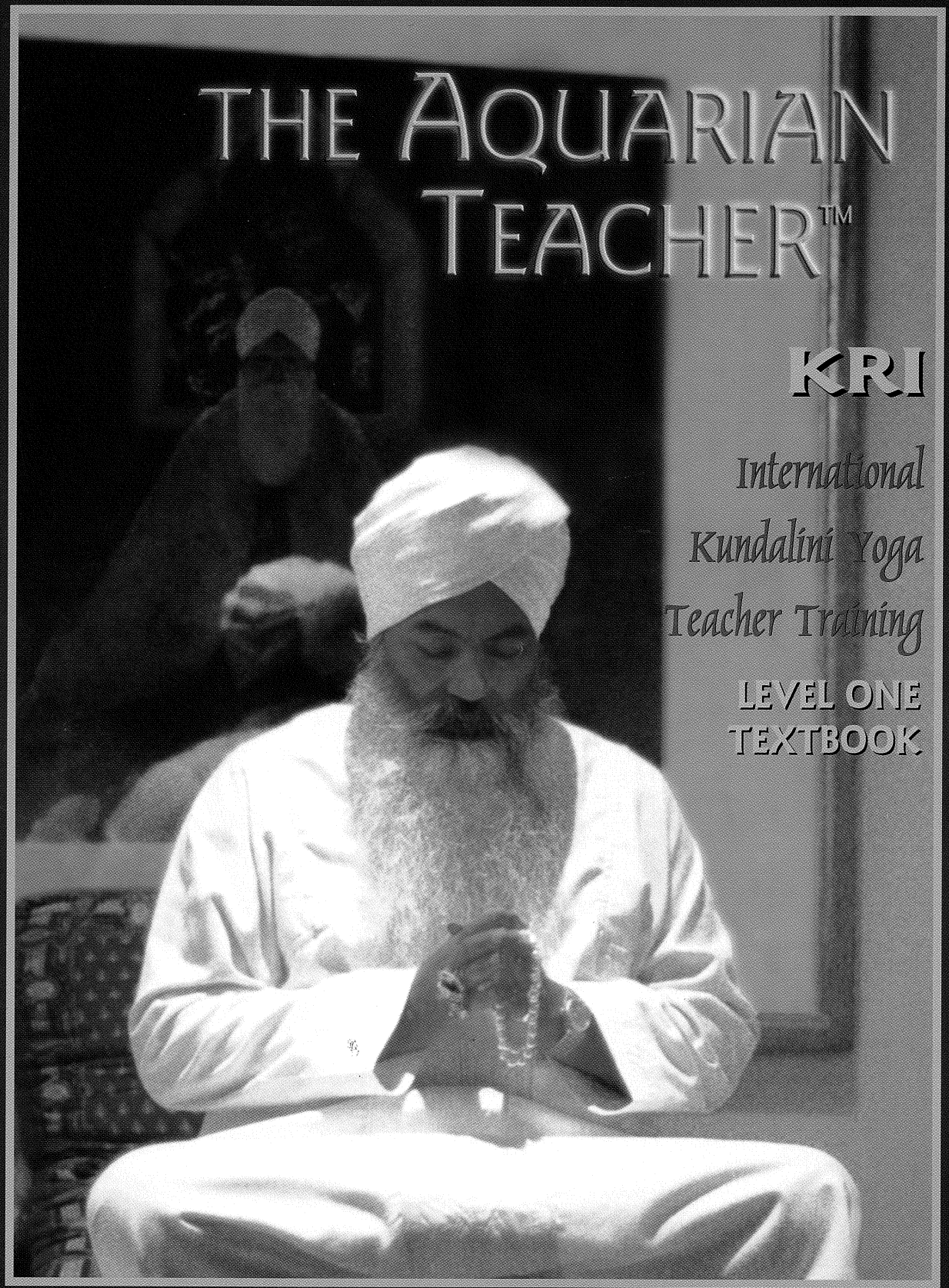

THE AQUARIAN TEACHER™

KRI

International Kundalini Yoga Teacher Training

LEVEL ONE TEXTBOOK

BY YOGI BHAJAN, PHD
MASTER OF KUNDALINI YOGA

THE AQUARIAN TEACHER™

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International Kundalini Yoga Teacher Training

LEVEL 1

TEXTBOOK

This KRI INTERNATIONAL KUNDALINI YOGA TEACHER TRAINING LEVEL 1 TEXTBOOK is designed to be used in conjunction with the LEVEL 1 YOGA MANUAL. Historically this was published as one very large volume. We offer it to you now in two parts. The Index found in the back of this book refers to pages in both the Textbook and the Yoga Manual.

Please check www.kundaliniyoga.com from time to time for online updates.

BY **YOGI BHAJAN, PHD**
MASTER OF KUNDALINI YOGA

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by Yogi Bhajan, Ph.D.

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Kundalini Research Institute

THERE IS NO IDENTITY FOR YOU, EXCEPT YOUR SPIRITUAL IDENTITY. There's no grace in you but to learn. There is no achievement other than to become learned. There's no power but to share what you have learned with all and everyone. Share with compassion—you will be compensated, and you shall have no complex. Then all that there is shall come to you, and you will not have to go after anyone.

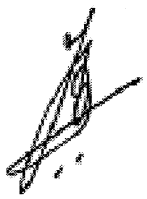
THESE DAYS EVERY HUMAN BEING FEELS THEY ARE PERFECT, they are righteous, they know it all; and they are judgemental of the world around them. In yoga a person has to be humble, have the power to merge, and to be spiritually, mentally, and physically committed for exalted experiences.

The Master can share the knowledge, but the experiences belong to the student. Therefore, we do not claim any result or effect or guarantee any result or achievement because the experience belongs to the individual student individually, his or her consciousness, and his or her power to practice.

We are not a commercial organization and we are not a business. We are just sharing the knowledge and technology that have been passed down to us. You are our students. We don't initiate students, because we believe that each student must initiate himself or herself. According to our definition, a student is the one who studies from the Master to become the Master.

We advise that you consult your physician before beginning this program. Then freely decide whether to participate in these teachings.

The Age of Aquarius is on our head whether we feel, know or understand or not. Past is going to become obsolete, and teachers of the Age of Aquarius are going to help humanity. This is your chance to be leaders with love and affection. We wish you the best of luck.



BY THE KINDNESS OF MY TEACHER, YOGI BHAJAN, I have witnessed his vision grow. From his first few words declaring his purpose, to create teachers, to a robust global network of teachers dedicated to live with awareness and uplift each person. From the first kundalini yoga Teacher Training in the western hemisphere with a dozen students crammed cozily together in a small house in 1970 Los Angeles to our most recent IKYTA meeting in New Mexico with hundreds of active teachers serving students in every country.

From the first he would say, "You do not know me, I know you. I accept none of you as my students. Accept your Self first and show me your grace and caliber by your service and compassion. Compassion is the language of the Aquarian Age. You want flesh and bones and a personality, I want nothing. You will know me by my words and teachings."

Most of you will in fact know him through the teachings. And when you practice the teachings and link to the Golden Chain of teaching energy, you will also know Yogi Bhajan by his subtle presence. Practice brings awareness, awareness brings subtlety, subtlety brings depth, depth brings dedication, dedication brings humility, humility brings grace, and grace brings you the master's touch, which is that presence of spirit that is timeless, without ego and without any boundaries—pure and infinite.

That domain of the Infinite, the *anahat*, is always present and accessible. It is as intimate as your breath. Yogi Bhajan is a master of the time. He has merged into the Infinite consciously in the House of Guru Ram Das, which holds the space of Kundalini Raj Yoga for the Aquarian Age.

I encourage each of you to read the words of these teachings, then be silent and listen to the heart within them. Watch the video records of Yogi Bhajan teaching to get a sense of his clarity, directness, compassion and attitude of service. It is rare to even glimpse someone who has mastered themselves to share mastery. No words or descriptions can convey the impact of participating in his classes, virtually or otherwise. Confirm by experience your own connection to the Teacher, the teachings and the inner teacher within you. Practice the *kriyas* to energize, awaken, purify and heal yourself. Then you can experience teaching with the constant capacity to commit to the integrity of the Self, to commit to stillness and listen, and commit to fearless, compassionate action to serve all.

There is nothing more powerful than Kundalini Yoga to awaken your consciousness, to confront your ego and drop your fears. There is nothing more elegant, to build the strength of your nervous system and character. There is nothing more effective to develop the caliber to be happy in the midst of challenge, and grateful each moment of life. And there is nothing more profound that takes you to the core of your being to listen deeply and hear the pulse of the Creator, the *naad* and *shabd guru*, in all people and all things.

The journey has many steps, abounds with insight and inspiration, invites deep companionship and calls on your body, mind and spirit to work together. At each step the hand of the Teacher is there to help guide you, the teachings are there with flawless energy and technique. My prayer is that each of you realizes your potential and role as an Aquarian Teacher of Kundalini Yoga and awareness.

This manual stems from our efforts to provide a systematic introduction to the vast teaching materials given by Yogi Bhajan. It is the effort of many people. Our vision is to establish a clear standard for the concept of a teacher, the technology of Kundalini Yoga and a discipline to train yourself in both.

My gratitude to Yogi Bhajan for sharing the teachings and directing this effort. My gratitude to Shakti Parwha Kaur Khalsa who has held the standard steadily from the beginning. And my gratitude to the many teachers who have given comments, ideas, critiques and countless hours of time to realize this series of training manuals. And lastly, my appreciation to Guru Raj Kaur Khalsa who has patiently compiled, designed, and structured the Manual coordinating the pieces by meetings, calls and emails to reach the final product.

Gurucharan Singh Khalsa, Ph.D.
Director of Training, Kundalini Research Institute
www.breathwalk.com
July 2002

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BY LUCK OR BY CHANCE, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, I was the first woman in the United States to study with Yogi Bhajan. He told me, "You've been a student long enough; you should be a teacher." And so within two months of attending his classes, I was teaching. That was in 1969. I'm still teaching, and still learning. The more I teach, the more I learn.

In 1970, when Yogi Bhajan started traveling and I heard he was teaching new kriyas in various cities (nobody was tape recording), I felt insecure not knowing all the latest techniques. He said, "Just teach what you know, and teach people to relax." This is still important advice for any teacher. By all means, learn as much of the technology as you can, but realize basically that you don't have to know "everything" to help people to help themselves.

When you affirm the Oath of a Teacher before each class, and when you tune in to the Golden Chain with *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo*, be aware these are not just rituals, they are real and effective means to help you avoid what Yogi Bhajan warned us was the "one incurable disease." That disease is an occupational hazard for teachers, it's called "Spiritual Ego." No matter how much your students appreciate you (and they will), for your own spiritual health, remember that you are not the Doer. It is only by the grace of God and the generosity of our spiritual Teacher (with a capital "T") that any one of us is able to share the magnificent technology of Kundalini Yoga.

In 1969 when Yogi Bhajan taught his first class in Kundalini Yoga in the United States, hardly anyone had accurate information about this ancient, sacred, and up until then, secret, science. Its technology for transformation and empowering of the individual human being had been given only to those students who could prove their devotion, dedication, self-discipline, humility, and obedience to the Teacher. Despite scriptural warnings that whoever taught Kundalini Yoga publicly would not live to see his next birthday, Yogi Bhajan flaunted tradition. He saw that it was the very thing that was desperately needed at this time of the dawning of the Aquarian Age. The time to bring The Yoga of Awareness to the world had come.

He made it clear from the beginning that he had come to train teachers, not to gather disciples, and he emphasized, "Don't love me, love my teachings." But, as students flocked to him, we were enveloped in his absolute, unconditional, amazing loving presence, and love him we did—and still do. It has been his mission to enable us to become "ten times greater than him." To me that means ten times more kind, compassionate, patient, and selfless. (Not to mention wise and graceful.) It's a big order.

His quotable quotes, the "clichés" that have become a part of our 3HO vocabulary can fill volumes. "Keep up, and you'll be kept up." Of course he shared knowledge about the healing, therapeutic benefits of Kundalini Yoga, but he stressed that "Doing is believing." So, when you teach, he said, "Give people an experience."

As you are about to become Kundalini Yoga teachers, I offer my heartfelt welcome to this family of beings who truly want to live, be, and share the technology to be Healthy, Happy, and Holy. It is, after all, your birthright. Teach it, claim it, and the world will be a better place for your having lived and breathed on it.

Humbly yours,
Shakti Parwha Kaur Khalsa
July 2002

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THIS AQUARIAN TEACHER MANUAL REPRESENTS the efforts of many people to codify the great body of teachings brought down through the ages and the ethers by Yogi Bhajan. And at this point in time, this Manual represents the unity of the pioneers who carried these teachings forward, to stand together as one, as Aquarian Teachers, and present in a simple form, the basic teachings of Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan.

Over the last thirty-three years, thousands of pages of material have been created and collected, as those whose lives have been changed by this miraculous science have endeavored to document and share these teachings with others. The Aquarian Teacher represents the distillation of those thousands of pages into an essential, basic format, to serve as a beginning for the first Level of KRI Training in becoming a Kundalini Yoga Teacher.

This Manual, in its simplicity, is meant to be part of a threefold process in your Training. The technology and wisdom contained in its pages will serve as a resource for years to come.

The second in the trinity are The Master's Touch lectures, in book and video form. In 1996 and 1997, Yogi Bhajan taught the first Master's Touch course in Espanola, New Mexico and Assisi, Italy. He asked that these lectures be transcribed and made into a book. These lectures form a great legacy. They embody the spark of the Golden Chain and are an invaluable tool for developing your personal relationship with Yogi Bhajan and the Golden Chain.

The third is your Teacher Trainer, whose dedication to these teachings and to his or her beloved Teacher Yogi Bhajan, and to you and your destiny, will pass these teachings to you purely and selflessly.

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT are in order. Particular acknowledgment to Gurucharan Singh Khalsa and Satya Singh Khalsa, whose original Teacher Training Manuals formed the foundation of this Manual, and to Tarn Tarn Singh Khalsa, Hari Kaur Khalsa, and Dharm Kaur Khalsa who began the process of forming an outline. Thanks to Pranpati Singh who helped to add structure and continuity, and to Guruka Singh Khalsa, who added helpful finishing touches. Bravo to Gurumarka Khalsa from Germany, who took it upon himself to contribute the very valuable index!

Deep appreciation to my daughter Ong Kar Kaur, for her tireless work on the hundreds of drawings—a seemingly never-ending task. And to my young daughter, Nirinjan, who was our model for the meditations. Both completed their Teacher Training last year and were eager to contribute to this important project. Naseem Gulamhusein of Vancouver and Sat Dharm Singh of Mexico also are due thanks for modeling posture.

Thanks to Guruchander Singh Khalsa and Nirvair Singh Khalsa for their work developing the teachings on the Ten Bodies. Thanks to Guru Prem Singh and Simran Kaur for their dedication to perfecting posture, one of the great limbs of yoga, to Shakta Kaur and Gurumukh for their work with children and pre-natal yoga, respectively. And to Darshan Kaur for work on the list of mantras.

Thanks to Shakti Parwha Kaur and Gurucharan Singh who are like philosopher stones for the accuracy and integrity of these teachings.

Thanks to Darshan Kaur Khalsa, Dharm Kaur Khalsa, and Hari Kaur Khalsa for helpful review, and to Nam Kaur Khalsa and Satya Kaur Khalsa to whom this project was so precious.

I humbly bow to the efforts of the many pioneers in Teacher Training worldwide, particularly all those who have pioneered Teacher Training in Europe and other parts of the world.

All contributed to this work out of their love of and desire to serve these teachings, and out of their love for and gratitude to their Teacher, Yogi Bhajan.

It was my personal privilege to serve my Teacher, and the great House of Guru Ram Das. I worked on it with personal and impersonal dedication. I humbly present it, on behalf of my Teacher, and ask forgiveness for any shortcomings. Any shortcomings are mine, not his.

MAY YOUR HUMBLE PRAYER to serve be fulfilled through these teachings and through the course on which you are embarking. May the touch of Guru Ram Das soothe and make fruitful your longing to serve these times, and to uplift every heart.

Humbly,
Guru Raj Kaur Khalsa
May 1, 2003

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PART ONE

The Aquarian Age & the Awakening

CHAPTER 1

The Aquarian Age & the Awakening

The Age of Aquarius is coming our way. Emptiness, insanity, and pain shall be everybody's affair. People will like to hit walls to find out where they can go. They shall come to you. As insane as they are, if you do not take away their pain, and instead you sit in judgment, you are wrong people. That's why we wanted to teach you how to remain disciplined in the most undisciplined world. How to grow, to glow. How to serve, to be. First, we identify ourselves: We are, we are. Second, our words should be such that they should cool down any fire, the desperation, the depression of the person. Third, we must have the power to uplift the soul and serve the person, to be graceful. And finally, we must stand pure.

–YOGI BHAJAN

"Keep up & you will be kept up!"

–YOGI BHAJAN

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Consciousness in the Aquarian Age

Excerpted from *The Quantum Technology of the Shabd Guru*, by Yogi Bhajan and Gurucharan Singh Khalsa.

THE AQUARIAN AGE IS DAWNING. NOVEMBER OF 1991 marked the cusp of the last step of the shift of the Age. There have been many Ages and shifts of Ages before in the long history of Humankind. But this shift of Age is different. The old Piscean Age was dominated by machines and hierarchies. The new Aquarian Age is ruled by awareness, information and energy. The greatest power will be your Word–your consciously projected words. This change is radical, not incremental. It is a simultaneous change in both the outer and inner worlds. The mind is changing its sensitivity, its basic frequency and functioning. Our lifestyle is changing its sense of time, space, relatedness, and relevancy.

In the Age we are leaving behind, it was a central and even sacred task to find and gain access to the right information. There were special places of study in remote areas–like Tibet, or in a deep jungle or an isolated desert, accessible to a few who could qualify or who had a special destiny. The motto of the Age was "to be or not to be." Learn, grow, and become something. Great knowledge about human potential was guarded by secrecy and layers of initiations.

In the Piscean Age it was central and sacred to find and gain access to the right information...In the Aquarian Age, there are no secrets! Information is available. Real value will come from truth embodied in practical actions and internal caliber.

In the Aquarian Age there are no secrets! Information is available. Finding it is not the central task any longer. In this Age the motto is "be to be." You already are something by the grace of the Creator. Accept your wholeness and your connectedness to a larger creative existence, and express it with each committed action. Let your actions demonstrate wisdom. Study alone, knowing a truth alone, will not be important. Real value will come from truth embodied in practical actions and in the internal caliber and qualities of your mind and heart. This is the profile of a fulfilled human being.

THE UNKNOWN WILL BE KNOWN

In the last Age people could get away with many more behaviors–from embezzling to dumping pollutants. They could hide them. Now that is rapidly becoming impossible. In the past one could establish a persona–a mask to show to the world, and be known by. Now every persona is under audit. Each action can be tracked regardless of appearances. Every money exchange, statement, and behavior leaves a trail. They will be known by those actions.

Action is the language of the awakened Self. As the Aquarian Age dawns, the old defenses and manipulations based on hiding or controlling access to information will no longer work. We need the capacity to assess our actions and their consequences before we take them, as if every action will be known and will reveal us. Only then can we realize that our word, fulfilled by actions, is our ultimate gift and power.

VAST CHANGES AFOOT

There are many dimensions to the radical shift of this Age. People everywhere are talking about it, making predictions or debunking it. Some sense the shift as a cataclysm or end of the world, others as a new beginning, and still others as a time of uncertainty and unpredictability. What is clear to everyone is a sense of urgency and a vast change in society, consciousness, and the nature of our perception of the world and each other. We have always experienced change. But rarely with this intensity and speed and *never* with this scope and vastness. The change is on all levels of life at once. It is not sequential and orderly, nor is each step predictable. And it affects each one of us personally.

The change is on all levels of life at once. It is not sequential and orderly, nor is each step predictable. And it affects each one of us personally.

Regardless of how the shift is perceived, every person down to the grass roots of society is reaching for something to do about it. Each person must accept the responsibility to elevate and manage his or her own state of awareness, to deal with widespread and constant stress, to take actions and to make decisions on a vast, shifting array of problems. Although people intuit the shift in different ways, there are several over-arching themes that we all agree must be confronted and dealt with.

THE CHARACTER OF THE AQUARIAN AGE

- Change and learning is continuous and life-long. We must maintain mental, emotional, and physical flexibility.
- Intellect is not enough. We need a new relationship to intuition, emotion and instinct.
- Information is not enough. Neither is knowledge. We need wisdom.
- Learning is not enough. We must learn how to learn.
- Complexity is increasing as is our need to deal with it.
- Our sense of personal identity and its foundation is shifting.
- This is an age of paradox–more global and more individual,

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with fewer boundaries and more demand for political separations. Everything is faster and we have less time. We need far more love and unity, for we have more fear and tremendous insecurity.

- Stamina and constant peak performance are the common benchmarks to evaluate all people and their work, and the need is to go inward and regenerate.
- We require a reconciliation and integration of the spiritual side of life with the technological and material sides—a spiritual fitness to sense values and meaning.
- There is no isolation. Each action we take must be considered ecologically, and globally, because each person does affect, directly or indirectly, vast networks of people, and other living beings and places.

USING THE MEDITATIVE MIND

We must learn to use the mind differently. The mind of the future Aquarian Age person will change both in sensitivity and quality over the next several decades. In a few generations our mental struggles will seem as distant and perplexing to them as the problems and thoughts of ancient prehistoric empires seem to us now. That change of mental quality will occur automatically and has already begun in some people.

The outer education provided by the information revolution must be matched by an inner education in wisdom, self-control, intuition and the use of the neutral mind.

The outer education provided by the information revolution must be matched by an inner education in wisdom, self-control, intuition, and the use of the neutral mind. We need stamina under stress, clarity of values for decisions, and a new base for identity. We need the ability to command our brain, mind, and states of consciousness consciously through the filter of intuition, wisdom, and the positive, negative, and neutral minds.

UNIQUE CHALLENGES IN THE AQUARIAN AGE

We must prepare for and find antidotes to a wave of new maladies. Each Age has its special challenges to body, mind and soul. For example, leprosy, tuberculosis, malaria, and smallpox are plagues that we faced for many generations in the last Age. Through new medical technologies and committed efforts, some of the old enemies, like smallpox have disappeared. Others are contained and in retreat. Now, as we enter the Aquarian Age, previously unknown challenges such as viral epidemics and psychological and spiritual ailments beset us, with more on the way. Depression and fatigue-related psychological illnesses are at epidemic proportions and rising at accelerating rates. *The Annals of Internal Medicine*, a prestigious U.S. medical journal, recently reported fatigue and stress as two of the top reasons people seek a doctor. Over 25 percent of patients complain of prolonged fatigue lasting at least several weeks. Other symptoms come with the fatigue: insomnia, inability to concentrate or make decisions, loss of a feeling of control, and alienation from normal social and sexual relationships. News reports are increasingly documenting that even the most competent, productive, and intelligent people have lost their sense of balance to the inescapable pressure of information overload, the lack of time, and increased social and personal demands.

Depression and fatigue-related psychological illnesses are at epidemic proportions and rising at accelerating rates.

At first people will try to deal with this gap with increased electronic technology, attempting to use more sophisticated devices and software, to sort the flood of information. The ancient defenses of our human nervous system will accelerate. We will fight, withdraw, and fantasize more. Some of us will attempt to diffuse the impact of the flood of information with harmful adaptations like drug use and violence. Electronic technology will only bring us more information, more choices, more contacts, and more complexity. It will push us beyond all the old frontiers of identity—home, neighborhood, country, values, and the natural rhythms of nature. Our old touchstones for forming an identity will fail, and we will have a pervasive identity crisis.

