing moment in Citta, which is very much necessary for the further study of concentration process. The practice does not ends here but actual practice of attaining Samādhi starts now and without this highest control of sense organs it is impossible to start that practice. Therefore, before practicing Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna and Samādhi one has to master the stage of Pratyāhāra. Otherwise the mind cannot be stabilized and then in the process of Dhyāna will get attach to the external objects and one cannot experience the uninterrupted flow of attention, which leads to Samādhi.
VI.7 OBSERVATIONS:

I) Patañjali describes Pratyāhāra very briefly only in two sutras. But defines it in such a way that it gives the clear idea to the aspirant as to what is expected in that stage.

II) Patañjali describes the state of Keval Kumbhaka that is prerequisite for mind stability; then only defines Pratyāhāra. He is more concerned about the inner quest and finds necessary to point out the state of Pratyāhāra, before describing Dhāranā, Dhyāna and Samādhi. Therefore he describe Pratyāhāra as the fifth stage of Aṣṭāṅga Yoga.

III) Withdrawal of sense organs and mind is the foundation of the path of renunciation but to attain that state one has to master external aspects or practical aspects of Yoga, which are mentioned in first four stages. Yama, Niyama, Āsana and Prāṇāyāma. Through that practice of restrain one is able to control one’s sensory organs. It is not very easy task because mind is involved in that process. One can control physical activities but cannot control the mental ones. Because one doesn’t have control over his thought process while he practices the external quest and that is main constrain in the path of Yoga. If that stops, then only concentration process will start and for that withdrawal of mind
is necessary.

IV) *Yoga Upaniṣads* describe *Pratyāhāra* in detail. There are some
definition mentioned in the *Upaniṣads* describing the types of
*Pratyāhāra*. But none of them express the meaning of the term as
definition in *Yoga Sūtra* does.

V) *Yoga Upaniṣads* do not take the meaning of *Pratyāhāra* as only
withdrawing sense organs but they relate it to part of renunciation
(Vāirāgya). Therefore suggest to do *Pratyāhāra* in every day to
day activity even describe the retention of breath as *Pratyāhāra*
which is part of *Prāṇāyāma*. But wherever there in ‘Nirodha’
they describe it as *Pratyāhāra*. That means YogaUpaniṣads
describe *Pratyāhāra* as retaintion and not withdrawal.

VI) Every Upanisad deals with *Ātman* and *Supreme Brahman* therefore
relates them in every stage of Yoga. So they relate in case of
*Pratyāhāra* also. The *Upaniṣad* says that every activity one
performs goes to Brahman. So they want to establish the *Advaita*
philosophy. ‘*Brahma Satya Jagan Mithyā*’. And therefore
describes that whatever one does with that thought is called
*Pratyāhāra*. It is simple to understand the theory behind it and
that is one should not get involve in any activity of life and only
think about the *Supreme Brahman*. Then one will attain the state
of Kaivalya or dissolves his Ātman in Paramātman. Therefore the seer always give advice to his pupil that he should only think about Brahman and nothing else. And for doing so Pratyāhāra is described from where the path of spirituality starts.

VII) Yoga Upaniṣads do not fix the position of the stage of Pratyāhāra in the practice of Yoga. Somewhere it is described as the first stage of Yoga somewhere it is described as fifth stage. They also are not very firm about the attainment of Pratyāhāra after the state of Keval Kumbhaka.

VIII) But they describe various manners that one should able to practice Pratyāhāra in day to day life also, which helps the aspirant to become non-attached.

IX) Though Patañjali describe only control of sense organs in the definition of Pratyāhāra it is very difficult to attain that control. And Yoga Upaniṣads help the aspirant to attain that control of sense organ. Because they prescribe how to perform the Pratyāhāra. They describe it in very simple manner, which is easy to understand and follow. This is the contribution of Yoga Upaniṣads, which are simpler and suggest the easiest practical way to attain the stages of Yoga.

X) Patañjali gives description of confirm state of every stage of Yoga
which is final description and Yoga Upaniṣads help the aspirant to understand it.

XI) Yoga Upaniṣads also describe about the Yogic powers attainable after Pratyāhāra but Patañjali describes those power after the eighth stage i.e. Samādhi which is more relevant. But one can not find out the authenticity of the powers described in Yoga Upaniṣad, because Yoga is based on theory as well as practice. So to judge the truth one has to practice Yoga to that extend which is not possible for everybody. Therefore there are two ways one has to accept it as it is or drop it.

XII) The stage Pratyāhāra that Patañjali describes is very important for the practice of inner quest. It is the foundation of renunciation. And the result of Pratyāhāra gives the aspirant the power to control the mind and sensory organs, which is essential for concentration. i.e. Pratyāhāra. In Yoga Sūtra it has been described as fifth stage of Yoga because up till now the Yogi has got control over physical limbs and breath so this is only external control. But for the inner quest Yogi requires the control over internal organs and that is only possible when one controls the mind. Therefore before the state of Dhāraṇā Patañjali defines Pratyāhāra. The definition itself gives the idea what is expected from that stage as well as explain what happens in that stage.
The Yogi, who has attained breath-control also, needs guideline for the further practice; because, only stage of Keval Kumbhaka is not the aim of the Yogi. Therefore Patanjali now suggest controlling the mind by withdrawing the sense organs and termed it as Pratyāhāra.

XIII) Though Patanjali describes Pratyāhāra in two Sūtras, they are sufficient for the Yogi to guide the path of Yoga. But for the ordinary Sādhaka Yoga Upaniṣads give the helping hand to understand those two Sūtras.

XIV) One observes that there is level of difference between Pratyāhāra in Yoga Sūtra and Pratyāhāra in Yoga Upaniṣad. The stage of Pratyāhāra in Yoga Sūtra describes who has already attained the state of Keval Kumbhaka which is the highest stage of Prānāyāma where the Yogi neither inhales nor exhales i.e. the Yogi does not require the vital air also which is most essential for life. He has controlled his breathing. And still that is not enough to attain Samādhi. Patanjali describes three stages in between, which are essential to be attained to reach the state of Samādhi. So attainment of Prānāyāma is the prerequisite for the state of concentration mediation and total observation. But still it is the control over external aspects, thus Pratyāhāra is described where
the Yogi attains control over internal aspects. So Patanjali gradually increases the intensity of practice of Yoga and guides the aspirant to climb from gross to subtle. From physical level to psychological level which leads to spiritual level.

XV) But Yoga Upanisads do not describe Pratyahara on particular point but prescribe it in every stage of Yoga from Yama to Pranayama. The stage of Pratyahara does not have its own identification but the practice of Pratyahara has to be done on several stages. So it indicates that the seer wants to explain Pratyahara from the lower level up to the higher level of practice, so that it becomes easier for those who wants to practice Pratyahara but do not attain the state of Keval Kumbhaka. Or may be the seer wants his pupil to practice Pratyahara in every activity he does which helps him to practice higher standard of Pratyahara where it deals with Atman and Brahman. So the stage of Pratyahara Yoga Upanisads describe is also from gross object to subtle object. So one can say that there are levels in Pratyahara.
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