Vedic Philosophy

Tradition
- Vedic Wisdom
- Support of Previous Teachers

Importance of knowing the Philosophy

Vedas
- Basis of mantras

Vedanta
- Foundation of our Teaching
- Higher States of Consciousness
A Brief History of Meditation

From the Big Bang to the Chopra Center
How did it all begin?

Big Bang or Big OM?
The Absolute
(Pure Consciousness)

Silence
Infinite Possibilities
The Absolute experienced Itself by moving within Itself

Friction

Sound
The Absolute is Silent so the first sound had to be forced out of the field of Pure Consciousness, becoming conditioned consciousness.
Om is the original Primordial Sound emerging from the unmanifest silence and diversifying into creation as we know it.

“In the beginning was the Word” (the sound of OM)
“The Word became flesh” (manifest creation)
“The One became many”

- Gospel of John
The Vedic scriptures
The non-dual OM emerged from the Supreme Unmanifest Absolute becoming the three letters A U M.

From these came the gross physical (Bhur) and subtle (Bhuvah) causal, celestial (Suvar) universes.

From them emerged the great Gayatri Mantra.

From the Gayatri Mantra emerged knowledge of the transcendental nature of the Cosmic Being (Purusha).

From this emerged the entire meaning of the Vedas.

From the Vedas, Brahma created the manifest Universe.
We do not create OM by a chanting of it. We only produce a vibration sympathetic with the vibration that is already there by its own right and which is called OM.

OM is a cosmic vibration. It is not a chant made by us, created by us or initiated by us.

When we chant OM, we establish a connection between ourselves and the Supreme Reality, which manifest itself as sound vibration in the form of OM.

When the mind is completely silent and you listen within, you will hear God humming.
Process of Creation (evolution)

- Non-dual Absolute
- Universal Soul - Atman
- Individual Soul - Jiva
- Ego and Individuality
- Intellect and Mind
- Subtle Elements
- Gross Elements
- Material World

The Bhagavad Gita says: “the unmanifest appears as manifest and then returns to the unmanifest” - Consciousness manifesting then dissolving back into itself
Consciousness is Primary
Matter is secondary
The Universe is a Projection of Consciousness
The Universe is a projection of Consciousness an **Evolution** from Universal Consciousness to Individual Consciousness to Ego, Intellect and Mind, senses to the Physical Body

Meditation is an **Involution**, a return journey from the gross world to subtler and subtler levels until we arrive back **Home** in Pure Consciousness
The good news
In our essence, we’re all already Enlightened, perfect in every way

The bad news
We’ve forgotten it
Meditation reconnects us with our essence
Four Yugas: Sat, Treta, Dwapara, Kali

**Sat Yuga** - golden age, lightness, purity, siddhis (yogic powers), bliss body, sattva predominates
Lifespan 100,000 years, 1,728,000 years long

Most people enlightened, Divine vibrating in everything, still need to close the eyes to transcend

Gradual distraction and loss of purity
Vedic Times:
Worship of natural forces - fire, wind, rain, night, dawn, sun, death, etc.
Time of balance between man and nature
The Four Vedas:

Rig Veda - mantras, prayers to deities
Sama Veda - Rig structured as songs
Yajur Veda - rituals, fire ceremonies
Atharva Veda - formulas, customs, beliefs

The Vedas give knowledge of the outer world
Four Parts to the Vedas:

Samhitas - mantras, mostly for ceremonial purposes
Brahmanas - explanation of rituals
Aranyakas - “forest texts”, inner meaning of rituals
Upanishads - “to sit near”, dialogues between teacher and students, discussions of Atman and Brahman, inner meaning of life.
Upanishads / Vedanta:
108 total, 10 most important chosen by Adi Shankara

- **Purusha** = eternal, indestructible Self, non-changing, connects everything
- **Prakruti** = material reality, ever changing

Knowledge of the inner world
Underlying reality of life - Self in every creature
Attainable in this life without priests and ritual
Upanishads
Science of the mind
Beginning of meditation practices
Learning by direct experience and faith in teachers

Meditation to understand the inner world rather than outer

Need for a qualified, experienced teacher

“When all desires are concentrated into one desire - the desire for Self Realization - the spiritual journey begins”
Shvetashvatara Up.
Be seated with spinal column erect and turn your mind and senses deep within. With the mantra echoing in your heart, cross over the dread sea of birth and death

Mundaka Up.
Those who are pure in heart, who practice meditation and conquer their senses and passions, shall attain the immortal Self, source of all Light and all Life.
The Mantra is the bow, the student is the arrow and the Lord is the target. Draw the bowstring of meditation and hitting the target, be one with Him.
Beyond the reach of the senses is He, the Lord of Love, but not beyond the reach of a mind stilled through the practice of deep meditation.
Isha Up.
Those who combine action with meditation (the world without and within), cross the sea of death through action and enter into immortality through the practice of meditation.