A TECHNOLOGY FOR INNER ENERGY

All these examples highlight the necessity for a potent and practical technology to generate the inner energy needed to survive and excel under this pressure. Energy is "the capacity for action or accomplishment; the effort the mind and body is able to exert to move from the current state to a desired state." Remember the famous formula of Einstein, $E = mc^2$. It converts the mass of an object into the amount of energy it can generate. In the realm of the mind we can write a similar formula:

These examples highlight the necessity for a potent and practical technology to generate the inner energy needed to survive and excel under this pressure.

E (inner energy) = mc^2 (Mind) (Consciously Conscious)

We must consciously direct the consciousness of the mind. We release the energy we need to excel and balance ourselves with an inner technology that can alter the frequency of the mind and the state of the brain.

We do not need new choices. We are flooded with choices. We need an elevated capacity to make choices. We do not need more information. We need the wisdom to use all the information. We do not need another religion. We need the experience of a dharma that creates the spiritual fitness to act believably on our beliefs.

Excerpted from *Shabd Guru*, by Yogi Bhajan and Gurucharan Singh Khalsa.

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Five Sutras for the Aquarian Age

1
Recognize that the other person is you.

2
There is a way through every block.

3
When the time is on you, start, and the pressure will be off.

4
Understand through compassion or you will misunderstand the times.

5
Vibrate the Cosmos, the Cosmos shall clear the path.

–YOGI BHAJAN

Keep Up!

(Chardi Kalah II)

Har, Har, Har, Har, Meditate on the Name.

As the tears of God's Love come to your eyes,
The Path will be revealed,
And you'll see God
Everywhere.

Keep going!
Keep up!
Keep walking . . .
Slowly . . .
Effortlessly . . .
Gracefully . . .

Sing the Nam!
The Music of the Spheres,
And keep on drinking
The Necter Essence of God!

–YOGI BHAJAN from *Furmaan Khalsa–Poems to Live By*

Yogi Bhajan's Message at the Dawn of the Aquarian Age

THE AGE OF AQUARIUS BEGAN ON NOVEMBER 11, 1991. We are in the cusp period between Pisces and Aquarius. The world shall change. A new world shall emerge beyond our expectations, imaginations, and situations.

With this year, we will not only say goodbye to 1991, we will say goodbye to the Age of Pisces. Now, the slogan of the Age of Pisces: "I want to know, please help me," will change to the slogan of the Age of Aquarius: "I know, let me help take you there."

This will be the age of experience, expertise, and expansion. Prosperity shall be the key factor, and the prosperity message is:

Prosperity, prosperity, prosperity, is perpetual with people who prefer to be penetrating, prepared and purposeful. But prosperity only comes to those who are trustworthy, deliver, and who are content and consistent. Basically, it boils down to commitment. If you put your soul into anything, you can plug into the whole world. It will be yours. You can sweep prosperity with your commitment. Contain, commit, and be continuous.

We wish you the best in 1992, the beginning of the Age of Aquarius.

–YOGI BHAJAN, DECEMBER 20, 1991

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The Self-Sensory System & the Transition from the Piscean to the Aquarian Age

TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN
August 2000

IN THE NEXT TWELVE TO FOURTEEN YEARS YOU WILL BE needed by the world. It does not matter who one is today, or to whom one belongs, people's minds are going to go empty. In the Piscean Age, the main need was for knowledge, for creative legacy. That's why in the Piscean Age sex was taboo; it was monitored, matured, glorified. Sex and sensuality were considered the primary attractions. Beauty was physical, and people pursued each other. Sexual intercourse was the orientation of relationship, and it reached the point of obnoxious duality. Perversion became very prominent.

DUALITY WON'T WORK ANYMORE

But the time is changing, and people are looking towards fulfillment of the self through purity and piety, individuality, and reality. They don't want to practice duality anymore; that's why you will find few marriages. Sex will not be the attraction. A Sensory System will develop, a new system where the individual will find him or herself complete. Communication will be humongous. Everybody will have access to all knowledge. With a push of the button you can get any information you want. The whole world will be at your disposal. The obsession with sex will have no place. One will not look for satisfaction through physical intercourse. It will be automatic that one will find satisfaction through the self-sensory system, which people will develop in the coming 50 years. The foundation is being laid now because the cusp period is 1991 to 2012 for the Age of Pisces to go, and the Age of Aquarius to come. We have already gone through nine years of these 21 years.

What is that personal sensory system? There will be no need for cosmetic make-up. People will be open, straight, simple, and their beauty will be internal, not external. Man and woman are going to reach out with such dignity, such devotion, such an elevated, loftiness of self that the beauty of the human character will be so bewitching. Not only the one who is willing will be enjoying and realizing, but their realization will be so profound that no destructive temptation by another person will work.

People will be open, straight, simple, and their beauty will be internal, not external.

WHAT WE ARE LEAVING BEHIND

The Piscean Age was the ugliest age. It was an era in which the female was rooted out from her roots, and exploited to the brink and to the brim by men. Male-female relationship didn't have any strength. It didn't have any character. It didn't have any taste. So females in the past century gave birth to the most fearful, insecure, impotent, or oversexed men, and sexual disorder was worse than ever before in the past 3,000 years.

In humankind, men were sexually inferior; they did not have the power of endurance. And they could not carry the love and polarity of the female. In other words, men and women could not become a unit. Their sexual habits were so shallow that the Akashic record did not even record them. Men were the product of being worthless and useless; their sexual intimacy had no depth.

The men produced in the last century, whom we call "great," wanted to indulge in the power of destruction. That's why we created the atom bomb, the hydrogen bomb, and smart bombs; we had two wars, and we killed more people in the name of religion than anything else. Religion became not reality, but an ugly fanaticism.

THE WORKING GOD

The ugliest thing that happened in this last century is that man started finding God outside himself. Man forgot that God is the working God, *Karta Purkh*, which, Nanak said, works and breathes in us. It's part of us; It's not separate. We were blind to God's presence everywhere.

The only way to survive today is through the insanity of the ego. Not ego– ego has a rational reference–but the *insanity* of the ego. Man's ego is like a snake which spews poison at you like a fountain. It doesn't mean anything. It just scares you, that's all.

People have become limited, small, squeezed to a point of just physical existence. Today we are six-billion ugly ducklings of the human race living on the planet, and we have no quality, no quantity, no character, and no commitment. Look at our character; it's wrapped in lies and inconsistency. We truthfully say things which are not true. We dramatically say things which are not true.

And we do the ugliest thing on this planet: we build a power which surrounds the individual. How many houses, how many

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boyfriends, how much money do we have? We end up adding on dirt—a termite heap of dirt.

In character we have become very shallow. How many and how big are our TV sets? How many cars do we have? You'll never hear a person talking about how much satisfaction, how much containment, how much contentment, how much character, and how much realization he has. You won't hear it these days.

"Who had sex with who? Who wants who? Who chased who? Who is nude? Who is more nude?" Do you understand? There's a competition going on. You see all our magazines—it's a human joke. And when a race of humans starts making mockery of themselves openly and obnoxiously, nothing is sacred.

So this is the state of affairs, and it has to go on for 12 more years of this cusp period. And it will be bad for us.

BUILDING THE FOUNDATION OF THE NEW AGE

My idea to present this to you is that many of you will try to reach out to help people or help yourself, and you will have something to understand. It's called "Building the Foundation of the New Age."

The Age of Aquarius will be the age of experience where only people of experience will be liked, respected, worshipped, talked to and understood. It's not a matter of how young or old you are, how white you are, or how black you are.

Religion as it has been known has become absolutely obsolete. Because in the past 5000 years religion has been teaching you to redeem your soul. Soul is already redeemed. What you should redeem is your being cheap, shallow, worthless, useless, not true to your words, not true to your commitment, and not true to your character. That's what you should redeem.

The majority of the world is nothing but show business. You put on a show. And spirituality is nothing but a show. No human believes that they are a fact of life, a fact of existence; that they are real; that they are born in the image of God. The most magnificent Allah, most infinite God Jehovah, most pure, wise Lord Buddha, whatever you want to call your God, has created you in His own image, and this is it. So God in the New Age is called He-She-It— He, She, and It. And if you don't understand the totality of God as He, She, and It, then you are s_ _ _. You can put silver leaf or gold leaf on it, that is still what you are. So you are wrapped in gold, your wealth, and you think you are covered; you are wrong. You are wrapped in silver, and you think you are shining and bright, and you can make a fool of others? You are deadly wrong.

The fact is there is nothing more beautiful, more worthy, or more conscious than you.

TO BE, TO BE

The time has come of self-value. And the question is not: "To be or not to be;" the statement is: "To be, to be." "I am, I Am." The time has come not to search for God, but to be God. Time is not to worship God, but to trust and dwell in the working God.

As this is coming through me, it is cleansing me. If you are not listening and only hearing, you are not getting it. But if you are listening, it will go into you. You have to come to the awareness of how bad and unfortunate we have made this world as ugly as possible, and how beautiful actually God created it. We are purely enemies of God, because God within us is in pain, and there is no God outside us. Each one is the manifestation of God, so it won't work to create God by making a stone God. Every grain of sand is God. And we have to have our subtle body, our sophisticated self to see it.

In reality, you are a bunch of molecules living by the Pranic Body. You are nothing more, nothing less. As long as the psyche will not merge in you, equally in balance, you will have no awareness. Human existence is a combination of the Pranic Body and psyche energy, which is the universe, *Prakirti*, the creation in proportion. When you have that state of mind you are clean and clear. You stop searching; you start practicing. The oddness in you becomes even, and your flow becomes as vast as the universe—and sometimes beyond the universe. You have the authentic reach to yourself. I don't want anybody because I want everybody. This concept is very difficult. I don't want to be "I"; I don't want to be "we." I want to be "just as it is." And my run is with the flow of the psyche of the universe as it takes me, as it moves me, as it desires me. Man will stop cutting corners and come to a real existence. And it's not long from now.

You have to come to the awareness of how bad and unfortunate we have made this world, and how beautiful actually God created it.

Any person who thinks he is great may be nothing, because the Information Age is so powerful, and so knowable, and so acknowledgeable, and so understandable, that nothing can work. We will not be competent to cheat each other, but we can help and deal with each other as equal. There's no beautiful, no ugly. The love of existence of our life and of our breathing will be in need of the flow of the psyche in us, therefore, we can be a real combination of self within the self. And the sensory system which will develop automatically out of us will be our archangel protecting us and glorifying us.

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LIVING BY THE SELF-SENSORY SYSTEM

Those who hustle and hassle and move and want, will just die suffering. They'll not get anything. Now the time has come that you will have a meditative mind to wait and see what comes to you. Your mind will direct you to work towards the right channels. You will meet the right people. Our future is now, and our presence is our purity. We don't have to purify ourselves—we are pure. We simply have to not make it ugly by diversion, by concoctions, stories, and by creating meaningless romance and fantasy, and imagining things which are zero. We'll master ourselves through our service, through our character, through our commitment, and the most powerful thing which people have—our grace. Our individual grace is the most wanted today. And our projection, which will give us satisfaction, fulfillment, and exaltation, is our nobility. We will act noble, gracious, kind, and compassionate. These are our essential features.

The love of existence of our life and of our breathing will be in need of the flow of the psyche in us. The sensory system which will develop automatically out of us will be our archangel protecting us and glorifying us.

Our creativity will be our sensory system. And through this sensory system we will be overflowing with energy, touching the hearts of people, and feeling their feeling, and filling their emptiness. We will act great and our flow will fulfill the gratefulness in the hearts of others. It will be a new relationship. We will create a new humanity which will have the new sensory system, and thus we will establish the Age of Aquarius. This is the fundamental character you have to learn by heart.

Our future is now and our presence is our purity. We don't have to purify ourselves —we are pure. We simply have to not make it ugly by diversion, concoctions, stories, and by creating meaningless romance and fantasy.

(For the Meditation to Develop the Self-Sensory System, see Chapter 30.)

Seven Steps to Happiness

1st Step is Commitment

The first step is commitment. In every life you are meant to commit. That is why the word is commit-meant. Commitment gives you CHARACTER.

2nd Step is Character

Character is when all your characteristics—all facets, flaws, and facts—are under your control. Yin and yang meet there, totally balanced. Character gives you DIGNITY.

3rd Step is Dignity

People start trusting you, liking you, respecting you. Dignity will give you DIVINITY.

4th Step is Divinity

What is Divinity? Divinity is when people have no duality about you. They trust you right away. They have no fear about you. Divinity gives you GRACE.

5th Step is Grace

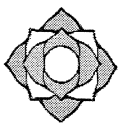
Where there is grace, there is no interference, no gap between two people, no hidden agenda. Grace gives you the power to SACRIFICE.

6th Step is Power to Sacrifice

You can stand any pain for that person. That sacrifice gives you HAPPINESS.

7th Step is Happiness

—YOGI BHAJAN



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PART TWO

The Roots of Kundalini Yoga

CHAPTER 2

What is Yoga?

What is light?
Light is where you can see everything.
Light is where darkness disappears.

Who is enlightened?
One who can see everything: good,
bad, and neutral.
One who sees all and sees God.
If you cannot see God in all,
you cannot see God at all.

Those who seek God inside, find it.
Those who seek God outside,
waste their time and waste their lives.

This world is the essence of Word,
of Shabd.
Those who follow the rules in their
essence and being, by action, thought,
and deed, shall rule their destiny and
shall cover the distance of life with
place, grace, and glory.

When we fold our hands in prayer,
God opens His arms and gives us a hug.
Life is fulfilled with this union.

That is Yoga.

–YOGI BHAJAN

I will tell you about yoga in very simple terms: The human mind is potentially Infinite and Creative. But in practical reality it is limited. So a technical know-how is required through which one can expand his mind to bring about the equilibrium that enables him to control his physical structure and experience his Infinite Self.

–YOGI BHAJAN

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TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN

What is Yoga?

An Adventure in Consciousness

I HAVE FOUND THAT PEOPLE LACK A BASIC UNDERSTANDING about the goals, process, and techniques of Kundalini Yoga. They do not understand the core concept of yoga. Some people think yoga is a religion. Some people think it is physical exercise for vitality and health. Some people think it is a psychological system that develops the potential of the psyche. In reality, this is all based on misunderstanding. Yoga is essentially a relationship.

Consider the origin of the word "yoga." Yoga, as we in the West understand it, has come from the biblical word, *yoke*. This originated from the root word in Sanskrit: *jugit*. They both mean "to join together," or "to unite." Yoga is the union of the individual's unit consciousness with the Infinite Consciousness. The definition of a yogi is a person who has totally leaned on the Supreme Consciousness, which is God, until he or she has merged the unit self with the Infinite Self. That is all it means.

The word "yoga" comes from the word "yoke," "to join together," or "to unite." Yoga is the union of the individual's unit consciousness with the infinite consciousness.

A TECHNOLOGY OF AWARENESS

Yoga is a technology of awareness. It starts with the universal human predicament that regardless of your individual level of experience and awareness, the underlying reality of every human mind is that it is both infinite and creative in potential. This unlimited potential is limited in practical action. Your possibilities meet with your actualities at the border of awareness. Awareness varies and gives you different choices and capacities. To break the unconscious limits, a person needs a technical know-how. That know-how is required to expand the caliber and capacity of the mental faculties, to bring about an equilibrium, to control the physical structure and to experience the Infinite Self.

The techniques of Kundalini Yoga form the owner's manual for human consciousness.

The techniques of Kundalini Yoga form the owner's manual for human consciousness. Yoga explores your dimensions, depth, nature, and potential as a human being. In simple terms, that is all that yoga means.

Yoga is greatly needed. In our life today, each person must deeply understand why he is a human being and what it means to be a human being. There is a lot of talk and philosophy about the inner Infinity and how to know about it. Remember that intellectual knowledge does not hold and sustain you. Knowledge only becomes real wisdom when you experience it with your own heart and Being. Only the experience in that wisdom—*gian*—can hold and support you. Just because you know about or believe something is true, does not mean you can act on it. But if you discover a truth and act on the path of that truth, and if you can find bliss, success, and fulfillment in yourself as a result, then no power on Earth can make you veer from that truth or do wrong. Once you have seen the joy of that truth and have enjoyed that beauty you are okay.

Knowledge becomes wisdom when you experience it with your own heart and Being, when it becomes your personal experience.

DISCIPLINE & TRUE WISDOM

Students must understand this distinction. Knowledge becomes wisdom when it becomes your personal experience. Anything which can hold and support you is based in real wisdom. Some students say that knowing about the truth is all right. They say knowledge is good, but wisdom is not. They are afraid of the discipline and surrender required to attain true wisdom.

A guru can give you knowledge and techniques, but he cannot give you wisdom. This is where we normally err. We think that someone is a wise man. We believe we can make everything all right if we learn from him, serve him, and feel good about him. Yoga and wisdom never work that way. He can give you technical skills, but acquiring wisdom depends on your own practice and discipline. The teacher and the student have an equally essential part to play in the drama of enlightenment. His part is to provide the knowledge and inspiration. Your equally essential part is to learn, practice, and experience!

Acquiring wisdom depends on your own practice and discipline.

Where can you start to learn who you are as a human being? What is the most basic knowledge that you can capture as your own inner wisdom? I want you to feel very happy and good. But I also want to give you a direct and honest overview and assessment of yourself as a basic human being who seeks happiness and a fulfilled life.

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THE THREEFOLD STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN BEING

To begin the study of Kundalini Yoga, understand that you have a threefold structure: body, mind, and soul. Your essence has a vehicle to experience the universe and the Self, through these three facets of you. You must understand, have your own depth, and experience of each facet.

The Body

The physical or gross body is the first facet you must master and understand as a human being. It is your vehicle to travel through this life. Your inner machinery is very complicated and subtle. It is not just the flesh and bone that you can see. It's a very well-designed and systematic system. It has glands, blood circulation, breathing apparatus, heartbeat pulsation, a brain, sensory apparatus, and a complex nervous system. All these systems combine and interweave with a structure of flesh and bone to constitute your physical system.

The physical vehicle is a functional system. It receives, processes, and accomplishes ongoing tasks. Every functional system, regardless of its composition, needs cleaning, needs care, and needs tuning regularly. The normal use of the system creates wear and misalignment. It also needs careful assessment of its capacity to act, its potential to respond to demands, and its possibility for endurance and longevity. These are the basics that you must learn to take care of first.

The physical vehicle is a functional system. It receives, processes, and accomplishes tasks. It needs cleaning, care, and tuning regularly. The balance of the physical vehicle affects the rest of your capacity and experience.

The balance of the physical vehicle affects the rest of your capacity and experience. If you want to test the reality of this claim, just overeat consistently for a few days and you will understand. In New York I met a person whose case proved this. I asked him, "Why are you on welfare?" He said, "I can't hold myself together." It surprised me. He had intelligence, nervous capacity, and friends. His problem was that he overate. Every ten or fifteen days, he would get sick and go to the hospital. After he got out they would ask him to take precautions and not do it again. But he would immediately overeat, get sick, and go back in. It was a powerful cycle. Overeating destroyed the balance of his whole system. It blocked any other aspiration and goal he had. Overeat even one time and you upset your body.

The physical body is the basic temple in which you can deposit the treasure of happiness in life. When you are young you can play mischief with the physical body. But in old age the body has you paying for the playing. You cannot escape this fact. The body does not forgive your actions, it only records the results of the actions.

You must schedule the body and calculate its use and maintenance on a scale that changes with age. Think to yourself, "Suppose I live 100 years. I have a plan for that. How should I carry this body, model 1949, or 1969? I want to live 100 years from that first year. How do I care for that system?"

The physical body is the basic temple in which you can deposit the treasure of happiness in life.

If you buy a car, you can expect that with regular service, oil changes, etc., it will get a certain mileage. But if you do not schedule regular maintenance, you will have to change cars after only two years. It doesn't work that way with the human body. You are not so fearless that after five or ten years you can say, "All right, I can change the human body, I can get into another." You have not become so mystically attuned to Universal Consciousness that you can do that. It is essential to make the best of what we have. This body is the only one you get.

In Kundalini Yoga, you study the human body in the light of yoga therapy. You must understand it and learn how you can make the best use of it. You must be able to keep it on the level of consciousness you choose, so that it can serve you better and better, without a lot of trouble. That's the maximum you can do.

The Mind

The mind is the second facet in our human life. If the horizon of the mind in thought, understanding, tolerance, and patience is limited, and if the mind is not so beautifully functional that it can see the unseen, and understand the consequences of each action, then it is practically impossible to live a happy life. The mind guides your actions and emotions. If you do not have a good road map, you do not know where you are going. You are just driving without aim, choice, or control. That's what we do in life.

As you think, so you are. The mind guides your actions and emotions. If you do not have a good road map, you do not know where you are going.

I would like to train you so that you can have a happy life around you. Actually, you must realize that everything depends on your mental outlook. The problem with your mind is that as you think, so you are. How can you develop this potent mental faculty to perceive everything correctly? If somebody is beautiful or ugly to you, it is a result of your mental evaluation. Somebody seems rich to you, even though he doesn't give you a penny. He is rich to you because of mental appraisal. You may imagine somebody is poor, even though he has a million dollars sitting right under his seat. You call him poor because of your own mind. All of your experience is filtered

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through the creativity and appraisal of your mind. Happy and unhappy belong to your mind, not to the world.

Let me say this in the two languages of the mystic and the scientist. When you say, "I am a God-conscious person," it only means that you realize your mental capacity and ability. That is the real meaning. Everything you receive and have is through the capacity and creativity of your mind.

We always say, "When I pray, God will come." Have you ever understood what a prayer is? You create a vibratory effect, which goes into the infinite creativity around your psyche. The answer comes and is expressed in the energy of a job done. Then you say, "Well, prayer works." It is only your mind, which has the power to concentrate and to work with that beauty.

It is the mind, which can give you a perspective on your life. What is the aim of your life? Many of you do not ask this question. You are too busy just surviving. But without this question you will never experience living. The reflex answer to the question is, "Oh, everything is all right." What is all right? Nothing! Ask anybody. Everybody has twenty complaints about himself. Why? Where does the time go? Early in the morning, you go to the office and earn money. Saturday you have to pay your bills and buy groceries. If there's a long weekend you have to take care of your taxes. Three hundred and sixty-five days go like this. We are so involved in moment-to-moment tasks that we do not know any better about life. When we do not know any better, how's the better going to come?

We pass our years with such speed and anxiety that we do not know what maintains us, except the blessing of God's compassion. It is an enormous and very rare mental shock that can damage your mental energy. This functional structure of the human machine is so beautifully made by the Maker that it can recover from normal jerks and problems. Only when there is constant pressure and no relaxation, when there is no outlet, when there is constant boredom, or when there is a constant deficit in mental capacity, does it result in a shattered mind and the loss of happiness. Then you must get to a psychiatrist, a counselor, or a yogi. You depend on someone to redirect your energy and help you.

But I believe every person represents God. I do not believe you should be dependent and led around like a donkey by the nose by some wise man who puts a string in your nostrils, or who talks about God. You do not need preachers or leechers. What you need is the inner experience of God. But you have been brainwashed to misunderstand this idea. You think God is a guy who lives in the seventh sky at the head of Time watching you.

Understand the word "God." There are three basic letters in the word "God": G-O-D. These letters stand for the generating principle, the organizing principle, and the destroying principle. What I have done is taken the first letter from each of these three words and combined them together to make the word "God." God is the generating principle that is within you and which pervades the Creation. It is Infinity to Infinity in relationship to the total creativity. Through its changing, everything happens.

When you give the mind the regular experience of an infinite horizon, you maintain it at the level and caliber of a basic human being.

When you become a God-conscious individual, you have the power of mental infinity. It's a great help if you find some person who can stand by you and let you go through that experience. You can get knowledge from anybody, it will always yield a beautiful bounty. You can work on any level, but you have to train yourself to be wise and effective through your own experience.

