

Foundation Course in Raja Yoga Meditation

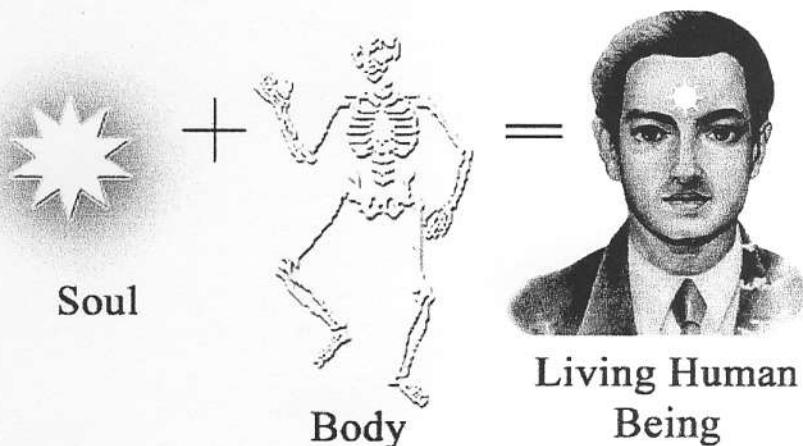
INFORMATION SHEET

1. **Commitment:** Each lesson builds upon the preceding one, so it's important to take the lessons in sequence. You'll get the maximum benefit if you can commit to the full series.
2. **Missing a Lesson:** If, due to illness or emergency, you are going to miss a lesson, please call as much in advance as possible and let us know. If you wish to continue, you will need to make up the class you miss. Make-ups are usually scheduled two hours before the next lesson, however other times can be arranged if necessary. If you do miss a class, please do not come to the following class without making up the one you missed.
3. **Dropping Out:** If you decide you do not want to continue with the course, we would appreciate your letting us know. You will remain on our mailing list and receive notices of our monthly special programs and workshops featuring guest speakers and a variety of topics, unless you indicate otherwise.
PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WISH TO BE REMOVED FROM OUR DATABASE.
4. **Bringing Someone New:** Please do not bring anyone new along with you to a lesson in the middle of the course. Spiritual knowledge is increasingly subtle. Newcomers would not be able to relate to subsequent lessons without having the explanations and meditation practice that you will have had. If you have friends who are interested, suggest they enroll in the next course.
5. **Lesson Format:** We'll begin each lesson with $\frac{1}{2}$ hour of meditation, and end with ± 15 minutes of meditation.
6. **Traffic Control:** In all of our centers, recorded music plays for a few minutes at 5 specific times during the day, one of which is 7:30 p.m. Just as when you are driving and have to stop at a traffic light, this music signals us to stop activity as well as the traffic in our minds and enter a state of silence and spiritual awareness.
7. **Start & End Times:** We will start promptly on time. This initial meditation time will give you an opportunity to review and experience what you've learned in the previous lesson. If you are late, please come in quietly. Our ending time may vary by 15 minutes or so, depending on your questions and level of participation.
8. **A Word of Caution:** If anyone has a history of psychological problems, we recommend that you check with your psychiatrist before continuing this course, as meditation is contraindicated in some forms of depression and mental illness.
9. **Note-taking:** This center is a branch of a unique international spiritual university and this Foundation Course is basic to ongoing spiritual study. You are welcome to bring notebook and pen or to record the classes.
10. **Handouts:** If you would like the course handouts, please bring \$1.00 each week. Though the course is free, we do have to charge for the handouts because of the cost of copying them. For the first lesson, the handouts are free.
11. **Contributions:** We are supported by voluntary contributions of people who have benefited by our services and want to give a return. Should you feel inclined to help us continue our work, please use the donation box located in the classroom. Contributors will receive charitable contribution receipts for tax purposes if you write a check or if you leave cash in an envelope with your name on it.
12. **Learning Resources:** We also have a variety of resources in the form of books, tapes and CDs that we will recommend from time to time which can help you with your study and practice. The money from the sale of these items does not go to support the center; it is only used to produce additional literature and audiovisual resources.

Contrast of Soul and Body

*The following chart compares and contrasts the soul and body.
The purpose is to encourage you to observe the distinctions
and build understanding of our identity as a soul in a body.
It is most common to think of the self as a body.*

SOUL	BODY
Being	Object or thing
Self-aware	Unaware
Invisible	Visible
Light	Opaque
Immaterial	Material
Immortal	Mortal
Eternal	Temporary
Child of God	Child of man and woman
Indestructible	Can be destroyed
Non-flammable	Can be burnt
Weightless	Has fluctuating weight
Mutable	Mutable
Influences the body	Influences the soul
Infinitesimal	Finite size
Not limited by time or space	Limited in time and space
Has no beginning, no end	Has a beginning and an end in time
Incorporeal	Corporeal
Accountable	Non-accountable
Sensitive	Insensitive
Soul is the driver	Body is the vehicle
Soul is the owner	Body is owned by the soul
Soul is ME	Body is MINE



HOW TO 'MAKE UP' YOUR MIND

"You are what you think," and "It's all in the mind," are two phrases we all know and often use without really, well, ...thinking. But what do you think? And how do you think? And do you think your thoughts affect your body? And how do you think your thoughts could affect your body? Mmmm. No short answers to these questions. Yet it doesn't require an expert with an 'ist' at the end of his or her title to prove that your thoughts have a powerful impact on your body.

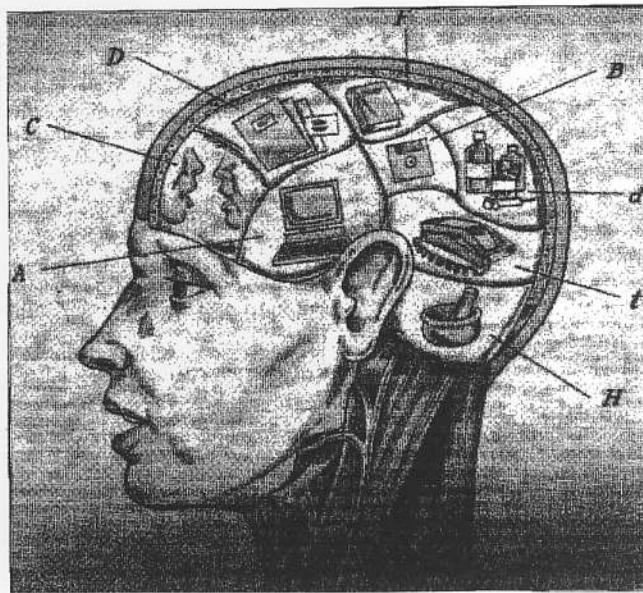
Think a thought of fear and feel your heart begin to pound and the adrenaline begin to flow. Think some worrisome thoughts about a job interview and feel the butterflies moving in V formation through your tummy. Think tense thoughts for a few days and watch the rash magically appear out of nowhere on your skin. Whatever you think registers somewhere in your body. That's why, long before cosmetics arrived on the scene, real beauty was said to come

from within, and why most doctors today admit that over 90% of all physical disease is psychosomatic, that is, begins with the thoughts in your mind.

Do you have a beautiful mind, a busy mind or a mind always under pressure?

Living in the final decade of the twentieth century almost certainly means making more decisions,

Mike George looks inside to discover different kinds of thinking.



communicating with more people, and probably working longer and more frequent unsocial hours than any other time in history. In no other era has there been such a need for a *calm and clear* mind, with the sharpness to make accurate decisions. In the face of rapid technological change, the need for a *fast and agile* mind, with the ability to produce appropriate responses, under a

wide variety of pressures, is essential to keep pace with the demands of colleagues and family.

With the never ending stream of news and events, much of which has a negative flavour, a *stable and positive* mind is essential for survival.

What goes on in your mind affects all that you say and do, making the difference between success and failure. When working well the mind is the source of ideas, inspiration and innovation, a

creator of clear communication and high quality decisions. When working badly it can be the sustainer of hopelessness, depression and fear.

The raw material of the mind is thought. Business plans, complicated designs, new products and even whole new philosophies all begin as a single thought in someone's mind. This is then shaped and sculpted into the details of the plan or design, and brought to life through words and action.

Are you in control of the creation and sustenance of your thoughts? People who have created success in their life have usually taken some time to get to know their thought patterns and thinking habits. They recognise their mind as their most precious asset, an essential tool and their thoughts as their most important natural resource.

If you have never given yourself

this kind of time and attention to assess and measure the quality of your thinking, and how best to use your mental resources, the easiest way is to become aware of the four different types of thought which are:

1. *Necessary thoughts*
2. *Waste (superfluous) thoughts*
3. *Negative thoughts.*
4. *Positive thoughts*

Necessary thoughts:

'What shall we have for dinner tonight?', 'At what time do I pick up my children from school?', 'What's the number of my bank account?'. These are all the necessary thoughts which arise during our daily routine upon which we must act. But if these thoughts are repeated again and again, they become:

Waste (superfluous) thoughts:

These are worrying, brooding thoughts which keep running around in your head. This type of thought has a high tempo, achieves nothing, and wastes your energy. Superfluous thoughts are often about the past: 'if only I had...', 'if this hadn't happened...', or about the future...'I hope...', 'if so and so doesn't show up...'

Since the past has already gone, and the future is yet to come, these thoughts are useless. In fact some people live their day three times over: once in bed worrying about tomorrow, the day itself, and then again at night, going over what they should have done but didn't. This kind of thinking drains your energy and makes you less efficient.

Negative thoughts:

These are angry, critical, egotistical, greedy, prejudiced, lazy, careless and stressful thoughts. If they

become habitual they result in the breakdown of physical health and eventual external failure.

It may appear that these kinds of thoughts are the most prevalent today. And they are! They are the root causes of the stress, fragmentation, anger and disease in our society. On a practical level they are the greatest drain on your mental resources, a kind of internal pollution that is well worth cleaning up, to make your mind a more efficient tool.

Positive thoughts:

These on the other hand are always economic. They create a positive internal feeling and sustainable external success. Positive thoughts are enthusiastic, harmonious, honest, understanding, respectful, tolerant and happy. They are also patient thoughts, giving you the time to see the complete picture clearly, which is essential in order to make accurate decisions.

As you actively learn to watch the quality of your thinking you will automatically ferret out the superfluous and negative thoughts, denying them the life-giving energy of your mind. This will allow you to regain complete control of all your thought patterns, with no more auto-pilot reactions followed by a feeling of loss or regret. Using your mind to create positive thoughts puts you back in the pilot's seat all the time, not only enhancing your relationships on the outside but giving yourself the right quality of experience on the inside.

In summary, eliminate the negative, accentuate the positive, act immediately on the necessary and clean up the waste.

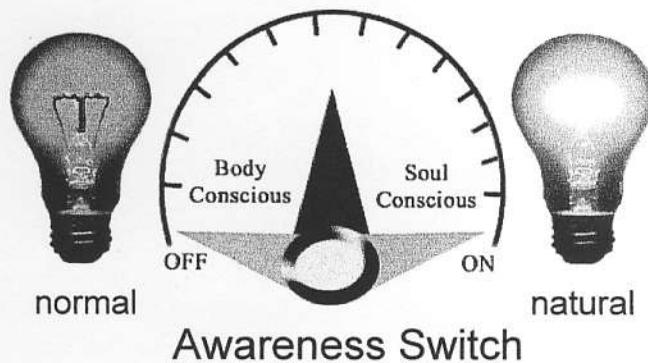
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Mike George is a writer, lecturer and management consultant based in London.

Original Nature of the Soul

(Soul's Innate Qualities & Inherent Virtues)

<u>Primary Qualities</u>	<u>Secondary Concomitant Virtues</u>
PEACE	patience, calmness, introversion, silence, serenity, stillness, centeredness
PURITY	cleanliness, authenticity, beauty, flexibility
LOVE	gentleness, caring, kindness, generosity, respect, giving, sweetness, mercy, selflessness
HAPPINESS	cheerfulness, humor, lightness, contentment, spontaneity
TRUTH	honesty, integrity, knowledge, understanding, clarity, light, discernment
POWER	tolerance, discipline, determination, strength, creativity, stability, reliability, confidence
BALANCE	equanimity, fairness, resilience, wisdom



Keep the switch of awareness on!

Soul and Matter

Ken O'Donnell rediscovers the essential difference between the physical body and the non-physical spirit.

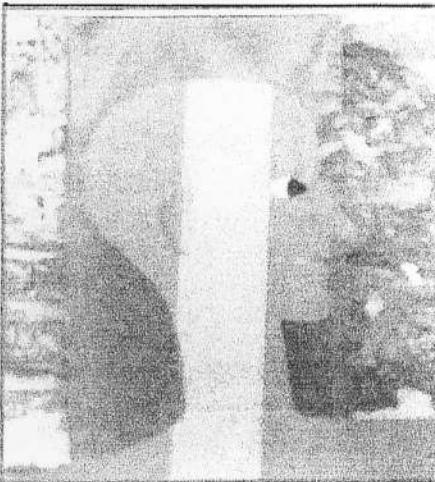
Stepping into the dimension of the spirit is a very subtle process, mainly because the mind is locked into a vision of reality that excludes eternity. Matter, the senses and things of immediate interest so dominate my thoughts that the very nature of existence becomes distorted. I see the world not as it is but as I am. My life revolves within narrow limits, distinctions and desires as I play the game of labelling myself and others on the basis of purely physical characteristics. I divide the world according to sex, race, creed, nation, age and social status and put everyone into his or her little box. Because of such division there is conflict in and around me as I seek to defend the territory thus established - whether it be a role, a job, a position in society, the family name or a nation. "May no-one encroach upon my territory" is an unspoken sign planted in my heart. Taking off the glasses of what can be termed body-consciousness, through which I see and judge the world around, calls for some effort. To experience the soul or self in its true light requires a detailed understanding of the terms and processes used. But the very act of taking such a step opens up a whole new perspective of seeing and reacting to the world around me.

With insight into the true nature of things, the very same life that I am leading in terms of work, family and leisure, becomes the spring-board for my own transformation. Letting go of the consciousness of the limits of this physical body and experiencing the inner self or soul is the essence of Raja Yoga.

Disorder and tension on an individual and, consequently, social level are the result of ignorance of



*When I look in a mirror,
I don't see my reflection
but that of my body.
The soul looks through
the windows of the eyes.*



the self and the world around. The mind stays without rest, running, jumping and churning aimlessly, lashed by waves of feelings and emotions. Like a spider caught in its own web, I become entangled in nets, which are the consequences of my

ignorance of the fundamentals of life. In life many happenings cannot be explained solely in material terms. At certain points of crisis or inspiration, there are deep emotional and spiritual experiences, which separate me from the world around. I retreat at such times, into myself, into religious or philosophical books, into rituals or symbols, in order to understand them. I am subject to a perpetual commentary on life around me from my own thoughts, feelings and deductions.

These faculties of thinking and forming ideas, desiring and deciding (and all the different aspects, which constitute my individual personality) are non-physical, and yet real. Indeed, anything perceptible to me comes from two sources: what is detected by the physical senses and what arises from impressions recorded on these subtle faculties. The things that I can see, taste, hear, smell and feel, as well as the body itself, are formed of matter. But the subtle faculties of mind, intellect and personality are manifestations of what is called consciousness.

Consciousness is another word for soul or spirit. The soul is a subtle entity that cannot be measured by any physical process or instrumentation. The non-material part of each one of us exists, and is in fact the true self or what we simply call I. This I or soul, is perceptible only at the level of mind and intellect.

ATOM AND ATMA

Throughout history, scientists have built up knowledge of the laws of the physical universe on the foundation of atomic theory. The atom is seen to be a point source of energy, and different energy levels and vibrations between

neighbouring atoms give the appearance of form, colour and heat. Atomic theory appeared originally in Greece and in India.

The English word *atom* came from the Latin *atomus*, which means *the twinkling of an eye* and the Greek *atomos* meaning indivisible. The Greek word probably derives from the Hindi *atma*, which means *self* or soul and refers to the conscious energy of the human as being an indivisible and indestructible point of non-physical light.

It has been established that the entire material world I see around me as a variety of forms and colors, light and heat, is formed of these point-sources of physical energy. The most beautiful scene in nature is merely a pattern of energy waves and vibrations.

The sense organs select the vibrations and relay a message to the mind where all images are formed. The eyes see some of these patterns as light forms and colours, the nose receives odours, tastes and sensations are detected and transmitted to the mind. The human body is also a complex pattern of physical energies. Atoms come together to form the organic structures and inorganic minerals which perform the body's chemical interactions, thus forming the basis of the hormonal and nervous control of the body. What I see as old or young, ugly or beautiful, male or female, is also the effect of these differing levels of physical energies. However marvellous a machine the body may be, it is the presence of the soul which makes it function.

One of the basic differences between souls and atoms is that while souls can exercise choice of their movements, where to go and when to go somewhere, atoms cannot obviously exercise such choice. In a way you could say that a soul is a point-source of spiritual-energy that has awareness of its own existence.

DEFINITIONS

The word *atma* has three specific meanings - I, *the living being* and *the dweller*. Within this one word we get an insight into different aspects of the self: I, the living being, am the dweller within this physical body. The answer to the question, "Who am I?"

Spirit - Being - Consciousness - Inner self - Anima/animus - Life energy - Essence - I

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'I' AND 'MY'

The two most common words in most languages are probably I and my. Our personal worlds almost revolve exclusively around them. I have to understand their deeper implications if I want to redesign my limits. I normally use the word my to refer to all the things that are not

If every physical part of the body is an instrument, who or what is it that is using it?

becomes clear. I am the soul, the living and intelligent inner being. I inhabit and give life to the body. The body is the means through which I, the soul, express myself and experience the world around me. Instead of answering the question as to my identity by giving the name of the body, the job designation, nationality or gender, the real inner self can simply say, "I am the soul; I have a body."

THE SOUL IS NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE

As an energy, the soul has within itself qualities that are both masculine and feminine. Though the soul is certainly affected by the gender of its body in the form of conditioning and social influences, those aspects are relatively superficial. The real self has no gender. The ancient Egyptians were strongly aware of this deep truth, as shown in the following excerpt of a conversation in the Egyptian Book of the Dead between Isis and her son Horus:

Horus: How are souls born, male or female?

Isis: Souls, my son Horus, are all equal in nature...

There are none among them either men or women; this distinction only exists between bodies, and not between incorporeal beings...

SYNONYMS FOR SOUL

The following words are essentially synonyms for the word soul:

me - my hand, my face, my leg or even my brain, my mind, my personality and so on. The next time I catch myself saying my soul, I could perhaps remember that I can't really say *my soul* if I am the soul.

The difference between I and my is the same as that between the soul and the body. The example of a knife illustrates this. I can use it to cut a tomato or to stab someone. The knife neither decides nor experiences, but can be washed easily under the tap. Now look at the fingers which held the knife. They neither decide nor experience the actions. They too can be washed under the tap. It's easy to realise that the knife is an instrument, but it is more difficult to realise that the fingers are instruments too, and not only the fingers but also the arms. The legs are instruments for walking, the eyes for seeing, the ears for hearing, the mouth for speaking, breathing and tasting, the heart for pumping blood and oxygen around the body, and so on. Even the brain is like a computer used to express all thought, word and action programs through the body and to experience the results. If every physical part of the body is an instrument, who or what is it that is using it?

Very simply it is I, the self, the soul. The soul uses the word I for itself and the word my when referring to the body; my hand, my mouth, my brain, and so on. I am different from my body.

Through the consciousness of my, I have spread myself far and wide -

not only with regard to the body and inner faculties, but in relation to possessions and relationships: - my house, my car, my son and so on.

With time, all of these things, which I try to hold to myself, slip through my fingers. I realise their temporary nature and, for want of available alternatives, I try to clutch onto them even more and so develop attachments and dependencies. While this identification persists, my innate qualities (i.e. what's really mine), are out of reach. When I assume my true identity as a spiritual being, then I also immediately have access to the love, peace, happiness and power that are part of me.

If I make a list of all the factors which create limits for me, it would probably include things like age, sex, health, family, profession, defects and weaknesses. By claiming ownership of all these through the word my, I set the boundaries within which I try to operate my life. Having set up my own fences, whenever sorrow appears, one or the other of these becomes the unwitting scapegoat.

Instead of pointing the finger of blame or complaining, I can adopt a more positive approach. I can be more realistic and accept them not as limiting factors but as instruments through which I can improve my experience of life. This same list can be the spring-board for my transformation and freedom.

I can make full use of the adult state or the energy of youth, as the case may be. I can take advantage of the positive characteristics of my gender while appreciating those of the other. My family and professional life can be experienced on another more elevated level. I can observe in my weaknesses and defects how much I have to learn about myself. The problem is not in the list of factors but in the consciousness I have towards them. It is a question of two words - I and my.

SOUL - POSITION, FORM AND ATTRIBUTES

The dualities of matter/anti-matter, sentient/in sentient, physical/spiritual can be understood easily with the awareness of the mechanism by which

human consciousness operates through the body. The soul has three basic functions to perform: to give and maintain life, to express and experience its own unique life and to receive the rewards or fruits of past actions performed in previous existences.

POSITION

When I look in a mirror, I don't see my reflection but that of my body. The soul is actually looking through the windows of the eyes from some point inside the head. The sentient functions are controlled and monitored through the nervous and hormonal systems from a particular point in the area of the brain housing the thalamus, hypothalamus, pituitary and pineal glands. This region is known as the seat of the soul or the third eye. The connection between the physical and the non-physical is by the medium of thought energy.

When viewed from the front, this region appears to be between and slightly above the line of the eyebrows. Many religions, philosophies and esoteric studies place great importance on the third eye or eye of the mind. The Hindus use a tilak, a dot in red or sandalwood paste in the middle of the forehead. Christians also make the sign of the cross with their thumb in this region. The Muslims also touch that spot in their traditional salute. When anyone of any culture makes a foolish mistake, the person instinctively brings his hand to that spot. After all, it's not the body that makes the mistake, but the thinking being that is operating the body from that particular point. As the brain is the control centre for all of the various processes of the body - metabolism, the nervous, endocrine, immunological and lymphatic systems - it makes sense that the inner person be located somewhere in the brain.

just as the driver in a car sits behind the wheel with the steering wheel in his hands, the soul sits in a specific point in the centre of the brain near the pineal body. This is important to know for meditation purposes because it is the place to

effort to concentrate the thoughts: I am the soul, a tiny point of conscious light energy centred in the spot between the brows.

Whenever I say: I feel something within me, pointing to the heart, obviously it's not something within the chest. The physical heart is just an incredibly sophisticated pump for blood. It can even be transplanted! Within the real me, the living and thinking being, there is a centre of emotions, moods and feelings.

The sensations that I very obviously feel around the body are due to the total interconnectedness that exists between the soul and the matter that it is inhabiting. For example, when I am afraid of, say, a dog attacking me. The whole system is activated. From the control centre in the middle of the brain, the soul sends messages out all around the body. Adrenaline is liberated to give extra strength to the muscles. The heart starts to pump faster, the breathing becomes shallower and the palms begin to sweat. While it may seem that all the different organs have autonomous sensing and feeling systems, the whole operation is so split-second fast that the coordination of sensations and responses by the soul from its own special cockpit in the centre of the brain passes unnoticed. In this way, if I feel something in my heart for or from something or someone, it's really being processed by me, the thinking being, and then reflected in my heart.

FORM

All of the characteristics present in the soul are subtle or non-dimensional in nature - thoughts, feelings, emotions, decision-making power, personality traits and so on. If they are all without size, then it is reasonable to conclude that the conscious energy from which they emerge is also sizeless. For this simple reason it is eternal. Something which has no physical size cannot be destroyed.

As a soul I am neither diffused throughout the whole body nor am I an invisible or ethereal duplicate of the physical body. Even though this subtle form exists, it is the effect of the soul being in the physical form

and not the soul itself. just as the sun is in one place and yet its light radiates throughout the solar system, the soul is in one place and its energy permeates the whole body.

To express something that exists but has no physical dimensions we can use the word point. The soul, therefore, is an infinitesimal point of conscient light. For the sake of having an image to fix our minds on we can say it's starlike in appearance. In deep meditation I can perceive the soul as an infinitesimal point of non-physical light surrounded by an oval-shaped aura.

INNATE QUALITIES OF THE SOUL

Everything I see has what can be called its acquired value and its innate or inherent value. The acquired value is that which it has picked up directly by association throughout its

existence. The innate value is what it always is irrespective of its appearances. For example, the acquired value of gold changes with the fluctuations of the market place. Its real or innate value is that it's one of the most beautiful of minerals. It is extremely ductile and malleable and so on. If I were asked about the main qualities present in a harmonious relationship with someone, I could immediately reply love, patience, tolerance, understanding, empathy and so on. How do I know this? Is it purely from experience? Can I remember having really experienced any of these qualities in any relationship fully and constantly. Probably not.

In that case, where does this urge for rightness come from if not from an innate sense of what is true and good? How can I judge or perceive the level of peace, love or happiness in a projection of these same qualities

that are within me? It's as if they join together as a subtle ruler for measuring what goes on around me, so that necessary internal adjustments can be made according to the situation. If it is good or bad, peaceful or confused, my own innate qualities at least advise me as to what is going on.

In the same way, in spite of whatever I have become as a human individual, my deep innate attributes are still the same ones that have always existed in me. It's my inner core of qualities that in fact inspires me to seek the ideal in whatever I do. If someone were to ask me a list of qualities that are important in a

relationship between two people, things like respect, honesty, sincerity, openness and so on would automatically spring to mind. Even if I have never experienced them in living memory, I still seek them. The impulse to seek and to dream comes from my own store of innate attributes that is just waiting to be found and brought into practical activity. The innate qualities of the soul are those that are the most fundamental. They are so basic that they themselves are the basis of all

virtues and powers.

" Peace " Truth " Happiness
Love " Purity Power
Balance

They are like primary colours, and virtues are secondary. Just as green is made of blue and yellow, virtues such as patience, tolerance, courage, sweetness and so on are compounds of these basic qualities. Some examples: Patience - peace, love and power
Courage - power and truth
Discernment - truth, peace and balance

The objective of Raja Yoga meditation is to empower my own innate attributes so that my behaviour can be naturally virtuous.

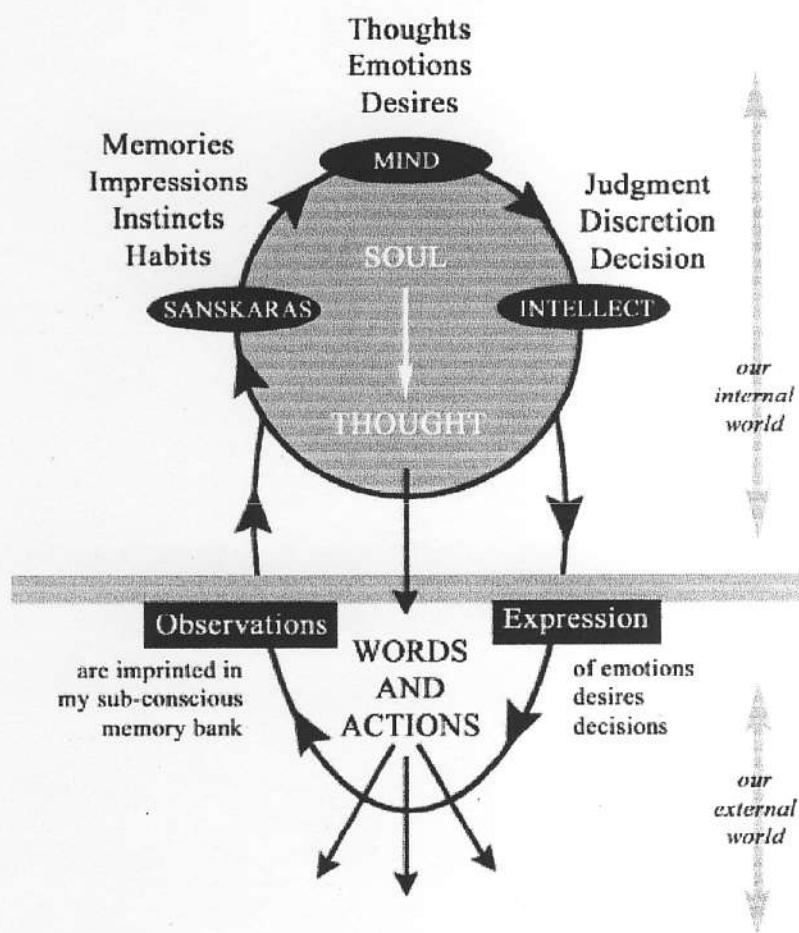
The problem is that they are in a latent state and do not translate very easily into action. Though these qualities are the basis of my ideals, when I'm in a weakened state I am unable to bring them into practice at will, according to the demands of the moment. They need to be empowered.

One of the most immediate benefits of the practice of meditation then, is to improve the functioning of this inner ruler. My innate qualities are just waiting for a chance to manifest themselves. Like a light bulb without current, the possibility of lighting up my qualities exists, but they need to be connected to a source of power. This is exactly what meditation brings.

Innate attributes are properties that are immutable. It's impossible to take the blue out of the sky or sweetness out of honey. Blueness and sweetness are part of the unchanging make-up of sky and honey.

Extracted from *Pathways to Higher Consciousness* by Ken O'Donnell, available from Brahma Kumaris Literature.

The Dynamics of Consciousness



MIND	INTELLECT	SANSKARAS
Thought	Judgment	Personality traits
Emotions	Ethics	Character
Imagination	Understanding	Latencies
Feelings	Logic	Habits
Desire	Discernment	Talents
Response	Comprehension	Specialties
Reactions	Distinguishing	Sub-conscious
Dreams	Calculation	Nature
Aspirations	Morality	Impressions of karma
Hopes	Conscience	Compulsions
Creates Thoughts	Analysis	Memories
Inner vision	Selectivity	Instincts

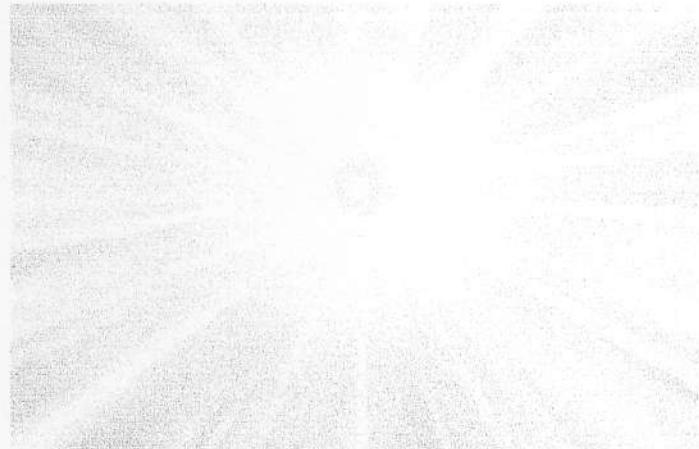


Stop for a moment.

Be aware of nothing else but the moment. Let awareness capture everything around you exactly as it is. Don't add to it, don't consume it, don't

judge it, don't name it, don't even let it move you.

Now in the Silence of the moment be aware of yourself. Let your thoughts melt back into your being. Be still, like a pond. Be calm. Be quiet... quiet... quiet.



Extend that moment of quietness into the utter silence at the heart of your being. Allow the silence to grow and fill your awareness. Stay at the centre of that silence as the movement and the noise of the world continues around you.

Watch through silent eyes, listen through silent ears and speak only from the silence in your mind.

Cultivate this silence and gradually the toys of science will cease to attract and distract you.

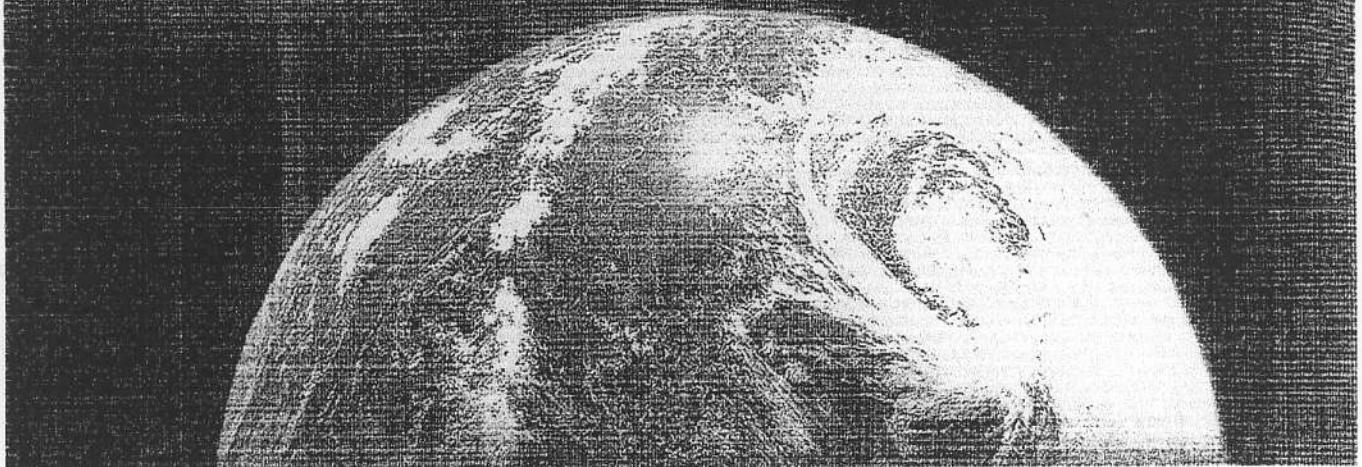
Return to this silence often and be refreshed and replenished.

Share the power of your silence to cool the fires in the minds of others.



WHO ON EARTH ARE YOU?

Foundation course in meditation - part one



Most people are attracted to learn meditation because they experience restlessness or peacelessness in the mind—a feeling of dis-ease. When confronted with physical disease, doctors prescribe medicine, a sensible diet, exercise and a balanced lifestyle. Meditation is a similar prescription, providing the right exercise and diet to restore balance to the mind.

The original meaning of the word mediation is linked to healing, and in many ways meditation helps you become your own doctor to treat any thoughts and feelings of uneasiness which you may be experiencing.

In order to practise meditation, however, it is important to understand who and what is meditating. The answer lies in the

difference between the mind and the body.

The mind and body are two different kinds of energy, where one (the mind) has control of the movement of the other (the body).

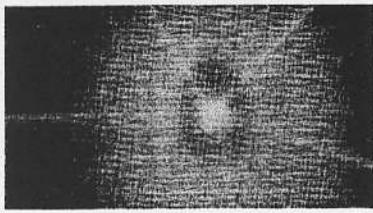
Body	Mind
Physical	Non-Physical
Material	Mental
Tangible	Intangible
Visible	Invisible

Today, we are unsure of this difference and tend to mix the two; instead of seeing the body as the package and the mind as the contents, we see ourselves mainly as the body. We spend a lot of time, energy and money looking after the body, but very little time caring for our minds. This is like buying a packet of peas, taking it home, throwing the peas in the bin, and cooking the packet.

Another way to experience the difference is to be aware of your self. Your leg, your arm, your stomach don't have self-awareness, yet 'you' do. You can say "I am" and be aware of your self. You say "my body", and again distinguish yourself from your body.

Clearly the mind is the being with self-awareness, and the body is the human which contains the being. The being, which is you, is situated just above and behind the eyes. This is the driving seat from which you instruct and direct the vehicle of your body.

Be aware of yourself there for a moment. This is where you do your thinking. This is where you make your decisions. Be aware of yourself directing every movement.



This is where you are conscious of yourself, and the world. In fact, you are consciousness itself, and your mind is your conscious ability to think. So your mind is not separate from you, but an integral part of you: the point of consciousness within the body.

Another word for this point of consciousness is soul. It is not that you have a soul somewhere in your body, but that you are the soul in your body. It is the soul that brings the body to life. This fact, which you will experience as you practise meditation, is the most important aspect to which we will constantly return throughout the course. As you will see, it is something each one of us has to learn to remember.

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOU THE SOUL

Form Point of Light

You are a conscious point of spiritual light energy and cannot be seen by physical eyes.

Position Centre of Forehead

You the soul sit just above and behind the eyes, inside the brain but separate from the brain. The brain is like the computer and you, the soul, are the programmer.

