PREFACE

The Patanjali Yoga Sutras is an ancient Indian scripture of the Vedic tradition. It is an authoritative and classical work on Yoga, its principles, practice and philosophy. Traditionally it is considered a shastra or authoritative discipline requiring sadhana or dedicated disciplined effort.

Yoga is increasingly gaining acceptance as a health and wellness enhancing activity. Yoga has been subject to study and scrutiny by health professionals and academicians both in the East and in the West. Yoga is now accepted as a valid fitness activity in education and as a therapeutic modality in modern medicine and healthcare. Although different aspects of Yoga are studied and incorporated into modern medicine, there is so far no attempt at a holistic and integrative amalgamation and interpretation of the whole Yoga system as elucidated in the classic Yoga text, the Patanjali Yoga Sutras from a medical science perspective. Several of the mechanisms and processes described in the Yoga Sutras can be better understood in the light of current research in neuroscience. More particularly, looking at the applied and therapeutic aspect of the whole system makes it pertinent to employ the present scientific advances in medical neuroscience to interpret this ancient work.

Patanjali Yoga Sutras is a scriptural work in the Vedic spiritual philosophical tradition. It is in the Sanskrit language. The researcher is a medical doctor with specialist training and experience in psychological medicine and neurology. He does not claim to have a formal expertise neither in Vedic philosophy nor the Sanskrit language. But he has some knowledge of both by way of svaadhyaaya (traditional self-study), being a paramparika veda yoga shastra adhyayin (Hereditary Practitioner of the Tradition of Vedic Yoga Discipline). He was ceremonially initiated into the tradition by on the 29th May 1987 (dvitiya shukla jeshta 2044 vikram samvat).