Remember, you have three aspects. You have the lower self, the gross or physical self; you have the central self, which is known as the existing self; and you have the higher Self, which is a powerful, sophisticated, and delicate Self. When you give the mind the regular experience of an infinite horizon, you maintain it at the level and caliber of a basic human being.

The Soul & Spirit

The third facet in the human being is the soul, the spirit. As no lamp can burn without a combustible fuel, so no life can exist without a relationship to the spirit in it. Spirit has many meanings, tones and facets. If there is a central thread in it, it is the general flow of the cosmic energy. In Catholicism we call that flow God. In yoga we call that flow Cosmic Energy. The two meanings and the One Reality are exactly the same.

You have to understand your relationship with that Infinite Energy. You must learn how you can tune in to accomplish your own purpose. You can have a healthy, happy, holy, wholesome life, a fulfilled life, a beautiful life. You can experience in yourself the deep contentment of existence. You should be so confirmed in this contentment that if you had to quit this planet you could just say, "Thank you," and feel grateful.

We often misunderstand or deny our basic spiritual nature in our social habits and communication. We are first of all people of spirit and faith. Our first impulse is faith. Our greatest capacity is faith. Our innocence and intuition act from faith, yet we have lost the normal experience of the inner Infinity.

I want to touch on a controversial point. Whatever religion you follow, that belief, tradition, and practice is meant to guide you to experience your true origin, which is Infinity. The religion should get rid of your self-belittlement and limitation. It should

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inspire and lift you to your full human capacity. Instead of this result, you usually learn prejudice; you learn how to divide humanity; and you learn to love and hate based on belonging to certain thoughts, feelings, or practices. This mis-education has done more harm to humanity than all the good acts the religions were intended to do.

You have to understand your relationship with the Infinite Energy, to the spirit within you.

We have lost touch with the roots of religion: the spiritual impulse and identity in our heart. We do not even understand the basic concept in the word "religion." That term comes from the Latin *religio*. It means "to look back at your origin." And what is your origin? Spirit! And what is your end? Spirit! So what are you fighting about? What is the great debate? When you experience your origin as a reality, you are happy. Be constant under all circumstances and relate to one thing—you are a part of Infinity and always lean on that power—then you'll never be unhappy.

Happiness and mastery of the spiritual facet of the human life is a simple and direct practice. The problem is that we have never trained our minds to know our origin as Infinity. Instead we have hidden under rituals. All these churches, temples, and synagogues, all the places of worship, were meant to create group consciousness. Spiritual awakening starts with individual consciousness, then progresses to group consciousness. When group consciousness is established, and you care for others, then you progress to Universal Consciousness. Religious places were designed so that all the people who believe in some way could join together to praise the Lord and feel elevated. That was the original purpose. Now people come there to fight elections and to argue about who should control the synagogue or church. Or it has become a forum for some minister to speak, entertain, and dump his distinctive fervor. It has become a regular mechanized ritual—a systematic system within the system.

Happiness and mastery of the spiritual facet of life is a simple and direct practice. But we have never trained our minds to know our origin as Infinity. Instead, we have hidden under rituals.

Take care of the spiritual facet of your life by joining with others to experience and elevate your self, the group, and the universe. In most places, the original purpose and practice to gather and experience the group elevation of consciousness has been forgotten, diluted, or simply gone. With that facet of our life neglected and undeveloped, we have become confused. When a person does not develop the strength of the individual consciousness toward group consciousness, he cannot attain the final experience of the Universal Consciousness. Barriers will always exist, which keep a person limited. The development of group consciousness into the experience of Infinity is the bridge to Universal Consciousness. It releases the Unlimited Self and fulfills the spiritual longing.

GROWTH WITH YOGA

Kundalini means awareness. Awareness is the active interaction of you as a finite individual identity with you as an infinite potential identity. This dormant energy of awareness is in you. Kundalini Yoga is the supreme technology to awaken that awareness and take you into your original Self. Normally, this awareness, kundalini, is sleeping in you. You experience your own capacity and reality in a limited way. That awareness can be awakened and expanded. It can be extended to Infinity and yet, you remain you! Infinity is your basic origin and identity. The difference in your expanded state is that there is nothing lacking. The process of growth through Kundalini Yoga is a natural unfolding of your own nature. The blocks to that growth are your attachments to the familiarity of the past, and your fear of the expanded Self.

The development of group consciousness into the experience of Infinity is the bridge to Universal Consciousness.

Your basic human structure is your threefold nature and the relationship of the finite coiled awareness to your infinite uncoiled awareness. This is the fundamental framework through which we have to function and experience life. Do you like it? Are you willing to agree to all this? Let's focus on this structure and its operation. As you practice Kundalini Yoga you will grow. Like a snake you will need to shed old skins to be more of who you are. You will need to examine certain attitudes, behaviors, and emotional habits. You will gain new perspectives, capacities, and habits that can support your expanded awareness.

Kundalini Yoga is the supreme technology to awaken your awareness and take you into your original Self. It is a natural unfolding of your own nature.

There are several common challenges a student must confront. Your mind must be developed, artistic, and self-controlled. It must gain a neutrality that lets you encounter and enjoy the constant change that is life. You must mature the mind and your attitude to ride on those waves of life and enjoy it. After all, what is life? It is a wave. The light must follow the night as night must follow the day. Sunshine must follow the clouds, and clouds must follow the sunshine. This constant change is the natural design of nature. But you feel you are really something special. You learn as a child that you are an exception, and you want to control everything. You want sunshine all the time! If you are in the sun all the time, then the nose gets

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burned, and the eyes can't see. No one can live in this world with sunshine all the time. No person can live in darkness all the time—they will get depressed and sick. The real beauty of experience and life is based on this constant variation of light and dark, up and down. To have happiness all the time is very boring. You can't live that way. Your sensory organs cannot smell, see, hear, or feel anything without a change or contrast. You need a little push and pull to just feel where you are and where you should be.

LIFE IS LIKE A WAVE

This life is nothing but a vibration. It is a path that vibrates up and down like a wave. What do we want out of it? What should we desire? Desire a mind which is neutral, which understands the wave, and which gives you intelligence and grace. You all know about surfing? When there are heavy tides and great waves some people love to go surfing. They enjoy it. Other people are fearful and run away. If a person has a neutral, sensitive mind, when he must experience a bad time, he can sit down and say, "Oh, God! Wonderful!! What do you want? A bad time? I don't care." That person will communicate, talk, and feel the challenge is fun. He's not upset. He knows this night will pass, and there will be a warm day. He knows he will have a lot of fun, so he preserves his energy for that time. He keeps himself centered, whole, and together. When the time changes so he can expand, he applies all his energy. He enjoys it all the way. That neutral and sophisticated quality of mind has to be developed, trained, created, experienced, tooled, and fitted into all the grooves of habits and action. Once you accomplish this, any success in life is possible. Without this training nothing is possible, except your fate and your old subconscious patterns. An important part of Kundalini Yoga is to develop the Neutral Mind and its capacity for intelligence, endurance, and integrity.

An important part of Kundalini Yoga is to develop the neutral mind and its capacity for intelligence, endurance, and integrity.

UNINTENTIONAL & INTENTIONAL SICKNESS

Good health is another challenge. We all want to have good health. Without good health it is difficult to work on projects in your self. Many people feel we get sick because we lack information and do not know better. My feeling about sickness is very different. I don't believe anybody wants to be unhealthy. But I also believe that we sometimes bring sickness on consciously and intentionally. We allow ourselves to get sick even when we know how to avoid it, because we think something else is more important.

There are two types of sicknesses: intentional and unintentional. Unintentional sickness is the main pain in our modern society. I have a lot of compassion for that. We do not know how to eat; we do not know how to digest; we do not know how to live; we do not know how to take care of this body. We have not been trained in the basic care and functioning of our human apparatus. We do not know how to pay attention to and to maintain our glands and our nervous system to function on optimal levels. We do not know how to check daily for the inner balance of elimination, absorption, rest, and activity. We do not know the interrelation of the body, mind, emotions, and spirit. Our unawareness is great. That lack of sensitivity, knowledge, and training makes us sick. This is especially true in this polluted environment and in this society which emphasizes drugs, short-term crisis thinking, and which ignores the inner dimensions of the person.

Intentional sickness is when we know our actions or lack of action will lead to sickness, but we continue to do it. I get into intentional sickness often. Do you think a man of my awareness who didn't sleep for eighteen days does not know I'm going to get into trouble? From the day I put myself on the plane until I returned today, I didn't get the chance to sleep. I had a specific, important mission that I had to accomplish. The schedule was heavy: from one meeting to another, discussion after discussion. I wanted to share the technology and psychology of yoga to combat the use of drugs and the wasting of young lives.

Even though the hours were long, I have trained myself consciously and subconsciously to do *sadhana* in the early hours of the morning. I could not skip that foundation and practice.

I said, "All right. Do not turn anyone away who is in pain or in need." My highest priority was to provide service. I was aware that I was getting sick intentionally. The body can only go to a certain extent. I chose the sickness and the extra efforts to recover from the sickness. This is an example of intentional sickness.

Kundalini Yoga teaches you how to gain a strong immune system, vital glands, a strong nervous system, good circulation, and an awareness of the impact of your habits.

YOGA & GOOD HEALTH

Kundalini Yoga teaches you the techniques and awareness to stay healthy. You gain a strong immune system, vital glands, a strong nervous system, good circulation, and an awareness of the impact of your habits. This foundation gives you energy and lets you deal with the mental and spiritual facets of your life.

CALMING THE MIND

To utilize yoga in its totality, you have to know what living is, what a relationship is, and what values this life can give. If you know

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what you want, then you can find it. Through meditation, you can calm the mind and develop your intuition to recognize what is real and important to you. Without knowledge, are you going to close your eyes and just start walking? Where will you go? You have to know your direction and monitor yourself each step of the way. Your inner compass must tell you your location in relation to your goal. Life has its own innate organization, which you can sense with intuition and intelligence.

Through meditation, you can calm the mind and develop your intuition to recognize what is real and important to you.

Some people become intellectual instead of intelligent. They argue endlessly with themselves and others and end with questions and doubt. Analysis is good but not if it leads to paralysis in action over important choices that are known clearly to your heart and soul. That only leads to intellectual insecurity and inaction.

Kundalini Yoga develops your relationship to your mental potential. You learn to use the clarity of the neutral, intuitive, comprehensive mind. You sharpen the intellect and do not use it to create self-doubt or insecurity. You act with grace and commitment from your heart.

GETTING OUT OF INSECURITY

Each student of yoga must confront the mental attitude of insecurity and doubt. Actually, there are two mental styles we can use to go through life. In one style, we act as if everybody were saints until proven thieves. In the other style, we act as if everybody were thieves until proven saints. Which style of life your mind uses depends on the strength and balance of your nervous system. People who live the first style walk through every wave of life with an even attitude. If you ask them, "How are you doing?" they reply, "I am fine." If there are certain dangers they might encounter they say, "I don't care. No danger is going to bite me."

Kundalini Yoga develops your relationship to your mental potential. You learn to use the clarity of the neutral, intuitive, comprehensive mind.

People who live by the second style are completely different. If you tell them, "The road is clear. It has been checked. It is beautiful," they will say, "I don't believe it. I can't walk further."

This powerful insecurity can create problems and disrupt happiness. The roots of the insecurity often run deep into the core of the elemental personality of a person's consciousness. Meditation, Kundalini Yoga, and White Tantric Yoga all work to disentangle the threads of insecurity from the layers of the subconscious. When these are removed you can deal with things as they actually are rather than as your fears portray them.

In every mental state, the subconscious plays a major role which we are not aware of. We say, "I know my past." Actually, there is no such thing as "my past." That past is only the experience you have in your subconscious mind. You become attached to it, and this prevents you from moving forward in your life. In Kundalini Yoga, we fry this subconscious mind; we make toast out of it and eat it. We have a technical know-how to approach this subconscious mind. If you do not clean it out, it sits behind your conscious mind and does mischief. It sits in the back and can spoil the image of human life by repeating experiences which are already in the past, but which are recorded in that subconscious mind. The subconscious mind must be taken care of and trained with Kundalini Yoga to be an aid in life.

The subconscious mind must be taken care of and trained with Kundalini Yoga, to be an aid in life.

THE GAME OF SELF-BELITTLEMENT

I want to touch on one more pattern that you must confront. We often hold a feeling that we are very limited and inadequate. This is our self-belittlement. A person thinks, "Oh, I, a poor humble self, can't do this. I am a very miserable excuse for a human." We play this game very well. There are three primary ways we play it: to get sympathy from people; to get recognized; and sometimes we play it so real that we actually feel it and are fooled by it. We all do it. It's just a matter of degree. The impact of that play is to limit your activity to realize the full capacity of your mental potential and energy. You must transcend and transform your subconscious habit of self-belittlement if you are to expand and experience that your mind has an infinite horizon. There's actually no end to it.

You must transcend and transform your subconscious habit of self-belittlement if you are to expand and experience that your mind has an infinite horizon.

It is at that horizon of Infinity that we all meet as human beings. Understand this today: there are no two people who are alike. They are different physically, mentally, and historically. They share only one real similarity: The inflow of Infinity can be equalized to the output of Infinity. We can alter and regulate that inner balance of the finite in relation to the unlimited potential. That capacity and quality is the only thing in us which counts. Through that mechanism, which is in the basic structure of our inner nature, we can reach the state of Infinity, bliss, liberation, of *jivan mukht*. Use any of the hundreds of words for that experience of Infinity lived. You can call it anything, it doesn't matter. But it is real, accessible, and an important part of the fulfillment of our human nature and experience.

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A TECHNOLOGY OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS

All the techniques and teaching that you may need are in Kundalini Yoga. Kundalini Yoga is the technology of human consciousness. You have the opportunity to know, test, and grow with these sacred teachings. The only impediment is the mental sickness that we cannot commit and be constant at anything. If you overcome that limitation, become a steady student, and do the *sadhana* with regularity, the results are certain! With regular practice the benefits accumulate so that you can direct yourself and have a deeper experience. You can enjoy your life more and you can extend your life's vitality.

As a student, simply do your best. I pass on this knowledge freely and I exchange it with you as a brotherhood or family. It is meant to be shared. As God, Guru Ram Das, and my teachers have given this awareness and knowledge to me, I am a postman who delivers it to you to share with others. If you are willing to get into that kind of sharing, that kind of love, that kind of existence, you are welcome. Otherwise, we are happy, and wherever you are, there is no problem, and we stand ready to share and serve.

3HO: TO SERVE & GROW

We exist to grow and to help those who need assistance. That is why Kundalini Yoga teachers are not initiated. We serve and share, we do not push and proselytize. Truth and authentic growth do not happen that way. I feel that pushing knowledge on people is still pushing. I don't want to be a pusher of anything. I have never done that in my life. I'm not going to push deep, sacred knowledge on you. I do want to share this secret science of Kundalini Yoga openly and widely so that we can experience certain things and grow as human beings.

In Kundalini Yoga the most important thing is your experience. It goes right to your heart. No words can replace that experience.

In Kundalini Yoga the most important thing is experience. Your experience goes right into your heart. No words can replace that experience. Your mind may accept the words or it may not, but your consciousness will not accept just words. The purpose of all our efforts is simply to extend your awareness in your consciousness so you can have this foundation in experience and a base in positive habits. Then you can smoothly plan your life to any extent you like. You can radiate creativity and Infinity in all aspects of your life.

That is the practical result of yoga. It is the capacity and right to live a healthy, happy, and holy life. That is why we called our yoga family 3HO (Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization).

Kundalini Yoga is a Science

which works on the seven chakras, the arcline and the aura (the Eighth Chakra). It works directly on the total energy, and that flow of energy has one simple way: either you sway it or it sways you. Either you are above the energy and ride it, or you go below the energy and it rides you. That is where Kundalini Yoga fits in: you will learn to ride your energy, to experience it and penetrate any given situation to attain a balance.

What is kundalini actually? It is your creative potential. You experience it when the energy of the glandular system combines with the energy of the nervous system to create such a sensitivity that the totality of the brain receives signals and integrates them. Then you become totally and wholly aware, and your creative potential becomes available to you.

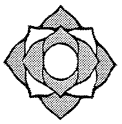
The Power of Kundalini Yoga

lies in the actual experience. It goes right into your heart and extends your consciousness so you may have a wider horizon of grace and of knowing the truth. Ultimately you come to understand your existence in relationship to the universe and understand you already are, and this brings you to the practical experience of Infinity. You can then radiate creativity and Infinity in all aspects of your daily life.

The Altitude & Attitude of Kundalini Yoga

Longitude and latitude are given to everybody. Altitude and attitude are given by Kundalini Yoga. When the spiral rises to penetrate through all the chakras, the man knows he is Brahm. That's why they say Kundalini Yoga is dangerous. It's dangerous because it takes away from man the ability to be exploited by another man.

–YOGI BHAJAN



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Kundalini Yoga

Awakening the Soul

TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN
1969

I HAVE RECOGNIZED, WITH THE BLESSING OF MY MASTER, that it is possible to be healthy, to be happy, and to be holy while living in this society. But you must have energy so that your dead computer may live and pass on the signal to you, and may compute all that you want to do in this society. We call this energy, in the old science, kundalini, which has been blocked in *muladhara*, the lowest of all chakras, or lotuses.

These are imaginary things. Huge books have been written on them. These books misled me, too, for many years. Still, I learned about them, and about the chakras (or circles, as we call them in English). These books have put us in so many circles that we do not come out of it, and we reach nowhere. Yet, there is a way we can set our computer to be in direct contact with Him, the Biggest Computer, and all things must then work automatically. That cannot work until the kundalini, the spiritual nerve, breaks through the blockage at the *muladhara*, travels up, and reaches the stage that you may have Superconsciousness in Consciousness.

You must generate the pressure of the *prana* and mix it with the *apana*. Thus, when the two join together, you generate heat in the *pranic* center. With this heat of the *prana*, you put a pressure or charge on the kundalini, the soul nerve, which is coiled in three and a half circles on *muladhara*. (*Kundal* means "the curl of the hair of the beloved." It does not mean snake or serpent.) This will awaken it so that it may pierce through the imaginary chakras and pass ultimately through *jalandhara bandh*—the Neck Lock—the final blockage in the spine before the energy reaches the head.

YOGA—JOINING THE TWO ENERGIES

Let me define a few terms. *Prana* is the life force of the atom. *Apana* is elimination, or the eliminating force. These are two forces in us—positive and negative—which are governed by *ida* and *pingala*—left and right. When we join these two energies under the power and science of Kundalini Yoga, we mix the *prana* with the *apana* and, under that pressure, bring the kundalini up. When it passes through the central nerve, or *sushmuna*, it reaches the higher chakras or lotuses, and thus one can know his total surroundings and he is a blessed being.

After one inhales the *prana* deep down to the navel center, and pulls the *apana* with the Root Lock up to the Navel Center, *prana* and *apana* mix there. This is known as the Nabhi Chakra at the fourth vertebra. Heat is felt during the kundalini awakening, and that heat is the filament of the *sushmuna*, or central spinal channel, being lit by the joining of *prana* and *apana*. Below the Nabhi Chakra, the energy leaves the navel and goes to the lower chakra at the rectum, and then it rises. This is called the reserve channel. Then there are six more chakras through which the kundalini must rise—and it will happen all at once. Once you have raised it, that's it. The hardest job is to keep it up, to keep the channels clean and clear.

THE THREE GATEWAYS

The pathway of energy from the rectum to the vocal cord is known as the Silver Cord. From the neck to the top of the head is the passage[1]. From the Third Eye to the pineal gland is the Golden Cord. To make the energy rise in these cords and passage, you must apply hydraulic locks. You must put a pressure. You know how we take the oil out of the ground, by putting a pressure so that the oil will come out? Like that, your spine is a staircase of energy. First, *mulbandh* brings *apana* to the navel, or fourth vertebra, the central seat of the kundalini. Second, the diaphragm lock takes it to the neck. Third, the Neck Lock takes it up the rest of the way.

When the pineal secretes as the kundalini heat is released, your pituitary acts as a radar, keeping the mind from negativity.

The pineal gland, or seat of the soul, does not work when the Tenth Gate at the top of the head is sealed. But when the pineal secretes as the kundalini heat is released, your pituitary acts as a radar, keeping the mind from negativity.

KUNDALINI: THE NERVE OF THE SOUL

Kundalini is known as the nerve of the soul. This is to be awakened; your soul is to be awakened. When the soul gets awakened, what else can remain?

In the practical reality, these chakras are imaginary and nothing else. This kundalini is just a kundalini and nothing else. It is not very important. These *pranas* and *apanas* are just there. Everything is set in us. We lack nothing. We use these terms simply to make the process clear so that we can get on with it. It is very simple. After getting myself into the darkness for years, I found that if I would have known on the first day that it was so easy, I could have saved myself a lot of hassle. When I found out that the kundalini really can come up like this, I was astonished. It was a surprise to me.

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That's it. That is the greatest truth. Truth is bitter, I know. So I cannot speak all the truth. But I speak indirectly and directly about the truth, because I cannot speak anything beyond truth.

THE *PRANIC* CENTER

The fact is, you cannot breathe by your will. It is the God within you which breathes. Without that, you don't breathe. What is this breath business? I'll tell you. It is good information for the medical people. Under the eighth vertebra there is a cavity. We call it the *pranic* center. In that *pranic* center, we breathe *pranic* energy, up to the tip of the tongue and on to the *ida* and *pingala*–which adjusts the temperature of the body.

This *pranic* energy is the life of the atom. We store it in the eighth vertebra down. We know certain actions through which we inhale this *pranic* energy to awaken our *pranic* center. The *pranic* center supplies the *pranic* energy to the *pranic* nerve. The *pranic* nerve supplies the *pranic* energy to the muscles, which are responsible for the beat of the heart and of the diaphragm. We call it the "U" muscle, because it is shaped like the letter "U." This "U" muscle is responsible for all this life current in you that is automatic and beyond your control.

The pranic center supplies the pranic energy to the pranic nerve, which supplies the pranic energy to the muscles, which are responsible for the beat of the heart.

If fifty years ago I would have come and talked to you about atomic energy, you would have said, "Go away, we don't understand you." When I talk about *pranic* energy, don't feel that I am talking about something mystic. It is practical.

Do you know what yogis do? They create *pranic* energy reservoirs in that cavity and thus live on that reserve. They make that cavity active with certain exercises and thus they know how to control the *pranic* energy or *prana vayu*, the life current. That's one aspect of it.

CIRCULATING THE ENERGY

The second aspect is *apana* which eliminates everything. It has a connection with the *muladhara chakra*. That is where that kundalini power lies. When the *pranic* energy is in you, then you can circulate it through your body. You can feel it and make people feel it. It is a scientific thing which has nothing to do with mystics or something which I can't explain. It is so simple, so practical.

In that circulation, we time it to go with the spinal cord. Then we make it hit the *muladhara*. Thus, we pierce through that knot, or blockage to the kundalini power. The moment we do it, she has no option but to come up. The moment she comes up, you stand blessed. Then you will see; the computer will work. That's all.

Is it difficult? There is no secret about it. In twenty, thirty days, if you honestly practice it about one hour, two hours each day, you can be through with it.

UNDERSTAND THE POWER

Two precautions: You must practice Neck Lock. Pull the neck straight in, keeping the spine and neck absolutely straight, with no bend of the neck. If you do not apply this lock in meditation, you do not naturally regulate the shifts in subtle and physical circulation. A sudden flood of energy can overstimulate the nerves and other cells of the brain to expand their activity.

Second, when you do yoga, please, for God's sake, remember you are playing with the energy which is the lifeforce of the atom. You can therefore well understand what you are doing. I am giving you a word of warning. The *prana* has been described in the *Shastras*–the yogic scriptures–as that which makes the atom live. The voltage here in the wall socket is 110. Do you touch it without insulation? No! Then how can you play with the *pranic* energy? The insulation you need is proper preparation and following the proper technique.