Task/Role

To animate and direct the body. It is the soul that brings the body to life. Without the body the soul cannot express itself.

Lifespan Eternal, Indestructible

The soul cannot be created nor destroyed. There is no such thing as the death of the soul, only the death of the body.

Nature Peace, Love, Truth

The original nature of the soul is peace, love, truth, purity, happiness.

Purpose

Self-expression in relationship with others (without your body you could not express and relate to others).

The main aim of meditation is to experience each of these original qualities. To achieve that, it is necessary to understand more fully the great mistake we have all made, which is to identify ourselves only with the physical form.

When we do this, two things result:

1. We think all our experience comes to us through our physical senses.
2. We create many identities or labels for ourselves

1. *Experience of the senses*

When we think the five senses of touch, sound, sight, taste and smell are our only source of experience we begin to rely on external things for our happiness and peace. Food, music, films and cars for instance, give us pleasure and make us happy.

However, in the physical world, everything changes and comes to an end. And when those sensual pleasures end we become unhappy and peaceless. We desire more, and a never ending queue of desires follows, and we become

dependent on external stimuli. Our moods go up and down, conditioned by how satisfied our physical senses are. And when we don't get what we want, we get angry, and that anger can lead to violence. And even when we do get what we want, we want more, so we become greedy. Or we show off what we have got, and we develop ego. All these things make us feel powerless and unhappy, feeling OK one minute and not OK the next.

We can't understand why this happens, so we go searching for answers. And that's why many of us learn meditation, hoping it will help to find inner peace and freedom in a life full of ups and downs.

2. *The Traps of Different Identities*

When we think we are the physical form, the outer packing, we give it labels. Each label is a different identity. Nationality, political affiliation, family, religion, profession, colour, sex, are all labels. This results in two negative side effects. First we are never sure who we are. Which label is really me? When am I one label and not another? And as we shall see later each label or identity brings with it certain values and therefore certain ways of thinking and acting. In the end, if there are too many identities, or ones we don't like, we react, either against ourselves or against others. The result is once again peacelessness or even violence.

The second side effect is to put labels on others. We put others in boxes or categorize them and that also ends in conflict. Black against white, Christian against Muslim, nation against nation, and so on. Once again the result is anger and conflict, contrary to our

true nature and our desire for peace.

And yet it is easy to resolve both these mistakes which are the result of thinking of ourselves as physical. Instead be aware of yourself as a soul, a conscious, eternal being; a point of energy with no physical identity. This resolves all conflict within ourselves as we cease to identify with all those labels. There is no need to sustain and defend them any longer. Therefore you cannot be threatened. You then begin to see others as the same, also souls, not merely physical costumes. This also resolves the conflict between individuals and ultimately, if practised by many, could resolve conflict between nations.

This realisation of your true identity as a soul is thus the key to experiencing your real nature of peace and happiness. This is the key to understanding yourself. This is the key to harmonising with others. Soul consciousness is the key, and the method to experience and cultivate it is meditation.

No need to reject your body. When you know the right relationship between you and your body you can take care of it in the right way, because it will not take care of you!

FACULTIES OF YOU THE SOUL

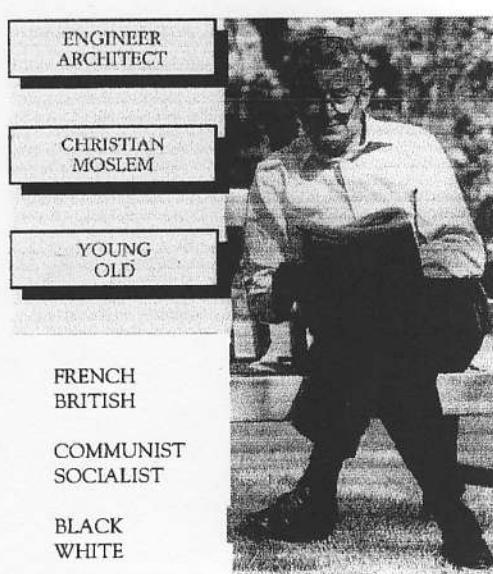
In the same way that the body has arms and legs to negotiate the physical world, you the soul also



This is the faculty of discrimination and decision-making, which you use to assess right from wrong, good from bad and then make a decision.

The Sanskaras

These are the impressions made on the soul by any action you do. How these three faculties of the soul work together can be illustrated by looking at how habits are formed. Take, for example, a first encounter with cigarettes. As you watch others smoking (and surviving) you might have the thought, "I should try a cigarette". Your intellect assesses the rightness of the thought based on the evidence of others surviving and seemingly enjoying smoking. You make a decision to have a cigarette which leads to the action of smoking the cigarette. This creates an impression or memory on the soul, rather like cutting a groove in a piece of wood. This groove is known as a sanskara. Within the groove is contained the memory of a) the action of smoking and b) the feeling of stimulation and relaxation. Whenever you encounter some pressure or tense situation, this sanskara is stimulated and the memory of the action and feelings emerge in the mind triggering the thought (desire) of having another cigarette. The intellect justifies it and the further action of smoking deepens the sanskara. Eventually the intellect is bypassed and you go straight from thought to action. Smoking becomes an automatic response to any tension, and a habit is formed.



The labels we give to ourselves

have certain faculties which you use to negotiate the world of thoughts, feelings and choices.

These three faculties are the mind, the intellect and the sanskaras (impressions). These are an integral part of you, the soul.

The Mind

This is the faculty of creation, where you create all your thoughts, which then stimulate certain feelings.

The Intellect

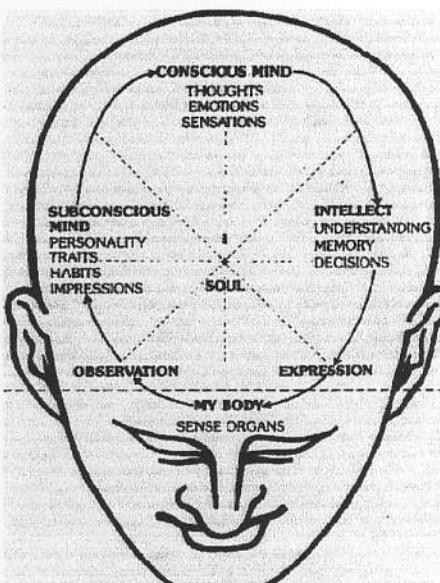
telling you that smoking is bad for the health. Consequently you have injured yourself at both the spiritual (soul) and physical (body) levels. You have lost control and feel powerless to change.

THE BATTERY RUNS DOWN

The main reason for feeling powerless is loss of energy. Not physical energy, but spiritual energy which is needed by the intellect for will power. When the soul took its first body it was new and fresh and full of spiritual energy. Using the mind and intellect it could create powerful thoughts and make clear decisions. It could concentrate, or focus the energy of consciousness easily and there were no unanswered questions.

Then, as time goes on, we spend that energy of consciousness; the will becomes weak, we cannot concentrate and find it difficult to make clear decisions. This process is like that of a battery illuminating a light bulb. Unless the battery is regularly charged it will run down as the bulb spends the energy in the form of light.

This loss of power is the main reason behind our grave mistake of identifying ourselves as physical beings. The loss of power means the loss of our spiritual or self-awareness. Then all our attention is drawn into the tangible, physical



yourself as a soul. By sitting in a comfortable position, let go of all the different identities you associate with your body, try to let go of all the sounds and sights around you and turn your attention inwards towards yourself. Bring all your attention up to that point in the forehead where you are seated. Be aware of yourself there. If your mind seems to be running with many thoughts or memories, just observe them and watch them come and go. Keep gently bringing your attention back to yourself here and now, sitting on your seat of consciousness. Gradually your mind becomes more peaceful and your thoughts slow down. Create the thought of peace, concentrate your attention on that thought, and gradually it becomes your experience. You experience internal peace, the true nature of you, the soul. Try this once or twice a day to start with, in a quiet place at home or at work. These are the first steps to learning how to meditate and regaining control of your thoughts, feelings and your life experience. If you find it a little difficult, be patient. Don't give yourself a hard time. Regular practice will make you perfect.

Once you have brought yourself to the point of self-awareness and the experience of peace, now explore the faculties of your consciousness. Create a simple thought in your mind, focus on that thought, concentrate on it, then use your intellect to try and assess the rightness or wrongness of that thought. If you decide it is not a good thought, drop it and create a good thought. In this way you exercise control over your mind using your intellect. This will make the intellect strong. And if thoughts or images come from your memories or from sources outside your own mind, don't give them any energy. Let them go, and bring your attention back to your creation. Once you have mastered this in your meditation try the same process as you carry out your responsibilities and actions throughout the day.

*Meditation is a journey
into inner space
to explore and discover
the nature of
your own consciousness*

Similarities & Differences Between Soul & God

SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES
<p>Same form and size. Being of light. Mind, intellect, sanskaras.</p>	<p>Bodiless. God never comes into the cycle of birth and rebirth.</p>
<p>Same eternal metaphysical power.</p>	<p>We forget who we are and where we are from; God retains knowledge of the Himself; Human souls oscillate in terms of their nature while God remains eternally stable.</p>
<p>Same original state: pure, full of virtues and spiritual power.</p>	<p>Human souls lose their original attributes, owing to identification with the body.</p>

GOD	SOUL	DIFFERENCE
Being	Being	
Light	Light	
Immaterial	Immaterial	
Immortal	Immortal	
Constantly self aware	Sometimes self aware	◆
Eternal	Eternal	
Father of souls	Child of God	◆
Indestructible	Indestructible	
Invisible	Invisible	
Weightless	Weightless	
Immutable	Mutable	
Influences souls and matter	Influences other souls and matter	
Infinitesimal	Infinitesimal	
Not limited by time or space	Gets limited by time and space	
No beginning, no end	No beginning, no end	
Incorporeal	Incorporeal	
Beyond happiness and sorrow	Sensitive and affected	
Supreme Judge	Accountable for own actions	
Not limited by birth or death	Takes birth and leaves the body	
Can use anyone as an instrument	Is bound to body until death	
No human can ever become God	A soul is a human self	
Ever pure	Sometimes pure	
Oceanic, unlimited	Limited	
Omniscient, knowledge-full	Forgetful	

Union with God

The Supreme Father reveals to us the method for communication directly with Himself... a method of contact which is a direct link of I, the soul, with the Supreme Being.

I need not repeat a mantra, nor do I turn a rosary in my hands. I need no physical images to look at. What I must do is stabilize my intellect with great love on God, the Supreme. On the one hand this is the simplest form of yoga, nothing physical involved at all. I do not need to practice postures; I do not need to practice breathing exercises; neither do I need years and years of penance. And so, on the one hand it appears to be extremely simple. All I need to do is to sit comfortably, or even as I stand, as I work, as I talk, whatever else it is that I may be doing, the mind must be tuned to the Supreme Father. So the only thing that is needed in Raja Yoga is this: to focus my mind in one direction, to stabilize my intellect on the Supreme Being.

At this, our hour of need, the Supreme Father reveals two very basic aspects of knowledge which are the foundation for the system and practice of Raja Yoga. Firstly, the recognition of whom I am—I, the infinitesimal spark of light: not the physical body that is visible, but I, the being of light, a tiny star; a self luminous pinpoint, a dot. That is what I am. I am a soul, located in the center of the forehead. Let me sit now with this consciousness of I, the conscient energy that is controlling, driving, guiding, motivating this human machine.

As I become aware of myself, totally separate from this physical body, in this stage—which could be described as soul consciousness—I can understand and appreciate the existence of the Supreme Being. My Father, the Supreme Being, is also a soul. Let my thoughts now focus on the Supreme among all souls. He is also a being of Light, the Infinitesimal, a pinpoint, a shining star. And yet this infinitesimal Being is the source of qualities without limit, qualities that are not even limited by time, but qualities that are eternal.

The purpose of my yoga is to communicate with this Being. For many, many years, for many, many births, I have been experiencing communication with human beings; but because human souls occupy physical bodies, communication with them is not only through the mind, but the use of physical senses; we use sound, we use vision. But now I wish to communicate with the Supreme Being, who is eternally bodiless, the Incorporeal, who never had a body of His own. None of my physical energies can help me in this communication. In fact, it is only when I take my own mind above my own physical body and all the distraction that the physical energies create, that I can achieve this contact.

When I recognize that I am a soul, I become aware of the tremendous energy that I have within myself. I have the power of thought. I know that I can dictate the direction of my mind; I know that I can determine the direction of each and every thought, and so let my thoughts flow only in the

direction of the Supreme Being. Let me experience this, the most potent of all powers, the power of my own mind.

My mind moves away from all other physical, mundane things. I forget the past, my own mistakes as well as my limited achievements. At this moment I am not interested in communicating with human beings; nor even with prophets, deities, angels or spirits. The soul seeks to communicate with only One, with the Supreme Being. I become aware of the form of the Supreme Being. I visualize the Spark of Light. I begin to think of the qualities that emanate from this Source. The unlimited peace, a peace which is undisturbed, a peace that is so powerful that it influences everything within reach.

My thoughts are now totally focused on the peace that my Supreme Father radiates. In the same way, let me experiment, knowing that my Supreme Father is not only a Father, but that He is also my Supreme Mother, the One with total love, the One who is able to give love which is totally for the upliftment of I, the soul. He is the One who will not reject the soul. Though seeing it at its present impure, imperfect condition, the Merciful Mother pours out so much love that I, the soul feel such strength and comfort that I am upraised and renewed.

Let me experience that vast Ocean of Love. Do not stop the thoughts of the mind which come to distract you, change their direction, allow thoughts to flow based on knowledge of God. This perhaps is the most important aspect of Raja Yoga meditation, that once the intellect is filled with the introduction of the Supreme Being, and then every thought that emerges is based on this understanding. If any other thoughts do come across and cloud the mind, let the mind turn them away, let the flow begin once more in the direction of the Supreme.

Sometimes let the mind dwell on the quality of purity. Let the experience be God as the Being of Bliss; let it take up the aspect of God as the Almighty Authority. Whatever quality is being taken up, let the mind be occupied totally, engrossed completely, within the one aspect. In this way, the soul will taste the sweetness of each and every relationship with the Supreme Being directly; not only the Parent, but even the Teacher, the Friend, and the Companion; the Supreme Guru, the One who is able to take the soul across from this world to the one far beyond, the one beyond the physical, the one which is the world of light, the world of silence.

As soon as we begin to meditate—because the very first meditation is based on Knowledge—our thoughts are beginning to flow towards the Supreme Being; thoughts are uplifted away from the level of mundane existence. So as we meditate, the mind is being used very actively. Many, many conscious thoughts are flowing. This ensures that the mind never experiences a moment of dullness; there is never the opportunity for the mind to be bored and therefore be distracted by anything else at all. The machinery of the mind is kept functioning at high speed, but with a specific direction. This process of meditation leads us automatically to a stage which could be described as concentration.

In this stage, all thoughts are focused on the Supreme Being, the mind is no longer pulled by the sounds outside, it is engrossed with this experience of contact with the Supreme Being. My effort was to meditate and now the result is that there is easy concentration. But still there are conscious thoughts, no longer as fast flowing as before... but now there will be no distraction because now I am beginning to enter deeply into each one of the attributes of the Supreme Being. My thoughts are pulled deeper and deeper into that particular quality, into that particular relationship, as I reach a stage which is described as the stage of realization. Now there are not any conscious thoughts as such; there is the experience of that particular quality of God, the experience of I, the soul, taking in, absorbing that attribute from the Supreme Being. This is also sometimes described as the seed stage. The soul has moved away from all the things that were additions, that were extensions; it has returned to its own original eternal form of this pinpoint of light, this spark of light, the seed. While experiencing that perfect love, the soul is totally absorbed in the experience. There isn't even the conscious thought which says "this is love," but the soul is simply filling itself; it is also radiating it out into the world.

Afterwards when the soul speaks of its experience, there will come the conscious thought that this is the love that I have been thirsting for— this is the relationship that I had wanted to experience. This is the stage that yogis describe as '*nirsankalp samadhi*', that highest state of consciousness which is even free from active thought. And it has been achieved very, very naturally.

Some think that this stage can only be experienced by forcing the mind, but to apply artificial pressure on the mind does not lead to establishing a relationship with the Supreme. It is possible that by forcing the mind, I can reach a stage by which the mind stops functioning for a limited period of time, but what I, the soul, am seeking is not simply stillness of the mind; I seek the relationship with the Supreme, the realization of my own eternal state and the realization of God. There has to be communication in order to have this realization.

So the mind is used actively at first, but then because the power of God is being experienced, the mind is pulled directly by the Supreme Magnet. Then the effect of this is that the fast functioning gradually slows down and within this *nirsankalp samadhi* there is an actual experience not only of stillness but of the highest attributes of the Supreme. As I, the soul, move away from peacelessness and return to stability, only then can I come close enough to the Supreme Being to appreciate His other attributes.

Generally, the first experience in meditation is of the peace from the Eternal Being, peace flooding the soul, so that I become stable. Now in the stage of stability, I can recognize the quality of love that the Supreme Being is offering. There is never a moment that He doesn't offer His love, yet why is it that I have not been able to experience it? It is because my mind has been tuned on a physical level. And so now, with this stability of peace and of spirituality, I first take love from the Supreme. I begin to offer my love to Baba; having tasted first love from the Eternal Parent, my own love, emerges and flows towards Him.

After this experience of love, there is this experience of cleansing, of purification, and as the soul becomes lighter and free from the burden it has been carrying of its own past sins, through the fire of love which is the fire of yoga, the tremendous energy that is generated through this union, the cleansing process that takes place returns me to my own natural state of purity.

With this experience comes the experience of happiness because now I am as I should be. More and more the happiness of this blissful relationship that I have always wanted grows and becomes a source of strength, of nourishment, for the soul. In My union with the Supreme Being, my Father who is the Benefactor, Whom I call SHIV BABA; Baba the Father; Shiva, the Benevolent Being -I draw power from the Almighty Authority. The battery is re-charged. I, myself become powerful as my connection with Baba deepens, as I allow Baba's influence to come over me. I am transformed. Baba's qualities become my qualities; the soul is changed and is re-created now in the image of God.

The end product of Raja Yoga is the transformation of the soul from the state of impurity to a state of perfection. The change is described as the change of a human being into a divine being, a deity. And so Raja Yoga, the highest of all yogas, is that yoga which is union with the Supreme Being, that yoga which makes me the sovereign, the royal yoga; first of all giving me the experience of being In aster of my own mind, but further allowing the sovereign qualities of divinity to develop within the self so that I am uplifted.

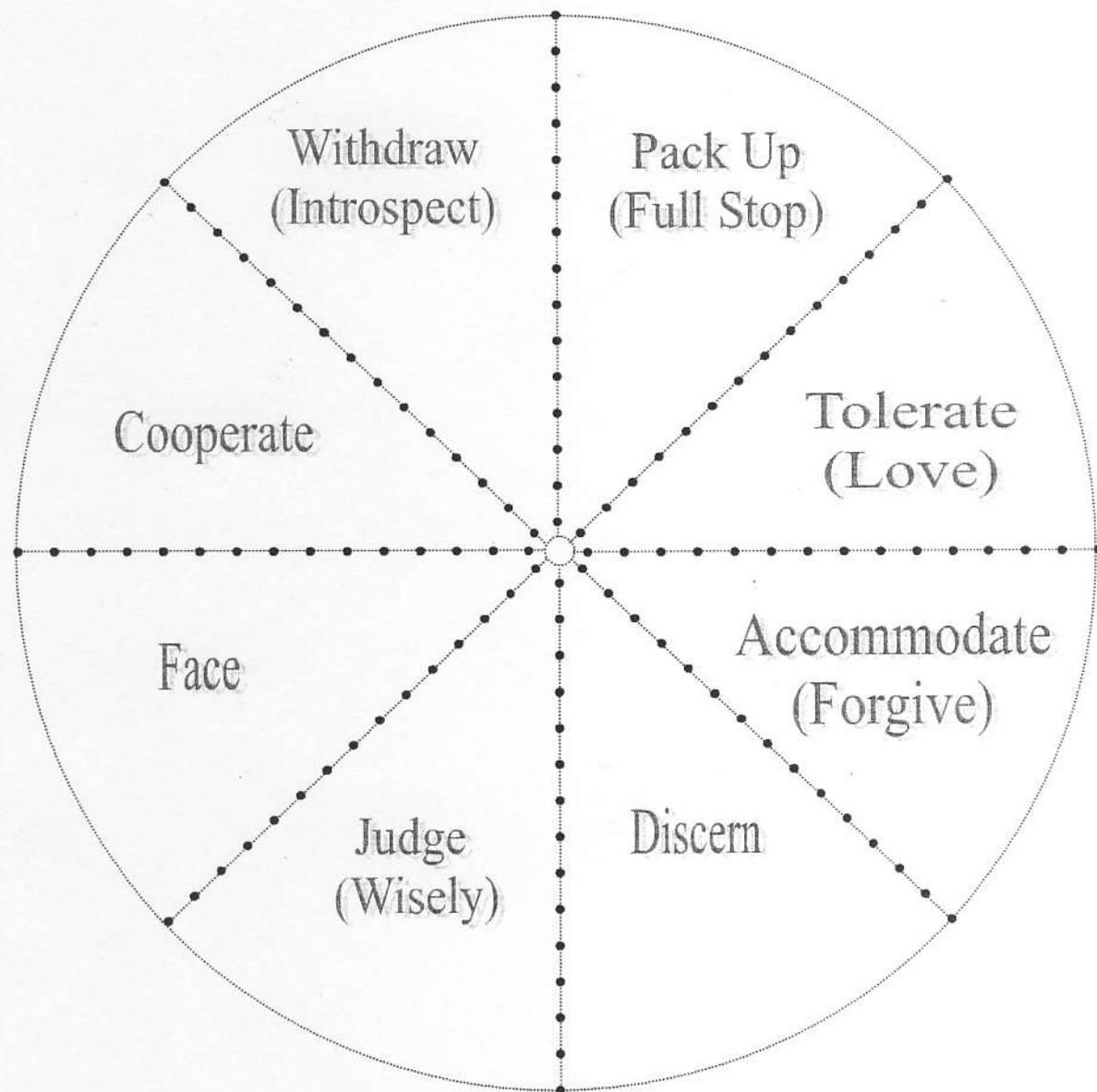
As the soul practices Raja Yoga, as it experiences each and every one of the qualities of God, more and more it even becomes an instrument to radiate these qualities into the world so that there is not only purification of the individual soul, but the vibrations of the highest yoga travel out. They reach out into the universe and eventually there is purification of the very elements of matter, so that peace, purity, love, and harmony are brought about within the world also.

This is a brief description of the stages that one experiences within the meditation of Raja Yoga. Of course, Raja Yoga is not just meditation seated in a particular way, but Raja Yoga, because yoga is the natural relationship with God, can also be experienced through the entire day. It is not a question of how long one must meditate, it's a question of how long one can not be meditating. Can I forget this sweet relationship? As I walk, as I move, as I talk, as I carry out my responsibilities—if I am a yogi, then my consciousness will be that I am a child of the Supreme, and as such I must share the qualities of the Supreme that I have experienced in meditation, through my actions, in connection with others, so that then there is a yogi way of life with the qualities of God being revealed in every footprint, in every action.

OM SHANTI

(from *Adi Dev*, pp. 265-271)

Powers Profile



**Choose a dot on the line to the right of each power
that reflects the strength of that power in you.
Connect those dots to see your 'Powers Profile'.
How balanced is your profile?**

Five Types of Karmic Accounts

by Anthony Strano

There are basically five relationships in which karmic accounts or imbalances can be created and they must always be put right. They are the relationships with one's mind, one's body, with others, with matter or material possessions and with time.

MIND

The mind is made to think—peacefully, creatively, positively. It is the subtle foundation of action because everything begins in the mind—even feelings like love, hate, respect, anger. Creation begins with thought. When there's a value system based on greed, ego and ambition then there'll be stress in the mind because the value is to get more and more—never is there enough. So many people today think that the more (houses, cars, status) I have, the more I am. Such materialistic value systems create wasteful and negative thinking.

What is needed is a spiritual value system that redirects the energy of the mind towards being more peaceful, compassionate, forgiving and tolerant. Powerful, positive thoughts are always slower, fewer and empowering. Really powerful and peaceful thoughts make me strong and stable internally and then I am not influenced so quickly by the moods, words or actions of others. When the mind is weak thoughts are faster, uncontrolled and they drain the soul of energy. Most people don't have good karma with their minds. They've forgotten how to be kind to their minds.

There's a lot of imbalance in the mind these days due to the misuse of thought power. People are not aware of how strong thought power is and they don't use it responsibly. I have to be careful of the thoughts I create, but generally I'm not, I'm careless about it. Just as I have to be careful with my words—I shouldn't just blah, blah, blah—in the same way I shouldn't let the mind just chatter on.

This is why taking a break such as Traffic Control is valuable. It's an opportunity to put a break on my thoughts and examine not only which way they're going but in which way they're growing. In meditation we use the powerful thought that "I am a point of stillness; I am a soul, a peaceful soul." This brings all the thoughts of the mind to one concentrated thought and that thought releases me from other thoughts and recharges and refreshes me.

When the mind goes too fast, sometimes there's even mental breakdown. Stress is mental disease, often resulting from too much ambition and competition. People become fearful and suspicious of others. And when there's no trust then there is not going to be right communication. When you don't want to tell someone the truth, when you feel you can't really be honest with others because they'll misunderstand or use it against you, then you have to think in very complicated ways in order to keep up the mask, the pretense. This is very tiring.

Another type of thinking that creates imbalance and that is very common today is sticky thinking. People's minds get stuck to certain thoughts and feelings which keep circulating in the consciousness. Then they have insomnia and bad feelings that don't go away—they remember things that happened 15 years ago, 20 or 30 years ago. The mind keeps focusing on what went wrong or what is wrong, and when there's an over-focus on negativity, the balance is lost. To be aware of what is wrong is a different thing, but I shouldn't be over focused on it.

An extreme aspect of mental imbalance is when people become obsessive about things, fixed in an idea sometimes even to the point of paranoia. A thought becomes their world. Fanatics for example are very fixed in the idea that they are right and they start to excuse even violent behaviors, because they feel they're right. Fixation on an idea colors ones vision and damages ones attitude. Some people are like walking volcanoes; they just erupt all the time whenever something doesn't suit them. How can such a one make right decisions? They'll be very biased; and that of course has consequences. If I make decisions based on emotional reactions and bias, the people who are at the receiving end of this will have a lot of enmity and animosity towards me.

Meditation means putting my mind every day in a quarantine of silence, discerning and removing 'germs' of negativity so as to avoid negative accounts with myself and with others. If I don't take care of my mind, what will happen? Just as a snowball going down a mountain picks up speed and many other things as well as snow before it crashes into something, so the mind will pick up speed and more waste stuff and will collide, usually with others.

Sometimes people deliberately create little 'bombs' in their minds when they have dislike or animosity towards others, and then at the right time they throw such bombs with their eyes or drop them with their words.

Our work in meditation is to diffuse, disarm the creation of such things. Our thoughts are very, very powerful—much more powerful than words or actions—because our thoughts penetrate the being of another, flooding their consciousness with whatever's in them. This is also why thoughts of love, or peace, or real sweetness works very powerfully. When thoughts are very strong and positive they flood others with uplifting experiences and they like to be with you or in a place where there are these uplifting thoughts and vibrations.

Therefore always keep the mind clean, clear, simple, healthy, light and peaceful. Just think "Past is past." Never keep in mind the past of others or of yourself. Learn from yesterday, but don't carry the burden of it. The more we remember with anger the negative things of the past, the heavier we feel. The proof of karma with the mind is no clarity and not contentment. Such a person tends to be very complicated and easily disturbed. This affects daily life. If one's mind is not clear, how can one make right decisions?

BODY

The body is the instrument of the soul, of the spirit. A characteristic of a truly spiritual person is that they respect their body. A materialistic person will often drink or eat anything, do anything—this is not the sign of freedom or enlightenment. Some think "I can do what I like with the body" but no, I have to respect it in the way a violinist has to respect his instrument. If he plays it and throws it in a corner very soon it will not behave properly when he tries to play it.

The lungs, for example were made for breathing, for bringing oxygen into my blood so it gets to the brain and keeps me alive—and very often at that. Breathing is something that keeps me alive and conscious. So my lungs were obviously not made for smoking. Someone who is smoking is interfering with the body's natural functioning and this will inevitably cause difficulties at some point. If one breaks the natural functioning of the body there are definite consequences. Similarly when people eat too much processed food which generally has little nutritive value; when the water and air that we consume are not clean—there are inevitable consequences.

The soul and body have an intimate and deep relationship with each other. Though they're separate and distinct, they work together. What I take into my body will affect my mind and vice versa. If someone drinks too much the mind and body both feel it the next morning. When there's a physical addiction, the first thing people lose is their logic, their reason. They become a slave to compulsive desires and that is very destructive to the self. This is a karmic account, an imbalance, and it happens because of the misuse of the body in some way. Of course the misuse of the body is tied to the consciousness of the person.

The mind affects the body too, which is why certain sicknesses and diseases are considered psychosomatic. A person who has a feeling of animosity and resentment for 20-30 years in a bad marriage can develop certain cancers because that negative energy is stored inside and there's no ability to tolerate, forgive, forget, let go. Once I realize this partnership of spirit and matter then I develop the aim to make the partnership as harmonious as possible.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

Human relationships are our source of greatest happiness as well as of greatest sorrow. Humans are made to relate, to come into interaction.

Love and happiness are the highest expressions and experiences of human life. When there is no love it is as if there is no life. Love is the expression of purest feelings for others and happiness is the expression of the joy of being alive and of sharing. Happiness can come through other people, looking at the beauty of nature, through genuine achievement, but it becomes real happiness when it is shared. When there isn't love and happiness in life, there starts to be psychological breakdown. In cultures where family traditions have been broken the sense of alienation and loneliness is resulting in high levels of suicide.

The reasons for a specific relationship going well or not are in the karmic 'account' that I have accumulated with the other person. The souls that play the parts of parents, husbands, wives, children, friends, colleagues and acquaintances form a network for the giving and receiving of happiness and sorrow from this account which was either established in the past or is being created in the present. My reactions are a mirror into my karma. The strongest relationships I have now were established previously, in other lifetimes. As long as the account exists, the interchange of actions together continues. When there is nothing more to give or receive, the paths separate by death, divorce or simply by the loss of contact.

The basic thing that maintains and sustains good and harmonious relationships is respect. Respect these days is more important than love. Respect is not possessive, emotional or tied to specific individuals as love can be—it's more universal.

When there's respect, there's harmony, peace and space given to express the self and allow others to respect themselves. When there's not, there's repression, aggression, anger and conflict. We often are not respectful because we think the person doesn't have much worth, is stupid or old-fashioned or this way or that way. You feel that you're superior or better in some way ("My way of thinking is better")—there are many reasons for lack of respect and they always provoke reactions. When there's not respect here's disrespect and disrespect creates imbalance.

The law of karma works to bring the balance back, to ensure respect for the rights of all things to be. If I'm very angry and I hurt someone, I create an imbalance with that person and until there is either forgiveness from the other person or until I say I'm sorry or until I make some effort for peace, that imbalance continues. But it has to come back to balance eventually and either I volunteer to make it come back to balance or the drama of life will make it come into balance again.

Right relationship with others is based on right relationship with the self. The more empty a person is the more demanding they're going to be, and they'll have lots of anger, because the basis of anger is "I expect"—someone to behave in a particular way and they don't. The more content I am with myself, the more I'm living from the inside, in touch with and valuing my inner qualities, the more my relationships with others will be peaceful and fulfilling. A lot of relationships are very dependent and parasitical—rather than loyalty and maturity there's great selfishness. When a person uses other people for whatever they become arrogant, self-critical and desperately lonely. They can't find love and don't feel they deserve it. They don't feel they deserve to be happy, therefore they can't be optimistic; they lose enthusiasm for life and faith in themselves. Such people will say that nothing ever shocks them because they always expect the worse. What a miserable way to live!—surrounded by defense mechanisms to keep the self from hurt and disappointment. Such a person never recognizes what he or she is doing to bring about such disappointments.

The basis of good relationships with others starts with seeing them as souls, actors in the drama of life, having a right to be here—relating to them on that level rather than on the basis of gender, the past, their nature, their role with respect to you (mother, father, etc.). Relatives are not extensions of me—they have their own right to be, they're also children of the Supreme and are unconditionally loved and appreciated by God, they have their own unique specialty. Have I recognized that? To see the specialty of others, go within yourself, open your heart and silently observe them. For as soon as you see others *as souls* you are released from a lot of unnecessary thinking about them.

Only if I'm happy with the self will I have the optimism and courage to see others as souls, and for this one has to review one's vision of the self and others *daily*. This is not just a conceptual point of knowledge, but a matter of *experience*. I must experience that others are eternal, original, loved by the Creator and that the universe is also cooperating with them.

MATERIAL POSSESSIONS AND FACILITIES

Money and material possessions are not inherently bad or evil. The problem that has created karmic accounts in this area is that people have become very dependent on material things and have allowed the pursuit and possession of them to replace their higher values. People without money and possessions are unhappy but people with money are just as unhappy. Sometimes people even base their sense of security on what they have and when it's taken away they can become quite violent.

Everything depends on the consciousness with which one uses material things. Learn to have the attitude that 'whatever I have is enough' and use your resources in a worthwhile way, to help others. To be spiritual doesn't mean I have to give everything away. It means I have to use everything in the right way.

TIME

Time is very valuable because it's the one thing I can never get back once it's gone. The more I value time, the more I'll receive the fruit of planting the correct thoughts and actions at the correct time. In order to yield the proper results, in order to achieve success in any effort, it's just as important to plant the right thoughts, words and actions at the right time as it is to sow seeds in the garden at the right time. But one great thing about time is that it keeps giving opportunities—if I'm aware and sincere I can correct many things. For this I have to be master of the self and master of the moment. I have to be able to say, "Do it now."

When you blame circumstances, you miss the opportunity which is presenting itself in the present moment. Usually we complain about the past when we don't want to change. It becomes an excuse—"this happened when I was very young and now look!" The main reason people don't want to change is fear—they feel they've failed in the past and lack confidence in the self, or feel the burden of karmic accounts is too big.

When you become a master of time then you don't blame the past or fear the future because you've understood the reality of the present: the present is opportunity. The power of faith together with my understanding of the power of time can create miracles. Each second is like a silent seed and if I can open it there's beautiful fruit waiting.

SPIRITUALITY IN ACTION

Sister Mohini explains how spirituality can powerfully influence every area of your life.



*What
does it
mean to be
spiritual?*

*Does it mean to be no
longer concerned with
the world of the
physical? That you
deprive yourself of
worldly pleasures and
devote the self to the
ethereal? What is the
purpose of spirituality?*

Not to have a clear understanding of these questions is to deny yourself a vital ingredient for your effectiveness and well-being. True spirituality is completely separate from all the channelling, supernatural and occult powers that are so popular nowadays. It is even different from religion. True spirituality is about awareness and behaviour. Very simply, it means to have a good awareness of your own eternal spiritual identity and the kind of values you need to be

living. It means to be totally clear about your inherent worth, and how this can be reflected in your everyday life.

Spiritual people are simply people who are succeeding in applying an elevated sense of themselves into the way they are living their lives. The very purpose of spirituality is to make us more effective, by helping us improve our act. Spirituality and action work together! Spirituality brings meaning to our actions, and actions bring purpose to our spirituality.

As vital a part that spirituality plays in our everyday life, nevertheless, effort is required to begin the process. Seeking is a first step. It is natural to seek, to discover what is true, real, immortal. However, there is a step after seeking, which is to start basing everything about you - your thoughts, words, actions, relationships, etc, on what you have found; that is, what it is you have come to know. This is where the effort begins. Take for example, thinking positively. You might, in



the course of your spiritual search, come to understand the power of thought; which kinds of thought are good for you and which not. A positive thought has patience, love or any virtue inherent in it. It is this virtue which makes the thought positive. However, it is only when that virtue is expressed in your attitude, speech or behaviour that spirituality in action begins.

