

**Bhaktyaloka  
Essay 4**

**Niyamāgraha**

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**Niyama + agraha**

**To reject the rules whimsically**

**I am beyond the rules.  
(ex: sahajiyas)**

**Niyama + āgraha**

**To get absorbed only in the rules and not the essence**

**Forget the purpose of the rules**

**Niyamas (rules)**

**vidhis**

**prescriptions (Dos)**

**nisedhas**

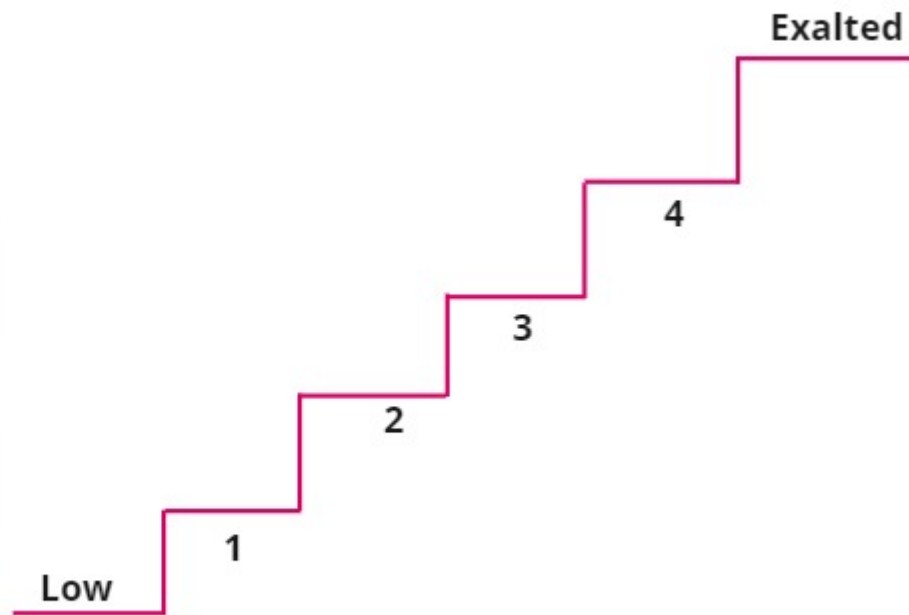
**prohibitions (Don'ts)**

Conditioned souls can attain an exalted position from a very low position.

Between these two positions there are many other positions

Each position is a gradual step.

Every gradual step has different Dos and Don'ts.



**Advancement**

If one follows the niyamas of one step, he attains the higher step.

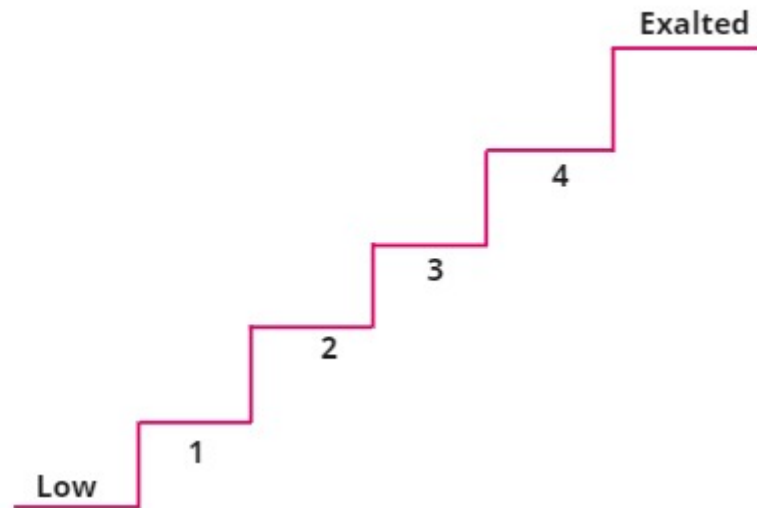
**Degradation**

If one does not follow the niyamas of the particular step he is in and tries to follow the niyamas of a higher step, he falls down to a lower step.

**Example :** Someone at the level 2, he must follow the dos and don'ts of level 2.

If he does so, after sometime he gets advanced to level 3.

If he ignores the rules of level 2 and instead tries to follow the rules of level 3, he gets degraded to level 1.



sve sve 'dhikāre yā niṣṭhā  
sa guṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ  
viparyayas tu doṣaḥ syād  
ubhayor eṣa niścayaḥ

ŚB 11.21.2

Steadiness in one's own position is declared to be actual piety, whereas deviation from one's position is considered impiety.

rules of one's own level : "one's prescribed duties"

steadiness in one's own position :

properly following one's prescribed duties  
acting according to one's adhikara

Glorious act : match between qualification and appropriate prescription

Glorious act : acting according to our adhikara

ex: someone at the level 2 follows the rules of level 2

Inglorious act : mismatch between qualification and appropriate prescription

Inglorious act : someone at the level 2 continues to follow the rules of level 1 or tries to follow the rules of level 3