When the kundalini, the nerve of the soul, is awakened, this car of yours will be driven by the soul, not by the negative ego.

The fact remains that without having the kundalini awakened, your soul is not awakened. If your soul is awakened, what else do you need? If you will get into the actions that awaken the kundalini, the nerve of the soul, this car of yours will be driven or chauffered by the soul and not by the negative ego. Then you will have found the God in you. I shall be the greatest man on Earth if I shall be privileged to touch the dust of your feet, if you have that state. Otherwise, you are a nut, and nothing else.

[1]Yogi Bhajan is referring to the silver cord of energy that follows the pathway of the spinal cord. The last part of that cord that goes into the base of the old brain begins the passage. The full passage is comprised of two paths that take the energy either over the top of the brain to the pituitary or through the lower part of the brain. From the pituitary to the pineal is the Golden Cord, which is opened only under special conditions.

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Kundalini Yoga

Leverage, Legacy & Lineage

Gurucharan Singh Khalsa
KRI Director of Training

AS TEACHERS OF KUNDALINI YOGA over many years, we are frequently asked if Kundalini Yoga is like X or like Y. Is Kundalini Yoga like Hatha Yoga? Is Kundalini Yoga like shamanism? Is Kundalini Yoga like ayurvedic medicine? All these questions are well intentioned and they're part of our understanding, conceptualizing, and communicating a beautiful and vast discipline. But though the questions are well intentioned, they're often misplaced. There's a certain depth, completeness, and timelessness that is inherent to the very nature of Kundalini Yoga. It cannot be reduced to any other form.

Kundalini Yoga has three characteristics. It gives us:

- **leverage**—the power to change, to make a difference in our lives.
- **legacy**—a complete integrity in its own structure, beyond any individual.
- **lineage**—a history and a line of transmission, brought to us and from which we launch and share with others.

THE LEVERAGE OF KUNDALINI YOGA

The leverage of Kundalini Yoga is not a boast from those who practice it. Even in the scriptures it is said that Kundalini Yoga is the fastest way to create the transformation, the lightening and the enlightenment that each individual is seeking. It is the fastest way to establish an aligned relationship between the body, mind and the soul. Yogi Bhajan has said there are over twenty-two major forms of the practice of yoga. Each one emphasizes some facet of the whole. Some may emphasize the use of bodily form, as in Hatha Yoga. Others emphasize the use of sound, as in Laya (Mantra) Yoga, or the use of visual forms, as in Yantra Yoga. A good way to think of that is that each of these different forms are facets just like a facet on a diamond. A diamond is beautiful. Particular planes of crystal that are sheared off capture the light, make it sparkle, bring your attention to it, and reveal its dimensions.

Kundalini Yoga is the fastest way to establish an aligned relationship between the body, mind and the soul.

Kundalini Yoga is the diamond itself. If you turn it any one particular way, you can find a facet. But if you try to understand the entire diamond from any one facet, you'll find yourself with a very shallow and incomplete understanding. Because Kundalini Yoga is the diamond itself, it gives greater leverage and transformative power than any one facet can. It also opens pathways to change and healing that seem to go around limitations and to penetrate blocks. With Hatha Yoga, for example, you might work with an emphasis on bodily form. Yet there are those who cannot take on those forms because of a physical limitation. But Kundalini Yoga gives you the leverage, the extra dimension that lets you reach around that limitation. It taps not only the *pranic* energy of the breath, body, and the mind, but the Z-Energy, the deep kundalini energy that cuts across time and space through a doorway of timelessness. There is always something that can be done with Kundalini Yoga.

Kundalini Yoga is the diamond itself. If you turn it any one way, you can find a facet. But if you try to understand the diamond from one facet, you'll find yourself with a very shallow and incomplete understanding.

Another part of the leverage is speed. It is said that that which would take twenty years can be done in a year through Kundalini Yoga. With full concentration, if you are in good shape, if your mind has equanimity that can join into the process, then in a mere 40 to 90 days you can transform yourself using Kundalini Yoga. The gift and the special bounty of the practice of Kundalini Yoga is the ability to rapidly encounter your own ego and to clear out its attachments so that you can revel in the light of the soul.

The other part of leverage comes through the completeness of Kundalini Yoga. It's said that Kundalini Yoga is an emanation of over 8.4 million *kriyas*, each one like a piece of music, a perfect sequence of energy, tones and feelings that are played in the instrument of the body. So, as a teacher of Kundalini Yoga, you should never give in to the temptation to reduce your diamond to a single facet, to agree to somebody's incomplete understanding of your own perfect discipline for which you are the channel and the transmitter. No matter how seductive it may seem to have a sudden insight or understanding of Kundalini Yoga according to some other discipline—"Ah, so this is similar to this, or that!"—all of these are but facets, ways to capture glimpses of the light. None of the facets will give you the full leverage of the discipline itself as transmitted by Yogi Bhajan.

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THE LEGACY OF KUNDALINI YOGA

Kundalini Yoga is also a legacy. A legacy means it comes as an inheritance, as something already existing, and passed on to you. The legacy comes direct from Infinity, direct from God, direct from the soul. It has been delivered by the Golden Chain—through Guru Ram Das, and Yogi Bhajan, to you. Kundalini Yoga is the force of the soul. The kundalini energy is the awakened inner identity of you. Because of that, its very nature is timeless, its very essence is like love. Deep in our heart we know that no reason can explain love. Love comes full-blown; it exists in a certain dimension of timelessness that we can all touch within us. Exactly in this way, Kundalini yoga is a legacy of the Infinite, of the Akal, of that which is timeless. It's a legacy of the love of the soul to experience identity. It is a product of what is Infinite, though we view it and experience it in our own finite ways.

Kundalini Yoga comes to you as an inheritance, as something already existing. It is a legacy of the love of the soul to experience identity.

When something begins already complete, it's an interesting experience to encounter it with finite eyes. It means if you search for structure, you can find as much structure as you would like. As you discover those structures you might try to reconstruct them. When you watch people in love, you may notice that they're kind to each other, that they're honest in their communications. So, you pick out someone; you become kind, you act honestly, and you think, "There, I've created love." Yet, you don't so much create love as participate in love which has been created in the timeless Infinity of God's Heart.

Just so, you can look at any one *kriya* in Kundalini Yoga, and you can find that there's a sequence, a stimulation of chakras. There's an elegant intertwining of all of the *tattvas*. There's also a clear and scientific focus on the stimulation of particular glands and meridians. And yet, no matter how much you may try to divide this legacy—given as a gift, as a kiss, as a love from your Infinity, into meridians and chakras and glands and sequences of muscles—you can never recapture that which has already been given.

In Kundalini Yoga, there is nothing for the ego to reconstruct, but lots for the ego to enjoy.

In Kundalini Yoga, there's nothing for the ego to reconstruct. There's lots for the ego to enjoy, to represent, and to communicate. To be a great teacher of Kundalini Yoga, accept this as a legacy, you accept this as a hug of the Infinite, as a kind of love, as an opportunity that has come to your soul to experience, to give to others, and to pass on. It's something to pass on as complete as when it was given to you. I like to think of it as an infinite set of Chinese boxes. While we have time in our physical bodies and ego, we can enjoy it. We unwrap one box, and another box, and another box. Whenever we are done, there's an infinite sequence more of boxes within boxes that we will never get to. We just pass that on. We continue the Golden Chain. The legacy is an infinite exploration, a constant discovery, a continuous newness that each person will experience and bring to the world.

THE LINEAGE OF KUNDALINI YOGA

The third thing to remember as a teacher of Kundalini Yoga is that it also has a lineage. It is a practice that has been experienced and given through enlightened souls for many thousands of years. It is a royal yoga, one that is not intended to be done by only those who are ascetics and withdrawn from the world. It requires a mastery of both the inner dimension of the Self, and the outer expression in the universe. It is that balance between the inner and the outer, between the neutral interior Infinity and the active and serviceful exterior that is the signature of Kundalini Yoga.

That's why even in the early days Kundalini Yoga was often given through the line of kings. King Janaka, in the ancient scriptures, was an early Raj Yogi. This yogic tradition was passed on through that lineage to Guru Ram Das in the lineage of the Gurus of the Sikhs. Guru Ram Das was acknowledged as having the high throne of Raj Yoga, the Takhat, and to passing that blessing to all who would come. Yogi Bhajan acknowledged his teacher as Guru Ram Das and we serve that house. Each of us links to this lineage through a Golden Chain. Just as a torch passes on a fire to the next fire, so when we tune in with the Adi Mantra, we link with this long lineage and you become just as a faucet of water, a great source to quench the thirst of the soul of the people.

It is actually a transmission, and you, as a teacher of that, are beholden to the integrity of it.

Some come to go, and try by any means to get students. Kundalini Yoga is not a commercial enterprise in that way. It's true that you can do business with it. You can set it up as a profession, and indeed you should have all the organization and management skills that you can bring to your particular style. But in the end, Kundalini Yoga is actually a transmission. It has a lineage of transmission, and you, as a teacher of that, are beholden to the integrity of it and to its long history. It is good for you to understand that history and to look to the future as you serve each individual now.

In that lineage, you're guided by the unseen hand of Guru

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Ram Das, and by the explicit teachings and formulations codified by Yogi Bhajan. When you pass the tradition on with authenticity and with accuracy, each person can continue to pass it on, to experience it in his or her own unique way and give it to the future. You need to practice relentlessly the qualities of humility, patience, discipline, and service.

And as a lineage, we have certain ethics and a certain look, a certain radiance, a certain *Akal Moorat*, a certain embodiment of Infinity, and people who truly practice Kundalini Yoga are often recognized by that light.

UNDERSTANDING KUNDALINI YOGA

The best way to understand Kundalini Yoga is that it gives us the power and the leverage, has a legacy to it, and is part of a long lineage that is using these techniques for the opening of the Aquarian Age, and for the future peace and expansion of human consciousness. A way to understand Kundalini Yoga is on its own terms. At the root of Kundalini Yoga is the experience of *Shabd Guru*. Kundalini, when it awakens, is often called *Shabd Brahm*, which means that the words are the vibratory creative aspect of the Infinite Soul in experience.

The Mul Mantra expresses the character, depth and understanding that we can see in Kundalini Yoga.

We see the emanation of that when we vibrate the Mul Mantra. Guru Nanak spoke the Mul Mantra: *Ek Ong Kar Sat Naam Karta Purkh Nirbho Nirvair Akal Moorit, Ajoonee Saibhung Gurprasad Jap! Aad Sach Jugad Sach Haibhee Sach Nanak Hosee Bhee Sach.* This mantra is at the very root of all creativity. This mantra expresses the character, the depth, and the understanding that we can see in Kundalini Yoga.

Ek Ong Kar. Kundalini Yoga has a oneness, a completeness and a connectedness between each exercise, throughout each *kriya*. It comes as a complete package, a revelation all at once.

Sat Nam. It has a reality, a seed. Every time you do one *kriya*, it has its own truth and dimension to it, and it creates a reality, a vibration which has consequences and will be honored unto Infinity.

Karta Purkh. It is a discipline, which is already being done by the larger Being. It is already a creativity of that which is timelessly creative. It is not a construct made by you and me. Our doing it is a form of participation. It is an act of collaborative intelligence between me and the Infinite itself. When you experience kundalini, when you act as a Kundalini Yoga teacher, and when you join as part of that lineage and legacy, you acquire the leverage and legacy of Kundalini Yoga. There's no time spent in fear, in wondering whether you're right or you're wrong, or in comparing yourself to others. You instead accept your own identity and proceed with what's in front of you.

Nirbho Nirvair. Neither is there any revenge, nor blame, nor competition in the sense of trying to overcome some other teacher or some other teaching. It's an act of humility and grace, because you're given this opportunity.

Akal Moorat means that in the floodlight brilliance of the kundalini, you take on and accept your own image from the perspective of the Infinite. That is why we cover our heads as we accept, through the Seventh Chakra, the *pranic* flow of the subtle energies that kundalini releases. As a teacher, when we teach, although there's no limitation from the finite perspective, there's an opportunity to create an image, a *bana*, a structure, a certain impression with all of our senses. That is *Akal Moorat*.

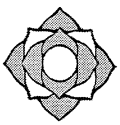
Ajoonee. Since Kundalini Yoga is unborn, it doesn't come from any one particular time, and it's not subject to the laws of those times.

Saibhung. This is its own integrity. It has its own inner completeness. It's one of the reasons that as you do each set—which you've been fortunate to receive through Yogi Bhajan's clarity—you don't try to alter it or make it up. Each *kriya* is complete in itself, autonomous. Each *kriya* doesn't rely on anything else. In its own form, it is under the constant blessing and guidance of the Infinite: *Gurprasad*.

And you *Jap*, you repeat it again and again. Kundalini Yoga never gets old. The more you do it, the more the polish makes the gem shine. And what is it that it gives each and every person?

Aad Sach Jugad Sach Haibhee Sach Nanak Hosee Bhee Sach. It gives you the experience of constant truth of your own reality and soul.

The Mul Mantra is very much the essence of the qualities, the nature, the character, and the depth of Kundalini Yoga. As a teacher of that, practice the Mul Mantra; remember the character that you are sharing with others. You never reduce it. You always exalt it, and it will exalt you. Always bow to its beauty; it will bow to you. Always support each person who comes to you, by sharing directly and fearlessly the clarity and the power of the leverage of Kundalini Yoga. The entire universe will help you, and leverage you to experience your own soul in the service of others.



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Questions & Answers with the Master

TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER

From an 1976 interview with Yogi Bhajan

Question: I have heard people say that Kundalini Yoga is a dangerous form of yoga.

Answer: This talk of danger sometimes becomes the biggest danger and a big problem. The only danger is when you use something external and artificial, like a drug, and force it into you.

Think of kundalini in a different way. In reality there is a God. He uncoils Himself, opens Himself up. This uncoiling process or manifestation process is known as kundalini. What can be dangerous about it? The kundalini that is going to be uncoiled in you is already in you and part of you. It is an unlimited power that is the essence of your consciousness. It is going to uncoil in you. Your system is already built to contain the energy of kundalini. It is a normal capacity that you simply are not utilizing. If you start utilizing that energy, where is the danger?

Question: You seem to be unique among the yogis I have heard. Most of them will not teach without initiation. Very few say anything openly about kundalini, and most are very cautious about it.

Answer: There are certain things in my life which I can't eliminate or overcome. They are in my destiny and deep in my character. I came to this country to teach this sacred and secret science because I was called to do it. I never came to this country out of my own choice or desire. I came to serve and to deliver a message. I had no means to reach all these people who have come to know me. People have come to me from everywhere around the globe. With all my success and recognition, I have never thought or intellectualized for even one moment that, "I did it." Those souls who have the destiny to come and learn from me, will do it. They are already in the body, and will find their way to these teachings. I already have all the knowledge which I am to share with them. I am just a postman delivering their letters from the Cosmos. When my mailbag is empty I can quit. The job is done and my duty fulfilled. I teach openly and honestly to all who come.

When I went back to India where I lived for 39 years, the one question everybody asked was, "What are you doing in the United States? Why are you teaching them those techniques and meditations?" All my friends were upset. They did not believe Westerners—particularly Americans—were suited to the inner knowledge and discipline of yoga. When I told them Americans have the potential to experience the Infinite, they said, "Oh, no, no! What has gone wrong with you? Do you not understand the way things have been?" When they started questioning me, I withdrew and said, "I've heard what you say. But it is my destiny. I am happy with my Guru, so what do I care about this criticism? I must teach the truth as it is."

All these yogis love me, but they feel very uncomfortable with me. They love me because, as a Master of Kundalini Yoga, it is difficult to hate me and the awareness that I bring. It takes a lot of strength and ego to hate me. Since I came to the West, the 3HO family, students of Kundalini Yoga, has grown to a very powerful organization of people around the world. We have thousands of people who practice the techniques and enjoy the elevated awareness it brings. Near most large cities there is a yoga ashram or teacher nearby. It is difficult to defame somebody who inspires that kind of following and who has that kind of personality.

Why is Kundalini Yoga put down? What is the root of the distrust and warning? It is done either out of ignorance or simply because a reaction with jealousy or fear that I, with my personal style and charisma, teach it! I teach it without hesitation or discrimination. I seek nothing other than to do my duty.

There is another side to this that is historical and cultural which you will not understand. Kundalini Yoga has never been taught publicly before. Many yogis have a sense of national and racial loyalty. They feel the knowledge should be guarded and given only to people of a certain class or group. They feel this great sovereign secret of Kundalini Yoga is supposed to be learned only by highly select Brahmins of the upper class. They will only teach you those techniques which make you disciples instead of masters.

Historically, India was conquered by the British who were Christians. The result was that the lower classes and the working classes in India were converted to Christianity. Traditionally, in India, this class of people was called "untouchable." They were considered undeserving and incapable of learning the knowledge that could elevate their awareness and give them extraordinary ability. The majority of Christians came from that untouchable class. Even now in the minds and hearts of many of the swamis and yogis who come to the West, a Christian is still untouchable and must not be taught certain things.

Now they say, "This Yogi Bhajan somehow has gotten hold of all the knowledge—which even they do not know—and he has freaked out. He gives it to every American and Westerner without discrimination. He ignores the old warnings that were written to prevent the untouchables from experiencing their own inner power and potential. He will upset everything." They believe it is very dangerous. They are right: It is dangerous culturally to the past they live in.

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As a student of Kundalini Yoga, you may hear or read something which is said out of ignorance or jealousy, but there is no need to answer or to defend. In the end, the results from the sincere students who cultivate awareness will be the answer to those old prejudices and ignorance. Just remember that when you uncoil the kundalini, it is the same as the natural awakening of our potential. It is the same as what you call "God Consciousness" or what you call "Christ Consciousness." It means you bring that awareness actively into your life.

Question: I practice Kundalini Yoga as you have taught it and I feel great! My life has changed, and I have had a lot of success. My question is why does that work? I don't always plan everything; things just seem to flow better.

Answer: The world and our journey in this life is actually very clear. Every aspect of it is organized and creative. We are all human beings on this planet. We are supposed to live with each other in love, work as a worship, and follow the path of righteousness, to goad our consciousness across the cycle of time to use our human energy to reach and manifest Infinity.

Why has this world become a puzzle to us? The confusion occurs when, sometimes, in spite of our well-equipped personality and our best preparations, we do not thrive, and we do not understand why. There is a way to make sense out of this. We may understand this intuitively, but it takes a little time to explain it systematically and technically. Imagine an ordinary man who is a grade B medical student. He graduates and gets a great opportunity. He rises above everything to the top of his business. Imagine another man who is a very brilliant student at college. He graduates, and regardless of great efforts, he never seems to get the right opportunities, and he establishes an average clinic and career. What makes the real difference in these cases? Why do we often not fit into life and into our own plans when it seems as if we have everything we need to accomplish it?

The center of this confusion in human life today comes from one widespread, very human problem. You do not understand who and what you are. Then you cannot understand how things work and how to progress. Each thing has its own nature and its own mechanism. Understanding who you are, your own nature and the relationship between things, will make it all very clear. There will be no place for doubt or confusion. This is the source of unhappiness and conflict in this world. Feeling, judgment, and action that are not based on this type of clear understanding will always misguide you.

So just what type of consciousness are you? What base makes sense of your confusion? The yogis have a symbol for the human being: an arc of light that we call an aura. It is brilliant and white. Human existence depends on that arc. What comes to you in your life depends on the strength and balance of that arc. Most people can't see it and don't understand it. If you do see the aura, you can recognize the state of health and disease, the kind and intensity of emotion, and the capacity and abilities of a person.

Every human being is unique. That uniqueness is defined and protected by the arcline. Every energy in existence has its own cycle of input, output, and exchange. That existence must interact with you through the shield of the arc aura. Every magnetic field has to cross this magnetic field of your arcline. It is the strength of the magnetic field of your arcline that determines how the magnetic fields of the other things and people in existence can or cannot enter and affect you.

Now a question arises. If there is a positive opportunity or vibration, will this arc of light reflect it so it won't enter? No! That positive energy will merge in it and will relate to the Earth. If it is negative, it will be canceled out at the arcline. Any person whose mental vibration results in a strong arc will protect all fragile areas of his life automatically with that arc.

You relate differently to emotions when your magnetic field is strong and when it is weak. When your field is weak, emotions seem so important and real that you cannot separate or direct them –you are subjected to them. When your arc is strong, you can choose to express the emotion or to redirect it. You can choose to relate to someone or to disconnect from their influence. When your radiance is strong, and you direct it toward someone, they will want to talk to you and be around you in spite of great personality differences or obstacles.

Kundalini Yoga is the science of changing and strengthening your radiance to give you an expanded life and greater capacity.

When a person has the energy and power through his psyche to focus on things or not, then he has nothing to worry about. The projection of the magnetic field will arrange the radiance of his existence. All the surrounding magnetic fields that will make up the environment and opportunities will be organized to connect and fit with each other. The environment will operate in tune with his purpose.

This same mechanism can be expressed in the mystical language of the spirit. The person who experiences this through faith would say, "When the Divine Source that prevails through the human being projects the light of God, all darkness goes away. Wherever that person goes, there shall be light, beauty, bounty, and fulfillment." These two explanations express the same reality, but one is in mystical language, the other technical language.

Kundalini Yoga is the science of changing and strengthening

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your radiance to give you an expanded life and greater capacity. I'll give you an example of understanding human behavior with these two languages. Whenever the individual consciousness, while radiating, feels a cut or dip in some area of radiance, the connection that could be made by that radiance will not be completed. When there is a cut or depression in the arc, you cannot radiate correctly. The cycle of energy, projection-connection-reception, cannot complete itself. There will not be a creative action, success, or opportunity. What is a cut? A cut is a splitting or division of your radiant energy in the arc of the aura.

Question: Since my radiance is so important, I want to know what things create the cuts in the arcline?

Answer: Whenever your intellect, the giver of thoughts, does not correspond to your established behavior, you create a problem. We all develop habitual behaviors and attitudes, which record the pattern of consciousness. These patterns hold and stabilize our personality. A Hindu, for example, cannot eat meat because in his consciousness he feels it is a sin. A Muslim cannot eat pork because in his consciousness he feels it is a sin.

Consciousness forms patterns of flow. Once you fix the pattern, you cannot radiate. Some people cannot face you and look into your eyes as they talk. What is wrong? Nothing. A pattern of flow was set and challenged. There was a duality and uncertainty. A combination of social environments and the inner emotional and cognitive environments form the patterns. Conflicts in those patterns with your actions form cavities in the aura. A cavity in consciousness is a duality.

Mystically or scientifically, immediately or eventually, every radiation that helps people must provide some way to deal with this duality and to increase the human radiance. In a church this conflict is viewed as the duality of the sinful man. The procedure is to go and confess the sin to a minister. What happens when you confess? You pour your feelings out, and he tells you that you are forgiven. You have a set pattern of belief in him as an agent of the spirit. You feel you can believe in him and in what he says. He helps you to bring your mental projections back into collaboration through the behavior of confession, which is a set behavior that is deeper and more established than the conflict itself.

Whenever something bothers you, there is only one way to get out of it. You need a touchstone or a teacher. You need a teaching or a person who will not betray your faith and who will counsel you to return to the path of righteousness. In technical language, he should adjust the flow of the psyche to be in tune with the surrounding magnetic field. In mystic or spiritual language, we say the same thing this way: "A person who has committed a sin comes and confesses in the house of the Lord. The Lord accepts his prayers and blesses him to the Light. He can again live with inner guidance in the bountiful world." The two explanations are exactly the same.

In the modern world, when there is a problem or conflict, people go to a psychiatrist or counselor, who drinks a lot of coffee and has the patience to listen to them and to make them talk. The counselor uses his experience and skill to find a way to tell them that they can work out the whole problem from inside. This is done cautiously and systematically so that clients feel they have the resources to do what is asked. The professional fee of a couple of thousand dollars makes the client alert and receptive to the idea that he has to stop, change, and solve his problems from within his own self. He will not be rescued but he will be guided to put in his effort and face the challenge.