Spirituality in action means to use your spiritual understanding in everyday life. This is what takes effort. There are many who believe that we shouldn't lead lives of effort - that life is for living. They want to keep things easy and use everything around to keep themselves happy. However, is this real? Are we sure we have the wherewithal to really fulfil the need to be happy? From where are such resources being drawn? The reality is quite a different picture. Those resources which are truly able to

fulfil our needs are generally, at this point in time, in a state of great depletion. There is scarcity of both kinds - that which we need internally as well as externally to be really happy. So although life might be 'just for living', currently there is something else we need to be doing with it, something we need to be creating and bringing to life. This is something people need to understand: that in addition to life being 'just for living', life is also something to make, to create. I'm not saying that simply enjoying life is wrong, but enjoying it and being in charge of it as well - learning to shape and direct it - allows you to get more out of it. For this you need a clear understanding of your inner resources, of how the energies of thought and feeling are formed and what is the source of these energies. This is where a spiritual education can be helpful, which enables you to understand the essential needs of your inner being and fulfil them.

Bringing spirituality into action has a direct and positive effect on at least four specific areas of your life: your (inner) well-being, your effectiveness as a person, your leadership potential and your professional profile. Note how all four of these arenas feed directly into life and your ability to live it! This is in contrast to the popularly held assumption that spirituality should somehow take place separately from life, that the aim of a spiritual practice, indeed the practice itself, needs to happen in isolation from life. In fact, all four of these aspects are examples of how spirituality is to be used in life, how spirituality and action are connected.

Inner Well-Being

The development of inner well-being begins as you learn to take care of two basic (inner) facilities:

the intellect and the mind. The intellect is your intelligence, your ability to make decisions and also, through the ability to focus, to see things clearly. The mind controls thoughts and emotions. The first thing to do is understand what the mind and intellect want. Understanding how they operate helps you to start directing them. In this you also come to understand how you want them to work, what you want out of them. Change begins here.

As you get to know yourself at this level of your being, you will definitely experience inner positive changes, the kind that come from feeling more in charge. These changes lead to progress - a kind of constant personal growth, which is very refreshing. In fact, you can quickly come to feel that life without this kind of energy flow becomes routine, boring and overwhelmed by difficulties. People have been living with inner conflict for so long, many think it is natural and even normal to be in conflict. But actually this kind of inner tension creates a huge loss in your subtle energies. It is as if there is a leak, so that no matter how OK or happy you might be feeling at one moment, in the very next you flip into feelings of frustration, tiredness, loss. Once you start managing the energies of thought better, you will begin to see your problems in a different light. In point of fact, problems are our own creation. The very same situation which is the cause of so much trouble can be turned around and experienced as a tailor-made lesson in life especially designed to help you move forward. Once we start appreciating what, within a problem, is revealing itself as something we need to develop for our own self-progress, we actually grow to like problems, because we see them as a means to move forward. Love is an important factor in this. We need to stop

being so hard on ourselves, and instead bring understanding and respect to our efforts of self-realization. Love goes a long way in resolving conflict - even inner conflict - replacing it with the higher energies of happiness, peace and power.

Personal Effectiveness

The second area which is positively affected by spirituality concerns our ability to manage our everyday responsibilities. In this, concentration and the ability to learn are very important. These are parts of the self that need to grow. It is surprising how many people have difficulty with either or both of these nowadays, because in fact concentration is a natural quality; we are all naturally endowed with the ability to concentrate. However, something has happened to that original nature, lessening our experience of it. What that 'something' is, is ego. Ego is what has happened to us. There is so much ego nowadays. This ego is what blocks us, so that we lose our ability to learn or concentrate. Of course this interferes with our ability to be responsible. It makes us less efficient. Spiritual practice teaches you how to dismantle your ego and replace it with self-respect. A spiritual education makes you clear about many things and this clarity becomes a basis for good concentration and learning. It enhances efficiency. Whereas it might have taken you half a day to get a certain task done, you will find you can finish it in less than half an hour. Even work becomes more enjoyable as it takes less time to do more. Whatever skills you have are enhanced.

Leadership Potential

The third area that spirituality affects positively is your leadership potential. A good leader is one who

leads through his/her own example. Spirituality puts you back in touch with your inner resources. As you experiment with these energies (such as patience, far-sightedness, flexibility - all the spiritual values) merging these qualities into your experience and behaviour, there is definitely a positive influence on those around you. The purpose of examining your own spirituality is so that your attitude, outlook and level of energy improves. High energy and a quality performance are two more practical and direct benefits of a spiritual practice.

Professional Development

The final arena which is affected positively by spirituality is your professional life. Here again it will not be a question of sitting back in your 'peace', letting all opportunities for advancement ride by you. There is nothing wrong in being devoted to spiritual progress, and enjoying progress in the physical world as well. On the contrary, year after year I see how many of the people affiliated with this Spiritual University are the ones who are offered promotions. This is because truly spiritual individuals are the most useful and effective employees. Our organisation has been asked so many times to help in the organising and manning of major projects at the United Nations. I believe this is not only because when we work, we work to get the job done, but that work is done from the heart - so it is easy for others to enjoy and appreciate our presence and the work we do. It is another example of spirituality in action. In all four areas of your life, you can see how spirituality enhances your ability to act.

What are the efforts we need to be making in order to introduce into our actions a reliable form of spirituality? The first effort is to

choose some thoughts which will allow you to practise what we call 'the consciousness of your true identity', or soul-consciousness. Try to hold such thoughts in your mind throughout the day. Working with thoughts like these will help you transform your identity from the body to the soul. If you do this even for one week, you will definitely start to feel yourself as a soul: a tiny point of light and energy which is separate from the body. To this practice you can add an hour or half an hour in the morning and evening, of just sitting in the experience of yourself as spirit, turning yourself over completely to your spiritual personality traits of peace and love. Each week you can focus on another aspect of this consciousness - for example the aspect of the relationship between you, the sparkling pure spirit and the Supreme or Source Soul. Ask yourself if you can see that connection, feel it from within. See the qualities of that Soul and imagine yourself being filled with them. Efforts like these bring so much in return. Not only do you begin to fill from within and feel the transformation, but whatever you want to achieve begins to happen for you. Honestly, it works!

The key is this link with the Supreme, the Source of all light and might. Understand this process. How does the energy of a generator reach the outlets in a home? Wires need to be connected. Before that, the plastic or rubber 'coat' has to be removed, so the link can be made properly, the current can flow and the energy can then be distributed everywhere. The right method has to be applied. In the same way, concerning the Supreme power, why is it so difficult to connect with that energy? It is because the 'coat' of body-consciousness still needs to be removed. Otherwise the 'wires'

can't connect. So the first step is to remove the 'rubber insulator' encasing the soul, which we call body-consciousness, i.e. the experience of yourself as a physical identity. This is done through thoughts, as it is through thoughts that consciousness is created. As you create this consciousness of your spiritual identity, you will begin to feel that connection within a few minutes. If you stay in that consciousness for a while you will definitely experience new feelings deep inside. These new feelings will gradually have an influence not just on the way you see things, but on the way you behave, as well.

Spirituality is for helping you to understand and transform yourself. It is for helping you make the most out of your life. It clarifies your ideas and ideals so you can know what you truly want and need. The real changes we all want to see in the world - justice, freedom, equality, abundance, love - will happen when enough individuals again begin living with humanitarian values, from hearts and minds that have been opened and connected. This kind of change happens through spirituality. Simply understand the first step - of connecting yourself. Practise this and just see how your attitudes and inner strength will develop, and how this in turn will influence positively the way you live your life - the way you are. We are an action-oriented species, but we are also very spiritual. Our future depends on how successful we will be in putting the spiritual theory into physical practice.

Based in New York, Sister Mohini is the Director of Brahma Kumaris Centres in North and South America

LEARNING TO BE POSITIVE

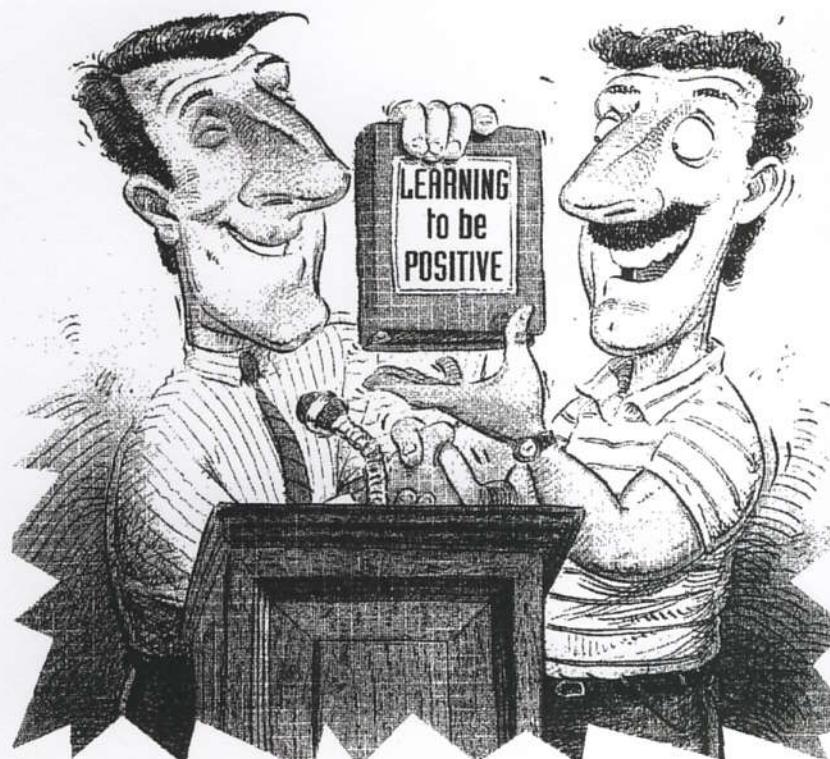
Lesley Edwards reveals why positive thinking is more than just ... positive thinking!

Some time ago there was a Government inspection in the primary school where I work. The school had a reasonable report but there were some pointed criticisms and most teachers were left feeling demoralised and stressed by the experience.

The headteacher pinned a copy of the report to the notice board with a note that said encouragingly 'Think Positive!'. The next day I noticed someone had scribbled underneath it 'Like Turkeys do at Christmas!'

That really made me think, and confirmed for me that people do not like being patronised with the quick fix smiles and niceties that positive thinking can superficially seem to offer. Positive thinking is not a gloss to be painted over the cracks of life. It is not a panacea that makes everything okay when people's feelings have been trampled over. Positive thinking goes much deeper - it is an understanding and wisdom that sees things for what they are, sees the people behind the structures, the feelings and intentions behind the actions, and deals with things in the most appropriate way; with empathy if empathy is needed, with courage if courage is needed, or patience if patience is needed.

Real positive thinking comes from



a clear understanding of who we are. Inside each of us is an inner universe of beliefs, attitudes, feelings, memories, dreams, desires and past experience. We look out at the world through the lens of this inner universe, and it can appear to be heaven or hell! Two people can see the same scene in completely different ways: "Two men looked out through the prison bars, one saw mud, the other saw stars." If we want to see the stars, if we want to change the view, we need to make some internal adjustments, and a good place to start is with our thoughts. Thoughts are our tools - with thought we can gain new understanding, new insight, we can chip away at the blocks of our old limiting belief systems. Thoughts are also vehicles, they are our way through our inner universe. It's the energy of a thought that creates the impetus for understanding and change.

There is a part of us that can accept in one second that we are good, that everything else is good, that everything happens for a reason, and is ultimately beneficial. But the daily application of that understanding and the unfolding of that reality takes time. It is only through experience that we can learn the beautiful intricacies of what positive living, positive thinking, positive being and positive doing means. The intellectual acceptance of goodness and positivity gives the inner universe balance and equilibrium. This is a good start, but it is only the beginning. From my own personal experience I cannot separate positive thinking from meditation: times of still, quiet personal reflection where I feel my own inner positivity and get insights into my own strengths and weaknesses. Meditation fills understanding with power, truth

through being actively involved with our feelings, and meditation puts us in touch with our feelings. Gradually the feelings generated in meditation become the template of a new positive belief system, a new way of seeing ourselves and the world. And then, of course, life will be there constantly challenging us, demanding we put our theory into practice.

A lot of people, with some effort and practice, are able to be positive about people and situations they are not emotionally involved in; to keep calm in a traffic jam or to have compassion for the old lady at the supermarket counter who is holding everyone up. (Of course we can still have our bad days!) But for most of us our positivity is

really challenged by those we are closest to, working with, living with, day in and day out. One of my personal challenges has been in dealing with some pretty serious behavioural problems in the classrooms of the inner city London schools I have worked in over the past eight years. There have been times when I have had some very painful experiences, but as Kahlil Gibran says in *The Prophet* "Your pain is a breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding". Perhaps another way of putting this might be that our difficulties and confusion are proportional to our illusions. I am now very grateful to those children for what they have taught me; in fact I am sure they taught me far more than I ever taught them! I had this fixed picture of how I wanted my classroom to be. And then a child, or maybe two or three children, would start behaving outrageously, violently, sabotaging my picture. For a long time my only way of responding was to get angry, however much I thought positively, or meditated! Slowly over time, with experience, as I became better

at doing my job, as I looked at what was going on inside my own head - the fear of lack of control, of losing face, of what others would think, the fixed picture of my 'ideal classroom' - I stopped getting angry. And I saw my anger had just been a way of saying I can't cope! It was a real relief when I was able to say I don't know how this should be and I'm willing to change it if need be. To stand back and act rather than react. To create a space and moment where the appropriate words and actions could come. I found that quite often the best thing to do was nothing. Just to be internally peaceful and quiet, and let someone move through their pain, not taking it personally. I have learnt that positive thinking

POSITIVE STATEMENTS MADE



powerful creative thinking; that means having the right thought at the right time, the thought coming from a clear perception of myself and other people. And that comes from keeping quiet, standing back and watching, observing how life works.

I have used this example because I know this happens to many of us in some form or another. We have expectations from those around us. We have ideas of how our parents should be, or should have been, how our children should be, how our careers should be, how our friends should behave. And often things are simply not how we want them to be. Whatever

misconceptions we have about the world, whatever the extent to which we don't understand ourselves or the way things are, will be revealed by those closest to us. The people closest to us are mirrors. They shatter our illusions! We might have negative thoughts and feelings towards someone for having power over us, yet they reveal to us the degree of our dependency. If it wasn't them it would be someone else. So we can choose to feel negative or positive about these revelations. We can love people or hate them for what we learn from them depending on whether we want to be positive or negative.

would be good if we could put the power of positive thinking in a bottle, like a magic elixir and distribute it to all those in pain and confusion in the world. But we can't, because like creativity and happiness it comes from inside. There is a story I read to the children at school by Alice Walker called 'Finding the Greenstone'. It is about a place where everyone has a bright shining green gem. When they are good, have good thoughts, do good deeds, their gem glistens and glows. When they are bad, or selfish or hurtful, the gem turns to stone or they lose it altogether. If you lose your stone, nobody else can find it for you, but in the story the whole community come together, creating an atmosphere of love and support, to be there and celebrate when a lost stone is found.

It is certainly a reason to celebrate when someone finds their own positive world inside, because the magic elixir of positivity can work miracles, transforming anger, healing illness, overcoming fear, building self-respect and generating love in our lives.

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TIPS FOR LISTENING TO BABA'S MURLI

“By listening to the Murli you become a conqueror of sinful actions. How can there be a change in your actions if you don't hear the Murli? How can your conscience be awakened if you don't hear the Murli? Listen with so much love that you never become tired of listening. By listening to the Murli, things become clear, you receive answers to your questions, you develop courage, your faith in the self increases and there is that recognition of the Father as well. While listening to the Murli, all doubts are removed and the intellect becomes full of faith. No matter what happens, never miss listening to the Murli.” — Dadi Janki

1. Accurate Listening

Listening is a natural ability of the soul. But listening is also an art that can be developed that will enable us to effectively process knowledge, gain insight and embody it so that we can put it to work in our lives as we interact with others on the field of action.

We have spent at least 2,500 years being influenced by our senses and so our listening ability has become trapped by the external world. To be soul-conscious and to listen to the spiritual concepts of soul, matter and God require from us a new way of hearing. It requires us to listen from the depths of our internal world.

Listening accurately to the Murli requires a) a soul conscious state of mind; b) curiosity for new wisdom and a thirst for the experience of truth; c) a willingness to recognize and respect the One who is speaking; and d) compassion for the self.

Listening to the Murli accurately requires you the soul to see, hear and feel with your whole being. To attend carefully to the message, whether spoken or read, is to perceive as closely as possible the intent and the experience that is being conveyed.

2. You the Soul as Listener

Visualize the kind of listener you would like to be: for example, calm, focused, open; able to understand, and remember whatever you choose in relation to your own well-being and that of the world.

3. Preparation for Listening

Before listening to the Murli, spend time in silence and create a sacred space of solitude in which the soul can listen with undivided attention to the voice of God as He sings the song of truth! Be aware of how this song awakens you to a totally new reality within and gives you the strength to listen differently to the outer world.

4. Factors for effective listening:

Relaxation
Focus/Concentration
Desire to Learn

Relaxation

Be in a state of soul-consciousness and create a space between you and the external noise. Turn within and quiet the internal noise. Be open to receive the whole message contained in the Murli, and to understand both the message and the One who is speaking.

Focus/Concentration

Interest in wanting to explore the truth gives us enthusiasm and this hones our focus on the topic. Our interest naturally heightens as points of knowledge from the Ocean of Knowledge enter our intellects. With each point of knowledge the soul can pick up strength and speed for realizing its aim and objective. When the mind and intellect remain focused on the development of the ideas that Baba explains, it can reach the depth and the unlimited scope of their meaning. A good listener hears both the spoken word and the meaning/intention behind it.

To strengthen concentration, it is especially necessary to sustain a focus for several minutes at the beginning of the Murli, paying attention to the intent of the subject matter. Sustain attention to the spoken word with interest. Listen for the main point and the threads that connect back to the main point.

Listening to the Murli is an art that develops over time. The subtle tools are focus, interest, intoxication and most of all active attention.

Desire to Learn

- Be in a stage in which you feel valued and respected.
- Widen your comfort zone for new ideas that once seemed threatening to entertain.
- Put aside self-concerns in order to understand what Baba is saying.
- Listen from the heart without censoring or processing the points heard.
- Receive the spoken word accurately as it is said. Don't edit or interpret while listening.
- Cultivate knowing Baba better through the experiences that He is describing.
- What is His main point? What facts and observations is he offering to support His position?
- What does He feel about the topic being presented?
- How does His point of view enhance or change your view of the issue?
- Listen to the whole message contained in the Murli in an unbiased manner.
- Be sensitive to the accuracy of the message and the possible interpretations that could be derived from it.
- Listen with a pattern of thinking that is cyclical (holistic) rather than linear (cognitive).
- Listening to Baba creates the 'will' to change. This 'will' is a strength and power that unlocks the stubbornness and resistance of the intellect and softens it with humility.
- Listening to Baba gives the soul the unlimited capacity to be a student who uses the Murli as the foundation for its lifelong learning.

5. Enjoyment While Listening

The Murli is a flute and so the sound of words spoken by Baba creates a rhythm that resonates with the truth embedded in the original and eternal sanskaras of the soul. The Murli is a ballad that speaks to the story of my life.

Listen for the titles that Baba mentions, e.g. 'world benefactor children'. Adopt the awareness of this title and listen from the seat of this stage. This subtle exercise will match your awareness to that of Baba and there will be a sense of equality experienced between Teacher and student.

6. Check Yourself While Listening

Use the inquiries below to check yourself and make appropriate adjustments required to listen and enjoy to the maximum the sweet versions of Baba. While listening to the Murli, do you:

1. Think about what you already know and use it as a reference, while Baba is explaining a point?
2. Tune out when He says things that you don't agree with and don't want to hear?
3. Learn something new everyday?
4. Maintain eye contact with the person reading the Murli?
5. Feel like often interrupting the reader?
6. Fall asleep or daydream during the Murli?
7. Restate knowledge in your mind to be sure that you understand it accurately?
8. Pay careful attention to the corrections made by Baba without becoming defensive or physically tensed?
9. Understand the meaning behind the words?
10. Feel frustrated or impatient when examples and metaphors are used that don't fit your culture?
11. Desire to inquire about the meaning of unfamiliar words and stories?
12. Feel the need to ask for clarification to make sure that you understand the concept?
13. Give the appearance of listening when you are not?
14. Be open to new points without judging or criticizing?
15. Focus on Baba's advice without the filters of your own advice or that of others?
16. Feel like Baba is rambling on before getting to the point?
17. Take notes to help you remember points?
18. Get in tune with the stage from which Baba is speaking?
19. Find the reader's physical appearance or mannerisms distracting?
20. Assume, after hearing the essence of the Murli, that you know what Baba is going to say and stop listening with the thought: 'heard that before'?
21. Feel uncomfortable when questions are asked by the one reading the Murli?
22. When statements are made about your perfect form, find yourself mentally prefacing such statements with unflattering or disbelieving remarks about yourself?

The basis of attaining an elevated status is the Murli.

Today, the Murlidhar Father is looking at His children who love the Murli (flute) to see how much they love the Murlidhar Father and how much they love the Murli. You become so intoxicated about the Murli. You forget all consciousness of your body as you listen to the bodiless Father. You don't have the slightest consciousness of bodily beings. You become so intoxicated in this way and dance in happiness. You consider yourselves to be multimillion times fortunate to be personally in front of the Father, the Bestower of Fortune, and stay in spiritual intoxication. As you become intoxicated with this spiritual intoxication and the intoxication of the Murli of the Murlidhar, you experience yourselves to be flying beyond your body and this earth. With the music of the Murli, that is, with the secrets and music of the Murli, you continue to have many experiences with the Father. Sometimes, you go to the incorporeal world, sometimes, the subtle region and sometimes, to your own kingdom. Sometimes, you become a *light-and-might-house* and give rays of happiness and peace to the souls of this peaceless and unhappy world. You travel through the three worlds every day. With whom? With the Murlidhar Father. Hearing the Murli you swing in swings of supersensuous joy. As soon as you receive the medicine of imperishable blessings through the music of Murlidhar's Murli, you become healthy in body and mind. Baba was seeing the children who have love for listening to the Murli in this right way. From the same Murli, some become kings, whereas others some become subjects because success is achieved through the method of application; the more you listen to the Murli in the right way, the more you become an embodiment of success.

First are those who listen to the Murli in the right way, that is, those who merge it in themselves. Second are those who listen to the Murli as a discipline and merge some of the Murli in themselves and speak about some of the Murli. Don't even ask about the third type! Those who listen and merge the Murli in themselves in an accurate way become the form of it. Their every action is a form of the Murli. Ask yourself what number you are in - the first number or the second number? To have *regard* for the Murlidhar Father means to have *regard* for every version of the Murli. Each *version* is the basis of earning an income for 2500 years. It is the basis of an income of multimillions. In regard to this, if you *miss* one blessing, you *miss* an income of multimillions. One blessing makes you into a mine of treasures. Those who listen to every word of the Murli in the right way and understand the philosophy of the account of success attained through it, attain an elevated status. Just as the philosophy of karma is deep, in the same way, the philosophy of listening to and merging the Murli in yourself in the right way is extremely elevated. Murli is the breath of Brahmin life. If there is no breath there is no life. You souls are experienced in this, are you not? Check yourself every day as to whether you listened to the Murli with that importance and in the right way. This discipline at Amrit Vela easily and automatically makes you into an embodiment of success in your every action throughout the day. Do you understand?

New ones have come, haven't they? Therefore, Baba is telling all of you who have come *last* the way to *go fast*. Through this way you will *go fast*. With this way, you can *gallop* and make up in terms of any gap of time. BapDada tells you the different methods so that no child has any complaints, such as: Why did we come late? Or, why were we called late? However, you can still move forward. Move forward with the elevated way and claim a high number. There won't be any complaints left, will there? Baba is showing you the *refined* way. You have come at the time when everything is ready-made. You have come at the time to eat the butter that has been churned. You are already free from that type of labour. Now, simply eat it and digest it. It is easy, is it not? Achcha.

To those who are complete in doing everything in the right way and thereby attain all success; to those who forget the consciousness of the body on hearing Murlidhar's Murli; to those who swing in the swing

of happiness; to the intoxicated yogis who remain intoxicated in their spiritual intoxication; to those who have *regard* for Murlidhar and the Murli; to such *master* murlidhars; to the children who become the form of the Murli or Murlidhar; to all BapDada's corporeal and angelic children, BapDada's love, remembrance and namaste.

BapDada meeting groups:

- 1) You are the elevated souls who constantly stay in remembrance of the One, in a constant and stable stage, are you not? Are you always constant 'ek-ras' (taste of One) or do other tastes pull you towards themselves? Other tastes don't pull you towards themselves, do they? All of you have just the One. Everything is merged in the One. Since you have only One, and there isn't anyone else, where else would you go? You don't have any maternal or paternal uncles, do you? What promise have all of you made? This is the promise you have made, is it not - that You are everything? Have the kumaris made a firm promise? You made a firm promise and you were garlanded with a wedding garland. You made a promise and you found the Husband. You found the Husband and also the home. You have found the Husband whose praise is sung by the whole world. You have also found the home where there is nothing lacking. So, have you put on the wedding garland firmly? Such kumaris are said to be sensible. Kumaris are sensible anyway. BapDada is pleased to see the kumaris because you have been saved. You would be happy if someone was saved from falling, would you not? The mothers had already fallen down, and so for them, it would be said that those who had fallen were saved, whereas for kumaris, it would be said that you have been saved from falling. Therefore, you are so *lucky*! Mothers have their own *luck* and kumaris have their own *luck*. You mothers are also lucky because you are the cows of Gopal (Cowherd. One who looks after cows).
- 2) Are you constantly conquerors of Maya? Those who are conquerors of Maya would definitely have the intoxication of being world benefactors. Do you have such intoxication? Unlimited service means service of the world. Always have the awareness that you are the children of the Master of the world. You have the awareness of what you have become and what you have found. That is all. Simply constantly continue to make progress in this happiness. BapDada is pleased to see those who are making progress.

Constantly remain intoxicated in remembrance of the Father. What does Godly intoxication make you? From being residents of this earth (ash), you become residents of the sky (fash). So, do you constantly reside in the sky or do you sometimes reside on the earth? Since you have become the children of the highest-on-high Father, how could you stay down below? The earth is down below, is it not, whereas the sky is high, so how could you come down? Never allow the foot of your intellect to touch the ground. Just up above! This is known as being a child of the highest-on-high Father. Let there be this intoxication. Constantly remain unshakeable and immovable and full of all treasures. If you fluctuate even a little because of Maya you won't be able to experience all treasures. You have received so many treasures from the Father. So in order to keep all those treasures with you for all time, constantly remain unshakeable and immovable. By remaining unshakeable you will constantly experience happiness. There is also happiness of perishable wealth. Only those who remain unshakeable and immovable will be able to experience this happiness.

All Brahmins have received self-sovereignty. Previously, you were slaves and used to sing: "I am Your slave! I am Your slave!" You have now become self-sovereigns. From slaves, you have become kings. There is so much difference! There is the difference of day and night. Remember the Father and change from a slave to a king. Such a kingdom cannot be attained throughout the whole cycle. With this self

sovereignty you receive the kingdom of the world. Therefore, constantly maintain the intoxication that you have a right to self-sovereignty, and your physical senses will automatically follow the elevated path. Always maintain the happiness that you have attained whatever you wanted to attain. Look what you have become from what you were! Look where you were and where you have reached!

Question: What is the easy way to become a conqueror of Maya?

Answer: In order to become a conqueror of Maya, be angry with your defects. When you feel angry, don't become angry with one another, but become angry with your defects and weaknesses and you will easily become a conqueror of Maya.

Question: Why is BapDada especially pleased when He sees the villagers?

Answer: Because the villagers are very innocent. Even the Father is called the Innocent Lord. Just as the Father is the Innocent Lord, so too, the villagers are innocent. Therefore, always have the happiness that you are especially loved by the Innocent Lord.

Blessing: May you be an easy yogi and constantly experience happiness by making all your attainments emerge.

The basis of easy yoga is love, and the basis of love is relationship. It is easy to remember someone in a relationship. All attainments are received through a relationship. Where you have attainment, your mind and intellect go there easily. This is why you have to make all the treasures of powers, knowledge, virtues, happiness, peace, bliss and love and all the different attainments you have attained emerge in your intellect and you will thereby experience happiness and become easy yogis.

Slogan: Those who remain beyond all questions remain fully satisfied.

*** O M S H A N T I ***

The Health Scene Newsletter

Garlic Proclaimed a Great Medicine By Medical Researchers

In the Austin American-Statesman of September 22, 1998 there appeared an article under the headline: "Garlic Power."

Two microbiologists did some researches with garlic at Brigham Young University. They tested the results against such "viral" diseases as fever blisters, genital blisters (what is called herpes genitalis or, formerly, the first stage of syphilis) and a type of common cold.

In 99% of the cases, garlic extract zapped the viruses, the researchers said.

How's that for an inexpensive substance that knocks out disease? I dare say if everyone ate garlic, they'd be perfectly healthy 99% of the time. Right? Unfortunately, this is not correct. I've dealt with too many garlic and herbal wrecks to buy the concept that a poison is healthful.

Garlic is labelled a medicinal plant. Many poisonous plants are said to be "medicinal" after the old saying, "in poison there is virtue."

There is no doubt that garlic extract did, indeed, help against the diseases they tested against. But who wants to lead a disease-producing existence in the first place? Do we not know that healthful practices never cause disease? So why play Russian roulette with a fully loaded gun and protect yourself from the worst effects of the bullet by sealing up the barrel?

How Garlic "Works"

What is the modus operandi of garlic which these researchers found useful?

Right up front we can dismiss the fact that garlic extract (isothiocyanate—the poison that killed all those people in Bhopal, India) zapped viruses and thus cured the problems. The fact is that viruses, so-called, are dead material to start with—they have no life as genomes (genetic material). They are merely templates or patterns for creating proteins, energy and other needed body nutrients plus, of course, the genetic material for faithfully reproducing the organism of which they were originally a part.

What these two researchers have found, much to the chagrin of the medical establishment which wants expensive treatments, is how a toxic agent causes the body to react.

In the first place fever blisters, or just plain blisters anywhere, are the body's way of collecting morbid materials and either expelling them directly through the skin or holding them until it can deal with them in a regular manner. To call them virally caused cells for proof that the dead genomes collected the garbage that is in the blister, transported it to the area and formed the blister. What are plainly body actions are totally disregarded, even by brainwashed microbiologists.

How the Body Deals with Poisons

Under the influence of garlic, yes, the body did, indeed, quickly deal with blisters. What happened? When you take a poison, it usually causes a body frenzy that causes its vital energies to leave off the eliminative processes in which it is engaged (as symptomized by illnesses). This is called drug suppression.

But there is another side of the coin. Garlic, massive doses of vitamin C and other toxic substances occasion a different type of body reaction. Likewise the body goes into a frenzy of activity to deal with the poison or rid the body of the toxic substance. But, incidental to this activity it removes both the ingested substance and the morbid materials it has accumulated.

In short, the administration of the poison of garlic has caused accelerated body activities in which it overcompensated and also removed additional morbid materials within.

And, of course, isothiocyanate is in garlic and quite toxic. It is also called allium or allicin. It is deadly to bacteria which, somehow, have not developed an immunity to it. Isothiocyanate (allicin) is known as an antiseptic, rubefacient (which means it occasions blisters!), a diaphoretic (which means the body steps up sweating to help excrete the garlic poison) and a vermifuge (which means it is deadly to insects and parasites too).

In horseradish isothiocyanate is more concentrated than in garlic. Workers in Tule, California who work with horseradish must wear special clothing and gas masks!

Two microbiologists who are mistaking body detoxification activities as in blisters, colds and other "viral infections" as viral activities and who are mistaking garlic extract as having power to zap those viruses can be forgiven.

The whole trust is to live healthfully. You'll never have a need for fever blisters or other illnesses as special body conditions for getting rid of toxic substances within. And while garlic poison may be helpful in expediting the body's removal of the garlic extract and extraordinarily the poisons the body was originally endeavouring to remove, it is not by any means a healthful substance. It debilitates the body just as does any other herb or poison.

A Little of the Truth Surfaces

One of our subscribers sent in a newspaper article on which he wrote "a little of the truth surfaces." In this newspaper article of October 1, 1988 it was stated that "doctor's errors led to as many as one-quarter of the deaths of patients being treated for heart ailments, strokes and pneumonia in 12 hospitals studied by the Rand Corp." The blame for these deaths is placed on doctors' misdiagnosing a patient's ailments or improperly "treating" the symptoms.

The article opens with this statement and then goes on to say that hospital patients shouldn't be alarmed at these findings because over 95% of people admitted to hospitals don't die. It says we need to keep this in perspective - as if this is to relieve our worries.

Rather than suggesting, however, that people should avoid hospitals and doctor's treatments, the article states that a need for quality control mechanisms within hospitals exists. It says that every activity within a hospital needs to be very closely monitored in order for the patients to get quality care. Even if all activities are monitored, there'll still be doctor-caused deaths though as their treatments are deadly.

What Are We Living For?

We squander our health in search of wealth,
Then we squander our wealth to regain our health.
Obviously it's better to so live your health to save,
Than diligently chase mammon and end in a grave.

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Principal Writer - T. C. Fry

DEBUNKING THE MYTHS ABOUT ONIONS AND GARLIC

By T.C. Fry

As with many other so-called herbs, many myths have been fostered about onions, garlic and other members of this vegetable family, namely leeks, shallots, chives and scallions. This is not the extent of the family of vegetables containing mustard oil for that pungent oil is also in mustard greens, cress, radishes, turnips and other plants.

As with other herbs this family of vegetables is not treasured for its food content but for its so-called "curative values." And the factor present with alleged curative values is, specifically, mustard oil, an organic poison!

Just as tobacco is treasured for its organic poisons, notably the deadly narcotic, nicotine, so are members of the onion family prized for their mustard oil content. Without their mustard oil content they rank far down the ladder as a food worthy of the human dietary and, with their mustard oil content, they should be shunned altogether.

Consider some of the ill effects of mustard oil which many mistake for beneficial effects.

Mustard Oil Obnoxious To Normal People

There is no need to mention the irritant qualities of mustard oil-if you've ever peeled onions your eyes have readily made you aware of it-it occasions much irritation of the intestinal tract.

On the skin, mustard oil causes reddening and then blistering. The body protects itself against the anti-vital substance, mustard oil, by rushing an extraordinary supply of blood to the affected area. Serous blood is interposed between the layers of skin as a buffer against the injurious substance, hence the blister.

Mustard Oil Indigestible

The body can use only that which it can digest. Mustard oil is not digestible and cannot be broken down by the body. It readily permeates the whole body and is passed off through all the channels of elimination, that is, through the bowels

and skin but primarily through the bowels and skin but primarily through the kidneys and lungs. The ease with which mustard oil enters the body and permeates it has been demonstrated thusly: A crushed clove of garlic inserted between the foot and shoe usually occasions "garlic breath" in about half an hour. The lungs and other organs thusly eliminate mustard oil just as if it has been eaten in the first place. Anything that penetrates the body thusly is poisonous.

Onions and Garlic Cause Disease

Consistent eaters of members of the onion family are frequently "afflicted" with kidney problems. Hemoglobin content of the blood is lowered and, contrary to many myths, instead of "enriching" the blood, it is a contributory cause of anemia.

Laboratory experiments have demonstrated mutagenic potential in mustard oil. Cells are so poisoned by highly permeable mustard oil that the genetic encoding is seriously altered, thus making it possible to beget all sorts of variants from the human norm, i.e., mongoloids, hare lip and other forms of body defects. Other drugs will do this, too, but mustard oil is perhaps one of the most prevalently used drugs which can cause these and other peculiar defects.

In its raw state mustard oil is pungent, of strong repulsive odor and shunned by all with even minimal senses of taste and smell.