Katha Up.
Realizing OM one finds complete fulfillment of all one's longings. When OM reverberates unceasingly within the heart, that one is indeed blessed and deeply loved as one who is with the Self.

Aitareya Up.
Shanti Mantra
Treta Yuga

Start of moral decay, intellect body, equal sattva, rajas, tamas; Lifespan 10,000 years, 1,296,000 years long

Ishwara - personal God, Brahman with qualities, duality
Emergence of Deities - Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Parvati, etc

Hinduism
Time of Lord Rama - Ramayana
Yoga Vasistha - *The world as the play of consciousness*
The Six Enemies of the Soul
- Desire for sensory pleasure, passions
- Anger
- Greed
- Delusion and infatuation
- Pride
- Jealousy

Life’s Values
Kama - joyous relationships
Artha - being secure in material things
Dharma - an ethical value of life
Moksha - liberation
Liberation comes when Kama and Artha are used to support Dharma. When they are out of harmony, suffering results.
How did we forget?

The journey of the Soul
Karma and Reincarnation

The Karmic burden
- contracted for this life
- created during this life
- left behind in the karmic sack

Everything that happens to us
is the result of our past thoughts and actions
What is the opportunity?
The only reason you are here is Karma

The Universe is your karmic projection
The Soul’s evolutionary journey is to wash (release) its Karma
Your present situation is not your final destination
Dwapara Yuga  ego, trickery, fraud, grosser three bodies
rajas, dominates; lifespan 1,000 years, 864,000 years long
Time of Lord Krishna -
Whenever there is a decline of dharma
and a rise of adharma, I incarnate Myself.
For the protection of the good, for the
destruction of the wicked and for the
establishment of dharma, I was born
in every age

Bhagavad Gita - Teachings direct from God (Krishna).
Upanishads give pictures of different parts of our spiritual journey,
the Bhagavad Gita is like a map or guide book. It gives a
systematic approach, warns of areas of concern, answers practical
questions.
Sadhana (spiritual practices) became available to everyone. **Krishna’s instructions:**

Work without expectation of reward; have no ego; practice non-violence; live simply; do service to your teachers and others; practice inner and outer purity; control your senses; contemplate your faults; practice silence.

**The Four Paths of Yoga**

- **Bhakti** - love, devotion
- **Karma** - selfless service
- **Gyana** - knowledge and self-reflection
- **Raja** - techniques, the Eight Limbs
Established in Yoga perform your actions

On the path of yoga (in Dharma), no effort is ever lost and no harm is ever done.

Be free O Arjuna from the the three gunas. Be free from duality. Be established in the Self.

A Yogi should sit firm, holding his body, neck and head erect and still. And sitting there he should practice yoga for the purification of the self, restraining the activities of his mind and senses and bringing his thoughts to a point.
Better one’s own dharma though imperfect than the dharma of another well performed. He who does the duty ordained by his own nature incurs no sin.

As a lamp in a windless place does not flicker so is the disciplined mind of the yogi practicing concentration on the Self. Supreme bliss comes to the yogi whose mind is completely tranquil and whose passions are quieted, who is free from stain and has become one with Brahman.

The yogi is greater than men of austerities, greater than men of knowledge, greater than men of action. Therefore be a yogi!

Three are the gateways of hell leading to the ruin of the self - lust, anger and greed. Therefore renounce these.
Yoga isn’t creating a union of body, mind, soul and spirit. They are and always have been One.
Yoga is the realization that individuality is an illusion and the revelation of the Oneness of all things.
Kali Yuga (current time period)
Materialism, chaos, destruction, physical and mental bodies tāmas dominates
Lifespan 20 - 100 years, 432,000 years long
Greatest Desire to know God

The three knots of the heart
Karma - cause and effect, past actions
Kama - sensory desires
Avidya - ignorance, not knowing who we are
The Three Stages of Development (detachment)

1. Detach from the physical body - *I am not the body*
   pranayama, asana, diet make the body healthy so it’s not a distraction during meditation.

2. Detach from the subtle/astral body - *I am not the mind*
   begin to see the mind, intellect and ego objectively, free from doubts and distractions become a pure reflection of the inner eternity.

3. Detach from the causal body
   break the connection with the deep unconsciousness.
Different Types of Meditation:
Prayer / contemplation
Guided
Active - walking, eating
Awareness/Mindfulness
Mantra
Mantras
A mantra is a “vehicle” or “instrument” of the mind.