What really motivates you to change? It is not the psychiatrist. It is not the priest in the church. It is your realization and acceptance of your subconscious set behaviors, and the urge to look back to your basic origin and start understanding that you are the creative source and nucleus of the whole vibratory pattern in which you live. The moment you understand this, you are all right; there is no problem. The moment you know you are you, the problem is solved. There may be more work to do and training to take, but the block will unblock, and a new flow will energize your life. When you understand who and what you are, your radiance projects into the universal radiance and everything around you becomes creative and full of opportunity and help. This confirmed relationship of responsiveness in consciousness between the finite self and the Infinite Self is the gift of kundalini.

The confirmed relationship of responsiveness in consciousness between the finite self and the Infinite Self is the gift of Kundalini.

The relationship of consciousness to the Infinite Consciousness is the one fundamental requirement of life, and the aim of yoga. What does it mean to understand? A real understanding is a pattern of behavior. What is a pattern of behavior? It is the rate of frequency and the degree of radiance of the psyche and the magnetic field in relationship to the universal psyche and the universal magnetic force. If you can relate with that universal radiance so the beam and frequency of your projection is strong and clear, then you have communicated with the universe. It will respond and support you just as a happy father will support his son, his creation. You must rise above your finite attachment, fear, and conflict and project at the frequency of a being with an unlimited identity in the Infinite.

If you are in any conflict and pressure, if you relate to the Infinite on the terms of the Infinite as an established behavior, it will always

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forgive, respond, and support your righteous intentions. This ability to align yourself with the higher Consciousness and to radiate into the universal magnetic field is more important than any qualification and specialty to your success.

The elementary awareness of Kundalini Yoga is to remove inner conflict and radiate in order to be happy. The basic unit that composes your experience is equal to your radiance plus your activity. The radiance is the mind, and the activity is the gross physical. Let me express this in the mystic sense. When the soul opens up to the heart, a human being becomes Divine. Express it any way you like. A person must understand his existence in relationship to the total universe. Whosoever understands this knows a deep truth. The whole world around you will become beautiful if you understand that you are you. In all facets of your life simply remember you are you. Think of the mantra: "I am, I am." Kundalini Yoga is a very natural element that rapidly makes you what you already are, and brings you to the practical experience of Infinity.

Kundalini Yoga rapidly makes you what you already are, and brings you to the practical experience of Infinity.

Question: Is it true that some people are suited to do Kundalini Yoga by birth, genetics, and temperament and others are not, no matter how much they may try?

Answer: Kundalini Yoga is the Yoga of Awareness. There is no human without the inborn temperament for awareness. Some have higher blocks to it, some have lower blocks. With some it takes a long time to break these blocks, with others it is quick. That is the only difference. It is a question of time. Just as someone prefers to go from New York to Los Angeles in an airplane or on a donkey. Both will arrive; it is a question of time.

In yoga this is how it is: twelve years of Hatha Yoga, plus six years of Raja Yoga, plus three years of Mantra Yoga, plus one year of Laya Yoga is equal to the effect of just one complete year of Kundalini Yoga. I have not written this, so don't blame me. It is in the yogic scriptures. It is a matter of choice. The difficulty is that Kundalini Yoga cannot be learned without a teacher. It cannot be learned from books. It is the psyche of the teacher who teaches it. That is why it is called "The Path of Gold," or Golden Chain, because it passes from one person to the next, to the next like a chain. All the teachers are linked by consciousness. The moment you tune in to the teacher's psyche, your psyche will protect the surroundings.

It is my personal belief that there are certain souls which have to study from certain other souls. They have earned that destiny. The contact of the psycho-magnetic field is already arranged. Once in a life, each soul must come across the orbit of that soul from whom he has the opportunity to learn. It is a law of consciousness. By the virtue of your previous incarnation, you always meet your teacher. Either you surrender your ego to the teacher or you run away from him. The law is that you will meet the opportunity, not that you will recognize it or sustain a commitment to it.

More questions on the kundalini from this interview can be found in the Yogic Anatomy section.

Kundalini Yoga–The Choice is Yours

Kundalini Yoga presents us with an image of the human being; an individual who has as a core a shining soul, with a consciousness that is luminous and which carries the experiences of God. That soul is shrouded in our personal karmas. The karmas are the results of choices and attachments and come from actions that are not done in the carefree service and rhythm of the totality of consciousness. The karmas have come from fear and from identifying with the finite self and ego.

Because you have a will which has freedom, you make choices and are allowed to get as shrouded and dirty as you like. Out of compassion you always have some opportunity to be shaken and penetrated by a teacher or teaching. You may stay for the shaking, or you may choose to run and create more commotion for yourself. All teachings lead to the same realization and awakening of your potential. But some shaking is efficient and fast, and others are very slow.

Kundalini Yoga, and the psyche that teaches it, is direct and royal. Those who have the blessing to practice it and teach it choose to stand before the crystal of their consciousness, under a great pressure washer–to remove the clouds of past acts–in order to reside now in the timeless beauty of the soul.

Everyone has that core potential. So everyone is capable of Kundalini Yoga. But their own past choices may limit them and make such transformations of the self inappropriate for them. Those will come to be taught by you who already have the momentum within them to be given a choice to move toward higher consciousness. It is that horizon you remind them of in every possible way. They must confront it. They must do the discipline. You cannot be a rescuer or take control of their life. You are part of a much greater show. Just do your part well.

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The First Qualification for Kundalini Yoga

The first qualification for Kundalini Yoga is that you seek that awareness that is moment to moment. We do not get rid of the ego or deny anything that is in us. We explode the ego by guiding it to the universal. We will not sit and beg softly that we may someday find God. We will make ourselves so strong and pure that God must come to look for us and look after us. God already has your number, let him look you up.

Kundalini Yoga cannot be practiced without a love for the teacher. It cannot even be taught without that. Man must be sustained through the flow which is the Infinite Power.

The yam's and niyam's are up to you. The other six stages of this divine science: asana, pranayam, dharana, etc. are all taken care of in one Kundalini Yoga kriya! We are tapping through consciousness to the supreme consciousness. This is not a subconscious process. We will not distract you with tricks, miracles, and denials. This is the yoga of fulfillment.

–YOGI BHAJAN, 1971

COMMENTARY: This yoga tradition is the road of Raj Yoga. It is a direct link and path to the supreme consciousnes in us. It is not a detour through all the fascinations of the subconscious and the temptations of the ego. We accept all of the creation around us and all of the creation within us.

The first qualification for a student is to stop fighting shadows and focus the mind and energy on the Infinite. The dispersing forces of the lower chakras create much pain and pull us apart. We can call that process anything we like: forces, satan, confused thought or bad habits. The uniting forces of the higher chakras create a lot of pleasure and carefreeness. Call them angels, higher energy or clear thoughts. We are beyond all this and yet contain all this. There is a huge dynamo in the center of the mechanism of creation of which we are a part.

Start by cultivating an awareness of what already exists within, and connect that with God. Gain a sense of sacredness and nobility that makes you a beloved of the Creator. Act as a channel for teachings that alleviate pain and bring grace.

Even one *kriya* in Kundalini Yoga will put you through all the stages of movement, breathing, concentration, and linking. In that moment when your energy is elevated and love is possible, reach out like an open lotus to the inner Sun.

Kundalini Rising
(Chardi Kalah I)

Chanting *Wahe Guru* the Kundalini Rises!
Taking *Amrit** the Kundalini Rises!
Meditating on the Name the Kundalini Rises!
Singing God's praises the Kundalini Rises!
Doing Yoga the Kundalini Rises!
Fixing the concentration the Kundalini Rises!
When the Kundalini awakens it Rises!

Chanting *Hari Har, Hari Har,*
Become One with God.

The Radiance of God and Guru fills every pore
and cell of the body.
Chardi Kala is the seat of the pranas.
Chardi Kala is the Source of all Good.

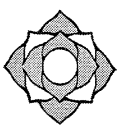
Oh Bhajan! What are you looking for?
God is standing right in front of you!

Chardi Kala is Kundalini Yoga.
Merge with God through His Name.
Practice the yoga of *Chardi Kala.*
Become Khalsa and attain the Infinite.
Chardi Kala is the Name's meditation.

Oh Yogi! This is the Sacred Knowledge
Of Devotion to God.

–YOGI BHAJAN
from *Furmaan Khalsa–Poems to Live By*

* *Amrit* literally means to "Nectar." In this case it refers to receiving the ceremonial baptism in the Sikh faith.



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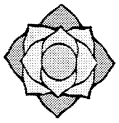
CHAPTER 3



Varieties of Yoga

Just as all rivers end up in the ocean, all yoga ends up raising the kundalini. What is the kundalini? It is the creative potential of the human being.

—YOGI BHAJAN

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YOGA HAS ITS ORIGINS IN THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE. These techniques for living a healthy, happy, and spiritually aware life have developed through thousands of years and across many civilizations. The human sciences of yoga are said to have been first systematized and used in their evolved forms over 40,000 years ago. They were openly taught and integrated into daily living. These systems were not a mystical activity. The work of the early yogis was based upon tangible observations of energy and the effects of different activities and attitudes on the balance of those energies in the individual.

All forms of yoga focus on stimulating and regulating the human energy that is the very essence of consciousness. This energy is called the kundalini. As it originally evolved, each student of yoga worked on all aspects of himself. He exercised the physical, disciplined the mental, analyzed and discussed the world intellectually, etc. Yoga was holistic, permeating every level of human existence. With the passage of time, the techniques became diluted and divided. As individuals catered to their different needs and personalities, they chose to emphasize and practice separate components of the total yogic system. Some preferred just exercise, ignoring mantra; some did mantra and meditation without breath control. Over time this led to the ultimate recognition of 22 different schools of yoga. Of this original division of 22, fewer than a dozen schools of yoga are widely practised today.

TRI-MARGA

The Bhagavad Gita calls Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Gyan Yoga the "Tri-Marga" or Threefold Path.

KARMA YOGA—FREEDOM IN ACTION

Karma Yoga is action in service to the boundless will of the soul. Each action becomes a dharma, a joyful duty. It is selfless action with no thought of reward. The philosophy of Karma Yoga is traditionally stated in the Bhagavad Gita, where Arjuna was instructed by Krishna, that it was his duty to fulfill his destiny without consideration for his own misgivings and feelings to the contrary. He was to perform his obligations selflessly, without attachment to their outcome. Instead of making superficial external changes, the path of Karma Yoga involves changing our internal attitudes and emotions–transforming our actions as we refine our motivations. Action is transcended through action.

BHAKTI YOGA—TRANSCENDING SELF THROUGH LOVE

Bhakti Yoga is the path of devotion, commitment, total and complete surrender to the love of the Divine as the Beloved. To the Bhakti Yogi, Yogi Bhajan says, "Be devoted. Praise the Lord. Forget everything else. Then sometime in your life, God will bless you and your kundalini will rise and you will be enlightened." The path of the faithful in most of the world's religions is Bhakti Yoga. An example of Bhakti Yoga is the Hare Krishna movement.

GYAN (JNANA) YOGA—SEEING WITH THE EYE OF WISDOM

Gyan means knowledge, or more specifically, the experienced knowledge inside oneself. Gyan Yoga, also known as Jnana Yoga, is the path of intellectual discrimination, knowing clearly without the subconscious clouding the clarity. It is the path of the intellectual and intuitive realization of the Divine in which one sees God in everything. The flow always goes both ways: God and me, me and God, are one; in each the other is seen clearly. In Gyan Yoga one looks at everything, dissects it, sees that the cause of everything is nothing but God, and concentrates on that.

* * *

HATHA YOGA—CULTIVATING THE BODY

Hatha Yoga is the most popular and widely-practised form of yoga in the West. It concentrates on perfecting the physical body in order to affect the mind and consciousness. It utilizes 84 postures (*asanas*), 24 mudras (energy seals), and three *maha-mudras,* along with breath control. Yogi Bhajan describes Hatha Yoga as, "a science where the sun and moon energy are directly united to raise the kundalini." Hatha Yoga requires many years of practice under a knowledgeable teacher to reach perfection, and it emphasizes flexibility and patience.

RAJA YOGA—BECOMING A SPIRITUAL KING

Raja Yoga, the Royal Path, is referred to as the yoga of meditation. It is a science, whose philosophy includes the path of Ashtanga Yoga *(Eightfold Path. See chapter 4.)* expounded by Patanjali. Raja Yoga involves the study of the psychic centers, and the development of the will and mental faculties as carriers of the great spiritual energy. Yogi Bhajan says, "You focus your mind energy on each center of consciousness and you raise your consciousness level by level, to the highest perfection that your kundalini can be raised, to the lotus of a thousand petals." Traditionally, this path called for a concentrated, monastic type of life, and needed years to reach perfection. *(See page 34 for more.)*

MANTRA YOGA—TRANSCENDENCE THROUGH SOUND & LAYA YOGA—MERGING THE FINITE WITH THE INFINITE

Mantra Yoga uses sound as a vehicle of transcendence. The goal of Laya Yoga is to merge finite consciousness with Infinite consciousness. With Laya and Mantra Yoga the mind is expanded through rhythm, breath, sound and mantra. *(See Sound & Mantra chapter.)* This is the most powerful, direct method of rising above the duality of ego consciousness through the one-pointedness of mind, breath, and sound, whose potency is maximized by being practiced in groups.

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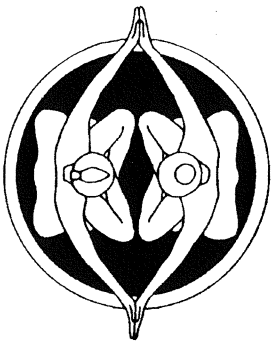
WHITE TANTRIC YOGA

Tantra means to weave. It is the precision of consciousness as measured in terms of latitude and longitude. Tantric Yoga is the way of union of the male-female polarity in individual consciousness. Through the practice of Tantric Yoga, subconscious and mental blocks to living one's potential are cleared. It uses the "Z" energy, which flows diagonally. Yogi Bhajan says: "Tantra is the spun fiber of the Cosmos. Whosoever knows the diagonal energy knows the Will of God."

There are three kinds of Tantric Yoga: red, black, and white. Red Tantric Yoga involves physical sexual practices. Black Tantric Yoga involves the control of others through the use of mental power or the control of the elements through the refinement of mental power. Neither are a part of White Tantric Yoga.



"The longitude and latitude which creates the Divine Human Attitude."

White Tantric Yoga is only practiced under the direct supervision of the Mahan Tantric, in groups of couples. It involves the controlled use of group and individual energy generated through maintaining a position, mantra, concentration, and communication between the individuals and the group, under the protective aura of the Mahan Tantric.

White Tantric Yoga is the reclaiming of innocence and the acquisition of purity of the subconscious through a close synchronization of the individual in their polarities with Infinity.

"In White Tantric Yoga, energy is created en masse to purify the physical and mental bodies. The soul, which is already pure, starts relating to the very existence of the being."

– YOGI BHAJAN

Yogi Bhajan on Kundalini Yoga & Hatha Yoga

I could have taught Hatha Yoga like everyone else. I am a good Hatha Yogi. In India when the Hatha Yogis got sick, I would heal them. I am a specialist in yoga therapy, where you use Hatha Yoga postures, certain mudras, *kriyas*, and nutrition to treat people.

I chose not to teach just Hatha Yoga. I started teaching Kundalini Yoga and everyone told me, "It will be hard, and it will not be popular. No one really wants awareness in the West. You should start with Hatha Yoga." I had to decide, "Am I going to do this for myself and pick the easy route, or am I going to deliver the knowledge undiluted and as a legacy for these people?" I felt that people in the West need the type of system which could give them a positive realization and awareness in a short time. That system had to be strong enough and practical enough that any householder can practice it.

All the traditional Hatha Yoga systems were aimed at students who could limit or withdraw from normal life. There is no better system known to me than Kundalini Yoga. Though Raja Yoga is great, it is very mental, and a student has to be very well prepared for it.

The beauty of Kundalini Yoga is that if you can just physically sit there, fix the automatic rhythm of your *pranayam* (breath control), add a creative *naad* (inner sound), your mind becomes focused and balanced. In one *kriya* you can immediately achieve a complete physical, mental, and spiritual balance. It works so effectively and quickly because of this completeness, balance, and energy.

Since any method, from prayer to dance, that helps you achieve Universal Consciousness must eventually raise your kundalini to accomplish it, why not start with Kundalini Yoga direct? What is the purpose of Hatha Yoga? The purpose is to raise the awareness. It is a technology which brings the *apana* and *prana*, the moon and sun powers, together to raise the consciousness through the central equilibrium line. In other words, its stated aim is to raise the kundalini. The problem is that it takes about 22 years to raise it that way, even with perfect practice. That is the long method. The difference with that and Kundalini Yoga is only a matter of time and rate of progress. The purpose of the two approaches is the same; only Kundalini Yoga is direct, quick, and a perfect practice for the pace of a modern household.

Teaching Hatha Yoga and Kundalini Yoga are different. First of all, it is difficult to teach Kundalini Yoga. A teacher who does not have a beam of energy within him or herself cannot teach it. That is the first fundamental. As a teacher of Kundalini Yoga, you should be established at a certain steady level of consciousness to pull the people up to that level. If you do not have that link of consciousness, the Golden Link, and the spark of awareness, then you can only instruct in darkness. That is the problem. You could come, and I could give you a bunch of powerful and elegant exercises. You would feel good. However, when I then talk about life and humanity, and the total sum of existence and consciousness, you have to feel that magnetism come out of me. My reality and confirmed consciousness must be present to act as a guide and compass. If I can't give you that, there is nothing to pull you to that new level. Kundalini Yoga is the master science of experience and awareness. It is a transmission of consciousness from person to person. It is a Raj Yoga that awakens you inside. That is the basic difference between Hatha Yoga and Kundalini Yoga.

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What is Raj Yoga and what does it have to do with Kundalini Yoga?

Yogi Bhajan defines Raj Yog as the "royal command and rulership of yogic virtue and values." He says that Guru Ram Das sits on that throne." The Raj Yogi rules the mind and body with the soul in a state of saibhung or self-illumination. Self-acknowledgment is part of what makes you royal. Raj is that which commands from the throne of Guru Ram Das.

KUNDALINI YOGA IS A RAJ YOGA. To understand what that means, begin with the root word: yoga–union. It implies a relationship between two or more things which are united. To a yogi, this is the soul and Being or God. It is the seen and the unseen, it is the relationship between the everywhere present play of *Prakirti* (the manifest universe) and *Purusha* (the seed potential of the Cosmos at each point). These pathways toward union and relationship are the contours of yoga practices. They are, as Patanjali says, "limbs" of the experience of union.

Yogi Bhajan gave a sequence to explain how these approaches are woven together in the fabric of yoga practice. First there is **Bhakti Yoga**. This is the act of surrender, devotion, and commitment. It is first because it conquers the Negative Mind. You use the Negative Mind to negate your own ego and old patterns and accept the command of your higher consciousness. The rule of this facet of the path is "I obey." Without this, few begin real transformation and awakening.

Second there is **Shakti Yoga**. This is the development of discipline, skill, and power. The purpose of Shakti Yoga is to realize: "I, the ego, am the Universe, God the Infinity." Its law is "I command." Soul and I become one. If the student has humility and balance, it is "I command my self and my impulse to spontaneously support my soul." This is why it is said Bhakti leads to Shakti–devotion leads to power. The metaphor implies that as you love the Infinite, the Infinite protects and directs you. You learn what you need to recognize your destiny, assess the distance to it, and perform the discipline to move toward it. It represents the use and refinement of the Positive Mind. Many Kundalini Yoga teachers are familiar with this stage and are challenged to balance the demands of professionalism in yoga and devotion–using the yoga to serve themselves and using themselves to serve the yoga.

Third is **Raj Yoga**. Yogi Bhajan says of Raj Yoga: "It is a royal command and rulership of yogic virtue and values. Guru Ram Das sits on that throne." This is the full development of Identity and Being when we talk like a sage and walk like a king. Your presence works. Just as a king is on the throne and things happen all around to enact his orders, you become still and watch the Will of God and the creative pulse of the Universe. The rule for this is "I am, I AM." It is the throne of the Neutral Mind. The least will of the king is perceived by the court and acted on, often without an explicit order. In this place the universe and you are not separated. There is an immediate and subtle response to your will. The challenge is to let go and let God, to trust deeply in the process of fulfillment and support as it acts through the path and Will of God.

Mostly the ego wants control and has its own schemes and expectations about how things will happen. But in the larger flow of life–*Karta Purkh*–the pathways of action are largely unconscious and occur outside the framework of the ego. To embrace that fully and to stay in synchrony with that larger will is the gift, power and capacity of the Raj Yogi. The line of Raj Yoga came from Krishna, then King Janak, then to the House of Nanak through Guru Ram Das who has been given the throne of Raj Yoga. It is through that blessing we can share this once-secret sacred science with all in the Aquarian Age.

To a practitioner of Kundalini Yoga, of Raj Yoga, this is all a miracle, a gift of the Creator. As Yogi Bhajan put it: "The Raj Yogi's presence performs his miracle. Others have to act and perform and do all kinds of things. But this is the path of the King. It is not the path of the slave. Just feel your presence is acting; therefore you have not to act. Never try to interfere with the power of God. Never try to control other people. Serve, excel, and be."

Once you are a Raj Yogi what can be left? **Sahej Yoga**–the pair of opposites does not affect the yogi. The stage of flow where there is no difference between obey and command. It is a stage of synchrony of the mind and soul so that all experience serves the identity and divinity established in Raj Yoga. It is a flowering as in the expression of *bani* in the Siri Guru Granth Sahib.

Then comes **Gyan Yoga**. This is the ability to know things clearly without the subconscious clouding the clarity; knowledge that only comes after all three minds are conquered–Negative, Positive, and Neutral–and synchronize the self with the Infinite.

And lastly is **Karma Yoga**. Action in service of the boundless will of the soul. Each action is performed as dharma without reactive karma.

To live and develop as a Raj Yogi requires self-worth, self-trust, and self-discipline. You accept the gift of your soul from the Infinite. You act to sense and serve the soul in all beings. You embrace the full scope of the creative pulse of the Creator without fear or blame. You dissolve your self as a candle turns into light. You commit to live with subtlety and refine your consciousness.

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Twenty-two Forms of Yoga

Anabhava Yoga. The discipline of non-being; the higher yogic practice of immersion of the self into the Self without objective supports.

Ashtanga Yoga. The discipline of the eight limbs described by Patanjali.

Bhakti Yoga. The discipline of love and devotion. Surrender of the ego in love.

Dhyana Yoga. The discipline of meditation. Simran, mindfulness, and concentration all come under this.

Guru Yoga. Merger through focus, surrender and acquisition of virtues in relation to a teacher. It often employs a *traatik* picture as a meditation in addition to service and modeling the teacher.

Gyan (Jnana) Yoga. The discipline of discriminating wisdom, to discern the real from the unreal, the intuitive from the impulsive, and the intelligence from the intellect.

Hatha Yoga. The mastery of the polarities.

Japa Yoga. The discipline of *mantra* recitation.

Karma Yoga. The discipline of self-transcending action. This was one of the primary approaches expounded in the *Bhagavad-Gita.*

Kriya Yoga. The discipline to bring actions to a fulfillment and completion within the self. In the *Yoga-Sutra* of Patanjali it is mentioned as the combined practice of cleansing exercises (*tapas*), deep study (*svadhyaya*), and devotional conscious worship of the Supreme One in all (*ishvara-pranidhana*).