Onions and Garlic Impair Digestion

Not only is mustard oil indigestible but it is so irritating to the digestive system that it causes indigestion and impairs digestion. The digestive system rushes the contents of the stomach through its canals without proper digestion in an attempt to rid itself of the offending substance, mustard oil. Mucus is copiously secreted in the intestinal tract in an effort to surround the irritant and keep it out of contact with vital tissue.

Most types of bacteria succumb to mustard oil. That is to say, mustard oil is an anti-biotic. It destroys harmful and symbiotic bacteria alike though, to be sure, there are types of bacteria that can withstand mustard oil. Just as it is "against life" in the case of bacteria, it is likewise deleterious to human life.

The Argument of Good Taste is Fallacious

Some people treasure mustard products because they "taste good." This is not so much a recommendation of mustard oil as a reflection upon perverted taste.

Mustard oil is an irritant to the tastes as are, indeed, peppers (with capsicum), cloves, salt, vinegar and other condiments.

That our tastes have been so depraved that we treasure mustard oil as a stimulant no more commends onions are garlic to us than the fact that the alcoholic treasures the tastes of wines, beers, liquors, etc. or the tobacco addict treasures the taste of his nicotine or the gourmand treasures the taste of "ripe" (rotted) meats.

Those who are healthy and who have not perverted their taste buds abhor members of the mustard family. Try to give it to babies, calves, monkeys, etc. The taste argument is espoused by those who have really lost their sense of taste-those who have been perverted in their sensibilities.

It is doubtful that very few, even with perverted tastes, can eat garlic or onions in their raw state-except in conjunction with other foods that buffer and dilute their strong mustard oil content. In the cooked state the mustard oil is partially boiled off but so, too, are the nutrients thus destroyed in part or in whole, thus making onions and garlic injurious no matter how eaten.

It cannot be emphasized enough that mustard oil continually put into the body deteriorates it and causes disease of the kidneys, lungs and intestinal tract. Anything that pollutes the body causes diseases. It is also contributory to other pathologies and culminates in "heart failure," cancer, or other terminal affections.

I urge you to undertake the health regimen of Life Science. Reject all "herbs," condiments, drugs and other poisons. Rejuvenate your taste buds and they'll treasure food for its very own delicious flavours. You'll then enjoy food for their own sake and utterly deplore the malodorous and harmful excitants so many employ today.

GARLIC

Garlic is most often used to season foods because of its pungent flavour. A substance in garlic, called allicin, is responsible for its flavour and odor.

Allicin is an antibacterial agent and an extremely irritating liquid. It has a drug-like property which, like any other drug, destroys life. Antibacterial agents kill bacteria. Do we wish to kill bacteria? Certainly not! Bacteria are essential components to life and without them life would not continue.

An Anthelmintic and Rubefacient

According to Stedman's Medical Dictionary, the volatile oil from the bulb or entire plant of garlic is used as an anthelmintic and rubefacient. These are big words, but with big effects. We will take them one at a time.

An anthelmintic is an agent that destroys or expels intestinal worms. Now if one suspects that he or she has intestinal worms, one had better look very closely at his or her diet and lifestyle. And then run(don't walk) to their nearest Hygienic practitioner and go on a long fast! Taking an anthelmintic drug would not be the answer in any case as we cannot promote health by ingesting deadly poisons.

Any agent which is so poisonous as to cause immediate death to any other living organism should never be consumed. If this volatile oil, which is part of the garlic plant, is so powerful as to result in death of internal parasites and bacteria does it not stand to reason that it would also have a serious detrimental effect on the entire organism?

A rubefacient is an agent which results in reddening of the skin. In other words, as soon as the extracted oil from the garlic is applied to the skin, a redness will result. What does this mean? Redness indicates inflammation and the body's response to an irritating substance. The body attempts to isolate this invading substance so that it does not enter the bloodstream and create further problems for the body to deal with.

We may assume that if this reaction occurs when this oil is applied topically, extreme irritation must result when it comes in contact with the more delicate lining of the gastrointestinal tract.

We know that the body regards garlic as a poison and attempts to eliminate it as soon as possible. Anyone knows that when they ingest garlic (even a very minute quantity) the odor will remain on the breath and even the skin will smell of garlic. The body is eliminating this poison through the lungs and skin, which seem to be the most rapid and efficient routes.

Claimed Health Benefits

Many authors claim that garlic is a "miracle food" and recommend it to "cure" all types of ailments. Paavo Airola says, "Garlic is, indeed, a tremendously nutritious health food and a miraculous healing plant. It can truthfully be called the "king of the vegetable kingdom." In the book, *Herbal Medicine*, Dian Dincin Buchman says, "If garlic weren't so cheap, we would treasure it as if it were pure gold. Garlic draws out pain, helps in resisting a cold is an aid in combating hypertension, is a remarkable vermifuge (releases worms from the system), quiets the body, tranquilizes, can be directly applied to warts to whittle them down, can be used to (diluted in lots of water) to irrigate the colon to control amoebic dysentery, and can help treat mild cases of mononucleosis."

In other words, garlic is a powerful drug which results in the suppression of symptoms. But causes have not been removed and no healing has occurred. We have, in fact, halted the healing process when we suppress the symptoms.

Reduced Blood Pressure

Paavo Airola says that, "In my own clinical practice, I have treated many patients with high blood pressure; in most cases the blood pressure was reduced 20-30 mm, in one week by taking large amounts of garlic and garlic preparations."

This was a very dramatic drop in the blood pressure of this patient. What would cause this pressure to drop so quickly? Was it the 'miracle' preparation of garlic? No, garlic has no ability to act just as no drug has the property to act upon the body. But the body does respond to food and toxins which enter. Furthermore, the garlic does not have a mind of its own to treat specific symptoms. The body detects it as a poison and marshals all of its forces to deal with that poison. Meanwhile, other bodily functions are slowed or depressed while this energy is being directed toward the emergency at hand. If there were healing in the heart, the body would have to stop this process in order to deal with the poison. Continued consumption of large amounts of garlic would have a continued depressing effect on the heart and all the bodily organs and a state of enervation or exhaustion would occur. It may be especially enervating on the heart as opposed to another organ in persons who have high blood pressure because this may be their weakest organ. One should not palliate symptoms but remove the cause of disease.

Prevents Plaque Formation in Arteries

It is claimed that garlic prevents the formation of plaque in the arteries and thus helps prevent the development of arteriosclerosis and heart disease. Paavo Airola describes one experiment where one-fourth pound of butter at one time

was given to five healthy volunteers. Three hours after the volunteers had eaten the butter, their cholesterol levels had risen from an average of 221.4 to 237.4. Later, the same volunteers received the same amount of butter along with the juice of 50grams of garlic. This time, the cholesterol levels, instead of rising, went down from 228.7 to 212.7 in three hours. Now that really was a "miracle" - or was it?

Now we must recognize that no one consumes one fourth pound of butter in one sitting. The cholesterol level in the blood would naturally rise after such a meal. But this is where the cholesterol should be after the meal-in the blood. Excess is then eliminated (as much as possible). That is, under ordinary circumstances, the excess would be eliminated when the body is not so drastically overloaded.

When the volunteers were given garlic with the butter, blood cholesterol levels were reduced. Where did the fat go? Did it disappear? No, it is still in the body, but it is in the tissues and has not remained in the blood. Allicin makes the cells and tissues more permeable and substances enter which would not ordinarily enter.

Garlic also interferes with certain physiological processes. It is known to interfere with the synthesis or breakdown of lipids in the liver. This is why the cholesterol level of those ingesting garlic over a period of time is lower. However, the body synthesizes cholesterol in the liver for a reason and it is needed for certain cellular functions. Any agent which interferes with any normal bodily function is health destroying and not health-promoting.

The body has its own way of controlling the amount of cholesterol which is in the plasma. Cholesterol synthesis, as well as the hepatic mechanism for removing this steroid from the plasma, are both stimulated by thyroxin. Thyroxin is the hormone which is produced by the thyroid gland. This hormone plays a role in many metabolic activities besides control of cholesterol in the plasma as will be explained later. The output of thyroxin is controlled directly by the thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) secreted by the anterior pituitary. These mechanisms of checks and balances to keep all bodily actions and reactions in harmony and in balance.

A substance which is present in garlic as well as onions is mustard oil. Mustard oil is metabolically converted to thiocyanate in the body. This substance contributes to the formation of goiter by decreasing thyroxin synthesis in the thyroid gland. Thus, when garlic is eaten, thyroxin is decreased and therefore cholesterol synthesis is reduced.

Garlic then results in the interference of a very important homeostatic mechanism. The impairment of this mechanism does not have just one effect but many. Remember, the body works as unit and never as separate independent parts.

People think that they have discovered a wonder drug or a miracle food just because one symptom has vanished-in this case, elevated serum cholesterol. In reality, it is a grave deception-an illusion.

Quite often one hears that excessive lipids are the major causes of heart disease. This is not quite the truth. The real cause is the overloading of toxins created through the over-consumption of fats in the diet and in general, an unnatural diet.

Garlic Cures Anemia

It has been claimed that garlic extract has a beneficial effect in the treatment of anemia. This is far from being the truth. In fact, the use of garlic actually results in anemia. The red blood cells are actually destroyed by the allicin in garlic.

A Cure for Arthritis

It has been claimed that garlic exhibits some anti-inflammatory activity and is therefore effective in the treatment of arthritis.

One cannot get well by suppressing disease. We must remove the cause of disease and provide the conditions for health. Then the body will heal. Garlic undoubtedly does have some anti-inflammatory drug effects. However, this is not a good aspect but an adverse one. Inflammation should never be suppressed as it is a healing response without which even a mild infection could become fatal. To suppress this response by an anti-inflammatory agent is to suppress healing.

Garlic-A Body Detoxifier

How could any agent which is so poisonous and irritating be a detoxifier? It does, in fact, add toxins to the body. It is claimed that it detoxifies by stimulating the liver, the nervous system, and the circulation. This stimulating effect is in reality the body's response to an unwanted agent and the body's efforts to eliminate it as quickly as possible. The ingestion of this food as a stimulant will, according to the Law of Dual Effects, eventually depress these organs. Only much harm can come from this practice.

An Anticoagulant Agent

One of the so-called benefits of garlic is claimed to be its anti-coagulant factor. In other words, it inhibits blood clot formation. In truth, this is not a benefit but an undesirable factor. As we all know, if our blood did not clot, we would bleed to death from a slight wound.

In certain disease conditions, a thrombosis (blood clot) occurs in the blood vessels. But if given the proper conditions, the body is equipped to handle this also. Nature has its own anticoagulating factors. Heparin occurs naturally in the body tissues. It reduces the ability of blood to clot by blocking the change of prothrombin to thrombin. Thrombin is the enzyme responsible for the formation of fibrin which is the structural ingredient in blood clots.

If a blood clot occurs with a blood vessel, a system within the body called the fibrinolytic system digests the fibrin clots into a number of soluble fragments.

Pesticidal Properties

The following are just some of the pesticidal properties of garlic:

1. Causes 100% mortality in 5 species of mosquito larvae when used in such small doses as 200 parts per million.
2. Planting rows of garlic plants between rows of vegetables or flowers which are specifically vulnerable to insect attack, such as roses, tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage, etc. will prevent insect infestations and protect plants.
3. When used on dogs, garlic will kill ticks within 20-30 minutes.

Would you put a pesticide on your salad? We had better leave the garlic in the garden!

Onions As A Medicine

For years the health food crowd has been praising onions as a medicine, an herb endowed with many medicinal properties. It has been hailed as a miracle food by many who fail to distinguish between the qualities of food and medicine.

In an issue of *Science News* we learn that scientists at the University of Missouri and East Texas State University are beginning to study some of the chemicals in onions that have earned their reputation as a medicine.

It seems that onions contain propanethial S-Oxide and mustard oil among other things that irritate the human organism.

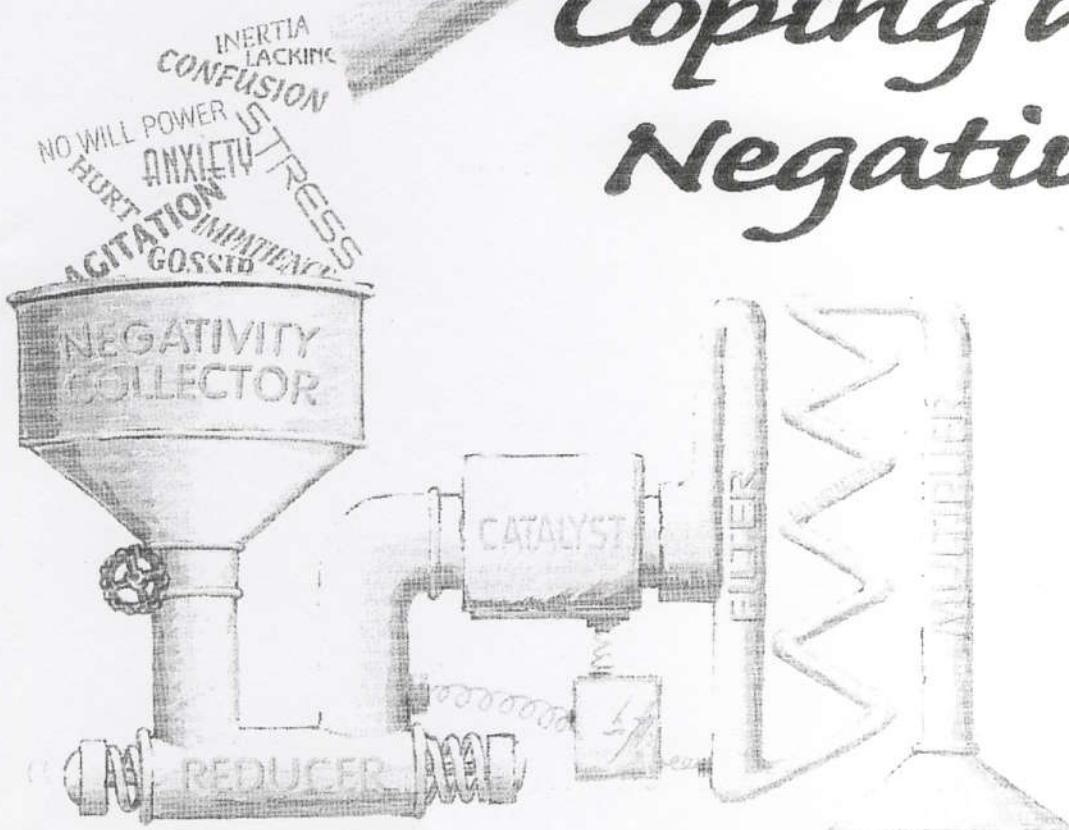
As you well know, the medical profession always seeks new drugs, for the old drugs keep going out of fashion. The world keeps seeking new cures, for the old ones never work. Now it seems onions will have their day on stage. But, as with all other drugs, they, too, will pass on. For our salvation does not lie in the irritants and poisons of petroleum, bacterial or plant derivatives but in living healthfully—that and nothing else.

“Onions doubtless injure the kidneys if taken habitually, as the mustard oil these contain, which is highly irritating, must be eliminated by these organs. They certainly should not constitute a part of the diet of a patient with kidney and bladder trouble. As they give to the breath a very offensive odor, cause offensive stools and produce bad body odor, it seems wise to avoid them at all times. I have seen at least one case in which the eating of onion, even in small quantity, was invariably followed by a distressing and painful urethritis-catarrhal inflammation of the lining of the urethra.”

Dr. Herbert M. Shelton

Sister Jayanti explains how to handle negativity within ourselves and when it comes from others.

Coping with Negativity



In this world there are so many questions about our future, the environment and population, the financial and political situation, distribution of resources.

You only have to pick up a newspaper to realise the world is in a horrendous state. It is easy to become negative. If I want to become negative I can find 1001 reasons to be so. If I allow all these factors to influence me then yes, it is as if 1000 guns were pointed at my head, so I feel extremely negative. Another factor is the people I am surrounded by; it is very easy to become influenced by their negativity. I may be influenced by people that I work with and sometimes it is their negativity attacking me, then it becomes difficult to

COOPERATION

TOLERANT

PLEASANT

PATIENT

WILL POWER

JOYFUL

PEACEFUL

HAPPINESS

EFFICIENT

***"if I can make sure that I remain my own master,
their negativity will flow over me and above me
and not influence me."***

maintain my balance, lightness and happiness because of their negative reactions and responses to everything, or it could be my negative response towards them. I might not like the way they talk to me or look at me, so there is a gradual build-up of feelings of being pressured from all directions. So how do I escape?

Even if I were to escape there will be another deep realisation - that the problem is not actually the world outside or the people I am with. If I spend a few moments in honest reflection I realise that whatever is going on inside of me is the root of my negativity. This probably won't bring joy or lightness and may even cause feelings of depression or heaviness because it means I have realised that the negativity is coming from inside. How do I cope with it? First of all, I can try to understand it, and by understanding and realising it I have gone a long way towards being able to put it right.

I understand that the period of history that civilisation is passing through now is a particularly dark one. But it cannot last forever. The condition of the world is horrific but it will change. After the darkness the light will come; night has to turn into day. This will happen in the passage of time; I cannot force the day to come, I cannot force the pace of it so I learn to be a detached observer. I can be part of the movements that will bring the day and not allow things to affect my own inner state of consciousness. This requires a bit of experimentation. I can draw on analogy here: an actor plays a role on stage and is totally involved in all that is going on. Someone in the audience is aware of everything on the stage also but has a different state of consciousness. I have to learn to be both in this game of life, I have to be an actor and an observer. I have to be able to step aside and look at things from a distance. This will bring faith and confidence in the fact that the darkness of night will pass and the light of day will come.

What about the negativity of other people? I know that if I am affected by the negativity of other people then I am going to be plunged into the cycle of actions, reactions and responses over which I have no control. But if I see them, hear them, respect them as human beings and individuals and I understand their point of view, I will not let myself be moved from my position of inner stability. If I can make sure that I remain my own master, their negativity will flow over me and above me and not influence me. I can ask myself what it is that I want and then move in the direction to reach that goal. I can develop the art of detachment, being friends and yet not allowing them to touch me. I can draw on another analogy here: think of the image of a

lotus flower. It is found in dirty, stagnant water yet the lotus has a waxy substance on its petals and nothing can touch the surface, the dirt just rolls off. I can create that layer of protection so my inner purity and stability remain unaffected by outside influences. Only in this way can I be true to myself. Otherwise I become a puppet of circumstances and situations that others have created and am no longer a master of my own feelings and destiny. I learn to have this protection through the experience of detachment and the awareness of God and this will bring a canopy of blessings influencing myself and others around me.

Is there a human being creating a shadow over you? Sometimes I find myself in a situation whereby I am reacting against someone and then it becomes more and more difficult and irritating to manage that individual. I am creating a huge burden for myself which will make it more difficult to live with myself, as well as the individual. If I want to create an environment of peace and love around me, my response of negativity towards anyone becomes extremely uncomfortable for me.

I must try not to allow this build-up of negativity to happen. If it's happened already, let me analyse the whole process and I will see that it is a subtle form of ego because I think that the way I think, the things I do and my understanding is all correct and the other person is wrong. So I am constantly criticising - this will mean a build-up of this negativity. Appreciate that it has come from my own ego and learn humility and respect, recognise the value of the individual and acknowledge the goodness in them.

Everyone has enormous value, I just have to have the right vision to be able to see it. When I start appreciating their value, I will realise the negativity is my own. Yes, they do things in a different way from me but there has to be variety so let me appreciate that. I cannot change them or control them; what I can do is change my attitude and my responses. If I continue to have the vision of love and respect for them I know that through this there is a very good possibility that I can influence them and help them in their change process. If I react against them I will not be able to influence them in the future because my reactions will have set up a barrier between us, thereby making communication very difficult. If I change my attitude in a genuine way - not from diplomacy or artificial courtesy but by seeing their eternal, original divine state - then with genuine respect a good level of communication will arise, and perhaps, at the right time, we can talk about things

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to change my vision completely."***

and a change can take place. But I must not allow this build-up of negativity to destroy communication with them; otherwise walls will have been built up which will be difficult to sort out later on.

Perhaps the most difficult thing for me to come to terms with is the negativity I feel about myself. I see my weaknesses, I see the difficulties I have created, I see the emotional debts I have accumulated and I wonder how it is ever going to be possible to deal with all of this. If I lose hope things will get difficult. Therefore, I do not allow the cycle of negativity to come into being. I do not lose love for myself or negative thoughts will pull me further and further down. As soon as I see that there is the possibility of this negative cycle beginning, I make sure I cut it at that point because cycles are powerful; one weak thought and another and another and I am trapped. If I cannot stop it before it begins, it ties me into a knot. Firstly I must see the cause and what needs to be done, and look at the future so I can prevent things from happening; then I take precautions so that it will not happen again. When I recognise myself as an eternal soul, I alter my vision of myself completely. I come back to the realisation of my own original form and feel the divine being that I truly am, and hope returns.

Coming into the awareness of this experience of my own immortality, of 'I' the soul, I am able to change my vision completely. I know that in this awareness of being a child of God, I have within myself the capacity for purity, peace and love. If I allow these qualities to emerge and spend a few minutes in silence each day, just letting my mind become detached from all the other things that it's usually caught up in, then I can value who I truly am. As this stage grows, the influence of this lasts longer each day. As I develop this awareness of self respect and self esteem and I move outside the cycle of negativity that has pulled me down, I make sure my vision, words and actions show this esteem. It is expressed in value and respect for others and from them I get the same response back.

Whilst I lacked esteem I sought support and confirmation from the outside world and usually if I am seeking something it is denied. Only in this state, where I am generating my own self respect within, can I earn respect from others. This is the way I can change my own negative image about

myself. When I learn to remove negativity I am drawn by the beauty that positivity can bring and, because I develop a liking for this, I learn to accept positivity and reject negativity. I therefore have a greater impact on the atmosphere around me and the people I am with.

Even one individual who comes into this awareness of making things positive, of learning to deal with things in a positive way, makes a great difference. The heaviness of the world has come about because of the accumulation of all our negative thoughts and actions and the only way we can transform and replace it is through the power of positivity. This enables us to bring about change, firstly in our environment, workplace, family and home which will inevitably reach out and change society. In the state of hopelessness and lack of courage, the forces of darkness grow heavier and stronger.



If I become aware that I am a child of God, a being of light, an instrument of light and I let the light of awareness, wisdom and truth change me, then I can be an instrument to bring light into the world around me. In the state of negativity there is a great deal of fear and ignorance. If I can understand this then the fear is reduced and gradually eliminated and there is greater understanding of the reasons for a negative state of the world and of my karmic connections with other individuals. By understanding all these things light has entered the picture, darkness is removed and I know what to do and how to do it. I have to bring light into the world and in this way darkness will not be able to influence me and I will be able to help remove the darkness of others.

Sister Jayanti is the Director of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University in the United Kingdom

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The Mind and Meditation

by Dr. David Fontana, author of *'The Meditators Handbook'*

One of the exercises I use with my students when discussing the nature of the mind is to ask them to close their eyes and stop thinking. After 20 seconds I ask them to open their eyes and tell me if they have succeeded. Usually none of them have. I use the same exercise in therapy and stress-management workshops, and the results are as before. No-one can manage to stop thinking for even 20 brief seconds. So I follow up with the question, "Who is in charge in there? Who is in charge within the mind, if you can't stop the flow of thoughts for even 20 seconds?"

The human mind is one of our biggest mysteries. In spite of over a century of psychological research, we still know very little about its nature and its functioning. We have some ideas on how to help people improve their powers of thinking, learning and remembering, and we have some insights into ways of treating neurotic and psychotic conditions, but we are still very much in the dark when it comes to knowing what the "mind" actually is, and how it produces thoughts, and indeed what thoughts themselves really are. Consciousness—the conscious activity of the mind—is one of the great unknowns facing science, and unconsciousness—the activity of mind at its deeper, subliminal level—is an even greater puzzle.

Yet the mind is the space in which we live. It is our immediate, moment-by-moment experience of life. The quantum physicist (like the ancient sages) even tells us that the mind is literally the co-creator of reality, turning the whirling mass of sub-atomic energies which constitute the physical world into an apparent solidity of shapes and colors. The mind is what makes us human, and if we go through life without understanding it, then however advanced our intelligence and however numerous our qualifications, we have not begun to unravel the mystery of our own identity.

The essential first step in coming to know our minds is to recognize that we each must do much of the work for ourselves. In the West there is a belief that science can solve all problems, including the nature of the mind, for us. Nothing could be further from the truth. Tibetan Buddhists in particular are hugely amused by this curious Western notion, and the way it tricks us into thinking that we can look outwards and study other peoples' minds in order to understand our own. Like all the great spiritual traditions, Tibetan Buddhism teaches us that the path to self-knowledge leads inwards, and that the prime purpose of all genuine psychological research must be to help us find and follow this path.

The path is, of course, the practice of meditation. Meditation is the supreme method of mind-exploration, allowing one level of our awareness to scrutinize other levels, and to witness their shifting, haphazard, impermanent nature. Meditation allows us to see how the mind produces a constant procession of mental events—thoughts, memories, feelings, hopes, aspirations, resentments, anxieties, pleasantries—like the play of images upon a screen. Left to itself, the mind is never still and as we look more closely we see that it is this lack of stillness, this agitation, that causes much of our unhappiness, drawing our attention continually to worries, to upsets and hurts, to tasks uncompleted, to embarrassments and social failures, to things we would like to have and things we would like to do, to dreams unrealized and promises unfulfilled. It is the mind's own agitation that prevents us from seeing into its true nature, and that comes between us and an experience of the inner meaning of what is to be alive.

There is a well-known Zen story that sums this up. One day a sage was walking in the country when a tiger sprang at him and chased him over the side of a cliff. Luckily he was able to break his fall by clutching a small shrub, and there he hung, above him the tiger and beneath him certain death on the rocks far below.

as the sage clung to the shrub, he noticed some mice nibbling away at its base, and realized it would soon be gnawed right through. Then he caught sight of a wild strawberry plant just within reach, picked the single strawberry growing there and savored its sweet taste...

In the story, the tiger at the top of the cliffs is the past, and the rocks at the bottom are the future. The mice nibbling away at the shrub are the passing of time, which inevitably one day will bring our earthly existence to a close. Yet the sage troubles himself with none of these things, and instead picks the wild strawberry, the symbol of life itself, and experiences to the full the beauty of its taste. His (or her) secret is the ability to be fully in touch with moment-by-moment experiences, rather than to obscure them with thoughts about past or future or the passage of time. The sage knows exactly what it means to be alive, and abides in that reality rather than in the confused chatter of the mind.

The sage is of course a great meditator, able to concentrate on the truth of existence even in the midst of great distractions. In all the various meditation systems taught by the great spiritual traditions of the world, it is this concentration that is the vital key. Through concentration, the mind becomes, as the Buddhists say, one pointed, focused clearly, gently but intently, upon whatever point of focus the meditator is using. This can be the breath, a mantra, a mandala, a Koan, a blank wall or any one of a whole range of possibilities, but the constant factor is that the mind remains concentrated and alert. If it wanders from the point of focus, it is brought patiently back time and time again, until over the weeks and months of frequent and regular practice it learns to rest in its own awareness.

When concentration is well-established in meditation, tranquility arises—a state of great inner peace which is the true nature of the mind itself—and out of tranquility arises insight, an awareness by the mind of its own eternal identity, of the unconditional love that lies at the heart of creation, and of the divine presence of God, by whatever name we may know Him or Her.

I have been privileged to receive teachings in a number of different meditation techniques. All have great strengths, and it would be improper to attempt comparisons between them. But let me just touch on three (there are many more) particular qualities of the Raja Yoga practice, as taught by the Brahma Kumaris. Firstly, in Raja Yoga there is the important recognition that thoughts themselves can be the point of focus, provided they are carefully controlled and pointed always in the direction of the inner light of the soul and its divine source. Raja Yoga uses thoughts gently to turn the mind away from identification with the body (body consciousness) and towards identification with the soul (soul-consciousness). Through the use of positive, well-chosen thoughts it continually reminds the meditator of his or her true nature, and subtly strengthens his or her resolve to abide fully within it.

By acknowledging from the start that it makes sense to put thoughts to good use within meditation, rather than to try and ignore their distraction, Raja Yoga can thus be a sure (and sometimes) quicker path to knowing and controlling the mind and to ultimate self realization than many other systems. No major meditation tradition with which I am acquainted actually tries to stop thoughts. It is recognized in all of them that thoughts are powerful things, and when properly used constitute a natural activity of the mind. But Raja Yoga lays particular emphasis on how this natural activity can be directed and encouraged as part of the meditation process itself.

A second quality of Raja Yoga meditation is that it is done with eyes open. It is not alone in this. In my experience all traditions prefer the eyes to remain open, even if only partially, although it is acknowledged that they can be closed if preferred (clearly one should eventually be able to meditate equally well with eyes open or closed, just as one should be able to meditate in any body position). But Raja Yoga makes a point of the fact that by keeping the eyes open it becomes easier to continue to control and direct the thoughts on rising from meditation and returning to the world (just as it is easier to do so if one meditates in a sitting position rather than lying down).

We live our waking lives with eyes open, and Raja Yoga teaches that meditation should be continuous activity of consciousness, a constant awareness of our true nature within the bustle and activity of the outside world, and not just within the stillness of the meditation hall.

And the third quality of Raja Yoga? In all traditions, the biblical instruction that "by their fruits so shall ye know them" is one of the most valuable guidelines we have. And the fruits of Raja Yoga meditation are plain to see and to taste. Let me name two of them, those supreme manifestations of the spirit: peace and unconditional love.

In a troubled world, these divine manifestations shine through the practitioners of Raja Yoga. One need not go to Mount Abu, the Brahma Kumaris Headquarters, to find these fruits. They are given as gifts at any Brahma Kumaris center. But it is in Mount Abu that one comes close to the source from which they arise. At Mount Abu, within the sweet soul of India, one lives in a continuous meditation of divine awareness, and is touched each moment by the boundless grace of God. At Mount Abu one sees the direct result of properly directed spiritual practice, and of the personal revelation to which it gives rise. More even than this, one sees the power of this spiritual practice to transform the physical world and all those with whom one comes into contact.

For the fruits of meditation manifest themselves not in withdrawal from the world, but in enlightened action within it. This action is living proof that by truly experiencing the peace and love that sustains one's inner life, one becomes a channel through which peace and love can flow freely into the hearts and minds of others, promoting them in turn to follow the inner path of soul consciousness.


For more information
on Raja Yoga Meditation and
Free Introductory Lessons
Please call the
Brahma Kumaris Center at

or visit www.bkwsu.com

Being Aware of the Self as a Soul Contrasted with Being Aware of the Self as a Body

CONSCIOUS OF THE SELF AS SOUL	CONSCIOUS OF THE SELF AS BODY
Self aware	Self forgetful
Self-control	Lack of self-control
Virtues are dominant	Vices are dominant
Introspective	Egocentric
Introverted	Extroverted
Detached observer	Caught up in what's happening
Intuitive	Gross
Responsive	Reactive, defensive
Patient & peaceful	Agitated, anxious, uptight
Pure	Influenced
Free, content with whatever happens	Attached
Emotionally independent	Emotionally dependent; needing approval
Able to forgive and forget	Bears grudges for a very long time
Can let go	Resentful
Will not escalate any situation	Revengeful
Non-violent	Angry, irritable, easily provoked
Rigorous self inventory	Denial of personal responsibility
"Your mistake is my mistake"	"My mistake is your mistake"
Attitude of brotherhood; no enemies	Prejudiced attitude, racist, misogynist
Flexible	Rigid
Generous	Miserly
Sweet natured	Surly
Respectful	Arrogant
Feeling of security and comfort	Feeling of insecurity and worry
Content with own self and own accomplishments; motivated by wisdom	Discontent, dissatisfied, always wanting more/better; motivated by short-term desires
Happy to see others progress	Easily becomes jealous and envious
Simplicity of living, dress, equipment	Surrounds self with many extra things
Independent: happy with or without	Dependent on physical support & systems
Clear ethical policy for the self	Faultfinding, critical of others' behavior
Lives according to own values	Acts against espoused values
Interacts with integrity: is the same inside & out	Deceives self and others in many ways
Apologizes for mistakes	Denies mistakes and never apologizes
Polite	Rude
Hospitable	Neglectful

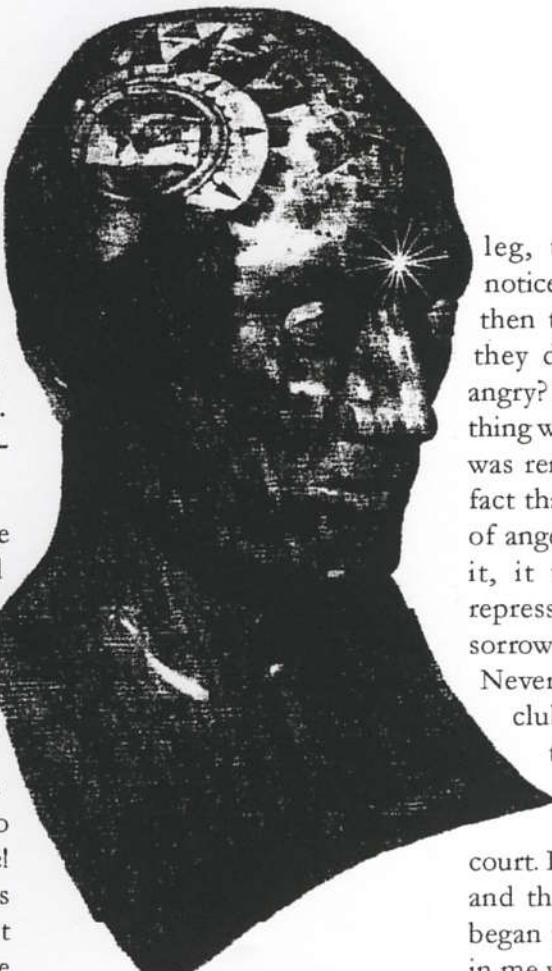
BODY or SOUL

A question of consciousness

Roger Cole explores the vital difference between soul and body

As a doctor, I had been practising regular meditation for eight years, since the time of my Kubler-Ross experience in 1984. The workshop with Kubler-Ross had changed me.

The most remarkable thing was the loss of anger. My temper had subsided completely. I felt inwardly calm. For instance ... consider the odd-sock syndrome. You get up for work. You're in a hurry. You open the drawer. And there they are - two socks, a red one and a blue one! You know that you put both pairs in the laundry basket. But somehow, somewhere they have gone forever. No amount of searching could solve the mystery. In the old days I could 'hit the roof' over such a tiny inconvenience. It was like having a powder keg inside. One minute cool, calm and collected; the next, an exploding incendiary device.



After Kubler-Ross these eruptions ceased completely. "A red and a blue sock," I'd now go. "Excellent, we'll start a new fashion!" And you know what? No one would notice. Even in a meeting where you cross first one

leg, then the next, no one notices. First they see a red sock, then they see a blue sock. But they don't notice. So why get angry? I said the most remarkable thing was this loss of anger. What was remarkable about it was the fact that it wasn't the expression of anger itself that freed me from it, it was the expression of repressed grief. In letting go of sorrow I was liberated from anger.

Never again would I throw golf clubs around (often further than I hit the ball, I might add!). Nor would I rant and rave on the tennis court. In fact my competitive edge and the need to impress others began to fade. The high achiever in me was dying.

Such experience, from my own life, has helped me to understand others. If someone is angry, I understand that they have experienced a loss of some sort. Whether in this life, or from the deeper past, there have been experiences of

sorrow. Experiences so painful, that they are repressed as the festering seeds of negative attitudes and emotions. Seeds that germinate destructive words and actions. Anger emerges and, in a strange way, it 'protects' the individual from the vulnerability of experiencing sorrow. There is a kind of 'safety' within it. It overcomes fear and exposure, acting like a shield. Eventually a habit is formed where anger is used in situations or circumstances where an individual is trying to keep his or her world constant, safe and under control. And it is extended or projected outwards, at times, to 'protect' others.

Once I began to grasp this I found I could forgive and tolerate more easily. What is there to forgive, when you know that someone acted against you under the influence of grief? To say, "I will never forgive him/her for that", is to remain angry yourself. You hold on to your sorrow in this way. It seems justified but actually the lack of forgiveness holds you into a relationship with that person and situation. And you will never be free until you let it go.