There are many different mantras used for different purposes:
- Healing
- Protection
- Creating abundance
- Relationships
- Knowledge
- Peace
- Enlightenment
- Silent Meditation
Silent Meditation

Mantras used for Silent Meditation draw the awareness inwards, from activity to silence

Inherent within these mantras is the desire to return to the source of thought. They have no karma
The Journey from Chaos and Confusion to Silence
Teachers and meditation in Kali Yuga:

Buddha
- Mindfulness, Loving Kindness

The Four Noble Truths - suffering exists, we can identify its origins, there is a way out, the way out is the Eight Fold Path

The Eight Fold Path - right view, thinking, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, concentration

Mahavira - Jainism
Non-violence, fixed attention
Jesus - Christianity
- Prayer, reflection, contemplation

Judaism
- Kabbalah, names of God, Hebrew letters

Islam
- names of Allah, contemplation, Sufism

Traditional cultures and religions
Patanjali- Yoga Sutras, Eight Limbs of Yoga

Dharana - one pointed focus
Dhyana - effortless flow
Samadhi - beyond limitations

Meditation must change the structure of the mind, removing old desires, concepts and limitations. Discipline is required at first - posture, regularity, techniques, leading to meditation becoming spontaneous

Four conditions for the mind

Friendship - to those who are equal to us
Compassion - for those subordinate or who have sorrows
Delight (happiness) - to those who surpass us in some way
Indifference - to those who have hostility towards us

As a result envy, jealousy, malice, etc will cease to grow and the mind will become pure and turn inwards
Adi Shankara

Considered an incarnation of Shiva
Reformed against Buddhism
- Soul/Self versus no soul/self

Established Shankaracharya Tradition
and Shankarachya Mathas

Reinterpreted and unified most of the important Vedic texts
Introduced the five deity lineages - Ganesh, Surya, Shiva,
Vishnu, Shakti

Five Koshas

Annamaya - food, physical body
Pranamaya - breath, body energy
Manomaya - outer or sensory mind
Buddhimaya - intellect, ego
Anandamaya - soul, jiva
**Advaita Vedanta - Non-Duality**

The universe is a superimposition upon Brahman. Brahman remains eternally infinite and unchanged. It is not transformed into this universe, it simply appears as the universe due to our ignorance.

Superimposition is the apparent presentation to consciousness by the memory of something previously observed, elsewhere.

The Soul is no different from God. Atman (the inner Self) and Brahman are One without a second. Brahman, the absolute existence, knowledge and bliss is Real, the universe is not real.

The universe and all its multiplicity are ultimately expressions or appearances of one essential reality.
World appearance is Maya. The Self, Atman alone is Real

Maya like Brahman has always existed. Ignorance as the cause and world-appearance as the effect have always and will always exist
The relationship between Brahman and Maya is unknowable by human intellect.
To know Maya, it is necessary to transcend it

When transcendental consciousness is achieved, the ego is lost and superimposition (world appearance) ceases

Duality
A God who creates a world limits Himself by the very act of creation and thus ceases to be infinite
More recent teachers

Sri Ramakrishna
Practitioner of Bhakti, Advaita, Tantra.
A life dedicated to the Divine and God-consciousness

*If you must be mad, be mad with the love of God.*

Swami Vivekananda
Introduced Vedanta to the West. First introduced Hinduism at World Parliament of Religions

*All the powers in the universe are already ours. It is we who have put our hands before our eyes and cry that it is dark.*
Paramhansa Yogananda
Founded Self Realization Fellowship
First brought meditation to West - Kriya Yoga
Autobiography of a Yogi
Practice meditation, you’ll find that you are carrying within your heart a portable paradise.
Sadhana takes us to God’s door. Love lets us step through

Ramana Maharshi
Advaita, Self-enquiry, silence, Bhakti, Arunachala
When there are thoughts, it’s distraction.
When there are no thoughts, it’s meditation

Let come what comes, let go what goes. See what remains. Your own Self-realization is the greatest service you can render to the world
Sri Aurobindo

Love is a yearning of the One for the One.
The real difficulty is always in ourselves, not in our surroundings

Anandamayi Ma

When by the flood of your tears, the inner and outer have fused into One, you will find Her whom you sought with such anguish, nearer than the nearest, the very breath of life, the very core of every heart

Osho

Stopping the world is the whole art of meditation.
And to live in the moment is to live in eternity. To taste the moment with no idea, with no mind, is to taste immortality
Swami Brahmananda Saraswati
Left home at age 9 to find his spiritual path
Lived 40 years alone in a cave
Became Shankaracharya of Jyothir Math
Rebuilt and revived Jyothir Math
Guru Dev to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

Firstly know yourself, then make an effort to know God. If you cannot know yourself, yet you know the world, you are really ignorant.

If you cannot do anything else, at least be humble
Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

Transcendental Meditation
TM Siddhi Program
Made meditation a household word
Introduced Ayurveda to the West
Introduced Collective Coherence

Meditation is the sharp tool to dig out the great treasure hidden within everybody's personality

We shall be in love and love shall be in us. We shall live in love and grow in love and shall find fulfillment in love eternal
The Chopra Center

- Meditation - Ayurveda - Yoga Asana

Seduction of Spirit
Silent Awakenings
Teacher Training
21- Day Meditation Programs

Primordial Sound Meditation Program

- Mindfulness
- Self-enquiry
- Neti, neti
- Mantra, transcendental consciousness
- Resting in the Ground State
- Intentions for a life of perfection