Kundalini Yoga. The unitive discipline of the power of awareness and the potential in each individual. It is a Raj Yoga. Once called the science of the serpent power (*kundalini-shakti*), which is fundamental to the tantric tradition, including Hatha Yoga. In Eastern symbology, the serpent represents energy, essence, awareness, rejuvenation and the play of the spirit.

Laya Yoga. Merging the finite with the Infinite. The use of sound and mantra with rhythm and a sensitivity to its subtle structure. Often practiced in groups.

Mantra Yoga. A discipline of the Yoga tradition ever since Vedic times, it uses sounds that protect and project the mind.

Nada Yoga. The discipline of the inner sound, the primal vibration.

Siddha Yoga. The discipline of the adepts to develop powers and extraordinary capacities.

Sâmkhya Yoga. The discipline of insight into the nature of things. A philosophy of liberation teachings referred to in the *Mahabharata.*

Raj Yoga. The royal unitive discipline, a **Maha Yoga.** The *Yoga-Shikha-Upanishad* refers to it as the combined practice of Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Hatha Yoga, and Raja Yoga. Add the direct link of awareness given by the master's touch and the Shabd Guru.

Sahej Yoga. Practice of a state of ease, flow and grace in which all polarites are seen to serve the One. It is considered part of Raj Yoga and is both devotional and powerful.

Shakti Yoga. The techniques in a yoga approach that give strength, power and activity. It relies on practices and actions that develop the feeling of potency and ability in the individual rather than through devotional practices alone. Shakti and Bhakti approaches inform and supplement each other.

Tantra Yoga. The psychophysical techniques employed in Tantra to clear the subconscious and promote the clarity of the soul. We do the White Tantra form.

Traatik Yoga. The discipline of gazing on a sacred object or picture of the teacher.

Yantra Yoga. The discipline of focusing the mind upon geometric representations (*yantra*) of the Cosmos or of energetic processes such as the chakras.

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The Many Facets of Kundalini Yoga

Jap means continuous, calm, meditative recitation of a mantra. Japa Yoga is part of Kundalini Yoga, as are Shakti Yoga, Laya Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga, and Hatha Yoga. Laya is the contact of the sound of the mantra. Mantra is the formation of the notes and the scale of the sounds and its applied actions or potency. *Japa* is the technology, *shakti* is the power, *bhakti* is the devotion in it. *Raja* is the royalty of philosophy that gives you gracefulness. Hatha is the union of *Ha* and *Tha*, the mastery of polarity. These seven form Kundalini Yoga. Until you know Laya Yoga, you cannot tune the mantra. If you do not know *japa* you cannot recite it. Without *bhakti* you don't have time for it. Without *shakti* you cannot perform it.

–YOGI BHAJAN 8/17/76

Kundalini Yoga & White Tantric Yoga

These teachings help you to become your real Self. The beauty of life is to experience the totality of yourself in complete unison. Less than that, you will be the victim of your own perpetual fears. In every growth, achievement and success there is a pleasure that comes from newness and originality. There is another pleasure, an ecstasy, which is everlasting, and which comes only when you become anew all the time, every moment. That is life at its fullest. That is the energy of Kundalini Yoga and White Tantric Yoga. When that energy is awakened in you, you become a forklift. You cut on a diagonal. In astrology the square represents opposition in life. With the kundalini energy. you cut the square across the diagonal into two triangles or trines. Trines are considered to be help and good fortune. Life is the art of creating the diagonal energy and never stopping or being stopped.

–YOGI BHAJAN

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CHAPTER 4

A Brief History of Yoga & Patanjali's Sutras

The ashrams and Gurus of ancient India used to be mental workshops. They taught and molded the minds of people to be clear, strong, and to act righteously under all possible circumstances. If all the spiritual teachers started to teach faith in the Self and stopped teaching faith in a personality, this world would be heaven. This existence with its infinite mind is at your command. You need guidance and training to experience and manifest this.

—YOGI BHAJAN

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The Evolution of Yoga through the Historical Epochs

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH HAS GENERATED MANY SCHOOLS OF thought and disciplines for experience over thousands of years. Yoga and the philosophy of consciousness did not spring forth fully formed and independent of historical and cultural processes. It is the historian's job to recast concepts and philosophies so they can be seen as part of the greater unfolding of historical processes and the evolution of great ideas. Our job is to appreciate just enough of that history to help us perceive some order to the evolution of the schools of philosophy that we will briefly survey. We have a specific destination: the foundations for yoga and the study of consciousness. Hence this brief presentation of historical phases is not intended to satisfy the details necessary for comprehensive history. It is a conceptual outline to help you recognize and put several key texts and schools of thought in a temporal order.

Although the process of awakening the kundalini and of transcending the ego is universal, and can be found in many cultural traditions, it is in India that the philosophy and the techniques of the kundalini saw its most complete fruition. This timetable follows the twists and currents of that great river of knowledge given to us by the sages and saints of many traditions of the Indian subcontinent. Remember that all the traditions are linked by a common quest and by disciplines that guide the student to self-transcendence.

Prehistoric Epoch (?-1800 BC)

There is evidence that the rudiments of yoga and meditation are known during this period.

We know very little about the civilizations of this early period. Archaeology has given a few hints. Speculation fills the rest of the gaps of our knowledge. There are only fragments of later writings that refer to these early periods. These references are presented in mythical form. Yogi Bhajan once commented that the oldest records in the scrolls of Tibet told of civilizations flourishing over 40,000 years ago. He says that even in those times there were forms of yoga and meditation. The biggest changes in those times came from the massive shifts in global weather patterns and the consequent crop and wildlife adaptations. He specifically mentioned a massive shift in weather about 10,000 years ago that forced migrations. It was these migrations that blended cultures from different areas and which catalyzed the development of many of the new cultural forms of spiritual practice. He emphasized that the early forms of yoga were systematized 100,000 years ago. They were then reformulated in later cultures at 80,000, 40,000, and 10,000 years ago, and they are being reformulated now.

In the period a few hundred years prior to 1800 BC, ancient India was concentrated in the Indus River valley. The civilization spanned hundreds of miles in the north, northwest, and western sections of contemporary India and Pakistan. Two great cities have been excavated: Harappa in the north and Mohenjo-Daro along the southern end of the Indus River. The people were sophisticated and had elaborate socio-politico-religious organizations. They carried on commerce with trade routes stretching from Europe to China. They even had a system of running water, baths, and a sewer system that included sit-down toilets in some homes. There is evidence that the rudiments of yoga were known, and cities contained as many as 50,000 people by some estimates. The great cities survived in stable modes for over a thousand years. We know little of this time. The artifacts and records are sparse. It is clear that they already had the concept and practice of meditation. They used symbols for the feminine and masculine powers in the universe that are still used in modern art and religions.

Although we were not left with specific texts and scriptures, the motifs of the meditation on Shiva, Shakti, and Vishnu run through all the later scriptures and techniques.

Vedic Epoch (1800 BC -1000 BC)

The Mahabharata is revealed. The realms of the rishis are recorded in the Vedas. We find the cultural roots of yoga and the Samkhya philosophy.

The great migration of the cities of the Indus civilization by the Aryans starts the next period. The Aryans were a Sanskrit-speaking culture that came from the area of the steppes of central Russia. They had fair skin, light hair and blue eyes. They were Indo-European nomads (herdsmen) and raiders, and were proud, aggressive, and warrior-like. They believed in their own superiority, and they had a great tradition of self-development and yoga. They had a great variety of weapons. Deep in the core of their culture, they believed in self-discipline and in the transcendence of the ego-self.

The Aryans eventually spread into the central areas of India after establishing in the area of modern day Punjab. This expan-

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sion was not peaceful. It was filled with battles, sieges, and grand conflicts. As they gained wealth and power, they even fought among their own clans.

The longest war in recorded history is chronicled in the Mahabharata, a poem of over 100,000 stanzas. A playwright once brought a version of the poem to the stage in New York City. The play lasted for three full days. It is a record of the battles between two warring clans: the Pandavas and the Kauravas. The original version was recorded between 800 and 1000 BC. It is a storehouse of myths, symbols, history, philosophy, beliefs, religion, customs, and mystical experience. The poem is a source of much lore about yoga in this period. Over the centuries the Mahabharata became the central epic of India, and has had many parts added to it, such as the Bhagavad Gita. And it grew in its role as the storehouse of cultural knowledge and inspiration.

If you are a serious student, and you want a deep understanding of the cultural roots of early yoga, then this is required reading. The earliest version was transmitted orally, and describes disciplines and sadhanas. The later versions record Samkhya and yoga philosophies. One of the strongest messages of this epic is that beyond all the drama, strife, and war, there exist transcendental states of Being. That liberated state is beyond all opposites: good and bad, right and wrong, and pain and pleasure. The personal and internal achievement of that special consciousness liberates and enlightens the individual.

As the Aryan and Indus cultures merged and influenced each other, the techniques and experiences of spiritual development that helped guide the integration of the cultures were recorded in Sanskrit, in the earliest Vedas (Books of Knowledge): the Rig-Veda, the Sama- Veda, the Yajur-Veda, and the Atharva-Veda. The Rig-Veda in particular provides stories and hymns about the adventures and beliefs of the early civilization of the Vedas. These scriptures came from the Aryans, and they show the influence of the Indus population in its words and concepts.

The hymns were composed by the great seers or *rishis* who had gained a vision from deep contemplation and merger with the Divine. The hymns were directly spoken and sung from this state of direct perception. Being in this state of consciousness, they did not compose the Vedas, but recorded in language the realms they experienced. These hymns are not intellectual treatises, but the direct poetic, emotional, and spiritual experiences of the sages.

Brahmanic Epoch (1000 BC - 800 BC)

This is a ritualistic, literal epoch. Yoga and the mystical precepts for empowering the individual are not promoted.

The priestly class were called Brahmins. They recorded a great deal of literature about the proper rites, rituals, and behaviors of the times. They formed a sacrificial and ritualistic class. Worship and virtue were external. Rather than accept the challenge of internal development cultivated in the earlier Vedic Epoch, the Brahmins stabilized their social position through elaborate bodily rites. Traces of the past were woven through them, but the literal-thinking minds of fundamentalists were busy at work.

The literature in the Brahmanas and in the Aranyakas, a handbook for ascetic forest dwellers, does not promote yoga or the precepts that empower the internal capacities and experiences of the individual.

Upanishadic Epoch (800 BC - 500 BC)

The Yoga-Upanishads and the guru-chela relationship transmit the yogic teachings. King Janaka grandly passes on the traditions of Raj Yoga and Kundalini Yoga.

The reaction to the rigid external ritualism of the Brahmanic Epoch finally came in the form of the Upanishads. These ecstatic writings are full of the technology of transcendence. They are iconoclastic and inspirational. They internalized all the transformations of the earlier rituals. They opened the inner ground of Being as the appropriate place for gradual self-transcendence. They record the knowledge of many anonymous sages.

The sages of the times who inspired and contributed to the Upanishads were diverse and unequalled in their sagacity and vitality. The great King Janaka, who was also the transmitter of the tradition of Raj and Kundalini Yoga, was a grand figure of the time. Others were ascetics and some were enlightened Brahmins. Great stories and traditions flow from this epoch.

The word *Upanishad* literally means to sit near and be meditative. It reflects the original way the knowledge was transmitted. It was given from *guru* to *chela,* teacher to student, master to apprentice. It assumed respect and commitment on the part of the student. There are 108 traditionally accepted verses that are themselves listed in the Muktika-Upanishad. This knowledge is known as Vedanta and is accepted as revelations or direct transmissions. Vedanta is known as "The great knowledge which is complete or which ends the teachings." Over the centuries, more than a hundred more verses have been added by various authors.

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These newer compositions are respected as both tradition and as elaboration. There are translations available of all of them and there are many studies of the content. One group is especially important: the Yoga-Upanishad. These include a great deal of instruction on yoga.

All the writings emphasize the discovery and cultivation of an ultimate ground of Being, that Infinite can be known through transcendental gnosis. The key insight is that there is an identity between the Ultimate Truth and the reality of the individual as truth. The soul and the Universal Being are not different in nature. This fact is beyond the mind's capacity for definition and classification. It requires realization or enlightenment. It must be known all at once, as a total and complete vision.

Gita Epoch (500 BC - AD 200)

Movement toward systemization of the inner technology. The Ramayana teaches of Divine Love and self-transcendence; the Bhagavad Gita the path of dharma, and karma yoga.

This was a period of transition. The mystical technologies of the Upanishads were taught and practiced widely. Some new Upanishads were added such as the Katha-, Isha-, and Mundaka-Upanishads. The rise of the numbers of people who practiced these techniques moved many practitioners toward systematization of the inner technology. This trend culminated in the next epoch.

The great works that guided the popular culture of that period and which remain as important pillars in the history of yoga are: the Ramayana and the Bhagavad Gita.

The Ramayana is an epic poem of 24,000 verses that tells the long tale of the tragic love of Lord Rama and Sita. Vishnu, one of the three aspects of the Absolute, had ten important incarnations. Of his four human incarnations, the ones as Rama and Krishna were most powerful. As Rama he demonstrates all the virtues that lead to liberation. Righteousness, fearlessness, non-attachment, service, discipline, and a love of Truth are all depicted in the many tales of the Ramayana. Many of the often-told tales are metaphorical. They can be understood as a story and as instructions in the methods of self-transcendence.

The Bhagavad Gita is part of the Mahabharata. It is a dialogue between Krishna and his devotee Prince Arjuna. It takes place in the middle of a war on the battlefield. It directly teaches karma yoga. We are taught that you can be unattached in the midst of great actions, even wars. We can relate to a silent and constant center. The great power comes from the disciplined mind, not from external rituals or sacrifices. The real problem is not the action of life, but our attachment that keeps us bound to reaction. In real liberation, we act free, carefree, and spontaneous without attachment or fear as motives. When we do not act from lower motivations, we learn to act from what is cosmically correct - from dharma. Only then do concepts like love, duty, and righteousness have any meaning. The writings do not outline systematically the yoga practices and meditations. Rather, they convey the spirit and viewpoint that must accompany them.

This became the main scripture for the Vaishnavites, who worshipped Vishnu. The message of the scriptures is universal, however. Vishnu was regarded as the One in all and the One beyond all. Awakening was in two main stages: the release of the attachment and security of time and space, and the absorption beyond mind into the absolute Being and Love.

Classical Epoch (AD 200 - AD 800)

Patanjali reveals his masterpiece of yogic philosophy, as the long-standing traditions flourish.

During this period, the tradition established in the Mahabharata flourished and expanded. Many of the streams of thought and the technologies of yoga were systematized. The six major schools of philosophy *(see Six Schools of Yogic Philosophy this chapter)* were codified and extensively taught. In the later writings of the Sikh Gurus (the Bhakti Epoch), the "six schools" refer to the philosophies established in the Classical Epoch. The most important work during this period was the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. This is the great work on yoga and its philosophy that has guided students ever since it was written. *(See this chapter for more on Patanajali's Sutras.)*

Puranic Epoch (AD 800 - AD 1469)

Esoteric knowledge becomes widespread, Vedanta philosophy sets the stage for the grant synthesis of the next epoch.

The Puranas were composed during this period. They are a huge collection of mythology, philosophy, and history. The great teacher Shankara wrote about non-dualistic Vedanta philosophy. His writings propelled many seekers into the use of the psycho-spiritual technology of yoga. During the same time the emphasis on tantrism and the use of the esoteric knowledge of the chakras, the glands, and the aura expanded. The discipline of sadhana to elevate consciousness and to aid in the philosophy propounded by earlier texts became widespread.

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It came to be understood that it was possible to produce the spiritual and physical well-being without rejecting the senses and without being an ascetic. This emphasis led to an awakening of the philosophy of Shakti, the feminine cosmic principle of energy. Kundalini is a Shakti energy that manifests the Divine in the finite body and mind. This explosion of experimentation and practice prepared the way for the grand synthesis in the next period.

Bhakti Epoch (AD 1469 - AD 1708)

The grand synthesis creates the householder as the sage.

This is the period where opposites fused. The tradition of asceticism met the tradition of mystical union. The householder who must live in the daily world was elevated to the status of the forest-dwelling sage. The catalyst for this was the meeting of the Sant tradition (which had respect for the Guru or teacher), the Nath, and Tantra traditions, (which use yoga and psycho-physical technology), and the Bhakti tradition, (which emphasized devotion as a means to know truth beyond the confines of the structure of the mind).

The greatest result of this confluence of influences was the ten Sikh Gurus and the creation of the scripture: the Siri Guru Granth Sahib. Yogi Bhajan has said that the Siri Guru Granth Sahib is the fifth Veda. It completes and culminates the philosophies of all the previous times. It also extends them. It is the only scripture that is treated as a Guru. It is not just history, philosophy, and technology, it is an active vibratory presence. It was designed as a *granth*, a knot that binds the Word into a form in which any person can interact and be transformed It is a primary source for many mantras and shabds that are the pinnacle of the power of the Word as understood by the yogis and saints. The Sikh Gurus emphasized non-attachment, service, and meditation directly on the Naam. They broke the cycle of searching for a personal guru and the cults of personality that often misled seekers. They embodied the Guru in the scripture and declared it a Siri Guru, a teacher of teachers. The tenth teacher, Guru Gobind Singh, declared there would be no more human Gurus in that tradition.

The result, the Siri Guru Granth Sahib, is a modern tool and writing that emphasizes the need to remember the essence of spirituality and at the same time the need to embody that essence in a distinct form. It encourages respect for all traditions and people, and asks each to recognize in others the common essence we share, and the Creator who creates us all.

Modern Epoch (AD 1708 - AD 2011)

The romance between East and West begins. A time of expansion and discovery, great change and possibilities.

The fall of the Mogul Empire brought about by the Sikh resistance ushered in the changes that opened civilization to Western influence. The British established rule over India in the latter part of the eighteenth century. This diminished the devotional ardor of the Bhakti Epoch. It increased materialism and secularism. It brought with it industrialization and, later, high technology. At the beginning of the 1900s there was a wave of missionaries from the East who brought many of the concepts to the West. The romance between East and West began in earnest. The Modern Epoch is the story of discovery and communication between the two hemispheres of our world. The great traditions have been established. Now they have been rediscovered, printed, practiced, and disseminated. In the United States and Europe, meditation and the practices of Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, and others are common. The recent wars in Vietnam, Cambodia, Africa, Thailand, and the fall of the old hierarchies in Eastern Europe have led to a great migration of people across the old cultural barriers. With the rise of Japan as a great economic power and the people fleeing China and Hong Kong, the oriental cultures have come face to face with the West. Buddhism, Shintoism, and Taoism have touched the Western heart and are being assimilated. The Modern Epoch is one of expansion and discovery. We near the end of that time and prepare to enter the next epoch. These years will be filled with change, chaos, and possibilities. The roles of the individual and institutions will need to find a new balance. Many institutions preserved themselves through ignorance and fear. The barriers to knowledge have been attacked by the people and technology of the modern information era.

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Aquarian Epoch (AD 2011 - ?)

A period based on experience, commitment, and universality, ushering in a new level of consciousness and civilization.

The key terms for the Aquarian Epoch are globalization, universality, and the dignity of the human being. No religion will survive in less than a global context. The historical and tribal- based traditions of the many world cultures will come face to face. The need is a commitment to establish authentic transformative experience in each individual. Consciousness and its many levels will be the theme in this epoch.

Traditions that rely on fear and ignorance will fall to the side. During this transition, there will be a polarization and some chaos as old institutions fight the final battle. Then there will be neither East nor West. There will be developed and undeveloped consciousness. We will judge philosophy and spirituality by the degree of awakening and embodiment an individual attains, rather than by their association with a specific group.

The end of the Aquarian Epoch is in dispute from different sources. By astrological, rather than historical measure, it should last about 2,000 years. Yogi Bhajan has said that if all goes well in the transition, the realm of global philosophy, pluralism, sprituality, and the ethics of Khalsa (the pure ones) will extend a full 11,000 years before they pass on. This length of time will be historically unique–it will be the first time that the entire globe will be united. It can be a period of stability, and expansion can occur in the depth of our hearts and in the reaches of space. Inner and outer space will complement each other and lead to a vast spirituality and a philosophy that is based on experience, commitment, and universality.

Each of you who studies these ancient techniques and puts them into practice in your life is a pioneer of the New Age. You are on the historical crest of hope and development that will usher in a new level of consciousness and civilization. The changes will happen very quickly. Each of your efforts to study and to teach Kundalini Yoga gives birth to the Aquarian Epoch.

The Six Schools of Yogic Philosophy

The six principal orthodox schools recognized as representing points of view within the context of Vedic heritage are:

- *Purva-Mimamsa* expounds in detail the art and science of moral and righteous action by following the proscriptions of vedic ritualism. It was focused on the concept of dharma. *Purva-Mimamsa* emphasizes individual responsibility for one's actions and that we have the free will to create a quality of life. We find no instruction in yoga in this school. Nor does this school presume one God.

- *Vedanta (Uttara Mimamsa)* In this school we find an emphasis on the internal experience of ritual, as well as the nature of meditation and the mystic scriptures of the Upanishads, including the Bhagavad Gita. Here we find the integration of the concept of right action within the Oneness of creation, and the nature of transcendental reality.

- *Samkhya* has many schools which are concerned with the evolution of existence, and the nature of being. The elements of Samkhya philosophy are woven through classical yogic philosophy. But samkhya stresses the use of mental discrimination and analysis to perceive reality, rather than meditative experience.

- *Yoga* This school was identified throughout Patanjali's sutras. It expounded practical techniques of meditation and self-control to attain the perception of self and reality. With this school, we find movement into the more experiential.

- *Vaisheshika* approached liberation by understanding all of existence in terms of six primary categories.

- *Nyaya* (literally means "rule.") Emphasis in this school was on rules, logic and rhetoric.

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About the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

IN THE VISION OF PATANJALI, and most Eastern and esoteric traditions, knowledge serves the function of awakening and even redeeming. It is through clarity, intuition, and understanding the timeless nature of the Self, that we can transcend suffering and stop the unconscious actions that create problems.

Patanjali's Sutras . . .

- consist of 195 thought-laden aphorisms. Sutra means "thread."
- remain even today, the definitive work on yoga.
- are an overview of the goals, philosophy, and structure of a yoga and meditation discipline.
- state that the process of yoga is focused on the need to control the modifications or waves of the mind.
- describe the Eight Limbs of Yoga essential for yoga practice.
- merge the two schools of Yoga and Samkhya. Yoga recognizes our individual consciousness as one with the Universal Consciousness, Samkhya explains how our unlimited consciousness manifests into the realm of the physical world.

The Yoga Sutra itself consists of 195 aphorisms presented in four steps or chapters.

I SAMADHI-PADA
Absorption and Higher States of Awareness

II SADHANA-PADA
Discipline and Practices

III VIBHUTI-PADA
Powers and Capabilities of the Possible Human

IV KAIVALYA-PADA
The Nature of Liberation

See the Yogic Philosophy chapter for more on yogic thought.