For me, forgiveness and tolerance emerged by understanding others through self-awareness. As it did so, I found myself more comfortable with people's emotions. Especially with grief, loss and separation. As the individual journeys the spiritual path, a need arises to break from the identity of the body. By this I mean to break from body-consciousness, to find the true, authentic self. Or soul. And to rediscover the original qualities and nature that were inherent to the soul, at the time of its purest expression. That is, before coming into the cycle of birth and death. Before experiencing attachment, separation and loss. Before anger. Before love and contentment became dependent on the external world.

To entertain this further, I will retreat away from the concept of having a soul or spirit that lives on after death. Instead I will emphasise that, in essence, the true identity actually is the soul. And the body, with its identity and relationships, is but a temporary vehicle for self. To consider, "I have a soul," also contains

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Or soul.

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the statement: "... but I am a body." To say, "I am a soul," is an accurate expression of identity, which contains the statement: "... and I have a body." A further reality of such awareness is the non-existence of death. As a soul, how can I die? I can enter or leave a body in 'birth' or 'death', but my subtle form of light cannot be extinguished. This is a matter of consciousness. As a body I live in the mortal coil. As soul I am eternal. Fearless. These are very deep aspects of faith... We will now consider the implications this has for true and false identity.

To begin with, at the time of birth, the child is given a name and adopts a gender. Both are reinforced regularly, by loving parents, who wish that the newborn should come to know itself as they do. As a boy or girl. And as a body. As the child grows in awareness he or she discovers the early trappings of body-consciousness. "You are Roger. These are your eyes. Here is your nose. Your ears. These are your arms. And your legs." Eyes, nose, ears, arms and legs. "Ah, so this is me! I know who I am. I'm a boy. And you know what ... girls are dumb!" Thus a child finds identity in its name and form. An identity that is already external to its soul or true self; and one that begins to separate and discriminate.

This is extended further as one begins to associate self with colour and culture. Black or white, European or Asian, French or German. As one does so, with increasing knowledge of the world around, there are further grounds for separation of self from others. And for forming affiliations to secure an identity of growing complexity. In this age, of the multicultural society, the fusion of race, religion and politics offers an opportunity for respect, equality and integration. It also means that children are confronted by apparent differences, relatively early in life when compared with my generation. This is where the attitudes and identity of the family unit, parents and culture play a significant part in moulding personal identity. If cultural rivalry exists there is likely to be early conflict and pain, leading to anger and hatred; which can be extended from an individual confrontation to a

cultural group as a whole. I was brought up in England at a time when there were relatively few coloured people in the society. In my final year of primary school, a black West Indian boy enrolled, from a new migrant family. We called him 'Bony', because he was skinny. He was the only black kid in the school. There was a group element in the school that gave Bony a hard time. "Bony is a nigger!" They chanted. Or they would 'take him off'. "Hey, nigger-boy. What yo' doin' there!" And worse. One child had even learnt the phrase ... "Black Bastard!" And he taught the others. Bony cried a lot when he started school with us. But he had two saving graces. The first was a pleasant personality. So he made friends, with people who liked him for who he was.

These children, by contrast, did not seem affected by the fact that he was coloured. They simply related to the nature of the individual, who resided in the form of a West Indian native. The second was that he was good at soccer. Actually better than the rest of us. Most of the antagonists in the school were soccer players. In fact soccer-player represented part of the extended (false) identity of those children. (Much of our school-yard rivalry was built around whether you supported Manchester United or Manchester City, which was generally inherited from your father.)

Gradually Bony's growing identity of soccer-player began to overcome the hurdle of being coloured. The original antagonists started to pick him first in their teams, as this would secure a fair chance of winning. In seeing him as more like themselves—as a soccer-player—that group now accepted him. What we are seeing here are some effects of body-consciousness in ten year-olds. Already it has brought about separation and discrimination. And chaos to the play-ground. The antagonists probably had role models within their family circles that influenced their attitudes. Such attitudes, be they from family or society, also fashion identity. They are passed on from parent to child. Their basis is multifactorial, including culture, social class, religion and politics.

Some of the hostility toward Bony emanated from fear. The protagonists, confronted by their unfamiliarity, reacted with malevolence. Each felt more secure in this response, which warded off the uncertainty of how to deal with a coloured boy. With their affiliation as a group, a peer structure was formed that identified enmity to be acceptable under the circumstances. On the other hand, the schoolchildren who took to Bony responded more to his personality than appearance. In accepting him they were less discriminating of his colour. They were also extending identity values from their own household influences. In the meantime, another division had taken place here. Those for Bony, and those against him. It was a clash of values ... a clash of identities. Sticking up for Bony was likely to lead to a fight, so we had a lot of fights going on at the time. Until the soccer-player finally emerged. Thank heavens he could play the game! Maybe in this, Bony has given us a clue to global co-operation. The need to discover a common and unifying identity.

From these early beginnings of the body-conscious identity, a sense of individuality evolves and ego emerges. I am not referring here to the Ego of some spiritual philosophies, where it is used synonymously with the higher-self or soul. I am referring to self-centredness. With ego comes desire to have or to possess for self. And with desire comes an increasingly complex identity, bringing increasingly complex needs. Through adolescent and adult years there are new roles and responsibilities, including work-roles and relationships. These are encompassed in an ever-expanding definition of self. Student, electrician, homemaker, secretary, lawyer, builder. Husband, wife, parent, uncle, grandmother. Interests and hobbies develop in accordance with special qualities or skills. And the identity grows. Golfer, gardener, hang-glider, artist, cook, soccer-player. Attitudes deepen and cultural identity strengthens. Money with the desire for material wealth and possessions may dominate life. New 'icons' of identity proliferate. A house. A car. Furnishings, sports

equipment, expensive clothes. The body, with its health and appearance, forms a major focus of concern for many. There seems an almost morbid fascination with having perfect looks or avoiding disease. You only have to browse through the magazines of any newsagent to confirm this. Slimming diets, vitamin supplements, cosmetics, fashions and so on.

In this age of the multicultural society the fusion of race, religions and politics offers an opportunity for respect, equality and integration.





As the complexity of this ego-identity expands, so too does its dependencies. Whoever you are, there is a common desire for peace of mind, contentment and happiness. There is also a universal need to be loved. As the identity becomes progressively externalised, its well-being needs stable circumstances and relationships. To feel valued, we need to be effective within our roles and responsibilities. For security, we are dependent on income, material wealth and possessiveness. For love, we have dependency on relationships. And for well-being we need physical health and a good appearance. All of this represents an expansion of the physical identity. With there being so many variables, contentment in the individual is under the constant threat of change. As a result negative attributes emerge. To ward off insecurity, arrogance is born that one can maintain control over an external world of circumstances and relationships. Greed emerges, in a lavish attempt for fulfilment through wealth, status or food. Attachment offers comfort, through possessiveness over people or objects. Lust develops for self-gratification or to satisfy strong and excessive desires.

In the preservation of a precarious identity, anger and blame are the last line of defence. They come into play when there is a threat to circumstances or relationships; or when self-gratification is obstructed. As I have already mentioned, reacting angrily has been learnt from previous experiences of loss. In the context here, it is also being used as a prophylaxis against further loss to the individual. And it will materialise whenever loss manifests again.

So this then is body-consciousness. Included in it are the negative attributes, or vices, that the individual employs to retain a sense of security. The five main ones are desire (lust), attachment, anger, greed and arrogance. In body-consciousness - or the deluded identity - an individual applies them to maintain control. This, in turn, will uphold internal peace and happiness, albeit temporarily. Within this is forgotten our true and original identity. That of the soul. Also forgotten is that peace and happiness are the natural attributes of this true identity. It is the soul that originally contained these qualities in their purest forms; when they were independent of external circumstances. It is the soul that lives, thinks, acts and experiences through the medium of the body; through the vehicle of the body. And it is the soul that 'loses' itself into body-consciousness.

After my Kiibler-Ross experience—my 'window' to the soul—I began to meditate in earnest. I began to make effort toward becoming, or being, soul-conscious. In the early days I was convinced that my soul was the pure part of me. And that the negative traits of my personality had nothing to do with it.

One day a medical colleague, who practised Raja Yoga, told me that the soul becomes impure. This comment permeated my contemplations. And I recalled my experience of soul-consciousness at the workshop. It followed catharsis, and exoneration from the paraphernalia and complexity of personality. The experience 'crashed' through all my protective shields, exposing the inner, true self. In doing so, it had brought about an encounter with my true and original identity. I realised concurrently that not only was this my original nature but it was also the destination of growth: That as I was, then so I shall become. Suddenly things began to make sense to me. The soul is the source of consciousness, however it is expressed. Under the influence of the body an illusion is created, and it is the soul that becomes body-conscious. Trapped in this delusion, layers of personality are lavished, like onion rings,

on the soul. Until it is completely hidden. And the diamond is flawed. Through the filters of a mistaken identity and acquired personality, it is the soul that gets angry. Or experiences jealousy or hatred. It is the soul that uses the body to attack another human being. And it is the soul that experiences loss or sorrow. It is also the soul that longs to be peaceful again.

As I began to understand these things I knew my colleague's statement to be true. Originally pure, through body-consciousness the soul becomes impure. And in the renewal of spiritual growth purity is returned.

Dr Roger Cole is a specialist physician trained in cancer medicine. He currently directs a Palliative Care Service in Australia. This is an extract from his forthcoming book *A Tapestry of Light*.

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Four-year-old recalls previous life!

By SP Singh in Ghaziabad, India
Friday, 01 August , 2003, 04:44

Believe it or not, a four year old child has fuelled discussion on re-birth. Aishwary, a resident of Chandner village in Ghaziabad, not only remembers his previous birth but also went to the place where he actually lived with his wife and children. They were too happy to receive their father, even though he happened to be a four year old child!

Aishwary has become cynosure of all eyes in Chandner. The re-birth story has been attracting curious visitors. Aishwary was born on January 26, 1999 in the family of one Mukesh Chauhan, a resident of village Chandner in Ghaziabad.

One day, the child told his father that he was an electrician and his name was Vir Pal. His father's name was Mathan Singh and mother was Chandrawati. They were residents of Kamalpur of Bulandshahr district. He had two brothers and two sisters. He was married to Rani. He had three children. He used to live in Sohna road, Faridabad. He used to work at Vinayak factory at Ballabgarh. He died of electrocution while working on July 27, 1997.

His family initially took his utterings casually. But after the repeated narration of his previous birth, his father informed the villagers of Kamalpur and asked them to verify the facts. As the villagers came, the child reportedly recognised them and discussed his previous birth in detail. The villagers endorsed his claim and told the child's family that his previous father Mathan Singh, now resides in DM colony, Bulandshahr. The present father of the child Aishwary took him to Kamalpur where the locals warmly greeted him. He recognised his uncle, aunt and his old friends.

The child also recognised his previous parents, brothers and sisters. Aishwary asked about his wife and children. The family took him to Faridabad where he met his wife and children.

Points for Meditation on God

1. *God is beautiful*
2. *God is wise*
3. *God is completely peaceful and silent*
4. *God is the giver of happiness and joy*
5. *God is omnipotent*
6. *God is loving*
7. *God is merciful and compassionate*
8. *God forgives all sins*
9. *God is the source of all values, virtues and qualities*
10. *God is your friend*
11. *God is the creator of heaven*
12. *God is light*
13. *God is your protector*
14. *God is immortal*
15. *God destroys evil*
16. *God is always with you*
17. *God fulfills your pure desires*
18. *God accepts you as you are*
19. *God is Truth*
20. *God is the comforter of your heart*

WHO AM I?

INTRODUCTION

Om Shanti - These two words represent the essence of the teachings of Raja Yoga. "Om" means "I am a Soul", and "Shanti" means "Peaceful". Hence, "I am a peaceful soul". Yet how long can I maintain being a peaceful soul? If I look back over the last 24 hours, is this what I have been?

Probably the situation has been a very different one. In my search for peaceful satisfaction in life, I have been trapped by peaceless-ness, which has influenced me so much that I have moved so far away from my natural consciousness of peace.

Through the teachings of Raja Yoga, the soul is able to achieve its natural state of peace very easily. The name 'Raja Yoga' has been used for a long time, many centuries in fact, although these teachings have only recently emerged, and are quite revolutionary. They explain very simply the most fundamental information of all: that of who I am and what I am.

Raja Yoga - can be defined in a number of ways. The word "Raja" means "supreme", "king" or "master" and the word "Yoga" means "union" "link" or "connection". Raja Yoga is the king of all yogas because through it I can become a ruler. But of what? Not of others, because that would not be beneficial. The power that I gain from practicing Raja Yoga meditation, is the power of control over my own mind, because it is my mind that has been creating sorrow and distress.

My Aim - therefore is to become the master of my own mind, even to master my own personality, and of course to be the master of the physical costume, my body.

The first subject of Raja Yoga is also the one that leads us to the last—that of not merely who I am, the soul, but of soul consciousness. The final stage of achievement through Raja Yoga, in which souls are free of all negative influences and have reached a state of perfection, is based entirely on this first lesson of soul consciousness.

THE PHYSICAL AND THE NON-PHYSICAL

Is there more to me than I see in the mirror? To see how there is more to me than an assembly of physical organs, we have first to define the 'Living' and the 'Non-Living', not merely in the biological sense, but in a deeper, spiritual context.

The Living - is that which has AWARENESS of its own EXISTENCE and also that which is able to create its own thoughts. These thoughts form the basis of feelings and emotions and only 'I the Living' am capable of these.

The Living is also that which has the ability to DISCERN and CHOOSE: Right from Wrong, Truth from Falsehood, Reality from Illusion.

I, the Living being, also have a unique personality which is totally incomparable to that of any other being. Individual uniqueness exists because every living being is carrying the full record of all its past experiences, which determines one's personality... that's why we observe that the personality of one person is quite different from that of another.

The Living is also that which has MEMORY. On the basis of this unique quality, a person can establish a relationship. As I remember meeting others, the relationship grows.

The Living is also that which DESIRES. These may be limited material ones, which tend to lead one soul into further material consciousness, or desires of the highest, altruistic, spiritual kind, that lead the soul back to its original state of spirituality. These desires form the motivation for all actions.

The Non-Living - If I relate the qualities of the Living to those of the Non-Living, I can see the vast difference between 'I the Living Being', and all the material objects around me.

So let me apply these criteria of the Living to my own physical body: Thinking of the body as a separate instrument, is there any part of it which is experiencing, judging or deciding? I can see that none of the physical organs, such as my hands or feet, eyes or ears, or even my head, have these faculties. There is something apart from these organs that does these things.

Let us take an example:- Whatever actions I perform, although I may use various instruments, I am totally separate from those instruments. For instance, if I use a knife with my hands to chop some tomatoes, throughout the operation, the knife makes no decisions. If I lose concentration, and cut my finger with the knife, neither my finger nor the knife became emotionally disturbed—they were purely instruments.

It is easy for me to see the knife as an instrument. But I'm so attached to these hands, that it is very difficult to dissociate myself from them and realize that they too are only instruments and really nothing more than this. I have had this pair of hands for as long as I have had this body, and I know they are the only pair I will get. So not only personal attachment to my hands, but to the whole of my physical body, is something so deep, so intense, that I have totally forgotten my real identity.

The Mistake - Ever since the moment when I came into this physical body, I have been labeled and put into compartments according to my physical classification. It has been instilled into my consciousness that 'You are a boy' or 'you are a girl' so that I grew up absolutely committed to this idea. And in fact if someone were to question this today, to question the identity of whether a person is a man or a woman, that person would probably consider it a very great insult. But is that what I am? Can I be accurately labeled 'young' or 'old', 'man' or 'woman', 'fair' or 'dark'? Is this any real indication of who I am?

Yet this is the mistake we have been making; not only have others made this mistake about me, putting me into a bodily compartment, but I have also been guilty of this same error. Not only have I put others into compartments, but I have done this to myself. I have totally identified myself with the body, and I have cut out all other possibilities; my consciousness has become quite restricted by the color, the age, the nationality, the religion, the culture, into which the BODY has been born.

THE REDISCOVERY OF "I"

I am the Living. I am not physical. I know I am not because I can experience things beyond physical limitation. My body cannot go back to childhood, but I can. Within a second, my mind can race back to the days of my youth. It can even race forward to the days of my probable old age. Past or future, both are equally easy for me to travel in. I travel through the three aspects of time without any hesitation at all. I am able to travel across any distance in a split-second, as my thoughts carry me across to America, to Australia, to India. Wherever there is a pull, my thoughts will take me there. And all this while my body has been seated in one specific place. So my body is physical, I am not physical; I am metaphysical, unhindered by the physical limitations of time or distance.

Just as I grew up with natural instincts such as eating, breathing etc. related to survival in a physical body, I also grew up with my own personality which, as has been mentioned, is absolutely exclusive to

me. My own subtle characteristics are quite different from even those of my physical parents, and so I must have gained this in an existence even before this one.

Also, I am definitely invisible. A mirror will only show me my bodily features: the shape of my face, the color of my eyes. But all these exterior things tell me very little about my real self. I, the being within this physical frame, am invisible. Now I can see all these things: that I am metaphysical, eternal, and invisible.

Form - What am I? When I dissociate myself from my physical costume, and search for my true identity, there is a strange detachment from the body, but also uncertainty, because I don't as yet fully know who I really am, and I'm leaving behind territory which was familiar. So let me go one step further, and think of myself in a non-physical form: a tiny point of light, a minute dot of invisible luminous energy. Can this really be true? Such a strange thought to have ... for so long I have thought of myself as female, or male, and now I am thinking of myself as a tiny dot, as light.

Let me examine this further... As you think deeply about this, you will become aware of yourself as a subtle being, a point of subtle energy, minute, yet full of power, so small it cannot be broken down any further.

Experience - Let me experiment with this...A dot is eternal, unique, unhindered by time and space; a point that has no geometrical dimensions. The dot of spiritual energy that I am is invisible; just pure energy. It is so peculiar to think of myself as this. And yet as I experiment with this concept of my deepest identity, and experience myself a point of light, located in the centre of the forehead, I have this incredible sensation of lightness, of freedom, of peace, of subtle power, because I am now aware I am not limited by the body.

Position —Where am I located?

I the soul am located in the centre of the forehead, near the organs of control for the body, and near the organs of communication with the physical world, since it is from here that I can exercise total control.

Performance - The brain is an instrument operating by means of electrical impulses. I, the soul, make a decision and the decision reaches the brain instantly. It is translated into activity via the entire body system. Stimuli come in through my senses, and reach the brain. From the brain, impulses reach "the soul". Thus from outside, I am stimulated into further thought, and possibly further action. The intellect makes the decision. I, the soul, am the controller, and the brain is the control room through which I operate.

The Third Eye - This is also where the third eye of wisdom has been shown, which was once thought to have existed physically. However it is nothing physical, because wisdom is not related to any particular part of the body. It is the soul that seeks wisdom, and the soul that retains wisdom. So when we speak, in spiritual terms, of the 'opening of the third eye', we are referring to the awakening of consciousness, a new awareness, or a soul consciousness.

People only stumble around at night when they cannot see. The eyes deceive the mind, and the intellect can only make a wrong decision when its knowledge is incomplete. Knowledge is like daylight, it opens the third eye, and the dark immediately becomes light. With my third eye open, I can see what I should be doing. Up to now, I have been using these two physical eyes, which can only see physical dimensions and nothing further. With my third eye I can see beyond the physical, and, being able to see, I can now become the complete master of my self.

DRIVER and VEHICLE

It will sound obvious to say that "only when a driver is fully conscious, can he use his vehicle accurately to take him to his destination". But if we now look at ourselves using this analogy, we can see clearly just what an enormous difference there is between being 'in control' and being asleep at the wheel.

The driver of a car can go anywhere, as long as he remembers what he is doing. If he is traveling along the road and suddenly loses concentration, allowing the mind to drift off even for a moment, he will plunge straight off the road. Accidents happen when people forget what they're doing.

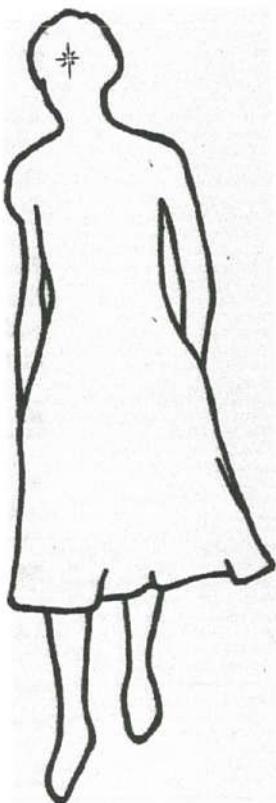
In exactly the same way, if someone loses their self-control, even for a moment, there is an accident (an outburst of great anger for instance) which causes sorrow for the self and sorrow for anyone else involved. Even onlookers who simply saw the accident are very upset by the damage done to the occupants of the vehicles.

So, awareness of and harmony between both the soul (the driver) and the body (its vehicle) is essential. Just as the driver must be aware of his vehicle and in harmony with it, the soul must be in total control of its body.



THE SOUL IS THE DRIVER
WITHIN THE VEHICLE,
THE BODY

And yet I have gone to sleep, I have not been aware, and so there have been many, many accidents. I have caused myself, and those around me, so much grief. But now with awareness, the driver wakes up, assumes control once more and begins to use his vehicle in the correct way.



Under Control - In the consciousness of "I, the soul", I can now see the benefits of using my senses to pick out the good from the bad, the useful from the useless, and translate it all into positive actions, which help others and elevate my own consciousness as well. Being aware of myself, I become the master of my physical senses.

It is so strange to realize that I have been using so little control over my senses, that my eyes and ears have been pulling my mind in different directions for years, making me literally into a slave of their every whim. It really is the situation of the cart before the horse, putting the body before the soul. Knowledge is power, and with this knowledge, I can re-establish my true state of sovereignty over the physical body.

HOW THE SOUL WORKS

Having seen, and experienced, the effect of forgetting who I am, let us examine what is happening inside this pin-point of light, this spark of consciousness, that is the soul. Each soul has three separate faculties.

As they are described, you will be able to see, not only how so many accidents have come about through lack of understanding, but also the method for gaining control once more.

Although we can give each faculty a different name, it is actually the same energy functioning on three different levels—these are: the MIND, the INTELLECT and the IMPRESSIONS.

The Mind - Through the mind, one IMAGINES, THINKS and FORMS IDEAS. Our thoughts are created in the mind. The thought process is the basis of all EMOTIONS, DESIRES and SENSATIONS. It is through this faculty that, in an instant, thought can reach anywhere, or re-live a past experience and produce happiness or sadness. The mind is a subtle organ which should not be confused with the heart, which is merely a physical organ that maintains blood circulation.

The Intellect - The intellect is then used to ASSESS thoughts. This is the faculty which UNDERSTANDS. Our capacity to understand is perhaps the single most crucial ability of all. With the deepening and broadening of the intellect, clear understanding of anything is possible.

In addition to understanding, the intellect REASONS, MEMORISES, DISCRIMINATES and TAKES DECISIONS. As with all faculties of the soul, it is subtle and spiritual, not physical, so it should not be confused with the brain. The brain is merely the physical focus of the nervous system and acts as the control panel of the soul. Through this physical control panel, "I, the soul" am able to regulate the functions of the different organs of my body. "I, the soul" am able to alter the pulse and respiration of my body, simply by reacting to an external situation, which I decide makes me overjoyed or very upset. So my intellect is not part of the physical brain, but the subtle faculty of judgment and understanding of "I, the soul".

THE CYCLIC PATTERN OF THOUGHT

The Impressions - Any action that has been performed leaves an impression on the soul. We will refer to impressions as "SANSKARAS", which is the precise Hindi word used. HABITS, EMOTIONAL TENDENCIES, TEMPERAMENTS, and PERSONALITY TRAITS are all sanskaras imprinted on the soul through each action it has performed. All the thoughts that occur in my mind are the direct result of my sanskaras. So my most fundamental feature as a soul, my personality, is determined by these sanskaras.

Each action I do either creates a sanskara (this is how a habit begins), or re-enforces an old one if the action is a repetition. This enables us to understand that the sanskaras contain the COMPLETE RECORD of all my mental and physical actions, i.e. all my experiences up to this moment.

Any thought that arises in my head will be due to the influence of one or more sanskaras. This makes it clear that I, and I alone, am responsible for my own thoughts, although we tend to deny this responsibility and blame external situations instead.

If an action is repeated often, it becomes a deep sanskara. Rather in the same way that the more one digs a hole, the deeper it gets and the more difficult it will be to erase all trace of it. Old habits die hard for this reason alone.

The Effect of Sanskaras on the Mind and Intellect - Imagine yourself as the detached observer of a car accident. A number of people will arrive on the scene, but although it is the same sight for each person, their different sanskaras will produce quite different reactions to the chaos.

For example, one person is examining the injured and I can see that he is a doctor. One is calmly questioning the onlookers and I can see that he is a policeman. Someone else is unhurriedly looking at the damaged vehicles, while another person is completely overwhelmed with emotion. The unhurried Who Am I?

one is a mechanic and I can see that the other probably has a relationship with one of the injured. The stimulus is the same, but their reactions are totally different. Different sanskaras lead to their different reactions.

Equally, I know from past experience that my own state of mind controls my thoughts. For instance, one day many things go wrong, and yet a great deal of inner strength enables me to remain calm and peaceful. On another day I may lack that stability and the slightest word out of place can annoy me. It wasn't the fault of the person who spoke, but my own state of being that created that reaction. My most fundamental feature as a soul—my personality—is determined by these sanskaras.

WHERE WE FIND OURSELVES TODAY

Gradually, as impure sanskaras were formed and were allowed to reinforce themselves through repetition, this instinctive voice gave way to the powerful influence of my physical senses.

The strong pull of these senses spurred my emotions to such a state that I overruled the decisions of my own intellect.

Consequently, when a similar situation now occurs, the weakened conscience has even less influence, and in due course it stops speaking altogether. As the conscience was ignored, ignorance inevitably followed.

And so we find ourselves often uncertain of separating right from wrong. We may even deny the very existence of right and wrong. The distinction between selfish and unselfish action has become clouded in the intellect, so that a state of amorality prevails.

As actions become progressively degraded, the search for happiness and fulfillment was only possible on a similarly degraded level. Without the knowledge of "I, the soul", body-consciousness became deeply ingrained as sanskaras and the soul has been forced to look for happiness on a material level.

Unable to find contentment from within the self, the soul has turned all its attention to pleasure derived from material sources and found itself in a void of inadequate, transitory experiences. In such a vulnerable position, the soul mentally grasps at any source of comfort. The level of motivation inevitably degrades into sense-gratification, which traps the soul into seeking greater pleasure to offset greater dissatisfaction.

This internal conflict has become a familiar scene throughout the world. The more we have turned our attention away from our true selves, the more we have become entangled in sorrow and frustration. The mind has become a slave to the senses, so that I am presently unable to control it.

THE FIRST STEP IN SOUL-CONSCIOUSNESS

The situation described in the previous section is definitely an unpleasant one, although very real for most people. But it needn't be like this at all. The first step is to awaken the intellect, my power of judgment, which is very simple:

A wild horse - With awareness of "I" as a soul, I am now awake to my real position in the world. In this conscious state I realize that it is me that is responsible for controlling my thoughts and disciplining my mind. The mind has been compared to a wild horse, one with such tremendous energy that it races round and round constantly, never stopping. Day and night it races on, even in my dreams it is still racing, and so little wonder that it has become tired. But even then it doesn't know how to calm itself. I can rest my body by sitting down, but my mind refuses to slow down. It only knows how to go on, not even aware of which direction it should take.

Realizing - The moment my intellect realizes I am non-physical, not a body but a focus of powerful energy within a body, I am able to use this power. With this awareness I have in my hands the reins with which to tame these wild horses, my thoughts. Once I am conscious of the waves, I can direct their flow; in this way there is none of the wastage that has made me so tired.

Choosing - I now become very selective. In this position of authority over my own desires, I am able to choose only those thoughts that will lead me to experience permanent happiness and contentment, instead of something that is transitory. In allowing only pure thoughts to pass into action, my impure sanskaras, that have caused so much upset, gradually weaken, giving way to pure ones I even reach a state in which my very thoughts are peaceful and deliberate, instead of tense and anxious.

Effect - At first there is some necessity for a deliberate control of the mind, but it leads to a situation where there is complete transformation. So it isn't merely an external force or discipline, but my very nature, my sanskaras, are being elevated. There comes a time when there are only pure elevated thoughts that bring me happiness and enable me to give happiness.

With my intellect awake, and each thought being evaluated before mistakes can occur, I am able to achieve actual changes in my life, when before it was impossible.

Developing a sanskara - But I have been body-conscious for so long, that the awareness "I the point of light" slips away again and again. Only with effort can I retain this consciousness, so I must develop the sanskara of teaching myself. Everyone around me will still see me as a body, and tell me I am a body, but I must tell myself that I am a peaceful soul, invisible, eternal, and I am simply using my body as an instrument. For as long as I can maintain this attitude, I will have complete freedom and all my actions done in this frame of mind will inevitably be accurate and positive.

As I see others I will begin to see them as souls too, as my brothers, and I will be able to establish a relationship of pure love and harmony, without any personality clashes of any description interfering at all. All this is only possible when I am seeing others not as male or female bodies, but as souls, non-physical like myself.

This is the stage of *Soul-Consciousness*: to remember this is what I am, and then use my vehicle with wisdom, seeing everything with the third eye of knowledge.

MEDITATION — TUNING OF THE INTELLECT

Let a little time be spent, now, in total silence, focusing the thoughts on the centre of the forehead, on the pinpoint of subtle light that is the real self and, in this state, being able to feel energy glowing and sparkling in that location. When next coming to a period of activity, it should then be possible to reach that consciousness within a few seconds and maintain it.

If possible, let the room be softly lit. Sit still for a few minutes in a comfortable, easy position; there is no need for strain. A number of thoughts are now suggested for the mind to follow. When at ease, these thoughts are allowed to flow peacefully through the mind and there is then the experience of soul-consciousness.

SUGGESTED THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

Turn your thoughts, your mind, to the self, the real I, the soul, a point of light... I, the soul, am a point of light ... a tiny point of energy ... I sit in the centre of my forehead ... This is the real I ... the real me... my physical body is but a costume which I, the living energy, use ... it exists for me to express my being ... through it I express my personality ... Now I realize my true identity ... I have unlocked my prison door ... I Who Am I?

am now free ... like a bird, I can fly once again...I now emerge my true nature, that of peace ... I experience that peace ... I become that peace ... I am that peace ... I experience my true nature ... that of light ... I become that light ... I am that light ... I experience my true nature—that of love ... I become that love ... I am that love ... Now power is being filled in the soul ... lightness and ease become my nature ... now I am no longer the slave but the master of this body ... I spread light and peace and purity into the world.

HELPFUL METHODS FOR THE DAY

Lightness - By seeing light, lightness is filled into the self. If, as you see others, you look at the soul (the light) at the centre of the forehead, you pass the day feeling light.

**Through Raja Yoga ... the Mind is controlled
... the Intellect is developed and elevated
... and, with Raja Yoga, the Sanskaras are purified and become sovereign.**

God as the Father and Mother

By Anthony Strano, Istanbul

God is not just energy. God is a conscious being and has the capacity to form relationships. One key relationship that God has with His creation is as the eternal Mother and Father. In this relationship are combined the eternal masculine and feminine principles which give life and sustenance.

The eternal Father, out of His love, creates new life. He has the power to renew and to reorder the universe. Through Truth He establishes harmony and wellbeing. Like the physical sun, the masculine principle is still, fixed, full of power radiating light. This constant light is the energy that creates life.

As the eternal Mother, God cares for and patiently nourishes with encouragement and selfless love. The eternal Feminine, like the physical earth, is ever giving, renewing and nurturing. God, as the eternal point of reference, is fixed in form and role, but His energy gently and powerfully awakens and sustains.

In reality, all human souls have the eternal principles of the Masculine and Feminine but, according to time, one is emphasized more than the other. God, the eternally incorporeal Soul, has these eternal principles within Himself also, but He never takes a physical form. God expresses the masculine and feminine qualities through subtle energy.

When the mind and heart are concentrated on God, then the human being can feel the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God—that is, the love, the power and the nourishment.

God's primary role is to create. The creating is characteristic of the eternal masculine principle, which is probably why in many religions God is referred to as the Father.

One aspect of His creating is to awaken His children from the deep sleep of forgetfulness. God sends energy and power in the form of pure thought, helping us to remember our original nature, peaceful and free. It has been said that the definition of truth is to remember what you have forgotten. So the Father awakens our remembrance so that we can become peaceful and free once again. This awakening is from the conscious limitation of the physical world. This allows us to perceive the horizon of the spiritual world.

God is the universal Father and Mother of all. He Himself is not a Hindu, a Christian, a Buddhist or a Muslim, for religions, though divinely inspired, are made in this world. God Himself is not a Christian, a yogi or a Buddhist, but He loves them equally and belongs to them all.

God has the power to belong to all because he loves and understands all. To the extent that He is powerful, He is gentle. True spiritual strength always demonstrates itself in gentleness and respect. God would never use force or impose His will. No relationship, especially one with God, can develop, or even really begin, if there is force, because force is violence. Any violence, whether against we or others, violates dignity.

The greatest example of such violation is when people or groups of people use force in the name of God to justify their own personal aims, and call it God's will or God's law. The use of violence, physical or emotional, against the will or choice of others, indicates not only lack of respect but overwhelming insecurity. To force another to believe what we believe, to do as we do, to think as we think, underlies our inability to be free and independent and to understand and respect ourselves.

The Father respects the eternal individuality of each of us. We are souls, each unique and valuable, and from a spiritual perspective we are equal. Whether we are men or women, whether we are from different cultures or countries, no matter what our religion, we are primarily spiritual beings. When we live with this vision of equality, it is very easy to appreciate, accept and encourage our differences.

God, as the eternal Mother, loves us unconditionally and, as the Mother especially, forgives. With forgiveness a child is encouraged to learn from mistakes and to go beyond them. If we identify with our mistakes or failures we

cannot learn from them. Instead we develop negative attitudes such as self-pity and guilt. We lose respect ourselves, and when the Father's unlimited love is not understood and we cannot forgive ourselves, we feel almost an obligation to suffer because we feel we don't deserve to be happy.

Our thoughts turn in on themselves and we begin to believe that, somehow, the more we suffer the worthier we become. We actually believe that God sends suffering to those He loves! This tangled thread of thought needs to be unraveled, for the sake of our own happiness and peace of mind. Our inheritance from God is happiness, not suffering. Real love cannot give suffering.

God is our loving Father and Mother and gives all the strength we need to overcome the effects of mistakes. However, until we take up the personal responsibility of examining and changing ourselves, we build an unconscious barrier against God's love—a love that can miraculously heal.

God is working for our happiness. Our Father is the Ocean of Happiness, not the Ocean of Sorrow. God's gift as the eternal Parent is to release us from suffering. Love gives us the strength. With the support of divine love we have no fear of mistakes and none of the pressure of expectations.

For many people, the negative image of God as the one who judges and punishes, interferes in their relationship with Him. This negative image can be very deep in many people, depending on their social tradition and upbringing. So, often, there is automatic rejection when the name 'God' is mentioned. The negative reactions usually center around words like 'punishment', 'hell', 'repentance', 'sin'. We require a new understanding and a new image of God. If we begin to think positively about God, we will find a new relationship with Him; a new way of understanding this supreme, loving being. We need to begin to understand that God as a Being of Eternal Goodness must hold positive qualities, not negative ones.

It is like our perception of people; if we hold on to a negative vision of them, if we keep this in our consciousness, then our relationship with them cannot improve and nothing will change. We keep confirming our own negative viewpoint because we see what we expect to see. Our preset conditioning gets stronger with each encounter and we cannot break out of the negative trap we've created. The relationship is doomed.

In order to change old attitudes, and to break from our conditioning, we need to step back from the past, from what we've been told and, most especially, from what we think we know. We need to be a little detached from ourselves. To make effective changes we should look for the positive in others and, of course, in ourselves. So many books have been written emphasizing the fact that self-healing and better relationships begin with our own, positive vision. We are exhorted to 'Look for the positive in everything'. This also should be our attitude towards God.

In silence we can gradually create a loving link with God. When we give time to silence and to reflection we can begin to feel God as the Father and Mother coming closer and closer. There is such sweetness in this experience that the soul begins to open like a flower in the warmth of the sun. This closeness, this communion with God, has been experienced by many people in different cultures throughout history. For example, Christ called God 'Abba' a word used by young children for their father expressing trust and confidence in His love. In India, the people say of God: 'You are the Mother, you are Father' and often God is called 'Baba', a term of great affection and regard.

God as the Father is Truth and as the Mother, Love. The combined qualities of these two roles create the imperishable sweetness of God. God is sweet—sweet in the sense of being gentle, kind and good. Such sweetness is a sign of spiritual power. Unfortunately, emphasis on 'repentance', 'hell' and 'punishment' have obliterated our sense of God's inherent goodness, His caring and His sweetness.

The Eight Powers

Power to WITHDRAW

The Power to WITHDRAW is about perspective. It gives clarity and coolness, as well as the ability to change a situation. To withdraw is to detach or step back from whatever the current situation is—feelings, emotions, confusion, interaction—whatever my potential reactions might be, to detach from ‘who I am’ at that given moment and withdraw from my ‘image’, my ‘personality’, my ‘body consciousness’ and sensory experiences. It is the power to be in the state of pure self in a moment.

It is the detachment from falsehood that is the power here. The power to become the pure point of consciousness, the real self—the being who plays the character. Detach from the scene, from the role I am playing, from the body I inhabit.

This power allows me to step away from my own story for a moment, from my pain, sorrow, needs and desires, not in order to deny, but to understand and to heal. This power enables me to be free from my own limitations when others are in need.

The Power to WITHDRAW, does not require one to leave the world and live out life in the barren mountains, but rather empowers you with detachment whilst living fully in the physical world. Whilst being threaded, connected with many other souls, you remain independent and clean in your singular identity. Virtues associated with this power are:

Silence

Detachment

Introspection

Concentration

Power to LET GO (also known as PACK UP)

This is the power to cut away everything that is destructive, useless and wasteful. It is the power to let go of all and hold nothing of the past in my heart, nor anything pointless of the future in my mind. It is the strength to say ‘no’ to negativity. Letting go requires courage, forgiveness, trust and purity. It means my life starts anew from this point onwards.

This power connects deeply with the Power to WITHDRAW. It requires me to LET GO of all limitations of identity—all that history says I am because of my gender, culture, race, social status, etc. and all that contemporary voices say I should be. It means letting go of what others expect of me and what I expect of others; letting go of all limited thinking and beliefs and identity. When I do LET GO of the expectations I have of myself based on what others/society expect, then I can have greater understanding and compassion for myself and for others.

In holding a vision of the new world, a new way of living together in harmony, this power compels me to LET GO of attachment to the ways of this world. I am asked to LET GO of attachment to my body and how it shapes my sense of self-worth. LET GO of the opinions of others. LET GO of ‘shoulds’ and ‘ought tos’. LET GO of behaviors which are destructive to myself and to others, and so consequently to myself. I also have to LET GO of what I think I know and who I think I am.

This is the power to choose a new life, a better way.

This power enables me to destroy anything that isn’t pure and true, using knowledge and detachment. When I possess the power of spiritual knowledge I can cut away all that is illusory, all that is limited. The power to LET GO is the power to LET GO of the dark—which I cling to from habit and want of knowing better, and it is the power that enables me to take hold of the light.

When people effectively use this power to ‘finish’ history and the way that history has shaped our characters, our world can change. As long as we carry in our psyche the imprint of dominance and exploitation, degradation and subservience, we will either dominate, submit or react—none of which brings about a new way, a better way. The virtues associated with this power are:

SelfRespect

Discipline

Positivity

Purity

Power to LOVE (also known as TOLERATE)

To truly love begins with loving the self, being my own mother and friend, tolerating the inconsistencies, the failings, seeing past all the limitations to LOVE myself, the pure soul completely. To LOVE fully and with a pure heart (without desire for return and without conditions) is the most difficult thing in the world to do.

We have all been tricked into thinking we were loving or being loved, by 'the illusion' of love, be it neediness, sex, dependency, safety, etc. To LOVE the self is the greatest need. All human beings are searching outside of themselves for love. We are looking to others, to material possessions to make us feel worthwhile. Very few can stand independently in the LOVE of God and the love of self. Even fewer are able to continually LOVE no matter the circumstances.

When you possess this Power, you become a protector of innocence - in the self and others. You will do whatever it takes to keep safe that innocence, like a mother protecting her innocent child, and this is an unassailable force. This is the power which keeps our world from total corruption and it is through the Power to Love that the world will be restored to right values.

Understanding

Patience

Acceptance

Fearlessness

Power to ACCOMMODATE

Whenever something—a situation, a person, an event—is awkward or out of kilter, you need the Power to ACCOMMODATE—to accommodate discomfort in your generous heart in order to make everything regain its sense or feeling of order. The Power to ACCOMMODATE is one of the great incognito powers, it is the power to soothe and comfort hearts. Everything that everyone does in their lives is in order to maintain comfort or attain contentment. With this power you see and sense what is needed and you make the necessary adjustments to ensure this state in yourself and in situations. Understanding that at this time most human beings live in constant discomfort, you can—through your connection with the Source Soul—the ultimate Comforter of Hearts, create a vibration of fullness, of 'nothing lacking', no hard edges. You acknowledge 'what is' and wrap it in a cocoon of acceptance.

Why we hate change is because it causes discomfort, it takes us out of our 'comfort zones'. Like a mother who restores comfort after a child's nightmare, we must learn to play this role on the wider stage of the world. During this historical time of cataclysmic change we must create for ourselves a state of continuing inner comfort to ACCOMMODATE changes on a personal level and to create comfort in the world wherever we find that no comfort exists. We must surreptitiously keep moving the boundaries of collective comfort zones ever wider by constantly exuding the vibrations of comfort in the midst of change. We must adjust the edges of limitation and to gently lead into the unlimited.

The result of the Power to ACCOMMODATE is a deep contentment. With this power we destroy all preferences and opinions based on ego, greed and attachment and the illusions they of reality create. This power nourishes, and nurtures as we accommodate many things and the result is the creation of feelings of softness and comfort.

Flexibility

Openness

Mercy

Gentleness

Power to KNOW (also known as DISCRIMINATE)

This is the power of using the intellect, the divine intellect. It is the art of consulting the most conscient self to understand the knowledge of truth and falsehood, right and wrong, reality and illusion, benefit and loss.

Using this power you are able to discern accurately. It is the power of clarity, allowing you to see with different eyes, hear with different ears. The Power to KNOW is about trusting our highest selves even in the face of opposing opinions. It is the power to listen to what is known deep within, what the highest self in relationship with the Supreme understands to be true.

When looking at options, this power stretches your vision across time. You are able to consider, whilst looking at the past, present and future, implications of each option and possibility in order to accurately assess what might be the best avenue of action. Remembering that often the best avenue is to take no action at all, your eternal identity as a soul ensures that you don't simply react. Reaction is the course of being controlled by external stimuli and is a disempowering state to adopt. The Power to KNOW is like a window that allows you to step out of the limited aspect of the present time, and as an observer, to see what the reality of the situation is.

The Power to KNOW also calls you to acknowledge that logic alone is not enough. It signals that you trust your intuitive powers, to allow the 'knowingness' beyond rational logic to speak its truth. Trust is a key word here and the more there is trust in the self, the more you will come to know when your sense of knowing is accurate.

Clarity

Simplicity

Accuracy

Trust

Power to DECIDE (also known as JUDGE)

This is the power of truth, the power to choose truth, to stand alone in that truth no matter what. It is intrinsically connected to the Power to KNOW, and takes much of its strength from that power. If the Power to KNOW has been

exercised well, then the Power to DECIDE flows more easily. However often people can know which is the best course of action, they can be absolutely certain, but they don't have the power to follow that knowing. They are bereft of the Power to DECIDE.

This power is also associated with the intellect, but unlike the Power to Discern, whose power is an introverted process, the Power to DECIDE manifests outwardly. A 'knowing' acted upon has impact in the world. The power to DECIDE follows no precedents. When you use it accurately, you make your own decisions. The one who uses this power is making a statement that *"I trust myself and am clear that my actions are right and will bring success. I am prepared to stand by my choices and to receive the consequences. I will stand alone if necessary. I believe I am acting correctly."*

This power is essential for women to develop. In a world that has traditionally empowered men as decision-makers and relegated women to followers or consulters of those decisions-makers, this power enables you to enjoy the freedom and power of personal spiritual truth—the ultimate experience.

Balance

Wisdom

Surrender

Faith

Power to FACE

The main attributes of this power are courage and honesty. In bringing back the original innocence of the self and of the world, there is a lot of de-demonizing which needs to occur. All the monsters of pretence and illusion which cover the soul and keep it from God and from its eternal innocence must be destroyed.

The Power to FACE means that nothing is too fearsome to handle. You are equipped with all the powers you need to face whatever comes—fears or overwhelming emotions, lack of self worth, attacks or denigration by others; or situations that seem impossible, insurmountable. Your Power to FACE provides all the weapons you need.

The Power to FACE is ruthless and does not in any way accommodate obstacles whether they be internal or external. It makes you completely fearless. Because you are fearless, you cannot and will not, be deceived by illusion. You stand on truth as your foundation and use knowledge and wisdom in your task.

Because this power sits opposite the Power to LOVE, the underlying drive here is love and so brings a balanced approach to dealing with the demons. The love though unconditional, is a detached love and won't be lured into any kind of dependency on personal weakness.

This power is not to be cajoled or negotiated with. This is the power to destroy all obstacles. No mercy is shown here.

With this power you will no longer accept or allow yourself to be made less because of any lack of value in our world. You stand strong and bold and yet is without ego, for you will not tolerate ego anymore than any other vice. As you return to your own innocence of spirit, your Power to FACE carries the world with you. You will never accept illusion or falsehood, ego, greed, lust, attachment, jealousy or anger in yourself and you will not support it in others. This power is the Power to Face evil in its most tempting forms and not be touched by it.

Courage

Confidence

Determination

Purpose

Power to COOPERATE

In many ways the Power to COOPERATE is the culmination of all powers. It requires you to be free from vice—ego, jealousy/envy, attachment, lust, anger, greed. You must be free from anything that would prevent you from being an instrument for a task. The Power to COOPERATE enables you to step in and contribute whatever is necessary in order to attain completion of a task.

Your detachment, your sense of knowing what is needed, your ability to be flexible and adjust to all situations and types of people—all enable you to be benevolent. This is the power of the 'extra hand' that is needed. You do the job and when it's over, you leave without the need to be praised or acknowledged. You are independently sure of your self worth and so do not require anyone's adulation or gratitude. You are solid in your self-respect whether you are praised or derided.

With this power, your motive for cooperating is always pure and you are not in anyway attached to the outcome of your contribution nor do you require ownership of the task at hand. Your treasure of wealth is absolute abundance and is overflowing. Whatever you have, you are happy to share and in the sharing you don't 'dole out', but rather allow people to take from you what they will.

Respect

Generosity
Honesty
Harmony

BUT HOW DO YOU MEDITATE?

Sister Jayanti describes the preparation and the process of Raja Yoga Meditation

Whilst I kept my head down, I could not see anything high. When I raised my head in self-respect, I saw the magnificence of the spiritual Sun.

The difference between "meditation" and "yoga" is that meditation is the thought process; the process of tuning in, and yoga is the result; the connection or union with the Source or Seed Soul.

Impact of time

The greatest impact on establishing powerful meditation is the attention we pay to our time generally. When we sit down to meditate it is the influence of our past activity that comes onto the

screen of the mind. If, throughout the day, we have maintained a spiritual consciousness, then our yoga will be powerful.

What do I have to pay attention to during my working day? Consciousness, interaction with others, reactions, state of mind, motives. If I ensure that I am not causing sorrow to anyone, at the moment of meditating my mind will be free, otherwise that sorrow comes to mind. Am I conscious of being a soul as I move and talk and work? Do I realise that the person I am talking to is a brother soul? Do I throw out useless worries and complaints about life? Do I waste valuable energy, thought power, time and action in sustaining a negative state of mind?

Meditation = Concentration

There are ways to prepare oneself before launching into meditation. Refresh the consciousness by reading spiritual knowledge. Write positive, spiritual points to bring focus.

When we bring stillness to our movements in this way, our thoughts are directed towards soul-consciousness, towards reaching the point where all that I am aware of is that I am a soul, a point of consciousness within the body. This is the first level of yoga. At this stage spend a little time in "om shanti"; "om" means "I, the pure soul", "shanti" means "deep peace". Soul-consciousness is about being in touch with our own original, true, spiritual qualities, such as peace and purity.

What do you do if thoughts stray? Don't be aggressive or angry with yourself, after all, the door to such waste thoughts has been kept open for so long that they feel most welcome to keep visiting you. The important thing is not to then close the door on high, spiritual thoughts, associating meditation with labour and stress instead of a cure for stress. Let it be like this: I notice my thoughts straying, I gather those stray thoughts into a bubble, and blow the bubble out of the window, letting it float far away into the sky. I then invite the good thoughts back into the house. I continue my meditation where I left off. The maxim, "ignore it and it'll go away," is also appropriate. I simply get on with the sweetness of soul-consciousness. How lovely it is to be a soul. Think about it yet further, to live it is to be in great happiness.

When you do get in touch with your own original state, it filters through into your actions, into your life. There is happiness in the awareness of your own original qualities. There is love for that true self.

Whilst I kept my head down, I could not see anything high. When I raised my head in self-respect, I saw the magnificence of the spiritual Sun. Having got in touch with yourself - om shanti - you can go to the Seed Soul and experience a deep connection, of peace, of love, as a right, for a child has a right from its very birth to all that belongs to its father. This deep connection is Raja Yoga; the highest yoga attainable, the link (yoga) with the Master Soul (Rai). You first touch your own qualities, thereby raising yourself up to that level whereby you can see the qualities of the Seed Soul.

Having reached that Soul, then you can either start a conversation with Him/ Her or simply let your mind be quiet. If it can be quiet, let it. But it is not a lesser choice to converse with the Source. Through conversation, you discover relationship. "Who are You to me? You are my ..." The value of silence is that the Seed Soul becomes very real to me. I feel His/Her peace. I feel His/Her love. I feel His/Her bliss.

Sometimes it is asked: "Am I having good yoga? What is good or bad yoga?" What I would describe as bad yoga is when I have let my thoughts scatter. In contrast, if in meditation, my thoughts are based on truth, knowledge, that would be called good yoga. If I have been able to fill myself with the qualities of the Seed Soul, that would be called extremely good yoga.

If I fill myself so much that I can share these qualities with the world, that is the best yoga of all.

By experimenting in the laboratory of silence - no external words, no internal scattered thoughts - a soul can see the truth of being a soul. Experiment with soul-consciousness and experiment with your consciousness of the Source too.

Location

A picture cannot exist without a background. Whenever someone says something to me, I search for the context or background to which that comment refers. Then I can understand what is being said and how to respond. It's the same with the background, e.g. the location, because there are other backgrounds of the Seed Soul too.

Sitting in meditation, let your mind visualise a place which is infinite, in complete and utter silence, glowing in the spiritual colour of golden reddish light, a place that has never seen badness - eternally pure. Then you get the sense, "I don't belong down here. I belong there." Home is a place that draws a soul. Though the soul is present in the physical world the mind has gone beyond. Experiment with such mental travellings.

Do it

External disciplines are important. If I say, "I will meditate when I can", I never will. Other matters will always take priority. But what time of the day can I be certain to have to myself, when no-one else will disturb me, telephone me, call on me? The only permanent and reliable time for me is the early morning - when others are asleep. And that's the purest time when the vibrations are less convoluted.

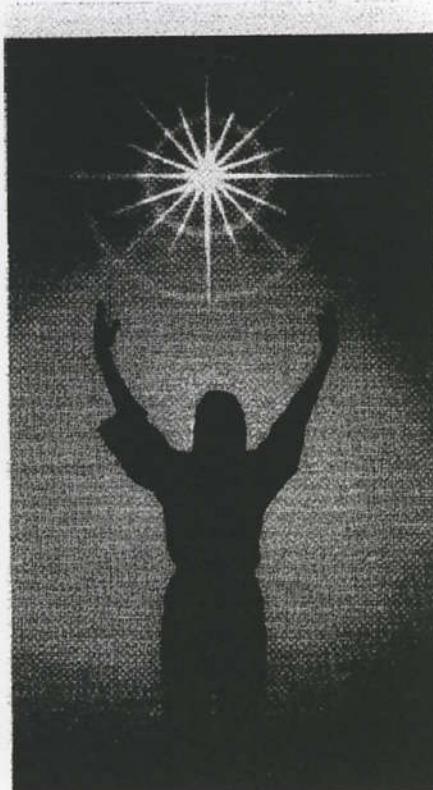
The only catch is possibly - well, you can guess it - sleepiness! But we can become accustomed to early rising and find that the yoga compensates for less sleep, even giving a type of energy that sleep cannot provide. Drink caffeine, if you must, to help get you to yoga.

Morning yoga sets you up for the day, with strength, clarity of mind, power of soul-consciousness, lightness of mind.

Who will come to you at that time?
Only the Source!

Om Shanti

Sister Jayanti is the Director of the Brahma Kumaris in London





Roads to Relaxation

Mike George offers visualisation and meditation as pathways back to a more relaxed lifestyle.

PERSONAL MYTHOLOGIES

When we are children,

our developing picture of self is determined by what we hear about ourselves: "What a beautiful girl," or "He is very shy." The culture of home is the foundation of our self-image. Our parents' and friends' comments about us form the first labels that we give ourselves, and help to provide the basis for our outlook and behaviour.

As a result, we each have an internal committee of voices. Whenever we want to try something new or difficult, we subliminally recall the legacy of opinions, "Don't do that, you might hurt yourself," "I wouldn't try anything so ambitious," and so on. Such simple statements fashion our expectations of ourselves, and can make us fear the consequences of our action.

We not only listen to such voices; we also embellish them. We create myths about ourselves that explain our behaviour. A parental comment such as "He's very shy" can become "My parents favoured my brother and neglected me, so I have always been very shy." Or, "She finds it very hard to make friends" becomes "I can't form relationships because my parents always quarrelled." We use our mythologies to gain sympathy and affection: as reasons to opt out of projects that we find daunting; and to explain our failures. But our anthology of mythical excuses serves only to perpetuate self-doubt.

To be totally honest about ourselves, avoiding the temptation to mythologise is difficult, but it is the only route to self-understanding. Self-knowledge lies deep within, at our 'centre'. Meditation is the one route there, stilling the mind to let us focus on our inner needs and unabridged thoughts. Visualisation exercises, such as the one below, can also help free the mind of illusion and encourage clear insights into positive aspects of the self.

A VOYAGE TO THE CENTRE OF THE SELF

Personal understanding lies far beneath the surface of the self, a great distance from the clamouring voices of labels and personal mythologies. We might call this place our 'centre', the true core of who we are. This visualisation will help you to locate your own place of truth.

1. *Sit comfortably in a quiet room. Close your eyes and breathe deeply for a few moments. Concentrate on stilling your mind.*
2. *Imagine that you are floating in a warm ocean. Sunlight falls on your shoulders. You drift without effort.*
3. *Now you are gently swimming beneath the ocean surface, feeling increasingly calmed by the water's caresses. Just beneath you, the wreck of a galleon is visible. This is the outer shell of your psyche.*
4. *As you approach, you see that the ship's woodwork has rotted. You swim in through an opening. The further into the galleon you swim, the cleaner and brighter the water becomes.*

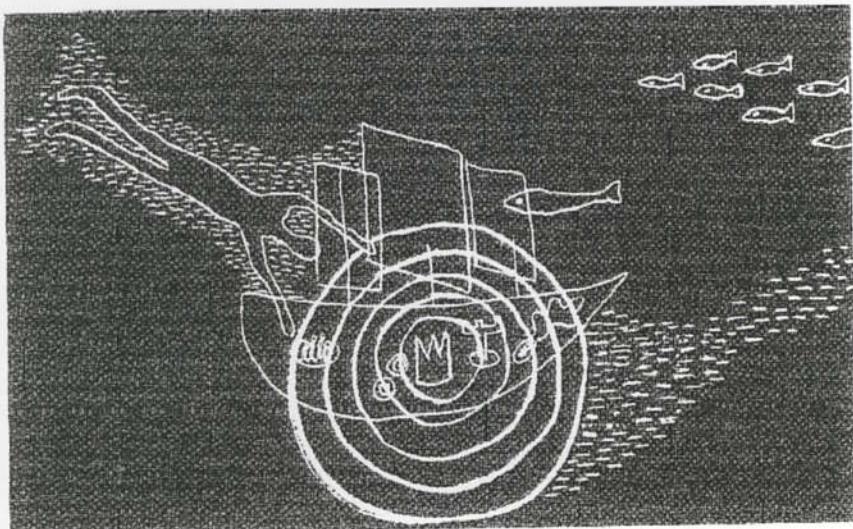
5. *At the centre of the ship, unspoilt, lies a chest of precious objects, each one an aspect of your true self. Spend time re-discovering yourself. Pick up each object and reflect on its meaning. A coin might represent your honesty, a chalice your generosity. Swim back to the surface, relaxed in the knowledge of your worth.*

INNER SPACE

There is nothing mysterious or difficult about meditation. Many people believe that they would be unable to practise the art, because it would require the dedication and spirituality of an Eastern ascetic. Anything that we perceive as difficult may of course, turn out to be difficult, in a self-fulfilling prophecy. But meditation is really a sophisticated version of something that many of us do quite naturally from time to time - that is, become lost in thought. If we applied ourselves to the discipline, we would undoubtedly become as spiritually effective as a Buddhist monk. However, we can achieve beneficial levels of relaxation without going that far.

Like a desktop, the mind can become strewn with so much information and detritus that we are unable to find our way to the bottom of the disorder and so function effectively. We clutter our minds with experiences, worries, regret, negative self-images, memories, actions, reactions, emotions, analyses, hopes and fears - all in a protean stream of consciousness. Every time we do or say anything, or have anything done or said to us, we add another distraction, and our true self gets buried deeper and deeper.

Meditation is intended not to stop us thinking altogether (this really would be extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible), but to help us to order the confusion. Through meditation we can begin to focus upon constructive thoughts, and start to discover positive images and ideas of



ourselves. When we become lost in thought, we tend to daydream about a better future; or we might reflect upon a problem in order to prompt a range of possible solutions. Meditation aims to do the same thing, but in a more purposeful way: it maintains its focus on the subject, whereas a daydream might wander off towards a random target. By relaxing our minds through meditation, we can clear our desks and experience a renewed sense of self. This will bring with it identity, clarity and freedom, in a cascade of revolutionary thinking.

Knowing who we really are is at the heart of our potential for contentment. If that essence of our identity is based on other people's opinions, or on the pressures that others place upon us, then our self-esteem runs out of our control, rising or falling at the will or whim of others, like a thread of mercury in a thermometer.

Meditation can gently steer us away from this emotional dependency to put us back in charge of our own lives. By helping to restore a true relationship with ourselves, it gives us a firm footing on which to establish strong and equitable relationships with other people.

Such is our addiction to action, we may find ourselves saying that we don't have time for inward reflection - or that it is self-indulgent. We feel that we will lose our dignified sense of purpose if we are not constantly doing - helping, building, improving, moving forward. However, these are precisely the circumstances when our real needs become obscured, blurred by our own momentum. Time spent organising our inner self is time gained for clarity and fulfilment.

Many of us hardly spend a single minute thinking about ourselves - or, if we do, our thoughts may tend to be selfishly calculating. Meditation is unselfish, as its aims are to be better, or purify ourselves so that we may live happier, healthier lives, which impact upon all those around us.

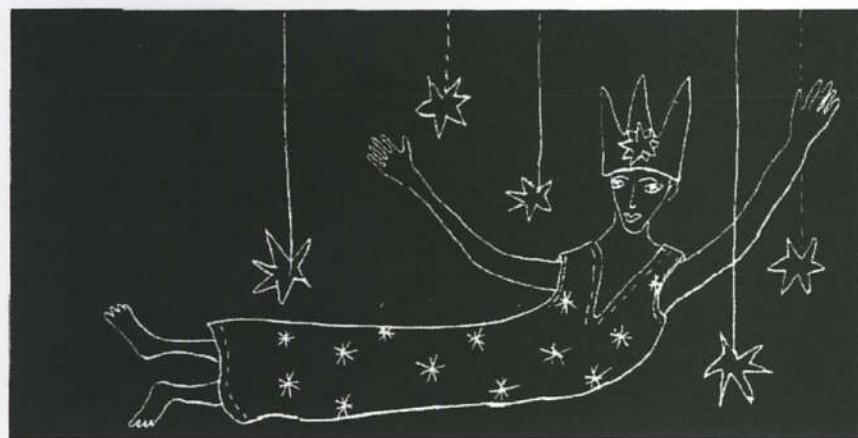
As a first step towards meditation, practise the exercise which follows - a basic visualisation, in which the mind imagines a vivid inward journey. Words or syllables may be used in meditation (a mantra

may be chanted to still the mind), but there are definite benefits in using visual techniques, which may more readily solve the problem of what the mind should do if it is not to flit randomly over our preoccupations.

Meditation has been practised for thousands of years in Eastern cultures. It has taken different forms, but its essence remains the same - to find inner peace so that our adventures in the world are calm, contented and purposeful.

2. Create a point of consciousness. Focus on the centre of your forehead. Think of this point as a radiant star. This will transmit positive energy, making you feel good about yourself.

3. Affirm the positive energy through positive thoughts



A FIVE-STEP MEDITATION

A first step in meditation is to be able to introspect without fear or compromise. This exercise takes you through an open door into the vast labyrinth of your unconscious so that you may begin to appreciate and love who you are. Sit comfortably in a pleasant room and close your eyes (You may like to recite the exercise onto a tape so that you don't have to remember it.)

1. Withdraw energy mentally from everything around you - not to reject or resist, but to turn your attention inwards. You might think of how a tortoise withdraws into its shell to detach itself from the outside world, but carrying the experience of the world with it inside its shelter.

and images about yourself, such as "I am a conscious being" or "I am a peaceful soul."

4. Focus your energy on peace and let this become the object of your meditation.

As you focus, you will give peace life, turning a thought into a feeling.

5. Experience this feeling by 'watering' it with your full attention. This is the beginning of self-realisation through meditation.

Extracted from *Learn to Relax* by Mike George, Illustration by Trina Dalziel. Published by Mitchell Beazley in association with Duncan Baird Publishers in the UK and Chronicle in the USA.

Spiritual Language (based on Silence)

Words can be treacherous. Ever notice how most people don't remember what you say? They remember the unspoken languages of your eyes and vibrations.

There are three different languages that do not depend on words:

- The language of the eyes
- The language of feelings and vibrations
- The language of thoughts (telepathy)

When you turn inside these languages become more powerful in terms of sending and receiving messages. The language of thought is the most powerful of the three, but the mind and intellect have to be kept clear and silent in order to hear what others are communicating without words or between them. It takes silence to be able to listen accurately. If we have waste thoughts or imagination mixed in, it is hard for us to make accurate decisions about the information we are receiving. Silence empowers the mind which can then make clear judgements.

The language of feelings and vibrations is also very important. When you speak good things but don't feel them, there is very little power in what you say. Only when your thoughts and feelings are the same as your words do your words have power. Even when you are silent, if you are feeling good and having good thoughts, you can communicate very powerfully.

Pure feelings are very powerful and can enable others to experience the attainment of peace and love. Pure desires and pure feelings are the foundation of serving others. If your feelings are pure, your thoughts will be powerful. However, if you keep your mind and intellect very busy with small matters, your thoughts and feelings will not be able to serve others effectively or speedily. For this you should pay special attention to pausing in between things for one or two moments to experience solitude and stability. If you have love for solitude you will be able to concentrate the subtle powers of the mind and intellect and use them

whenever and wherever you choose. Your pure feelings can even enable others to develop loving feelings for God. They can be an instrument to enable someone to experience love or peace even when he or she is far away. The basis of this is the accumulation of the power of peace within you. If you serve others with your pure thoughts and pure feelings, you will give them practical experiences and save time, money and use less facilities.

The fruit of your pure feelings of love is the transformation of the souls of the world. There should be benefit for the distressed souls of the world, so as you walk, move and carry out your tasks, keep pure feelings of love in your mind, feelings of benefit for everyone based on the knowledge that they are your spiritual brothers and sisters, members of one human family. The service that you do through pure feelings should take place at the same time as you are serving through words. This subtle service should be carried out for a long period of time.

The easy method of being a world server is to do service through the mind. Through the service of the mind one can be stationed in one place and do service in all four directions. Whereas through speech and actions one would have to go to a particular place, you can do service through the mind wherever you are sitting.

Special Situations

When you are in a peaceless atmosphere, think of the ocean. There is a great deal of noise and upheaval superficially on the surface of the ocean and at its edges (waves) but there is no upheaval in the depths of the ocean. So imagine that you are in the depths of the ocean. You are aware of the noise of the waves up above and yet you are so deep in the depths of the ocean that you are detached from the turbulence. When you go into the depths of the Ocean of Silence, upheavals finish and you become stable.

The Nature of Respect

Anthony Strano reflects on an increasingly scarce human virtue



Valuing one's own existence and the existence of others, as they are, is respect. True respect is not connected to a person's social position or role, nor simply to their capacities or talents, it is directly related to the uniqueness which they contribute to life. So to respect someone is to give them a space to be, and a space within my heart, appreciating their value as a unique human actor on this world stage.

To value or respect myself involves a process of acceptance and evaluation of my self, as I am and as I would like to be. But, for that to take place successfully, without fear or pressure, there is a need to see myself from a spiritual perspective, for that is the point of reality from which it is easy to

develop my specialities and diminish my weaknesses without negativity towards myself or becoming egocentric.

In ancient Greece, one of the greatest spiritual directives was "know yourself"; this did not simply refer to name, form or

position but to know the innate, non physical aspect of being.

Respect comes when there is faith in the self, a faith which gives internal peace and stability - very creative and necessary assets in the modern day. Where there is such faith, I am automatically freed

From fear, jealousy or irritation despite another's difference. Where there is no respect for the self, any difference creates intolerance and chaos, whereas for those with self-respect, difference offers means to appreciate others' roles and significance - it is a basis for harmony and unity.

Humanity is in dire need of respect, for both the self and others. Then communication could happen at a deep and fulfilling level. Talking is not communicating. Communication is the art of creating and extending friendship; an art quite lost today because of firstly, our dependence on pseudo communication techniques, and secondly, our inability to move beyond ourselves and listen to another; we are often too busy to stop, be quiet and listen; in fact we do not even listen to ourselves but rush, work, talk and become overloaded by a jumble of noise and relationships which do not permit communication.

The purest fruit of genuine communication is love. Love listens, understands and heals, but only if it is clean, non-possessive, unattached and unconditional. Those who respect themselves know how to love. They do not think about the how of it, as it is as natural to them as the rays of light emanating from the sun.

One who genuinely loves, shares himself without losing, without compromising and without imposing, since one can love properly when there is completeness within. This completeness, or harmony of being, is called self-respect and people arrive at such a state when they accept to learn and change themselves for the better. Of

Through silence we are thus able to come close to ourselves, to nature and to the universal being:

course, only those who realize the necessity for personal change can perform this miracle. This miracle

within is the achievement of a spiritual consciousness which enables all things and

all people, maintaining my innate dignity and purity.

egoless enough to realise that there are laws above mankind which are the standards of life and in turn protect human life.

It is good to realise that we do not know it all; that there are still things to discover; we cannot own the earth or the sky or sea; they are ours when we respect them and do not seek ownership. In fact, everything comes close to us, whether people or nature, when we do not seek to possess or manipulate.

When I maintain a genuine respect for myself, others and nature, automatically any attitude of exploitation will be quite foreign to my way of thinking.

We can see this more clearly when it comes to nature. Now there is a concern for the environment because humanity and nature have reached an obvious crisis point at which it must escape disaster. A return to respecting the laws and needs of nature is taking place. Obviously this respect, to a large degree, is not the ardour of a genuine love for nature but what has come about of necessity. Love and necessity generate different types of respect.

The religion of nature is a rhythm of balance and order. Her patterns and laws could

sustain our lives, but disrespectful human interference has produced sicknesses of all kinds - physically, environmentally and psychologically.

We realise that respect for nature should not be borne merely out of fear of the consequences, but from a humility which humans need to properly understand. Humility provides the openness to learning that makes us flexible; it makes us

And finally, yet of supreme importance, is the significance of respect for God. Not necessarily the traditional concept of God which, with its fear and punishment and guilt associations has alienated mankind from Him, but a God who is the divine giver, the co-ordinator of spiritual harmony, the One who eternally holds within Himself the universal spiritual values of human life. Not a manipulator, but the one who facilitates the inculcation of values

to anyone who, with honesty and respect for their fellow beings, wishes to be and do that which is right.

The religion of nature is a rhythm of balance and order. Her patterns and laws could sustain our lives

Through silence we are thus able to come close to ourselves, to nature and to the universal being, and are thus able to gain the understanding and the divine strength to integrate and realise our spiritual values of life by consciously bringing them into our life and actions.

Anthony Strano is Director of the Brahma Kumaris Centres in Greece.

SPIRITUAL EDUCATION

Spiritual Education is based on universal spiritual laws. Such laws apply to every human being regardless of his or her place of birth, culture and religious or political background. The goal of a spiritual education is to develop the original qualities of the soul. This has nothing to do with a person's intellectual capacity. Anyone, with or without previous knowledge or training, can enhance the quality of his or her life through spiritual wisdom. Spiritual study teaches you to make optimal use of your mind, so the concentration, clarity and the ability to make positive choices, increase.

Look around you and you will probably have the feeling that many of the universal laws of life have been forgotten. After all if, we truly understood these spiritual laws, wouldn't we also have the wisdom to apply them? However, this does not seem to be the case.

Clarification is needed on a variety of spiritual concepts – 'love' is only one of them. For example:

- What exactly is renunciation?
- What does a virtue like serenity really mean?
- Who is God?
- What is the meaning of life?
- Where do we come from? Where are we going?
- What is the influence of religion on the soul?
- What is the difference between religion and spirituality?

Even if we know all of these things, are we also integrating these understanding into our everyday life? For most part, no. On the contrary, it's as though we have lost the meaning and value of the soul and its relationship to the body and nature. It's as though we have forgotten what life is all about.

A spiritual education is aimed exactly at this – at rediscovering the value of life in a practical way. This is why a good spiritual education needs to include a thorough explanation of these vital, spiritual laws and concepts, in addition to creating a good meditation practice. As mentioned previously, the deeper you go into such understanding, the deeper will be your meditation experience. A good spiritual education teaches you how to live life as an art – happily and with fulfillment.

The Purpose of a Spiritual Study

- ***Gaining Insight into the Self, God, Others and Life*** – insight to these aspects create answers to four main questions that humanity has been asking throughout the ages: Who am I? Who is God? What is the purpose of life and how should I interact with others?

Why haven't we been able to find satisfying answers to these questions up to now? The most obvious reason is that we are too involved in the problem itself, too much a part of the questions and there is too much at stake. Therefore, we do not have sufficient 'distance' to see reality as it is. However, there is one Being who retains total objectivity, One who never comes into the cycle of birth and death, and so alone maintains the 'distance' needed to be an impartial observer. Such is the part of the Supreme Soul. He alone sees the complete cycle of time, knows the past, present and future. He alone has the reliable overview. Also, He is without any selfish motives. For all the

above reasons, the Supreme is ideally positioned to teach us great insights about ourselves and the state of the world.

For Raja Yogis, a relationship with the Supreme is not so much a goal in itself, as much as it is a means to get to the self, and realize the full potential of the self. God is sometimes called the Seed of the human world because it is as though He holds the ‘blueprint’ of human life. To know Him means to know the self, others and life itself. The aim of the Supreme Soul is to liberate all souls from the bonds of body-conscious thinking (learned, acquired, limited) thinking.