Ahangkar. The ego-sense which claims the impressions of the mind for its own and reacts to them.
Ashtanga. Eight-limbed.
Atman. The essential Self, present within all creatures. Pure consciousness. The mind merely reflects that consciousness, so appears to be conscious.
Bhagvad Gita. A chapter in the Mahabharata. Dialogue between Arjuna, leader of the Pandavas, and Krishna (reincarnation of the Hindu trinity (Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu). A clear statement of Karma Yoga, selfless action.
Brahm or Brahma. Spirit. The True Self. The universe before Creation.
Buddhi. The component of the mind which discriminates and classifies the impressions which the *manas* receives.
Chitta. The Universal Mind.
Dharma. Righteous path of duty. "Where there is dharma there is no karma." Action aligned with one's Infinite Self. The central organizing principle of the cosmos.
Gunas. The three conditions of matter: *sattva*—pure essence (saintliness), *rajas*—active, creative or initiating energy (imperial), and *tamas*—inertia or decay.
Karma. The law of cause and effect. Rooted in the ignorance of Atman. Remove the ignorance and karma is removed.
Mahabharata. *Maha* means great. *Bharata* is an ancient name for India. An enormous epic depicting rivalries of two clans, the Kauravas and the Pandavas.
Manas. The recording component of the mind, which receives impressions gathered by the senses from the outside world.
Maya. The illusion of the reality of sensory experience of one's self and the world around us. Usually thought of as what takes us away from, or blinds us from perceiving God.
Moksa. Release, when we realize we are *Purusha*, and enter into right relationship with *Prakirti*.
Purusha. Unmanifest spirit.
Prakirti. Matter. Primal Nature. Evolves under the influence of *Purusha*, so the Self may enjoy experience. Composed of the three *gunas*.
Reincarnation. The cycle (or wheel) of birth and death. One's condition in life is determined by the balance of the karma.
Samskaras. Tendencies, potentialities and latent states which exist in the subconscious and unconscious areas of the mind. They are built up by the continued action of the thought-waves, and create new thought-waves. Our *samskaras* define our character.
Upanishads. The earliest yogic writings, written over 1000 years ago. 108 in all. Many dialogues between kings and yogis.
Vedanta. Another name for modern Hinduism. Founded on the Upanishads.
Vedas. The oldest religious books in the world. Literature of Brahminism, an ancient religion of India.

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Patanjali's Eight Limbs of Yoga Practice

Ashtanga (8-limbed) Yoga

One of the deep truths captured by the eight limbs is the need to develop the entire spectrum of body and mind as a whole system. Kundalini Yoga includes all eight limbs in each sadhana or complete set.

PATANJALI IDENTIFIED EIGHT INTERRELATED ASPECTS OF YOGA practice some time betwen 200 and 600 AD. The eight limbs are equally essential to steady progress in refining the mind and discriminating the real from the illusory. They are called "limbs" or "parts" rather than steps to emphasize their integrated nature. The limbs grow a little in relation to each other, allowing the coordinated use of all the limbs.

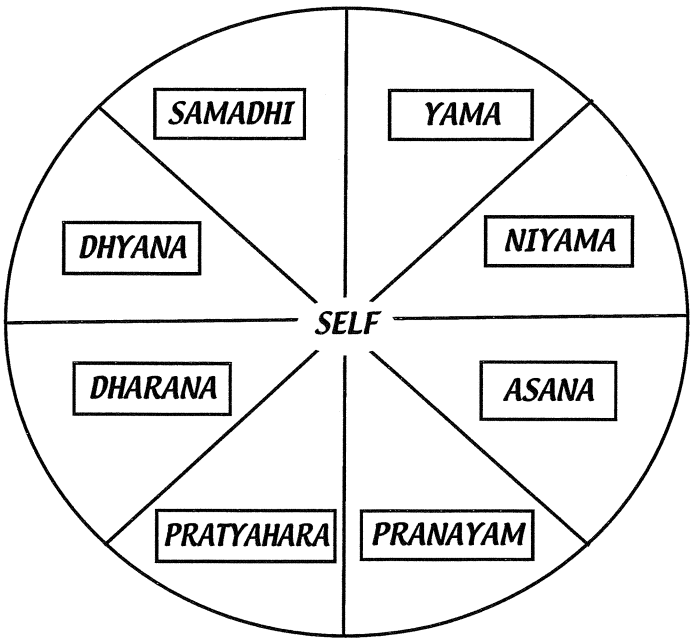
SAMADHI	*Awakening and absorption in spirit*
DHYANA	*Deep meditation*
DHARANA	*One-pointed concentration*
PRATYHAR	*Synchronization of senses and thoughts*
PRANAYAM	*Control of prana (life force)*
ASANA	*Postures for health and meditation*
NIYAMA	*Five disciplines [see below]*
YAMA	*Five restraints [see below]*

The list above places the eight limbs in a ladder-like manner, missing the dynamic aspects of the limbs, but emphasizes the nature of the practices from the most gross and accessible (ethical behaviors) to the most rarified and intangible (spiritual or mystic merger).

In the West, most popularizations of the techniques tend to emphasize one end or the other of the ladder. Either the body is cultivated without chanting and meditation, or the mind is cultivated through meditation, without building physical vitality through exercise. Both lead to imbalances, physically and emotionally. One of the deep truths captured by the eight limbs is the need to develop the entire spectrum of body and mind as a whole system. Kundalini Yoga includes all of the eight limbs in each *sadhana* or complete exercise set.

Yamas and niyamas

At the base of the eighted-limbed path are the *yamas* and *niyamas*. *Yama* is choosing to practice moral restraint in external interactions, and *niyama* is observing daily practices designed to clarify the internal relationship to the Self.



YAMAS

Ahimsa (non-hurting). Compassion, patience, love for others, self-love, worthiness, and understanding,

Satya (truthfulness). Honesty, forgiveness, non-judgment, owning feelings, loving communication, letting go of masks.

Asteya (non-stealing). Right use of resources, letting go of jealousy, cultivating sense of self-sufficiency and completeness.

Brahmacharya (sensory control). Channelling emotions, moderation.

Aparigraha (non-possessiveness). Fulfilling needs rather than wants.

NIYAMAS

Shaucha (purity). Evenness of mind, thought, speech. Purity of body.

Santosha (contentment). Gratitude, acceptance, calmness with success or failure.

Tapas (purification, zeal). Determination, willingness for practices.

Svadhyaya (study). Reflection, meditation, expanding knowledge.

Ishvara pranidhana (devotion, surrender). Faith, dedication.

The eight limbs and the three minds

The *negative mind* is mastered with YAMAS and NIYAMAS.
The *positive mind* is mastered with ASANAS and PRANAYAM.
The *neutral mind* is mastered with PRATYAHAR, DHARANA, DHYANA, and SAMADHI.

The Eight limbs and the five gross elements

Earth: habits—confronted by YAMAS.
Water: emotional impulse—guided by NIYAMAS.
Fire: energy and the urge to do—tended by ASANA.
Air: sensitivity and feelings —directed by PRANAYAM.
Ether: the creative inner space —navigated with PRATYHAR, DHARANA, DHYANA, and SAMADHI.

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More about the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

PATANJALI'S SUTRAS, A SHORT CODIFICATION OF THE PRACTICE of yoga, came out of the classical period of yoga philosophy and history (200-800 AD).

The Patanjali Sutras are an overview of the goals, philosophy, and structure of a yoga and meditation discipline. They provide a sketch of the effort needed and the progress to be expected in a yoga discipline. They are a map of the process of awakening and realizing the possible human that is in each of us. As ancient as they are, they are still an excellent foundation for any serious student of Kundalini Yoga.

The *sutras* were written, as many are, in short thought-laden sentences, assumed to be used under the direction of a master. Its brevity is a problem and a blessing. A great deal is assumed, making its use difficult. However, that allows for a wide range of adaptation to the Teachers who use the *sutras*. Several teachers have written commentaries on the *sutras* to bridge their particular purposes and audiences. That further emphasizes the importance of a relationship to a Teacher and teaching community as part of the process of spiritual practice and growth. There are other texts that list many specific techniques.

Most yogis preferred direct cultivation of personal experience and capacity rather than the intellectual enterprise of systematizing, classifying and analyzing. Substantial commentaries that came from intellectual efforts of great scope were rare. Patanjali Sutras represent the efforts of a yogic adept to attempt to trace the central thread of process across the many schools of practice that existed in the early Classical Epoch (which corresponded to the Christian era) in India. They were so well conceived and written, that they rapidly became the central authoritative text in the yoga tradition. Patanjali's contribution seems to be mostly that of a systematizer rather than an originator. The true beginning of yoga is always attributed to "the womb of Being" or the Creator. The Sutras are the culmination of the historical development of yoga up to that point.

In Hindu stories, Patanjali is said to be an incarnation of *Ananta*—the thousand-headed ruler of the serpent race. This icon has the job of guarding the deep treasures of the Earth. The treasure is the knowledge given by yoga to awaken the possible human; the ability to manifest the Heavens in the Earth, and the ability to embody the divine aspects of the self in the profane circumstances of the normal life. Patanjali's name came from his desire to teach and enlighten those of Earth. He fell *(pat)* from the Heavens and landed in the palm *(anjali)* of a saintly woman, his mother, Gonika. The reverence given to his efforts and its impact on the tradition of the times is clearly evident.

The Yoga sutras themselves consists of 195 aphorisms presented in four steps or chapters.

I SAMADHI-PADA. Absorption and higher states of awareness.
II SADHANA-PADA. Discipline and Practices.
III VIBHUTI-PADA. Powers & capabilities of the possible human.
IV KAIVALYA-PADA. The nature of liberation.

Many scholars argue about the proper order of the aphorisms in the original unedited text. But taken all together the current version seems authentic and reasonably complete.

The form of yoga that comes from this compendium is usually called Classical Yoga. There are some differences with this and Kundalini Yoga, mostly because Classical Yoga was intended for monks, people who withdrew from the world for spiritual practice. Kundalini Yoga was designed for people in the world.

The waves of the mind

The Classical Yoga system Patanjali described was meant to include and unify the precepts developed in Samkhya philosophy and in Vedanta. The process of yoga is focused on the need to control the modifications or waves of the mind. *(See Mind & Meditation chapter.)* The mind is considered the link between body and spirit or consciousness. It is the habits of the mind that bind us to attachments and duality and, in turn, suffering. It is also the habit of mind that leads to non-attachment and to the practice of merger with what is real. The mind is a sophisticated tool that can give us liberation and the transcendence of conditional living, or it can give us confusion, ignorance, and bondage.

The mind and body are one emanation of the primal nature: *Prakirti.* A fundamental property of this nature is constant evolution and transformation. The result of this transformation is the creation of a multilevel gradation of nature from the most subtle and unmanifest aspects to the most differentiated and gross realm of the five senses. Body and mind—the "psyche"— are considered to be gradations of the same substance produced through three eternal forces—the *gunas. (See Yogic Philosophy chapter for more on gunas.)*

The mind is divided into functional aspects:

manas—the lower mind of senses and reactions;

ahangkar—the ego;

buddhi—discriminating mind or mind stuff, which includes memories, subconscious realms, intellect; and

chitta—all other fluctuating waves of mind.

The central task of the yogi is to calm these mental functions so that a clear perception of what is real and what is false can arise.

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This is the central goal. Patanjali attributes the universal suffering witnessed throughout life not to an angry God, nor to any form of original sin or unworthiness, but to ignorance, the lack of the ability to properly discern the *real* from the unreal, the *eternal* from the transitory, the *essential* from the peripheral, and the *Self* from the world of experience–*maya*. Because we are wrapped in layers of mental and emotional habits that cloud our perception, we make choices that are against the Self. We initiate sequences of action with long term pain as their consequence. The moment we do that we are asleep. We are viewing the moment of choice through the blinders of ego. If we can awaken, we can discern the reality of the choice and stay in alignment with what is. Action in line with the Infinite Self is called dharma. You act in the right way at the right time. Dharmic action takes you beyond pleasure and pain to ecstasy, beyond like and hate to love, and beyond want and need to duty, commitment, and identity.

In the vision of Patanjali, and most Eastern and esoteric traditions, knowledge serves the function of awakening and even redeeming. It is through clarity, intuition and special forms of knowing when the mind is refined that we can transcend suffering and stop the unconscious actions that create problems.

The Samkhya and Vedanta traditions were woven together by Patanjali into the eight-fold path of yoga. Vedanta and yoga emphasize the use of meditation and other exercises as part of training the mind. He bridged the few critical differences in a manner that gave greater accessibility to the yoga approach in gaining knowledge of the Self. Both traditions recognize the importance of self-knowledge. But classical Samkhya emphasizes pure metaphysical knowledge. The methodology of meditation supports and complements the power of gnosis or sacred knowledge. Real knowledge makes us aware that we are more than how we usually perceive ourselves. As we recognize the transitory nature of all experience we gain non-attachment.

Through the practice of yoga discipline–*sadhana*–we calm the mind, sharpen its function, and gain discernment to recognize the real, to hear the inner Word, to follow the impulse of the heart–the path of *dharma*.

Balance of the inner & outer worlds

Kundalini Yoga and humanology concur with Patanjali's integration. One departure point is a tendency in Classical Yoga to reject the world and nature as profane or soiled. Some students take this as a validation of asceticism. Kundalini Yoga views nature as the sacred play of the eternal. It is a creation of God the artist. It is a final devolution of the spirit to its densest form. But the physical body shares the same elements and qualities that form all of creation. The body should be viewed as a temple full of treasures. It has the capacity to influence the mind through breathing and glandular secretion. Careful cultivation of the body aids the project of gaining inner knowledge. Neglect and degradation of the body confuses the mind and creates ill health. In Kundalini Yoga there is a constant balance of health, happiness, and holiness. It is designed to give the practitioner awareness and balance in both the inner and outer worlds.

Patanjali emphasizes the need to approach this task with an equal emphasis on practices and attitudes. The practices include the eight limbs of yoga, mental training, concentration, and breathing. If those are practiced alone, the aspirant is subject to great spiritual ego from accomplishments and special feats of mind and body. The attitudes include the *yamas* and *niyamas* discussed below, and the primary attitude of non-attachment to the many aspects of *maya*. If only non-attachment is practiced, the aspirant releases a great deal of psychic energy with no place for it to transform and be expressed. The result is unexpected neurotic patterns, the sudden emergence of the shadow aspects of the personality or other psychosomatic manifestations.

With both regular practice and constant attitudes the path is clear and without problems.

The five stages of mental refinement

The quality of mental and emotional experience changes as the aspirant guides the mind through the eight limbs of yoga practice. Patanjali describes five stages of mental refinement. The descriptions reflect the general principle that all emanations of *Prakirti* are composed of some combination of the three *gunas*: *tamas* (heavy, confusion, lack of clarity); *rajas* (activity, energy); *sattva* (balance, subtlety, clarity). The qualities of mind reflect different degrees of activity and combinations of the three *gunas*.

The Five Stages of Refinement, their description and the influence of the corresponding *gunas* follow:

1. NIRUDHA. *Sattva* is fully expressed. Total calm. The transcendent perception of the soul, consciousness or *Purusha* is now possible. It is "well-controlled," can distinguishg false from Real, and see the nature of the Self reflected throughout the mirror of *Prakirti*.

2. EKAGRA. *Sattva* rules. This creates tranquility and calmness, clear perception about the nature of things. The mind is able to manifest its intentions.

3. VIKSIPTA. *Rajas* dominates, so the mind is fast, flighty, almost manic. It never rests on one thing, nor commits. Often seeks stimulation and information, but doesn't analyze.

4. MUDHA. Predominance of *tamas* assures laziness, confusion, sluggishness, ignorance, and even vice. It is a state of dull confusion or stupidity.

5. KSIPTA. *Rajas* gives the mind a lot of energy. This combined with *tamas* loses discrimination. The mind is distrubed, irritated,

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erratic, distracted. Attention is often focused on the wrong things.

The first three states are the normal qualities of the mind that a novice discovers when beginning to meditate. Gradually the first two conditions are created and slowly developed into steady states. In this condition the many dimensions of capability and extraordinary sensitivity unfold. This process of refinement is discussed by Patanjali both as an increasing unification of consciousness and as an incremental purification of mind. Purification removes the disturbing elements of the mind and body. Unification increases the scope of awareness and the integration across many parts of the mind.

As the mind is refined, judgment also improves. The aspirant makes consistent decisions that lead to happiness and growth. The final result is not a psychological state. It is a condition of the mind and a relationship of body, mind and spirit that frees the soul to create and express without hindrance.

This appreciation of refinement disposes the yogi to pay as much attention to the process and quality of thought and emotion as to the content of those thoughts. It is like the old adage: "You can pile scriptures sky high on the back of a donkey, and it's still just an ass." The mere recitation of written or book knowledge does not mean the mind has been refined enough to be able to understand, act on, and embody the things being referred to in the abstract. The ability to manifest from the abstract to the concrete, from the general to the specific, and from the subtle to the gross is the result of extensive psychoenergetic development and psychological integration. The fact that we can represent things abstractly to ourselves is part of our creativity and part of our ability to delude ourselves.

The mind's capacity to represent things gives us both creativity and self-delusion. That is one reason that all spiritual and developmental paths require a teacher, Guru, or guide to test the student. The job of the teacher is to be sure the knowledge is learned in the heart, in the present, and eternally. Our tendency to appear right or better for others, combined with ambitions and insecurities often produce false victories and false failures. The teacher keeps the student going past the limitations of the beliefs and experiences, especially the successes, of the student.

For an in-depth study and commentary of the sutras, see How to Know God: The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali, *by Swami Prabhavanada and Christopher Isherwood. Vedanta Press, 1953.*

The refined mind & Guru Har Krishan

There is a story of a challenge given to Guru Har Krishan, the eighth of the ten Sikh Gurus who embodied and codified the original Sikh way of spiritual life. He became the Guru and leader of the Sikhs when he was only five-years old. The dominant Hindu culture gave great status to the learned Brahmins who memorized all the scriptures and rules of conduct. Many years of intense study and scholarship were required for such a position, as well as austerity and spiritual discipline.

On a trip to visit devout followers in the city of Delhi, Har Krishan received a challenge. A well-known Brahmin appeared before the Guru and demanded a debate over knowledge of the Hindu scriptures. He said, "You are young and lack the real experience to know wisdom. I have studied everything written. It is your ability to interpret these writings that we all would look to. I do not think you can do that."

The Guru looked amused by the situation. He offered the Brahmin a respectable seat next to him so the entire gathering could hear the exchange. Rather than debating the Brahmin directly, the Guru asked someone to go outside and find the most dumb and illiterate person in the local village. An illiterate water carrier was found and brought before the Guru. After giving him tasty fruits for his trouble, the Guru challenged the Brahmin to debate the washerman on the interpretation of any scripture he selected. The Brahmin quoted from an Upanishad and gave a spirited and cogent commentary. The Guru touched the head of the idiot with his wooden staff. The washerman spoke clearly, simply, and profoundly. The truth of his statements was obvious. The audience sat in stunned silence. With quotation after quotation the water carrier bested the Brahmin. He won the debate. Finally the Brahmin cast himself at the Guru's feet and asked forgiveness for his spiritual ego and blindness to the real source of knowledge.

This story has many implications. One is that the real knowledge to discern reality and falseness is beyond the immediate sensory experience of the ego. The knowledge that could come even through an illiterate water carrier was always there in the core of his consciousness. The Guru merely unclouded the karmas that let the fog of the unrefined mind keep the water carrier ignorant of his own deep nature. The Brahmin had mistaken thorough content knowledge with the more important task to refine the mind itself. It is only that process that leads to true discernment and the proper use of content knowledge. As in the story, we do not need to learn every fact and idea to have knowledge. We must refine the instrument of knowing, the mind and consciousness, so that whatever we learn will be used with effectiveness, wisdom, and appropriateness.

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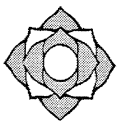
CHAPTER 5



Kundalini Yoga & Sikh Dharma

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The Relationship Between Kundalini Yoga & Sikh Dharma

TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
FROM A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN

A student asked Yogi Bhajan about the relationship between Kundalini Yoga and the Sikh Gurus. This was his reply:

THE GURU, THE VIBRATORY IMPACT OF THE WORD, unites you with the Infinite through the sound current. Kundalini Yoga prepares you and enhances your capacity so you can hear that sound current. You are a physical, mental, and spiritual being. I have shared techniques that allow you to care for and develop all the parts of your structure. When I started teaching Kundalini Yoga, I also began to give people Sikh Dharma. I didn't want people to be misled. I did not want to be a *Sat Guru*; neither am I, nor was I, nor shall I ever be. Many people grow in stature and then want to be worshipped in their personal identity rather than taking people to their own Infinite identity. Values must be taught with Kundalini Yoga.

Sikh Dharma is called the "path of the student." "Sikh" actually means student. The path is to become pure, filled with integrity, truth, and consciousness. This is the state of being Khalsa. As Khalsa, you are whole, purified, and you have a sense of higher priority or mission. There are three things I especially like in Sikh Dharma: no proselytization is allowed; there is no forced conversion; and there is nothing which is not complete as God made it. I have studied many religions, and I like many of them, but the energy of Raj Yoga has come through the House of Guru Ram Das. It is to be open to all and to serve everyone.

Householders path

I taught this yoga because it helps the householder who must live in and build a better life. You can find the Heavens here within your life; you do not need to wait for a later Heaven. During this lifetime you must penetrate to the core and build yourself to go home.

When you grow and become the nucleus or hub of energy within your life, then everything comes to you. You have a hypnotic, electromagnetic psyche which can attract everything. Your very presence can work and have an impact. In all the years I have taught, I have not asked a single person to become a Sikh. It is true that as a person grows naturally and organically, they will end with the consciousness of a Sikh—a student of Infinity who is humble, serves all, and brings consciousness into committed action. Kundalini Yoga is a householder's yoga. It is a yoga which allows an ordinary person to live in this world, experience the ecstasy of consciousness, then use this consciousness to serve humanity. This is the same as Sikh consciousness. It is not necessary to be a Sikh to have Sikh consciousness, just as it is not necessary to be a Christian to have Christ consciousness.

I have no intention of telling anybody what to do, but you have to tell yourself what to do. Kundalini Yoga does tell you one thing: one day you will stand before your consciousness and God, face to face. Your eyes will totally lock into the Eyes. Your breath will become one with the Great Breath. At that moment, you will answer to how truthful you were, how real you were, and how much you accomplished. The counterfeit currency of emotions and personality will have no worth at that time. If you can collect heavenly currency here through doing heavenly service, good.

The Kundalini Yoga teacher's personality

A Teacher's personality is based on pure service. It is your service to elevate, keep up the other person's spirit, keep the candle burning, and pass on knowledge. It is the highest respect and honor to become a teacher. It is your choice to become real or false. All great men, at their great sacrifice—personal and impersonal—leave behind a legacy and a legend that the future enjoys. They become immortal.

I did break a few rules to bring you these teachings. The first rule was about teaching openly. The old scripture was very explicit: "Whoever teaches this science openly shall die within the next sun." That meant that to teach this openly would bring death within a year. But I taught out of compassion for the Time. One year passed, and I was fine. I thought, "This doesn't seem to apply to me." I continued to investigate this old rule. I asked many wise people and sages. They said, "That rule does not apply to Masters; it is for the people of ego. People who teach this with ego become empty within the year." I watched people practice. They became great and then thought that they are perfect and exalted. They didn't make it through even one year. They disappeared and could not contain their ego.

The combination of the knowledge of Kundalini Yoga and the values and humility of Sikh Dharma creates a good combination of balance. It is up to you. How much do you want to excel? With your own ego and definitions, you won't last. Minus your ego, nothing can destroy you. When a saintly person dies, people drop flowers all around. When an earthly King dies, the pigeons leave

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their droppings on his statue. It is your choice. That is the idea of your Oath. *(Find the Oath in Identity of a Kundalini Yoga Teacher chapter.)* Eliminate all your biases and work with a concentrated strength and direction of service.

The humility that is in Kundalini Yoga and in the Sikh consciousness is the same. It is a habit to present yourself before the Teacher and your higher consciousness and then to obey it.

Students of Elegant Action

KUNDALINI YOGA'S ORIGINS COME FROM THE BEGINNING OF TIME and seem to have roots in the wisdom traditions of every culture in which a spark of consciousness has been lit. Sikh Dharma originates from the heart of spirit, and is part of the energy of the modern times in the Aquarian Age. The two paths have crossed and the great teachers, the ten Gurus of Sikh Dharma, confirmed by the spirit of Guru Ram Das, served a key function to open the practices of Raj Yoga to all people regardless of caste, creed, color, gender, or age.