- **Understanding the laws of life and their application** – Insights into the laws are useful only if we are able to apply them to our daily life. Otherwise it is armchair knowledge. Such impractical knowledge can result in mental tension – we know a lot but aren’t necessarily able to live up to it. Knowledge of this sort just makes us unhappy. It is only when we thoroughly understand the spiritual laws (such as the laws of karma, entropy, love, etc.) that we can then start applying them in our life.

In short, the study of Raja Yoga is based on a practice, which is oriented towards the situations of everyday life. It is not knowledge for the sake of having large discussions or philosophical debates. Rather, it is knowledge for studying, inculcating and applying in our own lives.

- **Giving meaning to life** – Many of us might have had the feeling that (our) life is not very fulfilling or meaningful. We might have wondered at the use of getting up every morning at the same time, to go to the same job, etc. Or we might have wondered at the meaning of so much suffering on earth. What is the purpose of the increasing violence everywhere? And what can I, ‘just an insignificant, single human being in a big world’, possibly do to make this world a little better?

Thinking about life in this way can lead to feelings of frustration, hopelessness, apathy, aggression or boredom. However, the more we begin to understand and see the spiritual reality behind the visible reality, the more interesting life becomes. It is as though a new dimension opens up to us. We begin to understand that behind each action, each gesture and each outer appearance, there is a world of significance. Nothing happens in a vacuum, everything has purpose, meaning and consequence. Looking at life in this way makes life exciting; it makes it a challenge.

When we begin to understand the way events are interconnected, we see that our ‘one small insignificant life’ can be very important indeed for the whole life in this planet. One person’s personal growth and spiritual development has an effect on everything and everyone, even on people who live far away from us. We are all interconnected. When we begin to realize this, life becomes more meaningful; it becomes more valuable. This is when we begin to live!

- **Changing the self through conscious choice** – If there is one thing certain in life, it is that everything is constantly changing. And whether we like it or not we will also have to change. If we do not consciously choose to change, we might end up feeling forced to, later by circumstances. This usually creates a general feeling of resistance to change – the feeling of being pressured, like swimming against the stream. This attitude is a source of tension.

Knowledge and understanding of the current time and the condition of the human soul gives us the insights and power to consciously choose to make changes in our life. Through such action it is as though we change ahead of time, before time forces us to change. We no longer simply react to change, but actively take part in the process of creation.

The Subjects of Spiritual Study

There are four subjects taught by the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University.

- **Knowledge** – the first subject. In each BK center there are early morning lessons. These lessons begin with half hour meditation followed by 45 to 60 minutes of class. These classes – called the Murlis- take up in greater detail subjects we already discussed during the basic and intermediate courses

The interesting thing about this study is that people who have been studying here for over twenty years listen to the same Murlis as do people who have only been studying here for a few months. God's teachings are so deep and yet so clear that each and everyone can extract from them whatever he/she is looking for.

- **Yoga** – Apart from the study of knowledge, yoga is also important. Yoga means linking the mind to the Supreme Soul, and it is this which gives us power and enables us to have the realization and experience of everything we learn. (This is the importance of the 30 minutes meditation before the Murli class and at least 10 minutes meditation after listening to the Murli.)
- Knowledge without yoga is impractical and burdensome. Yoga without knowledge will not have any power - it will be an experience, but there will be no understanding; thus we will not be able to recreate that experience at will or integrate it into our personality. It is only when both knowledge and yoga come together that there can be deep insight – wisdom.
- **Dharna** – This Hindi word is not very easy to translate. It is precisely for this reason that we have chosen to retain the Hindi word. (The Hindi language is rich in subtle connotations and words that have more than one meaning.) As we progress further in this study we will come across many such words that deliberately have not been translated into English for this reason.
- Dharna means the inculcation of divine virtues and powers. Dharna is the result of taking up this knowledge through a combination of study and yoga. When the experience of the union with God (yoga) and insight (knowledge) come together, thoughts, feelings, words and actions all become the same. There is no longer a difference in what we think, feel, do or say. This is dharna – when we start to embody the teachings.
- **Service** – When dharna increases, we automatically begin to share our treasures with others – treasures like peace, love, patience, respect and happiness. The experience of our own spiritual efforts and transformation is what enables us, in a very natural way, to explain to others and also to sustain them in different ways. This is called service.
- The most powerful and subtle service is to sustain other souls through pure, positive (elevated) thoughts. We might find it difficult sometimes to explain to others in words about who they really are or how a connection with the Supreme would be of so much benefit to them. But we can always support others in a subtle way, simply by having pure, elevated thoughts, by showing respect for who they (really) are, even though they may sometimes act in a negative or hostile way. Through this we give others hope and confidence in their own spiritual personality. We are often not aware enough of the effect of our thoughts on others, or of the fact that we souls are all interconnected.

Qualities Desirable in a Spiritual Student

Motivation - The more motivated we are, the better will be our results. In this study, motivation increases as we gain deeper insight into the Supreme, time and ourselves. Our appreciation for the unlimited advantages of this spiritual study will grow.

Consciousness - a clear mind is an important ingredient of this study as the clarity of our consciousness determines the degree to which we will be able to take this knowledge in. It is good to be reminded that alcohol, drugs and other mind altering substances (and also watching television for long stretches of time) have a negative effect on our clarity and should be avoided as much as possible. In any case be sober when you come to the Raja Yoga centers. Only then will you experience maximum benefit from the lessons and the experiences you will have during meditation.

Responsibility And Regularity – The interesting part of this education is that everything done here is done for the self. There are no examinations (other than those in our daily life) and we do not get any kind of certification or diploma. Regular meditation and study is our own responsibility. This gives us the opportunity to build a certain discipline and regularity into our own life. It is an enormous challenge to really do something for one's own benefit, out of self-respect and not for our friends, our parents, our teacher, but for ourselves alone.

The Spiritual Teacher

An important aspect of the spiritual study offered by the Brahma Kumaris is the realization who exactly is teaching it? You may have already met different BK teachers in the last few weeks, and you will meet more. But all of what you have been taught has been taught to them by the Supreme Soul. All the teachers here are, at one and the same time, students. Brahma Baba also saw himself as a student of God. He stressed this point to prevent people from seeing him as a guru. Brahma and the more senior students of this institution (whom we call brothers and sisters) are models, not gurus.

It is important to be aware of this, otherwise we might be tempted to start praising or even defaming others. If we become attached to a certain teacher or fellow student, we will miss the point of these teachings. So, the best way to proceed is to remember that all of us here are students, and that it is God who is the Teacher.

Results of a Spiritual Education

The results of this spiritual education are divided into short term and long term. You have undoubtedly already experienced some of the short term results.

SHORT TERM RESULTS	LONG TERM RESULTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inner calm (rest)• Insight• Enthusiasm• Autonomy• Control (over the self)• Self-confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peace• Wisdom• Happiness• Independence• Self-mastery• Self-respect

OM SHANTI

TIPS FOR STUDYING BABA'S MURLI

The Murlis are our study material for spiritual progress. It is important that we work sincerely with them in order to imbibe them. Here are some suggestions for working with the Murlis:

1. Murli Essence

In order for the essence of the Murli to remain clearly in your memory, after listening to the Murli, write down the essence in your own words. Keep your writing to one page only.

2. Work List and Shrimat Points

Having written the gist of the Murli, then note down 4-5 points that you want to practice specially. You can call this your work list.

Sometimes it sounds like there are a lot of 'shoulds' or 'have to's' in the Murli and we naturally resist such pressures if we feel they are orders. However, if we understand these instructions as "this is what is needed to be done/ is in our best interest to do at this time", then we will accept the instructions with greater enthusiasm and less resistance.

Write down Baba's instructions in "I" form. For example, "You should cooperate" would become "I will cooperate". Then you will feel more personally involved, because your intellect will accept the instruction as directed towards yourself and the energy required to bring that thought into reality will automatically be available to you. If you write sentences in the form of "one should do this", then the instruction remains in the mind as a piece of information only and is not applied to the self. The intellect puts only those things into practice which it formulates as its own decision, "I will do this".

3. Visualization

Having made your work list, meditate on each point for a few minutes. Try to visualize the practical form of that point. Imagine situations which will occur in your life when you have successfully imbibed that point and experience your feelings of pure happiness and power.

4. Removing Blockages

If you find difficulties during the visualization exercise, look deep within to discover what is blocking your experience of that positive state. You will encounter your old, entrenched thinking patterns (sanskaras) which have been ruling your mind and with which you have come to identify. These old patterns do not like to be exposed, and that's why they throw up blocks. It's the nature of the mind to protect its beliefs, because it needs them to be able to function or cope. (That's why you acquired them in the first place!) However they have outlived their usefulness to us and now we want to change ourselves, so we must 'operate' on these blockages.

When we look at such blockages with love and generosity, rather than with disgust and rejection, they begin to melt and the soul begins to open up in the places where its wounds lie. It is vitally important to maintain love and regard for your feelings at this point. Simply observing the blockage with love and regard deprives it of its power over you. Then you must also replace the old thinking pattern/belief with a new and positive one.

5. Practical Steps

After you have overcome the blockage and released the energy that was trapped by it, you will feel at one with your visualization. However you must now also practice/ apply the new, positive belief or thinking pattern; only then will it become a powerful part of your personality. Only then will you be able to experience its benefits. You must also guard against doing anything that goes against your new belief.

6. Experience of Success

For maximum success, make a note of any and all incidents, small or big, which reflect the success of your practical steps. The more success you experience, the more you'll be motivated to continue your practice. Success produces feelings of intoxication and creativity and you'll begin to observe your specialties blossoming one after the other.

Even if you don't observe big results, don't be disheartened. Acknowledge and affirm that you have success within you, that you have achieved greater inner harmony and are more balanced internally. Don't measure your success externally, but rather look to your state of mind. If you've come closer to your true self, that is a big success in itself. It is the state of the kingdom within you that is important!

EXERCISE FOR THE INTELLECT

1. Find a quiet place and ten minutes. Set a timer because the time for this exercise is important. Sit in a comfortable position. Do not lie down or you might fall asleep.
2. Watch what thoughts come into your mind.
3. BEFORE the 10 minutes is up, experiment with telling your mind that you should get up and start working. Watch what it says.
4. Now tell it that you are going to sit and watch it for another twenty minutes. What is its reaction then?
5. How does it react to the fact that you are following this set of instructions?
6. Play around with the experience of instructing the mind yourself and watching how it reacts. In other words, begin to appreciate the perversity of the mind. Become interested in how it works.
7. Decide that you are going to set ten minutes a day to get to know your own mind, recognizing that you are dealing with a force that has been ruling your life. Become determined that you will become the Master of Your Mind. Understand that in order to achieve this you cannot use force. You must use persuasion to convince your mind that obeying the intellect is worthwhile and in your best interest.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR MEDITATION EASY

Remember, Meditation is after all just thinking—natural, ‘soul conscious’ thinking—which will enable you to experience your original qualities of peace, happiness, power, love, etc.

Experience brings value and interest, but most importantly, it brings enjoyment. Just a little practice and patience is needed.

A very wonderful new you is just waiting to emerge—the you you’ve really been all along!

WHEN TO MEDITATE

1. Try starting your day with 5-10 minutes (more if you like). It’s the quietest time of the day, before you get into the hustle and bustle.
2. Aim to stop for a few minutes throughout the day, for example, over your morning coffee, at lunch, in the afternoon after one of your classes, etc. Even 3 minutes of quiet reflection can be so refreshing.
3. It’s good to take 30 to 60 seconds before diving into your food to just pause and remember that ‘you the soul’ are about to nourish your body. Bring your natural quality of peace and respect for yourself into your actions of eating. Relaxed dining is so enjoyable, and healthy too!
4. In the evening, meditation is a great way to wind down after the day’s activities. ‘Pack up the day’ before bed. Aim to sleep with a light mind. Reflect on the things you’ve accomplished, especially the times you’ve managed to refrain from negativity, or the times you’ve acted from your original or your positive sanskaras. If there have been any mistakes, learn from them then leave them in the past. Put a full stop to them. This will help in a restful sleep and for a clear mind on waking.

WHERE TO MEDITATE

1. Have the aim to create a very positive, peaceful atmosphere where you live. This not only helps the self but others will benefit too. Create a special ‘corner’ in your residence where you always sit to meditate. You may need to explain to others living with you that it’s a ‘special place for meditation’ so they understand.
2. Wherever you go have the aim to create a peaceful, positive and powerful atmosphere. Take the time to stop and sit and meditate deeply for a few minutes. This will help you remain free from negative influences and enable you to share good vibrations. Practice for yourself and see how it works.

TIPS for SUCCESS

1. Here are some suggestions for tuning out noise and distractions. Play some soft, lyrical background music to tune out minor distracting sounds.
2. If there’s a lot of noise, try using earplugs or listening to the background music with stereo headphones.
3. Listen to a guided meditation commentary specifically designed for Raja Yoga to help guide your thoughts.
4. First be sure the body is comfortable and relaxed, next remember who is trying to meditate—you the soul—and think about your form, location in the body, and qualities such as immortality, peace, purity, love, bliss and power.

These steps help you build an inner strength to deal with all situations much more calmly and accurately.

CATEGORIES OF THOUGHT

Positive Thoughts	Negative Thoughts	Waste/ Unproductive Thoughts	Mundane/ Necessary Thoughts
Whatever happens occurs for a reason. There is a lesson in it for me to learn, so that I can grow and progress.	This should not be happening. I can't stand it. I'll do something to get even.	Why is this happening? How could God allow such things to happen?	The first thing I'd better do is take some deep breaths and try to calm down.
I know I am not alone. Many people care about me. Someone will always be available to help me. I'll always be able to manage.	I am alone. No one cares about me. I am helpless. I am too weak to turn things around by myself. I'm depressed.	What will people think? How will it turn out? Why does everyone except me always get things right?	The counselor said I could call her if I need to. I'm going to look up her number right now.
If I continue to make efforts, I'll definitely improve. There are always opportunities and alternatives, I don't have to be stuck in one way of doing things.	I'm so stupid! I'm always doing the wrong thing at the wrong time. I'm never going to make it.	I wish I hadn't done that. If only it hadn't happened. I'll probably never get another chance like that.	Time to clean the house. Getting stuff clean and organized always makes me feel good.

The Four Stages of the Meditative Process

Meditation is a time to practice being fully aware of one's thoughts and creating very powerful, uplifting thoughts. Remember that according to what you think, this will be what you experience. The process can be described in four distinct stages.

INITIAL STAGE

In the Initial Stage, you decide to meditate. So you go to your meditation place and sit with the intention of meditating for a particular period of time and on a particular theme or topic. The intellect decides this. At first, you'll probably find your mind is flowing in various directions. You need to use the intellect to shift your sense of identity to the soul, turn your attention within and become aware of your inner state. Relax the body and focus attention on the forehead, thinking "this is where I sit". Because your consciousness is used to being engaged with the external world, there can initially be an inner battle or conflict. You want to go within, but the habit of your mind is to remain external and scattered. You may need to persist. Do not worry if you remain in the initial stage for a long time. During this time of focusing inward, using your intellect, consciously choose to experience an original, positive quality, one *that is of deep interest to you at this particular time*. Ask your mind to think about it, to explore it. For example, you might choose to try to experience your original quality of peace, to explore the meaning of 'Om Shanti' (I am a soul, a being of peace). Or you might choose the quality of spiritual love. If you persist with your intention, your mind will catch the flow of spirituality and before long you will move gently and imperceptibly into the next stage.

SECOND STAGE

The next stage is called Contemplation. In the initial stage you began by turning the mind within and considering yourself to be a soul. You told your mind to set aside all other thoughts which are connected with your work, relationships, feelings, pre-occupations, etc. You set your mind to focus on a certain topic or theme of elevated consciousness, such as peace or love.

In this second stage, you call to mind all your ideas and feelings about your chosen spiritual theme. You might call up thoughts about your spiritual essence, your inner beauty, your purity, love and serenity. One by one, pick up all the things you know about being a soul. "I am immortal, invisible, a point of light, eternal, a being of peace, etc." In this way, the knowledge in your intellect about the soul begins to guide your mind. Each sentence is not something to repeat, but something to consider. Questioning helps keep the mind focused. 'I am a being of peace. What is peace? How does it feel to be peaceful?'

In the same way contemplate other aspects of the soul. What does it mean to you to be immortal? Can you think about yourself as never dying? Try to imagine it, try to feel what it would be like to be forever. What you are actually doing is evoking the memory that is latent within you. What does it mean to be invisible? Can you think of being invisible? Your face is not you. Your body is not you. What you see in the mirror is not you. What do you look like? ... a non-material, very subtle, infinitesimal, invisible point of spiritual light, like a star in the night sky. You are an extraordinary star of consciousness, sitting in the center of your forehead.

This stage of the meditative process is when distractions occur. The number of distractions is directly related to your degree of motivation, to your interest in experiencing your chosen topic. Once you're aware that your mind has started down a path not appropriate to your topic, use the intellect to bring it back gently. Use the intellect to clarify distractions and set them to rest; don't suppress them. If the mind starts to think of food, for example, either a) tell it that you will think about what to eat in five minutes after you finish your meditation; and/ or b) work with the thought of food by thinking how, just

as it is nourishment for the body, in the same way positive, elevated thoughts about the self, nourish the soul; and/ or c) exploring which are the thoughts which best feed the mind and give energy to the spirit. If you have too many distractions, maybe you need to find a more interesting topic, or consider your topic more deeply. If something comes to mind that's important and needs attention, gently tell the mind to put it aside for now—you'll give it full attention after meditation. (It's OK to keep a notepad with you to jot down things that you suddenly remember and fear you may forget if they put them aside.)

THIRD STAGE

Once you have set aside distractions and are really deeply contemplating your theme, you have naturally entered **the next stage, Concentration**. Concentration means no distractions! You are beginning to experience yourself as a peaceful, pure, loving powerful soul. Acknowledge that this is what it feels like to be you. Allow yourself to be at peace with yourself, with the world, at peace with God.

Consider that before anything ever happened, you were at peace— quiet, peaceful, silent, serene, no upheavals, no strong emotions, just quietly being yourself. Can you remember this peace? Peace is a state of very deep serenity, harmony, balance, patience. Evoke that feeling. It will come quite easily when you just think about/ remember it. Then savor the feeling in your mind. Automatically you have slowed your thoughts. Your elevated thoughts are producing elevated vibrations and you are experiencing them.

In the same way, consider your original, natural state of purity— no flaws, no guilt feelings; pure means completely natural. Purity means cleanliness, being clean—not externally—but in the sense of being true. Pure means to be like a perfect diamond, completely transparent and light. Evoke the memory of the feeling of complete purity. You'll feel as if you have an inner glow; you'll feel very good about yourself. That is natural and correct. This is the real you.

Continue your exploration of the original qualities of the soul by thinking of yourself as loving. You are a child of the Source of All that is Good, the Ocean of Love. You are full of love. Spiritual love includes tolerance, respect, mercy, acceptance. All other beings are your brothers and you feel natural love and respect for all. Regardless of what anyone does, their being is also essentially pure, peaceful and loving, so on that level you can feel love for everyone.

This shift from thinking to feeling signals the stage of concentration. Once you begin to feel and to remember and experience, distractions no longer occur and your thoughts flow naturally and effortlessly in one direction. The longer you stay in a certain consciousness, the deeper the experience of those thoughts will be. Focusing on a certain theme is done by the intellect and when the mind and intellect are stable in one consciousness, this is called concentration. Check the clock, and you will see that 10 to 15 minutes have flown by. This is easy meditation: you knew what to think, you savored and considered each idea, you created the thoughts in a logical sequence, step-by-step, you evoked/ began to recall or call forth from within you the experience. This is how meditation works.

FINAL STAGE

Realization is the fourth stage, when you arrive at your destination; when you become the experience you are seeking; where you are totally still and radiating the pure bliss of your experience in a serene silent state. It's not so much the "Aha!" state, as it is the "Aaaa" state. Let yourself be content if you find yourself experiencing only the first three stages for many meditations.

Realization can be both sudden and cumulative, but generally the stage of realization comes over you imperceptibly in its own time. When you have thought so deeply, with such concentration that you reach completion, you attain a state of stillness, in which there is total comprehension of your theme. You know it on the deepest level. There is no longer the need to create thoughts about it. That realization sinks into your soul indelibly. As you progress, realizations continue and your soul undergoes real and permanent change. It is a very subtle and special process, which continues through your life.

As you begin to understand this process, you'll also begin to understand that:

- Change implies responsibility for the state of your mind and your actions. Becoming master of your thoughts, feelings, reactions and responses means you 'cut' puppet consciousness—being pulled here and there by everything and everyone, getting into cycles of bad feelings, blaming, complaining, accusing.
- You have within you both the sources of any suffering as well as the solution to it.
- The intellect has a crucial role in guiding and transforming the self.
- The positive qualities, which are in you as sanskaras can only be brought to the surface of the conscious mind through intervention of the intellect.

Summary

Raja Yoga meditation requires making a conscious choice for a connection with your original self, and recreating your self image based on your original intrinsic divine qualities. What kind of self image do you have? What thoughts come to mind when you think about yourself? If they are thoughts about your gender, role, personality, etc. remember that these are concepts that you have acquired over time. They are not your original 'you', your spiritual identity.

To create your spiritual self-image, ask yourself these 3 questions: Who am I? What is my form? What are my original qualities? Try to answer with understanding and to really experience your answers. Visualize, experiment and experience. Resist going to the next question until you've gotten something out of the preceding one.

The success of your meditation will depend on how long you are able to think about these questions without being distracted by things around you or by other thoughts coming up. If you don't have an experience right away, just keep practicing. Consider it gymnastics for the soul.

REMEMBER: these steps are ***not a formula to be followed***, but rather a description of the natural flow of consciousness when you are using your mind and intellect in the right way.

Letting Go

BK Sister Jayanti, Director of BKWSU in Europe, N,S & W Africa and the Middle East, makes liberation sound easy... and it is, if you can just *let go* of the idea that it's hard!

We spend most of our lives holding on to so many things, usually framed by the past, that we never truly know what it means to be free. Sometimes we think that things can only be accomplished by holding on, whether it's relationships or situations. Yet to hold a bird, tightly, you'd probably squeeze the life out of it. Even holding the bird gently, the bird is not fulfilling its purpose of existence, which is to fly. If I hold a flower in my hand, how long will it last? If I let the flower float in water, it will last longer. If the flower lives in the soil, its natural habitat, it will last even longer. First, there is the desire to have the flower, and so I cut it. And then it's not good enough that the flower is in a vase, but it has to be mine I have to hold it, and thus I deny it life.

In relationships, when I hold onto someone, I'm not giving them space or freedom to express themselves and be who they are. Holding on and not wanting to let go reflects my own insecurity; I'm afraid and so I need to hold on. The moment I become stable, secure and confident within, I don't need to hold on.

Letting go is absolutely important in order to live and let live. If I don't let go, I'm not allowing others to survive. Why are we not willing to let go of circumstances? Circumstances change, nothing stays the same. From one moment to the next, it's a different scene. We hold onto these scenes in our minds. The image of a particular situation or the impression of something that's left in the mind keeps repeating in my head. I'm hanging onto this state of consciousness and it's occupying precious space. I have only a limited amount of space in my mind. I can choose what to do with it. Often it seems that the beautiful memories disappear and only painful memories remain. This is strange because I don't want to experience pain, and yet I hold onto the painful memories. By thinking about these memories, again and again, I'm inflicting recurring pain on myself. Nobody else is the oppressor. I become my own victim by oppressing myself and not letting go of that particular situation.

Thankfully, we're not in this state all the time, but certainly there are periods of our life, situations or relationships in which we get stuck. It's important to allow myself to grow, flow and move forward. If I'm doing that for myself, I'm giving space and permission for everyone else around me to be able to move and grow also.

So that's the theory - how do you do it? First is to recognise that I need to be doing something about my own inner world, because the process is happening in the mind. It's on the inner level that I have to be free. Most people think that if they fix things externally then things will get better. Sorting things externally is like putting on sticky tape, it holds things together for a little while and then another bit of tape is needed, and another, and another. A quick fix is not enough. When we understand that things begin in the mind and then move outwards, we can begin to look for the answers inside. I will then come across permanent solutions.

Letting go does not mean to cut. If I try to cut something with a sharp knife, then probably a lot of blood will flow and it's going to be very painful and not a happy experience. Cutting things is no good. Gently move away, disentangle and find that you're able to let go at the right moment when things are ready to shift. That's a much smoother and less painful process.

Ask yourself: what is it that I really need? When I start to fulfil my own inner needs then I'll realise that I don't actually need to hold onto that bird. When I open my hand and watch the bird flying free, I can love and appreciate its beauty and its flight. The bird will probably come flying back and rest in my hand, out of its own natural will and choice.

In the same way, I have to let go of my desires. When a desire is born, it spins around and keeps coming back into my mind until I've been able to fulfil it. Once the desire is fulfilled, then there are more desires, and then more and more. It's an unending stream in which I'm never going to come to a state of peace and fulfilment. When I let go of desires, I can have peace within. To let go is to know that all that I need is within. When I follow this and make sure that my thoughts, words, and actions are aligned to this truth, my needs will be fulfilled. As Gandhi once said, "There's enough for everyone's needs but not enough for even one person's greed"

There are lots of empty spaces within the soul. We think that those empty spaces will be filled by my post, position, possessions and partners. However, no matter how much we try to fulfil ourselves with all things external, there's still

that feeling of internal emptiness. The way to fill the empty spaces is not by the shifting sands of relationships, or the changeable circumstances of position at work, or the possessions that work is able to provide for me. I can fill myself by tapping into my own inner resources and connecting with the Divine. This infinite source is never going to let me down, or dry up. It's a possibility that's available to all of us at any moment.

As I fill myself, I can feel the strength of love, peace, joy and power returning to my own inner being. There's security in knowing that I can be self sufficient and self-reliant. I don't need to hold onto people and things anymore. When I'm with others, there's an exchange of love and happiness, yet I'm not dependent on others. If they're not around, I don't miss them. That is the state of freedom that the soul is able to experience. Letting go is not deprivation or sacrifice. Letting go means to step away, and to be free. It means to give freedom and space to another.

In that state of letting go I'm able to step away and see things from a distance. When I'm seeing things too close up I don't get a very clear picture. When I see a tree I don't realise that it's part of a whole forest. Stepping back a little allows us to see things on a broader scale. To look at things differently is the process of inner wisdom. To teach myself to look at things from many different perspectives is the path of spirituality.

Letting go means to be in that inner state of peace, then to do whatever is right according to the situation. Most of our responses are not logical but emotional. When something happens, our emotions and feelings are triggered immediately, and our response is instantaneous. So, mostly it's too late by the time I realise... because I've already said something, I've already expressed something and then I think about it. We can choose to live like that, continually reacting, creating a mess and then mopping it up later. The problem is that the cleaning up process takes a while. What I can do is learn to develop a considered response, one filled with warmth and love, and one based on understanding. Not just see and react, but give myself a moment of space to pause, reflect and then respond.

Forgive and Forget

I'm now in a position where I can start to develop love and compassion in my heart. Until I've learnt to forgive the person with whom there is conflict, there will always be problems in my relationships with others. A block in one relationship also affects the whole flow of energy with everyone else. If I don't forgive, then there's bitterness, pain, many hang-ups. There's sorrow for myself, never mind the person I'm not willing to forgive.

When I have flu, I can't eat anything because nothing tastes good, nothing tastes right. It's not the food that's bad, but there's a bitter taste in my mouth. It's the same when I don't forgive: that feeling of bitterness in my mind influences everything else that I do. So, the process of forgiveness is part of my own healing.

Forgiving the self involves the process of realising and then letting go of the ego. It's our ego that doesn't allow us to acknowledge our mistakes. When I let go of the ego with honesty and humility, I'm able to have the recognition of my mistake. There's determination that I don't want to repeat that mistake again. Experiencing God's grace and forgiveness, I'm able to let go of my own guilt, and my own pain. Through that, I take a step forward to walk through the new door of opportunity.

When I realise my own mistake, others are also ready to forgive me. Forgiveness from other people comes from their own generosity of spirit, and also their faith in the goodness of every human being. That's why those who forgive are able to say, "We understand, we know that mistakes happen. It's ok. We've been through the same." When I remember the situations where I have received forgiveness, there's a feeling of gratitude and humility. Appreciative of that forgiveness, I know that I have a responsibility to do the same for others.

When a mistake has been made, sometimes an apology isn't enough. Feelings run so deep and have been hurt so badly, that I have to prove that there's been some change in me and I'm not going to cause you any more pain. When there has been some transformation in the self, then the other person will also be ready to forgive.

When the other person is not ready to forgive you, the only possibility at that moment is to let go and step away. From their side there's rejection because their mind and heart are just not open, yet. Let there be peace in your heart and positivity in your mind, and maybe with time, hearts will heal and the minds will open.

When it comes to forgiving others, do I have the authority and the right to forgive? The world is actually based on law. Everything moves in patterns, which are absolutely right. We might see disharmony and disorder; however this is not part of the whole scene. Things settle and resolve and get back to a state of order, harmony and justice. So, my forgiving you is really for my own healing and the healing of the relationship, but I don't really have the authority or the power to forgive you. The law of karma is absolute, so whether somebody forgives or not, the outcome will be sorted out in the right way at the right time.

Om Shanti

The most elevated treasure of Brahmin life is the treasure of thoughts.

Today, BapDada is seeing the account of the treasures of all the children everywhere. Each child has received treasures; you have received imperishable countless treasures. You haven't received them for just this birth, but you have the guarantee of them for many future births. You have them with you now and you will also have them with you in the future. So, today, Baba is especially seeing to what extent you have accumulated the most elevated treasure, the one that is the special basis for all other treasures. You have received countless treasures, but how much have you accumulated? The most elevated treasure is the treasure of thoughts. The elevated thoughts of all of you are the foundation of Brahmin life. The treasure of thought is very powerful. With your thoughts, you can reach Paramdham in less than a second. So the power of thought is a rocket that is even more powerful than a physical rocket. You can go wherever you want. Whether you are just sitting or whether you are performing an action, with the treasure and power of thoughts you are able to experience closeness to any soul you wish to come close to; you can arrive at whatever place you wish to. Whatever stage you wish to adopt, whether it is elevated, whether it is of happiness, waste or of weakness, you achieve it with one second's thought. [If you think] "I am an elevated soul", you will have an elevated stage and an elevated experience. The moment you have the thought, "I am a weak soul, I do not have any power", then with a thought of just one second, your happiness disappears; you experience signs of distress in your stage. However, the basis for both these stages is your thoughts.

When you sit in remembrance, you create your stage on the basis of your thoughts. "I am a point". How did you create this stage? With your thoughts. [In the same way] "I am an angel." So how powerful thoughts are. The basis of knowledge is also thoughts. "I am a soul, not a body." This is the thought you have. Throughout the day, you have pure thoughts in your mind and intellect, and in your churning, you have pure thoughts. What is the power of churning? The basis for that is also the power of thought. And when you inculcate something, you give your mind and intellect the thought, "Today, I will inculcate the power to tolerate." So the basis of your dharma is also thoughts. When you create plans for service, how do you create plans? You experience this, do you not? You have pure thoughts, do you not! You are able to create plans with pure thoughts. So, the special and most elevated treasure of Brahmin life is the treasure of thoughts.

If you use the treasure of thoughts in a worthwhile way, then your stage and your actions throughout the day remain very good. But what is the result when you waste your treasure of thoughts? You are not able to create the stage that you want to. All of you know that waste thoughts weaken your intellect and your stage. The intellect of those who waste physical things is clearly weak and confused. They are not able to make accurate decisions. They are constantly confused. They are not able to clearly decide what to do and what not to do. The speed of waste thoughts is very fast. You experience this, do you not? All of you experience waste thoughts, not sinful thoughts, but waste thoughts. Because of their fast speed, you are not able to control them; you lose control over them. So, the sign of waste thoughts is distress, loss of happiness, an upset mind and not experiencing pleasure in your life. Many of you are not even aware of why your stage has become like it has. You look at gross factors, thinking, "I did not perform any sinful action, I did not make any mistake, yet why am I lacking happiness? Why am I unhappy? Why am I not experiencing pleasure in my life? Why am I not able to stabilise my mind?" What is the reason for this? You see your sinful actions, your sinful thoughts, you check your gross mistakes, but in fact, there is a subtle mistake of wasting your treasures. You have definitely increased your account of unnecessary wastage. Physical illness initially may not be something major; it only appears in a minor form but grows from something minor to something major. You are not able to see the minor form but it is visible in its major form. In the same way, if there is this wastage, you have not accumulated anything. So, the account of wastage keeps on increasing, increasing and increasing. The account of sin is separate. This is the account of wasting treasures. You are able to see and realise sin very clearly. "I did this today and this is why my happiness disappeared." However, there isn't so much checking of the account of

wastage. So then you think, "Today has passed by and I haven't made any mistake." But did you check whether you accumulated or wasted the elevated treasure of thoughts? If you do not accumulate, then in which account will that be? In the account of wastage! Internally, you think that you are doing a great deal, but check your account: What treasures did you accumulate today? Do you know how to check this? Have you become checkers? Have you become the checkers of the self or of others? You check yourself internally but the checking of others is easier because it is done externally. So, BapDada was seeing that the special treasure of elevated thoughts is wasted a great deal. You are not even aware whether it has been wasted or used powerfully.

Brahma Baba is said to be the incarnation of economy. Who are all of you? All of you are this too, are you not? Are you masters or not? Do you not know how to economise? Do you only know how to spend? In fact, in their lokik life, double foreigners do not know so much how to increase their account of accumulation (savings account). They use it up and it is finished. It is like this, is it not? They keep a low bank balance. But in this, you will have to become the incarnation of economy. Who are you? Those who are sitting at the back, are you the incarnation of economy? Yes or no? Do you know how to economise or only how to spend?

So, BapDada was seeing that the account of wastage is greater than the elevated account of accumulation of what you have received. If your thoughts are wasted, then the other treasures are automatically wasted. If your thoughts are of waste, what will your actions be? What will your words be? Of waste, will they not? The foundation is thought; so check your thoughts. Do not let them loose, saying, "It is okay, it is only two minutes, etc." But check how many thoughts you had in two minutes. It was only two minutes, but how many thoughts did you have? And waste thoughts are faster! In one second in your thoughts, you are able to go from Abu to America, whereas otherwise, it takes so many hours. The speed is so fast. Check them at the same speed and save them. Save the power of your thoughts, and then check your account at night. If you save something with attention, then even if the saving is very little, there is extra happiness. If you have to spend 10 dollars or pounds and you save one dollar or one pound, then you experience great happiness at having saved one pound. So for your thoughts, use the power to control. Do not say, "I did not wish this. I understand this but what can I do when it happens automatically?" Who says that it just happens? A master or a slave? Everything is under the control of the master. If someone deceives the master, is he a master? Check whether you have the power to control. Firstly, save it. Instead of wasting it, accumulate it in the account of "the best". And secondly, if you are not able to save something, then change it. Change the waste thoughts into powerful ones. If you are not able to have control, then at least you are able to change, are you not? So quickly change its speed, otherwise you will develop a habit. If you check within one hour, then you can accumulate even five to ten minutes of thought in the account of best from the wastage.

If you have even five minutes, then how many five minutes are there in twelve hours? And how much happiness will you experience? The more you accumulate the account of elevated thoughts, the more this account will be useful at the time of need. Otherwise, just as with physical wealth, if you have not accumulated it, then you are deceived at the time of need; so here also, whenever you have a big test, the mind and intellect seem empty, there is no power. So what do you have to do? Learn how to accumulate. If we see this account next year, the account of elevated thoughts should be overflowing; it should not be empty. This treasure of elevated thoughts will become the basis of creating an elevated reward. Do you know how to accumulate? Or, do some of you not know how to do this? You are Raja Yogis and this means that you know how to accumulate. So, you know how to check and also how to accumulate. The face and activity of one who has an account of accumulation is constantly, visibly overflowing. It's not that sometimes their face is one thing, and sometimes their activity is something else; if you look at their face today, it is sparkling, and the next day there is a wave of unhappiness. It should not be like this. If you check yourself throughout the day, how many poses do you adopt? Have you ever checked yourself? You adopt many different poses, do you not? BapDada sees everyone's poses. What does He do when He sees them? Sometimes, He sees that the children have not taken much time in performing

an action but they waste a lot of time repenting for actions they have already performed. Then they say,

“It's been

three days since my happiness disappeared." But why did you lose your happiness? Where did it go? Who took it? The treasure is yours, but who took it? It is good to repent, because repentance makes you bring about transformation, but do not take a long time over it. When you cry in repentance, you sometimes cry throughout the week. You repent, that is good, but repent and then experience the happiness of attainment (realization) and for the future. Decide in one second that you will do this or not do this. You also were told earlier to remember two words: not and dot. You think "not" and you apply a dot. You may have been crying for four hours—this is a lot of crying; you maybe did not shed any tears, but you were crying internally; or maybe you shed tears for half an hour or cried in the mind for four hours. Do not repent this much. Keep a limit to your repentance.

BapDada likes one specialty of the double foreigners very much. He does not like your crying, but He likes one specialty. What is that? The Lord is pleased with an honest heart. Double foreigners are not afraid to tell the truth and because they have a true heart, they are worthy of double love from the Father. However, although you were told that you kept an honest heart and you pleased the Lord, bring about transformation just as quickly. Do not speak about it internally again and again, "This happened, this happened, this happened." It has happened and so it has finished, but pay attention for the future.

Sometimes, instead of paying attention, you create tension. You must not do this. Become the greatest justice of all. Here in India there is a chief justice. But you are the chief justice of the chiefs. Apply justice to yourself very quickly of whether something is wrong or right. When something is wrong, then say "not" and apply the "dot". Don't think: "If it were not like this, then it would be like this; if it were not like this, it would be like this." Because then you are accumulating in the account of wastage. Then your income finishes; your account of accumulation finishes. Think, but do not think waste thoughts and definitely save something. Show the result of how much you have saved in one hour; how when wastage began, you changed yourself and accumulated. Save the wastage. This account of saving will give you a lot of happiness.

This year, BapDada wishes to see the savings account of everyone overflowing. You are able to do this, are you not? Do you know how to do this? Now do this with a fast speed, because time is also moving fast, and then Baba will see who claims number one in this. Whose saving account is the greatest of all? Who will say, "Throughout the entire day, only one hour was spent in an ordinary way, and so it was a wonder that I accumulated 11 hours." We shall see who claims number one! We shall make a list of those who have saved, number-wise.

And if you controlled your thoughts, then you will not have to make effort to control everything else. Some say: "I did not wish to speak this, but it just emerged through my lips." But you still have the thoughts first and then you speak the words. When you perform actions, you first have the thought and then you perform the action. If you are going to get angry with someone, you first create plans in your mind, "I will do this and I will do that. What does this one think?" You use your time in creating plans in this way. You keep on looking at the time. "When will this one come? Who will come?" Because of your thoughts, your account of time also goes to waste. They both have a connection. So saving your thoughts will automatically enable you to save your time. Your words will automatically be saved as well.

Do not come into too much sound. Remain in solitude. It has been seen that those who speak throughout the day waste their treasures of thought and time a great deal. *Ekantvasi* has two meanings. It is not just external solitude, but to be lost in the depth of One, to be in inner solitude. Otherwise if there is just external solitude, you become bored and you say, "I don't know how I will spend my day." But become lost in the depth of the one Father, just as when you go to the bottom of the ocean, you find so many treasures. Go into the depth; that is, become lost in the attainments from the Father. Do not just move along with the waves on the surface, but go into the very depths; become lost in that and then see how much pleasure you experience.

Now, you are making plans to celebrate the diamond jubilee. In the diamond jubilee BapDada wishes to see one scene of the children. Whenever there is Deepawali or any major festival, lights are visible everywhere. You have seen this, have you not? All of you must have an important festival day in your country and at that time, there would be so many sparkling lights. Everywhere one looks, something is sparkling. On the diamond jubilee, the real spiritual diamonds should be visibly sparkling everywhere so that everyone is able to experience which type of sparkle this is. Diamonds do sparkle. Even if you hide them in the mud, they will not lose their sparkle. So, wherever you may be living, whichever country you may be in, everyone should experience that you are a sparkling diamond. They should receive this vibration. Wherever there is an ignited light, wherever there is this decoration, whether you want it to or not, it will definitely attract your vision. There are so many of you diamonds, and you are spread around the whole world. So the sparkling diamonds should show their sparkle to the whole world. What would the scene be! You would like that, would you not? So the scene of such sparkling diamonds should be visible to the world. At least people should begin to say that there is something here, there is some miracle here. First they should come to the stage of at least saying, "There is something here" and then finally, they will say, "Everything is here." The basis for that is to accumulate in your account of thoughts. Do not become tired making effort in little things. May be you are not able to finish your jealousy or you still get angry or certain words still emerge. Do not use your time in making effort for a single aspect. Put the seed right and the tree will automatically become all right. The seed for all of this is thought. If your thoughts are elevated, everything else is automatically elevated. There is no need to labour. Otherwise you find it difficult, thinking that you still have this much to do. It has been ten years, but you haven't been able to remove this particular weakness. It may have been twenty years, forty years or fifty years, but now, if you check your foundation, it should not take even four seconds. Then see how fast you are able to serve through the mind. At present, the power of your mind is being wasted; you are not using it for anything useful, and when you are able to save it, it will be used in a worthwhile way. Then there will be no need to make effort. Whilst walking and moving around, you will experience yourself to be a lighthouse and a might-house.

A lighthouse does not go to each one individually but from a distance signals the right direction. When all of you sparkling diamonds become lighthouses and might-houses, what will there be in the world? Will darkness remain?

To the souls who are the true, spiritual diamonds everywhere; to the special souls who are constantly the incarnation of economy; to the souls who constantly remember the One and have love for solitude; to the sparkling souls who spread their sparkle into the whole world through the sparkle of their vibrations and attitude; BapDada's love, remembrances and namaste.

* * * O M S H A N T I * * *

Which gathering is BapDada watching today? It is the gathering of those who are the present children of the True Lord and Master, and the future princes and princesses. Do you always maintain the intoxication that this is who you are? This life of yours is infinitely greater than the lives of the princes and princesses of today. Do you elevated souls, knowing your own greatness, stay in a high state of intoxication?

In the subtle regions today, there was a sweet spiritual conversation between Bap (Shiv Baba) and Dada (Brahma Baba). The topic of the conversation was the great significance of the sons and daughters of the True Lord and Master. All the sanskaras of your future life begin now, at this time.

Because you are heirs to the kingdom of the future and have the right to sovereignty, in the future, you will have the authority of royalty. You will be complete with all forms of wealth and will possess uncountable treasure stores of everything. You will always have abundance in all respects. Each of your lives will be spent in the company of royalty. In each of your lives, every achievement will encircle you, wishing to serve you at every moment. You will not desire to achieve anything. Instead, every achievement will have the desire "May my lord and master use me!"

In all four directions, the mines of luxury will be overflowing. Each luxury will be ever-ready to give its own particular form of happiness to each of you. In your hearts, the trumpets of happiness will always, automatically be blowing; there will be no need to blow trumpets.

The vegetation of nature, your creation, will create music by the movements of its different types of leaves. The swaying of the trees and the movements of their leaves will create different varieties of natural music for you. Today there are instruments that create many types of artificial music, but there, the songs of the birds will also make natural music for you. Like living toys, the birds and animals will display different games for you. Nowadays, people learn to imitate animals for the sake of entertainment. There, at a signal from you, the birds will entertain you with a variety of beautiful sounds.

Similarly, the flowers and fruits will give happiness to you. The flowers will offer different natural flavours. Here you use salt and pepper and other spices to produce different tastes. There the fruits will themselves provide a variety of flavours. There won't be any sugar mills there, but you will have sugar fruits. Whatever taste you require will be extracted from the appropriate fruit in a natural way. You won't cook green-leaved vegetables there; flowers and fruits will take the place of vegetables.

Milk will be plentiful. [Which is why it is said of heaven,] rivers of milk will flow. Do you know what you will drink? The fruit will have natural juice. There will be some fruit for eating and some for drinking. You won't have to make effort to extract the juice from the fruit because each fruit will be so full of juice. Here, you drink milk from the coconut [with considerable effort]; there, you will just pick up a fruit, press it a little and the juice will emerge.

The water in which you bathe will have its own special importance, just as the water of the Ganges has importance today. It will emerge from springs in the mountains and flow past

medicinal herbs, acquiring special properties such that it never becomes stagnant. It will also acquire natural fragrance from the herbs, so there will be no need to perfume the water.

In the early morning hours of nectar, you won't be awakened by a tape recorder, but by the sounds of the birds who will awaken you with their natural songs. The time of rising will be in the early morning, but you will not be tired. It is because the living deities rose early in the morning then that the devotees today awaken the idols of the deities in the temples early in the morning. The significance of the early morning hours is remembered on the path of bhakti. So you deities will awaken early, however actually you will always be as if in a state of awareness.

There will be no hard work there, either for the body (physical labour) or for the mind (intellectual labour). There will not be any burdens or pressures there, so the states of being awake and being asleep are equivalent. In this present life you sometimes think, "Oh, I have to get up early in the morning." There, such a thought will not arise. Aacha.

What will you study there? Or do you want to be free from studies there? Study there will be through games. While you play games you will learn. You will need knowledge about your kingdom and how to rule it, so this will be the topic of your study. The main subject will be drawing. Everyone, young or old, will be artists, painters, musicians. So your study will involve singing, playing music, painting pictures and playing games. Even history will be in the form of music and poetry. It won't be boring.

Dancing will be another game, that is to say, games will also take the form of dance. You will also enact plays and dramas there. There won't be any cinemas, but there will be many plays. Entertainment will be in the form of comedies [no tragedies there!] and there will be many theatres.

There will be a line of airplanes [called veemans] in your palaces. These veemans will be very easy to fly. All work will be performed on the basis of atomic energy. This last invention of science has emerged for you. Aacha.

The currency will be in the form of golden coins (guineas), but not like the coins of today. The form and design will be totally different and very beautiful. Bargaining and exchanges will be just for the sake of it. Today in Madhuban, although it is like a large family, there are different departments in which each one has a particular duty; though it is a family, some are giving and some are taking. In the same way there also, the entire kingdom will be in the form of a large family. There won't be any feeling of shopkeeper and customer; everyone will have a feeling of ownership. Only mutual exchanges will take place. There will be no form of scarcity of anything for anyone. [Therefore the economy won't operate on the basis of supply and demand.] Even the subjects will not lack anything; they will have infinitely more than they need for their livelihood. Therefore the feeling that 'I am a customer and this one is the shopkeeper' won't be there. All dealings will be with love. No account books or registers will be kept. Aacha.

[Then a musician asked Baba if we would play musical instruments there, and Baba replied:] The musical instruments there will be studded with diamonds and jewels. They will be natural

instruments of many varieties, and they will be easy to play. You will just touch them with your fingers and they will commence playing.

The dresses you wear there will be very beautiful and will be worn according to the activity you are doing or the location you are in. You will wear many varieties of dresses and sets of jewelry. You will also have a variety of crowns of different designs, but they will not be heavy. They will be lighter than cotton-wool. They will be made of real gold and they will have diamonds studded in them in such a way that they will reflect the different colors of light.

Here you have different colored fluorescent lights. There, the diamonds will shine with seven different colors. Each of your palaces will be decorated with multi-colored, diamond lights. Here mirrors are used to give one object multiple images. There, the diamonds in the ceiling will reflect the light so that many lights are seen instead of one. The shine of the gold and the diamonds in combination, by their brilliant reflection, will dazzle your eyes. The sun's rays will strike the gold and the diamonds and make them sparkle like the lacework of a thousand lights. And at night, the slight flame of a candle will do this same work. There will thus be no need for so many electric wires. Everything there will be so beautiful. The royal families of today use different colored chandeliers. There, your lamps will be of real diamonds, and one diamond will function like a thousand lamps.

You won't have to work hard there. Everything will come naturally.

The language there will be very pure Hindi. Each word will be full of precise meaning.

[Then, turning to the double foreigners, Baba said:]

Where will your England and America go? You don't have to build palaces there, build them in Bharat. You will just go to those places for picnics, and there will only be a few of them. [This is in reference to the fact that these continents will be largely under the sea and the islands that are above sea level will be picnic spots to which we will fly in our veemans.]

You will just sit in your veeman, start it up and you will arrive there faster than the speed of sound. The veemans will be so fast that you will reach in the same amount of time that it takes here to make a phone call. Therefore there will be no need of telephones. There will be family-sized veemans as well as veemans for the individual, and you'll be able to use them whenever you wish.

Aacha, now you have just sat in the airplane of the Golden Age. But now leave that airplane and come into the airplane of the intellect. The flying vehicle of the intellect is also very fast. What is the speed of thought? Is it such that you can just produce the thought and you are able to go beyond the moon and the stars to your own Home (the Soul World)? Is the airplane of your intellect ever-ready to that extent? Is that airplane always beyond all obstacles such that no type of accident can occur? It should not be that you desire to go to Paramdham (the Soul World) but that you are not able to lift off the ground [because you are too heavy]. It should not be that you crash into a mountain and fall. To create a useless thought is like crashing against a mountain. So is the plane of your intellect always ever-ready and beyond accidents? First climb into this

airplane and then you will get that [Golden Aged] airplane. Just as when you were nodding 'yes, yes' upon hearing the description of heaven, are you also nodding in full agreement for this too?

Today in the subtle regions the map of heaven emerged. This is why you have been told about it. Brahma Baba is preparing to go to heaven and so he was checking the map. Are all of you ready? Do you know what preparations are required? Who will pass through the gates of heaven with Father Brahma? Have you taken the pass for that? You have taken a gate pass, but have you got the pass to go through with Father Brahma? There are VIP gate passes, and there is a pass given to the President. This gate pass is for the Master of the World. Which pass have you obtained? Check your pass.

Aacha. To those who are the present children of the Lord and Master and the future princes and princesses, who are the masters of nature and therefore the future Masters of the World, who are the conquerors of Maya and therefore the Conquerors of the World, who through the method of having just one powerful thought bring the achievement of all powers, who stay ever near to the Father and pass all the tests, who pass through with Father Brahma, to such most elevated souls—Bapdada's love, remembrance and namaste.

Essence: Sweet children, do not let words that cause sorrow for anyone emerge from your lips.

Question: When can each of you Godly students progress in this study?

Answer: When you have the practice of churning the ocean of knowledge. The more you churn the more worthy you become. If you do not churn knowledge, you would definitely be churning devilish matters, that is, churning rubbish; you would continue to have wasteful and sinful thoughts. This is why, in order to progress, learn to churn knowledge. Those who have imbibed knowledge remain constantly cheerful.

Om Shanti. Baba sits and explains about knowledge and bhakti. Children have understood that there cannot be salvation through bhakti, and that bhakti does not exist in Satyug. You cannot receive knowledge in Satyug. Krishna neither does bhakti nor does he play the flute of knowledge. Murli means to give knowledge. It is remembered that there is magic in the flute. There must definitely be some magic. Even ordinary people can play the flute. There is the magic of knowledge in this Murli. Ignorance cannot be called magic. The Murli is called magic. You change from humans into deities through knowledge. When it is Satyug, there is the shower of that knowledge. There is no bhakti there. Bhakti starts from the copper age, when you change from deities to humans. Humans are always called vicious and the deities are called viceless. The world of deities is called the pure world. You are now becoming deities. What is called knowledge? One is the recognition of the self and Baba; then there is also the knowledge of the beginning, the middle and the end of the world; that too is called knowledge. There is salvation through knowledge. Later, when bhakti begins, it is called the stage of descent because bhakti is called the night and knowledge is called the day. This can sit in the intellect of anyone. However, inculcation of the divine virtues does not take place. It can be understood for those who have divine virtues that they have imbibed knowledge. The activity of those who have imbibed knowledge is like that of the deities. Those who imbibe less knowledge have a mixed activity. It means that those who have not imbibed anything would not be considered the children of God. People defame God so much. People continue to insult God. When you come into the Brahmin clan, you stop insulting and defaming God. You receive knowledge and by churning it, you receive nectar. If you do not churn the ocean of knowledge, what else would you be churning? You would be churning devilish thoughts. Only rubbish will emerge from that. You are now Godly students. You know that you are studying this study to change from humans into deities. The deities will not teach you that. You children receive this knowledge now. It does not exist in Satyug. Deities can never be called the oceans of knowledge. Only the One can be called the Ocean of Knowledge. Only through knowledge are you able to have divine virtues. These deities have divine virtues. You sing their praise, that they are complete with all virtues. So you now have to become like they are. Ask yourself: Do I have all the divine virtues? Or, do I have any devilish traits? If you have any devilish traits, you should remove them. Only then can you be called deities. Otherwise, you will claim a low status. You are now imbibing the divine virtues. You relate very good things. Since you are becoming the most elevated of all, this is called the most auspicious confluence age. So the atmosphere should also be very good. Dirty things should not emerge from your mouth, otherwise it will be said that you will claim a low status. You can quickly tell from the atmosphere (what someone has said). Your face should always remain cheerful. Otherwise, it could be said that you do not have any knowledge. Let jewels constantly emerge from your mouth. Look how cheerful Lakshmi and Narayan always are! Their souls have imbibed the jewels of knowledge. They always let jewels of knowledge emerge from their mouth. When you only speak and hear jewels of knowledge there is so much happiness. The jewels of knowledge that you receive now will then become real jewels and diamonds there. The necklace of nine jewels that is remembered is not of real jewels and

diamonds. It is a necklace of the jewels of knowledge. People think it is those jewels, and wear a ring of the nine jewels. The garland of the jewels of knowledge is created at the most auspicious confluence age. These jewels make you very wealthy for the future twenty-one births. No one can loot it from you. If you wore those diamonds and jewels here, someone would very quickly loot them from you. So you have to make yourself very sensible. You have to remove devilish characteristics. People's faces change because of the devilish qualities. Out of anger, their face becomes as red as copper. Those who indulge in vice become ugly. Children should churn the ocean of knowledge in every aspect. This knowledge is about earning a lot of wealth. That study is not worth jewels. Yes, after studying (worldly) knowledge, some claim a high position. So it was the study that was useful, and not the money. Study is wealth. That is limited wealth and this is unlimited wealth. Both are an education. You now understand that Baba is teaching you and will make you into the masters of the world. That is a temporary study for momentary happiness for one birth. Then you have to study afresh in your next birth. There (in Satyug) there is no need for studying to earn an income. There, you receive limitless wealth through the effort of this time. That wealth becomes imperishable. When you were deities, you had a lot of wealth and then, when you went onto the path of bhakti, that is, into the kingdom of Ravan, you still had so much wealth. You built so many temples. You were so wealthy! No one can become as wealthy as you were through any study of today. You now know that you are studying such an elevated study through which you become deities. So what can people become just through study? From poor to wealthy. At present, Bharat is so poor. Wealthy people do not have any time. They have their own arrogance of being so-and-so. Here, your arrogance should finish. I am a soul. The soul does not have any wealth, diamonds or jewels etc. Baba says: Renounce your body and all bodily relations. When the soul leaves its body, all its riches finish. Only when it studies afresh can it earn money, or if it gave donations it will take birth to a wealthy family. People speak about the fruit of their actions of their previous birth. If someone has donated knowledge or opened a college or a dharamshala (hostel), he will receive the fruit of that, but only for a temporary period. Donations and charity are performed here. They will not be performed in Satyug. In Satyug, they only perform good actions because they have received the inheritance of this time. There, no one's actions become sinful because Ravan does not exist there. Not even the poor will perform sinful actions. Here, even the actions of wealthy people are sinful. This is why there is sorrow and disease etc. There, people do not indulge in vice, and so how could there be sinful actions? Everything depends on actions. This is the kingdom of Maya, Ravan, and this is why people become vicious. Baba comes and teaches you to become viceless. Baba makes you viceless and then Maya makes you vicious. There is a battle between those who belong to the dynasty of Rama and those who belong to the dynasty of Ravan. You are the children of the Father and they are the children of Ravan. So many good children are defeated by Maya. Maya is very powerful. But even then, Baba has hope. Even the most degraded ones have to be uplifted. Baba has to uplift the entire world. Many fall. There are those who fell completely and became the most degraded. Baba uplifts even those. Those who are most impure are in the kingdom of Ravan. Baba saves you. But if, even then, some continue to fall, then they become most impure and cannot climb so high. That impurity continues to bite them internally. It is said: Whatever you remember in your final moments, you will become like that. There would be just impurity in their intellects. Therefore, Baba sits and explains to you children that you are the ones who become deities every kalpa. Would animals become that? It is human beings who are able to understand and become that. Even Lakshmi and Narayan have noses, ears, eyes etc. They too are human beings, but they have divine virtues. This is why they are called deities. How do they become such beautiful deities, and how do they then fall? You now know about this cycle. Those who churn the ocean of knowledge will be able to imbibe knowledge very well. If someone does not churn the ocean of knowledge, he

becomes a buddhu. Those who conduct the Murli chum knowledge constantly. I have to explain this and this about

this topic. They automatically churn the ocean of knowledge. So-and-so are coming and I will explain to them with enthusiasm. It is possible that they may understand something. It depends on their fortune. Some will have that faith very quickly and others will not. Hope is kept: If not today, then they will understand sometime in the future. You should maintain hope. To have hope means to have an interest in doing service. You must not get tired. Even though someone may have studied and then become impure, since he has come again, would you tell him to go away or would you ask him to sit in the visiting room? You would definitely ask: Why did you not come for so many days? He would say: I was defeated by Maya. There are many who come in that way. Although they realise that knowledge is very good, Maya defeats them. They do remember everything. In bhakti, there is no question of attaining victory or being defeated. This knowledge is for imbibing. You are now listening to the true Gita from the Father through which you become deities. Without becoming Brahmins, you cannot become deities. You now understand all these things. You know that you have to remember Alpha. By remembering Alpha you receive the kingdom. When you meet someone, tell him to remember Allah. Alpha is called the highest. People indicate to Alpha with their finger. Alpha can also be referred to as '1'. There is only one God. All the rest are children. Baba is always Alpha. He never rules a kingdom. He gives you the knowledge and makes you His children, and so you children should remain in so much happiness. Baba is doing so much service for us. He makes us into the masters of the world. Then He, Himself, does not come into that new, pure world. No one calls Him into the pure world. Only impure ones call out to Him. What would He come and do in the pure world? His name is the Purifier. So His duty is to change the old world and make it new. The Father's name is Shiva and the children are called saligrams. He is worshipped. Everyone remembers Shiv Baba. You also call Brahma, Baba. Many people speak of Prajapita Brahma but they do not know him accurately. Whose child is Brahma? You would say: The Supreme Father, the Supreme Soul, has adopted him. He is a bodily being. All souls are Godly children. All souls have their own body. They have received their own part which they have to enact. This has continued from the beginning of time. "Eternal" means that it has no beginning, middle or end. People think that there is an end and so they become confused. So how would they be created again? Baba explains that this is eternal. There is no question of asking when it was created. Annihilation does not take place. They have spoken lies. Because only a few people remained, they say that annihilation took place. The knowledge that is in Baba emerges. It is said that even if you make the entire ocean into ink, knowledge will not finish. Achcha.

To the sweetest, beloved, long-lost and now-found children, love, remembrance and good morning from the Mother, the Father, BapDada. The spiritual Father says namaste to the spiritual children.

Essence for Dharna:

1. You have to glorify the name of the Father with your cheerful face. You should only relate and listen to the jewels of knowledge. Let there be a necklace of the jewels of knowledge around your neck. Do not speak words that cause sorrow.
2. You must never become tired of doing service. You have to maintain hope and do service with interest. Churn the ocean of knowledge and remain enthusiastic.

Blessing: May you be a courageous mahavir who adopts the medal of an elevated stage by applying a full stop.

Within this eternal drama, no one awards a medal to the spiritual warriors in this spiritual army, but according to the drama, they automatically receive the medal of their stage. However, only those who observe the part of others as a detached observer and easily apply a full stop are able to receive this

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medal. The foundation of such souls is their experience. Whilst experiencing every virtue and every power, they continually move forward. No barrier or obstacle can stop them.

Slogan: With the awareness of belonging to the one Father and none other, become free from attachment.

*** O M S H A N T I ***

Essence: Sweet children, imbibe the things the Father teaches you exactly as He teaches you. Constantly continue to follow shrimat.

Question: What should you think about very well so that you never have any regrets about anything?

Answer: Whatever *part* each soul is playing is *accurately* fixed in the drama. This drama is eternal and imperishable. Think about this and you will never regret anything. Only those who don't *realize* the beginning, middle and end of the drama have regrets. You children have to observe this drama exactly as it is as detached observers. There is no question in this of crying or sulking in this.

Om Shanti. The spiritual Father explains to you spiritual children that souls are very tiny. The soul is very tiny whereas the body that is visible to the tiny soul is very large. When the tiny soul separates from the body, it is not able to see anything. You should think about the soul. The tiny point is able to do so much. Through a *magnifying glass* it is possible to look at very tiny diamonds to see whether they have any flaws or not. The soul too is very tiny. Is it possible to use a *magnifying glass* to examine a soul? Look where the soul resides. Look at its *connection*. Such a huge earth and sky are seen through these eyes. When the point departs, nothing remains. Just as Baba is a point, so a soul is also a point. Such a tiny soul becomes both *pure* and *impure*. These are deep things to think about. No one else knows what the soul is and what the Supreme Soul is. Look at what such a tiny soul creates and what he sees whilst in a body. The soul has the entire *part* of 84 births recorded in it. It is a *wonder* how the soul works. The *part* of 84 births is recorded in such a tiny point. It sheds one body and takes another. When Nehru died and when Christ died, their souls left and their bodies died. The body is so huge whereas the soul is very tiny. Baba has explained many times that people should know that this world cycle spins every 5000 years. When someone dies, it is not a new thing. The soul of that person left that body and took another one. That soul had also left that name and form at that same time 5000 years ago. The soul now knows that it sheds a body and takes another. You are now going to celebrate Shiva Jayanti. You show that you also celebrated this Shiva Jayanti 5000 years ago. Every 5000 years you have been celebrating Shiva Jayanti which is like a diamond. These things are true. You have to churn the ocean of knowledge so that you can explain them to others. You would say that all these festivals that are celebrated are not a new thing. History repeats as all the actors once again adopt their own bodies and play their part after 5000 years. Once again they shed their name, form, country and time period and take another. Churn this and write about it in such a way that people are amazed. Baba asks the children: Have we ever met before? It is the tiny soul that has to be asked this. Did you meet Me before through this name and form? It is the soul that hears this. Many reply: Yes Baba, we met You before in the previous cycle. You have the entire *part* of the drama in your intellect. Those are *actors* of a limited drama whereas this is the unlimited drama. This drama is very *accurate*. There cannot be the slightest difference in it. Those films that are played by a *machine* (projector) are limited. There can be two to four reels which continue to spin. This is the one and only eternal and imperishable unlimited drama. Such a tiny soul plays one *part* and then it plays another *part* within it. A *film reel* of 84 births would be so long. This is nature. This only sits in the intellect of some. It is like a *record*; it is very *wonderful*. It cannot be 8.4 million births. It is a cycle of 84 births. How can this understanding be given? If you could explain it to journalists, they would print it in the newspapers. You can also print this in the *magazines* every now and again. We are talking about the things of this confluence age. These things will not exist in the golden age or the iron age. For animals and everything else, it would be said that you will see all of that again after 5000 years. There cannot be anything different. Everything in the drama is fixed. In the golden age, animals will be *first-class*. The *shooting* (filming) of the history and geography of the whole *world* is taking place, just as *shooting* of a drama takes place. If a fly passes by and goes away, it will *repeat* in the same way. But we will not think about all these trivial things. First of all, Baba Himself says: I enter this lucky chariot every cycle at the confluence age. The Soul has said how He

enters it. The soul is such a tiny point. He is then also called the Ocean of Knowledge. Only those of you children who are sensible are able to understand these things. I come every 5000 years. This is such a *valuable* study. Only the Father has *accurate knowledge* and He gives it to you children. If someone were to ask you, you would instantly be able to tell him that the duration of the golden age is 1250 years. The lifespan of each birth there is 150 years. Such a long *part* is played. The entire cycle continues to spin in your intellect. We take 84 births. The entire world spins in a cycle in this way. This drama is eternal, imperishable and predestined. There cannot be any *addition* to it. It has also been said: Why worry about that which is not going to happen? Whatever happens in the drama is fixed. You have to observe it as a detached observer. In limited plays, when there are sensitive *parts* played, those who are softhearted begin to cry. That is just a play, after all, whereas this is *real*. Here, each soul plays its own *part*. The drama never stops. There is no question in this of crying or sulking. Nothing is new. Only those who haven't *realized* the beginning, middle and end of the drama have regrets. You now understand. Through the knowledge we claim a status at this time, and then, having gone around the cycle we will become the same again. These are very amazing things to churn. No human beings understand these things. Even the rishis and munis used to say: We do not know the Creator or creation. How would they know that the Creator is such a tiny point? He alone is the Creator of the new world. He is teaching you children. He is the Ocean of Knowledge. Only you children understand these things. You would not say that you do not know. Baba explains everything to you at this time. You don't need to regret anything. Remain constantly cheerful. The film reel of those dramas as it is played again and again will wear out; it will become old and then they will replace it and destroy the old one. This drama is unlimited and imperishable. You should think about these things and make them firm. This is a drama. By following Baba's shrimat you are becoming pure from impure. There is nothing else which would make you pure from impure, that is, that would change you from tamopradhan to satopradhan. Whilst playing your part, you have become tamopradhan from satopradhan and you now have to become satopradhan once again. Neither can the soul be destroyed nor can its part be destroyed. No one thinks about such things. When people hear these things, they will be amazed. People simply study the scriptures of the path of devotion. The Ramayana, the Bhagawad, the Gita etc. are all the same. Here, you have to churn the ocean of knowledge. You have to imbibe everything that the unlimited Father explains, exactly as He explains it. Then you will claim a high status. Not everyone can imbibe to the same extent. Some can explain with great depth and subtlety. Nowadays, you go to give lectures in prisons. You also go to the prostitutes and to those who are deaf or dumb, because they too have a right. They can understand through signals, because it is the soul that understands internally. Place a picture in front of them, and they would be able to study it, because the intellect is in the soul. Even if someone is blind or crippled, he can understand in one way or another. The blind have ears. Your picture of the ladder is very good (to show to someone who is deaf). You can explain this *knowledge* to anyone and make them worthy of going to heaven. The soul can claim his inheritance from Baba. It can go to heaven even if its *organs* may be *defective*. There is no one lame or crippled there. There, both the soul and body are pure. Matter is also pure. New things are always satopradhan. This is the drama that is predestined. One second cannot be the same as another, something or another is different. You have to see this drama as a detached observer, exactly the way it is. You receive this *knowledge* at this time and you will not receive it again. Previously, you didn't have the knowledge that this is called the eternal and imperishable predestined drama. Understand it well, imbibe it and explain to others. Only you Brahmins understand this *knowledge*. You are receiving the best, and anything that is the best of all is praised. Amongst you also, it is understood numberwise how the new world is established and what that kingdom will be like. Those who understand this are able to explain it to others. You have a lot of happiness. But some don't have happiness worth even a penny. Each one has his own part. Those in whose intellect this sits and who churn the ocean of knowledge also explain to others: this is the study

through which you become deities. You can explain to anyone: You are a soul. It is the soul that remembers God. All souls are *brothers*. It is said that *God is One* and that all human beings have a soul. The parlokik Father of all souls is One. No one can make those who have firm faith in the intellect change their mind. They would quickly make weak ones change their mind. There are so many *debates* about omnipresence. People who believe in that are also very firm in their knowledge, so perhaps, they don't belong to our religion. How can they become deities? The original eternal deity religion has disappeared. You children know that your original eternal deity religion belonged to the pure family path. Now, it has become impure. Those who were at first worthy of worship have now become worshippers. If you remember many *points*, you will continue to explain to many. The Father explains to you how the world cycle turns and you then have to explain to others. Apart from you, no one else knows this, but you also know it numberwise. Baba also has to *repeat* the *points* again and again because new ones keep coming. If they ask you how establishment took place in the beginning, you would then have to *repeat* the explanation. You will remain very *busy*. You can also explain using the pictures, but not everyone is able to imbibe knowledge to the same extent. Here, you need knowledge, you need remembrance and you need very good *dharna* as well. You definitely have to remember Baba in order to become satopradhan. Some children remain trapped in their own business. They don't make any effort at all. This too is fixed in the drama. However much effort each of you made in the previous cycle, you will only make the same effort again. At the end, you will remain in the consciousness of being brothers. You came bodiless and you have to return bodiless. It should not be that you remember someone at the end. No one can return home yet. How could anyone go to heaven before destruction takes place? They would surely either go to the subtle region or take another birth here and make effort to remove whatever weaknesses still remain. However, they would only be able to understand when they grow older. This is all fixed in the drama. Only at the end will you have a constant stage. It isn't that by writing it down that you will remember everything. Otherwise, why are there so many books in the *libraries*? *Doctors* and lawyers keep many books. They continue to *study* them. Human beings become lawyers of human beings. You souls become lawyers of souls. You souls are teaching souls. That is worldly education whereas this is spiritual education. Through this spiritual study, you will not make any mistakes for 21 births. Many mistakes are made in the kingdom of Ravan due to which you will have to tolerate a lot. Those who don't study fully and don't attain their karmateet stage will have to tolerate punishment. Then, their status would also be reduced. Only when you churn the ocean of knowledge and keep speaking about it to others would you keep thinking about these things. You children know that the Father whose Jayanti is going to be celebrated also came in the previous cycle. There was no question of any battle etc. All of those things are from the scriptures. This is a study. There is happiness in earning. Those who earn a hundred thousand have great happiness. Some are millionaires and others have little money. Each one's happiness is according to the amount of jewels of knowledge he has. Achcha.

To the sweetest, beloved, long-lost and now-found children, love, remembrance and good morning from the Mother, the Father, BapDada. The spiritual Father says namaste to the spiritual children.

Essence for *dharna*:

1. Churn the ocean of knowledge and fill yourself with jewels of knowledge. Understand the secrets of the drama very well and also explain them to others. Don't have any regrets about anything and constantly remain cheerful.
2. You have to make your stage constant and stable over a long period of time so that at the end you remember no one except the one Father. Practise being brothers and that you are now going back home.

Blessing: May you be a remover of sorrow and a bestower of happiness and with powerful drishti and an attitude of purity, enable others to have all attainments. The medicine of *science* has temporary power to end pain and suffering. However, the power of purity, that is, the power of *silence* has the power of blessings. This powerful vision and attitude of purity enables you to have permanent attainment. This is why, people ask for mercy and blessings in front of your non-living images. They call you merciful ones. So, it was because you became master removers of sorrow and bestowers of happiness in the living form and had mercy for them that you are worshipped on the path of devotion.

Slogan: According to the closeness of time, to do true tapasya and make spiritual endeavour is to have unlimited disinterest.

*** O M S H A N T I ***

Feedback Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

Series Level: Beginning

Intermediate

Advanced

Instructor's Name: _____

1. What was your aim in taking this series/ course? Has it been met? Was the series/ course relevant to your needs?

2. What main benefit(s) have you received from this series of lessons in Raja Yoga meditation?

3. Which lesson of this series was your favorite, and why?

4. Please give us feedback on the following specific components of this series:
 - a. Presentation: Was it clear, sequenced well and paced comfortably?
Any suggestions for improvement?

 - b. Half hour guided meditations at the beginning of each session:
Was it helpful?
Any comments?

 - c. Pictures: Were they helpful?
Any comments?

 - d. Handouts: Did they add to your understanding of the material?
Any additional remarks about them?

 - e. Multimedia (only applicable at the intermediate level):
Did you find the presentations helpful?
Anything further to add?

5. Do you plan to continue your study and practice of Raja Yoga meditation?

6. Would you recommend this course to your friends?