Formerly, through thousands of years the techniques of individual dignity, self-divinity, and worship of the Word—the vibration of the subtle self—were restricted to only a few kings, mystics, and people in the heights of society. But today in the spirit of the Sikh way, these techniques have been opened up to all people, just as the central temple in Sikh Dharma, the Golden Temple or Harimander Sahib, has doors open to all four directions. So, there has been a primary shift in access to the knowledge of the tools of consciousness. Those tools were recorded, and infused with heart through the poetry and inspiration of the Sikh Gurus, as well as others who wrote in that tradition, including Muslims and Hindus. It was a time in which there was a remixing, a re-inspiration of the spirit and technology.

Kundalini Yoga gives the tools, the technology, the *sadhana*, the personal discipline, to awaken awareness. Sikh Dharma and 3HO give an example of *living* that consciousness in an Aquarian manner. *Sikh* means "a student" and *dharma* means "elegant and selfless action." *Kundalini* is awareness. So with our full awareness we live a dharma, as people who are students of elegant action and life. That's the relationship. It's about living synchronized with spirit and not about "religion" at all.

Religions were originally the organized result of codifying an experience of ecstasy. The leader-teacher had an experience and accessed a template of Infinity. Often, guilt and fear were used to maintain power of the elite. The Aquarian Age is about giving back to the people, the ability to access the Truth themselves. With power and humility, *shakti* and *bhakti*, everyone grows in consciousness.

Kundalini Yoga & the House of Guru Ram Das

BABA SIRI CHAND WAS GURU NANAK'S SON. He was a great Baal Yogi, one who does not age, and still looked youthful even in his 160th year! Under his guidance, the heads of the schools of yoga came and bowed to Guru Ram Das (the fourth Sikh Guru) to seal for the future the lineage of the royal throne of Raj Yoga to come through Guru Ram Das' Subtle and Radiant bodies. Thus Kundalini Yoga as a Raj Yoga was brought through the House of Guru Ram Das, and got "coloured" by the Sikh consciousness, making certain values available to those who teach and study Kundalini Yoga. The "House," or lineage you are in, determines the principles which hold you, apply to you, contain you. It doesn't mean that all who practice or teach Kundalini Yoga are Sikhs. It just means that the path of Kundalini Yoga is held by the House of Guru Ram Das. Yogi Bhajan: Raj Yog is the royal command and rulership of yogic virtue and values. Guru Ram Das sits on that throne."

Some of the core values of the House of Guru Ram Das which were a departure from the ancient yogic path are:

- In Kundalini Yoga, the teacher does not become a "Sat Guru." The teacher takes the student to the student's Infinite Identity, rather than to the teacher's finite personal identity.
- Kundalini Yoga teachings are not secret, but open to all.
- Students are encouraged to be householders, not ascetics.

Through Yogi Bhajan's acceptance of Guru Ram Das as his teacher, as his Guru, the relationship between a teacher of Kundalini Yoga and the Golden Chain was subtly enhanced. *(See the story in The Spiritual Teacher chapter.)*

Yogi Bhajan tells the story of his relationship with Guru Ram Das:

"One day someone who was supposed to be a very saintly man challenged me, saying that if Guru Ram Das was really my Guru, then he must have given me a Guru Mantra. I told thim that every Sikh has a Guru Mantra, and that is *Wahe Guru*. But he challenged me that if Guru Ram Das was my personal Guru, then he should be in a position to give me his mantra.

"So I said, 'Okay, I will meditate and I'll see. If Guru Ram Das loves me he may appear, if not, I can't say.' So the next day I chanted *Wahe Guru, Wahe Guru, Wahe Guru* in the way, the tone, the method, the technology in which the Guru Mantra is to be chanted. After a little while I was surprised to find that there was a pure light in the room, and then a human being was sitting there in the very visible form of Guru Ram Das.

"And thus spoke the great Guru: 'At this time you need the protection of a mantra. Chant this: *Guru Guru Wahe Guru, Guru Ram Das Guru*. You do not want to claim anything as your own achievement, and you don't want to take the blame either. Let the claim be mine and let me also take the blame. Now say this mantra.' And I started saying it slowly, hesitantly, and I liked it."

—Yogi Bhajan, from *The Man Called the Siri Singh Sahib*

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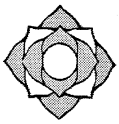
CHAPTER 6



The Golden Chain, the Spiritual Teacher & Yogi Bhajan

A teacher is a human institution which manifests Godhood. The spiritual teacher is the link of Infinity within two finites. Truth is infinite. It cannot be captured in any mental or emotional imagination. Teaching is infinity. It is a flow of the same energy and reality. Therefore, no finite person can teach the Truth. Through God's Grace, you may meet someone whom you will love beyond emotion, beyond dedication, whom you love for the sake of love. You are inspired to obey him, and this opens true selflessness in you.

—YOGI BHAJAN

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The Golden Chain

THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF KUNDALINI YOGA is the chain of teachers—your teacher, her teacher, his teacher, and so on. When you are teaching Kundalini Yoga this chain forms the channel through which the energy, the wisdom and the protection of the tradition flow to you and through you to your students. It is essential for a teacher of Kundalini Yoga to teach in this chain.

The Golden Link (or Golden Chain) is the law of the soul connected and projected through the mind. If you have faith in your teacher, you shall always be a teacher–you have to learn nothing. The law is that teachers are not trained; teachers are born out of faith, not out of spermatozoa. The energy of teaching is not transferred through physical power, but through the subtle power of the teacher. When you disconnect yourself from the teacher, you fall as a teacher. A teacher is one who links mentally with the teacher. Guru Ram Das is not away from us. When we link mentally with him, he comes to our aid exactly as a physical person would, but with much more grace.

–YOGI BHAJAN

COMMENTARY: It is true that we must study and become skillful in the techniques of *kriya* and meditation, and that a skillful presentation requires learning and practice. But there were many great teachers who never spoke, or who only taught with insults, or who offended everyone in the tradition they served. These historical people were nonetheless recognized as great teachers. They seemed to violate many of the rules that we are trained to obey. They were teachers in the true essence of the concept: they were sandpaper for the ego, a beloved of consciousness; they were someone who by whatever means gave up their ego in an act of love or faith. It was the removal of that barrier that allowed the essential link to the flow of intuition and discipline that we call the Guru. They obeyed that consciousness and embodied it regardless of the particulars of their personality and training. The essence of a true teacher is a consciousness that you obey in order to clean out the ego so that intuition, commitment, and love can serve the Will.

It is said: "You can pile a donkey with holy scriptures, but it will still be an ass." Some students collect volumes of writings, hundreds of techniques, but never deposit their ego–like dirty shoes–at the door of the teacher. The result is that the door of the heart cannot open.

The search for a trustworthy place of Truth to deposit the ego is fraught with pitfalls and delusions. That search is a path crowded with dead ends and egomaniacs. It is by grace and good actions that an opportunity to find a path and to lessen the ego comes to you.

You teach without your individual agenda involved. Your uniqueness as a person always comes through. Your capacity to utilize your ego in order to reach the students where they are and to elevate them is also there. But the power is the Golden Chain.

Tuning into the Golden Chain

The Adi Mantra (Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo)

(See Sound & Mantra chapter.)

In Kundalini Yoga, we always start a class or a personal practice with this mantra. We acknowledge this technology of transference in the form of the Golden Chain or Golden Link by tuning in with the Adi Mantra: *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo.* The Adi Mantra is the first technology of a Kundalini Yoga student or teacher. It is a meditation. It is a state of consciousness. It is the link between you as a finite personality and you as a flow of the Infinite Consciousness that guides the kundalini energy. At that moment there must be a merger between you and the teacher; you must deposit your ego and serve for no gain; you must link to the word of the Guru (the Infinite Teacher) to speak beyond the tangles of time and space; and you must project it to the level of the student. Consciousness and compassion join like left and right hands to elevate all who will hear.

Yogi Bhajan on the Adi Mantra

Anytime you want to manifest a link with spirituality, *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo* is the link. You know how when you enter a parking lot, and you cross a line and pull the ticket out? That is this mantra. You manifest Infinity through the Grace of Guru Ram Das when you chant this mantra. The guardian of the Aquarian Age is Guru Ram Das. When you have lack of faith or a similar thing, you can chant this mantra. Many of you are going to enter Shakti Pad. This mantra can help you, with the grace of Guru Ram Das,

Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo is a call. It is a call which can penetrate through any maya and manifest God and Guru, the Supreme Consciousness. It is the voucher of the Divine Shakti, the kundalini.

That is why the fifth Guru, Guru Arjan, the son of Guru Ram Das, chanted *Ad Guray Nameh, Jugad Guray Nameh, Sat Guray Nameh, Siri Guru Devay Nameh. Siri Guru Devay Nameh* is the manifestation of Shakti, of the presence of Guru Ram Das. This may be chanted after the *Adi Mantra.*

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The Spiritual Teacher

"The teacher is an analytical sandpaper who scrapes away your attachments, so that your Self can reflect your essence." –YOGI BHAJAN

The Virtue of a Teacher

You do not understand the basic virtue of a spiritual teacher. A teacher is one who analytically analyzes all your defects on the basis of the facts, and then gives you a chance to grow. Without such an assessment and opportunity, nobody has ever grown in the spiritual world. One who has not grown in the spiritual world can never enjoy this earth and have happiness.

God gives you the teacher, and the teacher will give you God. It is a full exchange system. –YOGI BHAJAN, 1978

COMMENTARY: A virtue is the special strength and quality that someone has that can be used and called into service. A teacher is not a substitute for a father or a mother. A teacher's virtue is not that he or she is someone who will cater to and quell the pained cries of your ego and your fantasies. The teacher is not a psychotherapist who is supposed to listen to all your woes and then help you knit them in a new pattern. The teacher is an analytical sandpaper that polishes your surfaces. The teacher scrapes away attachments to the desires, the mind, and the body. The newly polished surface of the Self can then reflect the soul and essence of consciousness without confusion.

Many people look for a "teacher" who will only tell them how great they are, or give them sympathy and hope. These things are readily available from friends. A teacher is a friend of your consciousness and the natural predator of your ego. Near a teacher all your nonsense will arise. It will seem to be provoked. How else can the sandpaper do its job? All you have to do is hold still, be committed and look to the discipline so you can work it all out.

If you can understand the virtue of a teacher, you will never be disappointed or led astray. You will also gain the strength to learn under confrontation and under self-confrontation.

The "Guru"

Throughout these teachings, and in this Manual, you see the term Guru referred to in a variety of contexts. In present day culture, East and West, the term Guru is most commonly thought of as a living, human teacher. Guru is actually an agent of change, a catalyst of transformation that awakens the spiritual knowledge, dispelling darkness and bringing light and deep understanding. The Guru is alive inside of everyone. We consciously choose to tune into that inner wisdom, and in fact, as teachers of Kundalini Yoga, we do just that when we chant the Adi Mantra at the start of each Kundalini Yoga practice. Translating *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo*, Yogi Bhajan describes "Guru" as "Infinite Teacher." This force called Guru is alive inside you and within your students. It is embodied in beings who live with enlightened consciousness, and it is perfectly encoded in the Shabd Guru, the technology of Naad, the recitation of which awakens your soul.

The Guru's Gate

Everybody in one lifetime has one chance to serve one Master. That is the law. The opportunity doesn't come back again. Remember, no Master ever comes back again.

I have come to carry the message of Guru Ram Das, the light of the times. It is not my proposition that you should love me or hate me or if you follow me or not. If you love yourself, you will follow the Truth. Truth is what I share with you. If you don't want to share it, fine. Don't feel bound. I want you to progress, but never progress like slaves. Progress like free, graceful individuals. Otherwise, even being infinite in experience is useless.

Remember, nobody comes to the Guru's gate if it is not earned already. But it is still yourself who must have the will to enter the gate or not. –YOGI BHAJAN, 1978

COMMENTARY: Yogi Bhajan is an acknowledged Master of Kundalini Yoga and White Tantric Yoga. He has attained self-mastery. He will pass this way once. He will leave a huge body of teachings. Any who wish to travel in the wake of such a huge ship are welcome. There is room for all, but you will not be carried. You must experience the grace within yourself on this path. You are not to be slaves or to follow blindly. But if you choose to travel this way, do it with your whole heart and soul. Take care of the day-to-day, the breath-to-breath process.

Here, Yogi Bhajan conveys the attitude of certainty about the teachings. He shows compassion for all who walk this way. And he shows steadfastness without doubt. He speaks to a question that many people ask. Are there many ways to the Infinite? The answer is "yes." (Or, the answer is "no." The only way is to live truthfully.) So why choose anything if there are so many things?

The answer is that it is truly your ego that has the illusion of choosing. You are chosen by the teaching and the path. If your past actions have polished you enough that you shine, consciousness will pick you up. Somehow you will meet teachers to guide you to the choices that can elevate you to the Truth.

That choice in true depth only comes once because Truth is total; it is unified and complete; it is beyond the divisions of the mind. The problem is to be able to recognize it. For that you must know the characteristics of your own ego. It is not so much a matter of the details of twenty paths. If your window is dirty, nothing will make sense. Do a *sadhana* and take the highest of what you have attracted. Then, *keep up*!

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All About "Gurus"

I WANT TO DISCUSS A MOST CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT: the nature and need for a spiritual teacher or Guru. We do not understand how to be students or how to think of a genuine teacher. Subconsciously, as a culture, we are rebels and fear authority. For our own growth and success it is important to consciously discuss the Guru, why you need it, what it does for you, and when you need it.

Let us begin with a clear definition. The "Guru" is the word of wisdom coming through a person who has attained the state of consciousness where he or she can speak the Infinite Truth under all circumstances. Attaining this state is a difficult qualification and cannot be compromised.

THE IMPACT OF SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

To investigate the need and impact of the spiritual guidance of the Guru, I surveyed the great cultures of the past. I journeyed to those areas and studied the ancient cultures and their technologies in detail. I found the old, old records of doctors and the hospitals where people were treated.

As a result of my search, I came to a surprising conclusion. The mental turmoil that we suffer under now was not in existence then. People had a tremendous sense of guidance in life. They took life in stride. Once I discovered this, I studied the great Greek masters of medicine. I wanted to know one thing: Did they use some type of drug or tranquilizer to calm people down? What was the reason for the high level of mental tranquility people had at that time? If they used tranquilizers, then there was nothing necessarily unique to the training or structure of the Greek mind that created such steadiness and sense of control. They did use herbs and potions to treat ailments, but there was no secret or widespread use of any drug to control or tranquilize the mind. The tranquility and excellence of the psyche of that time was due to something else.

In the life of each individual, two things can happen. One is that circumstances and pressures of the time make you forget that you have capability and resources. The second thing is that under certain pressures, you forget that the stress and pressure are momentary, and you give in to pressure. That is the start of mental depression and the inability to cope with life.

FAITH IN THE SELF

If all the spiritual teachers started to teach faith in the Self and stopped teaching faith in a personality, this world would be Heaven. This existence with its infinite mind is at your command. You need guidance and training to experience and manifest this command.

Many people who are known as Gurus or spiritual teachers do you a disservice. Suppose I am Teacher "A." I speak a very good truth. I am very clever. I am beloved. I am entertaining. I am personal. People love to follow me. What good will it do if you are only attached to the personality and energy of Mr. "A"? His following will become a train. Mr. "A" is the engine and all those who follow become the railcars. The moment they start rolling on his words, they forget everything else. They are secure and satisfied. But if he loses steam or derails, then all is lost. Imagine instead that every railcar has its own motor, can drive itself. It can stay on track and reach the destination. From time to time, it comes to a workshop where a head mechanic can just take care of it, tune it up, and let it go on. That is a perfect system.

If all the spiritual teachers started to teach faith in the Self and stopped teaching faith in a personality, this world would be Heaven.

VICTORY OF THE MIND

The ashrams and Gurus in ancient India used to be mental workshops. They taught and molded the minds of people to be clear, strong, and to act righteously under all circumstances.

There is a system of education and guidance called *brahmacharya*, often translated as "celibate." There is a more accurate interpretation. *Brahm* means "Infinite God." *Achar* means "the action." *Brahmacharya* is a person who learns God-like action, not "the one who is celibate." People were taught about life, the intellect, and the Self. People were trained to be *brahmacharya*.

This process of guidance and training by the Guru was so effective, that it could redirect and rebuild people who were very dysfunctional. In Tibet, if a person who had committed a serious crime would admit his mistake and surrender himself to the monastery of the Lama, the law of the Tibetan state would not punish him. The Lamas would undertake a project to correct and polish him. They did not recognize such a man as a criminal. They would respect him. The criminal became a student who had to learn about life, his Self, and proper actions.

Compare that ancient method of guidance to the modern approach of punishment. We have lost the guidance of the Guru and the knowledge of how to train and reset the mind. If the mind does not change, the behavior will stay fixed. The punishment we give people for their crimes, does not punish them at all. Through punishment, we achieve no goal and no improvement.

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Punishment is just an effective method to create fear. We create the fear that if you steal, you will go to jail. Those warnings rarely stop the criminals.

The mind must be able to know what it perceives and not confuse what it sees with its own subconscious projections. A huge amount of pain in human life comes from treating something not as it really is, but as you project it. This projection creates confusion and delusion. You project yourself and create a role, with its commitments, when you speak and give your word. Your mind must be taught to listen to your word, to see clearly what you have created, and to live to that word in activity. Your projected personality in activity is what you are. How you act in relation to another person is what matters. It is not your initial status in life, but your habit in personality that matters. It is how you project yourself in activity which will create your reality, your impact, and your future.

We have lost the guidance of the Guru and the knowledge of how to train and reset the mind.

LIVING UP TO THE WORD, NOT YOUR POPULARITY

A God-conscious person is not one who wears a turban like me, or who wears religious clothes. Those things are only a beginning to God-conscious habits. The God-conscious person is someone who can live up to his word under any given circumstance. Your word is what you create. Your word is the essence and creativity of your communication. It is your communion with yourself and others. When a person communicates what he means with perfect spirit, his communication is complete, and he can live up to his words. If you say to somebody, "I love you," then live up to it to the last breath of your life. If you say to somebody, "I am your friend," live up to it with your utmost integrity and clarity about your own word. If you tell somebody you will stand by him and help him, then stand by and help under all conditions.

I met hundreds of teachers who were popular and known as Gurus. Most of them said beautiful things and were inspiring. But there was something very wrong. The students appeared happy, but they still had inner conflict, lacked depth, and did not really change. Many things seemed right, but something was wrong and prevented the students from attaining the steady equilibrium and peace that the teaching should give.

I concluded there are two basic problems. First, many of the teachers are competing for a position rather than serving. Second, they shy away from the direct spiritual confrontation and wrestling that the student needs, because they want popularity. These days, teachers compete to be recognized as an incarnation of God. A great deal of money is spent on this. Many ancient scriptures say that at this time, an incarnation has to take place. A new spiritual awakening must occur. So everybody tries to tell the world, "I am the incarnation." The Gurus who are on this kind of trip lack compassion.

GARBAGE CLEANER

The Guru opens the door to the cage of a problem and makes a person free to fly again on his path. He shows him that he is a part of Infinity; that he must relate to Infinity and that these shadows are only temporary. This is the job of a Guru. He is a garbage cleaner.

In America, we think a Guru is a holy man who can create miracles. He has many disciples, is skinny, and closes his eyes all the time. We have imagined all kinds of images and powers that a Guru has. It is a very strange world where we believe our hallucinations rather than simple truth. People have been so thoroughly brainwashed that these weird expectations are taken for granted.

I experienced this stereotype. One student of mine would not give up her idea. She said to me, "One morning at 3:30, I had the experience that you came and made me get up." I said, "That can happen, but not in the way you now think it does. My life is dedicated in one prayer: "Lord God, all people should love and belong to you." Emotionally, mentally, and in action this is what my frequency is. As a yogi, both my conscious and subconscious minds act and project in that frequency. When you tune in to me, the only thing you can do is praise the Lord, because that is what I stand for."

The Guru shows a person that he is part of Infinity, that he must relate to Infinity.

I pressed the case to her, "Tell me, my dear, on that night, when you went to bed, did you promise yourself to get up at 3:30, have a cold shower, and meditate?" She said, "Yes." I said, "Where did you learn to do that?" "From you." I said, "That's why you experienced it. God appeared in the form of my personality and bugged you to get out of bed, take a cold shower, and feel good. It was not me personally. I never went to you at all. Don't attribute that to me. Whatever your mind tunes into and whatever words go deep into your self, the subconscious will use to guide you to the Universal Mind. My words and image were at the frequency of Infinity, and your own mind used those to connect with you."

REALIZE THE GURU WITHIN

The only purpose of having a Guru outside yourself is to realize the Guru within yourself. When you share a problem with your Guru, his compassion will fill you up, and it will pull you out of the problem forever, because there is no better remedy than the

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flow of a compassionate word from one human being to another.

Another qualification of a Guru is that he acts as a guide, rather than controller. A guide is not a commander. He may confront your ego and wrestle with your nonsense, but he always gives you to yourself so you can give your ego to God. The Guru guides by suggesting the truth, but not being attached to the suggestion.

That is why in almost every country in the world, there is a convention or law that says, "If somebody confides in a holy man, the holy man cannot be made to betray that confidence." If these holy people are put before the court, and they do not want to speak, they are not forced to do it. The qualified Guru has the capacity for confidentiality. A sane society recognizes this need. A great person establishes this relationship outside of and within himself. The Guru fulfills many deep, instinctual needs in a human being. Most human societies realize that they need a person with whom a person can speak, confront, and communicate in total freedom and honesty. It is a natural instinct of a human being.

Most societies realize that they need a person with whom a person can speak, confront, and communicate in total freedom and honesty.

The Guru is like an ocean where you can totally merge yourself and come out washed and clean. The Guru is a storehouse of the technical knowledge of how to be a human being and master life. You can go to the Guru when you have been shaken and get taken care of, so that you are fit again to take up the responsibilities of this life. The Guru is the secret chamber of your inner self where you can confide your greatest secrets and be guided in the light of righteousness.

Yogi Bhajan on What it Means to Have a Teacher

What is this teacher business? You think, "Oh my God, now I have to surrender to somebody." That is not true. You should not surrender to anybody. But aren't you that unfortunate that you don't have one person in your life who can tell you, "Stop!" Are you worse than the road? When two roads meet, there is a Stop sign. So you stop. You look left, you look right, you look forward, you look in the mirror backward, and then you go. Why do you do that? Because that guarantees your safety. There has to be in one's life a person or a commitment, or a thought, or a self discipline, where you can stop. You can buy the best car in the world, but if it doesn't have brakes, you cannot ride in it.

With a teacher there are three things which work: endurance, patience, and honor. And if you want to become a great master, learn reverence. It's complete. The teacher is a living channel between now and Infinity. Try to follow him. Try to understand him. Try to read between the lines of the teacher. A teacher can go to any extent. You can't understand a Teacher because when you understand, he says, "More."

Sometimes you get tired. "What is this 'more, more' business? Who the hell is he? What does he want? Why is he saying these things? Has he crossed my dignity, my identity?" You are preparing for a court case; you are not learning to learn.

Every student has to conquer his teacher. Not sexually, sensually, or wisdom-wise, but in an absolutely super-self and enlightened capacity. Everybody has to do that. Because you are the tomorrow; the Teacher is the today. It must be understood that God is not on holiday. He has not left the planet Earth. He has created you, and He can take care of your routine.

Question: What is the function of a genuine teacher in a spiritual path and in Kundalini Yoga?

YOGI BHAJAN: The teacher does not control you, or try to please you. He guides, confronts, and elevates you. You have to rebuild yourself. You must leave your subconscious garbage behind. Consciously work it out, rebuild it, and transform it, so you can enjoy the higher consciousness which is the Guru's way.

That is the difference between belonging to some egocentric maniac who calls himself a Guru, Man of God, or Messenger, and the real teacher. The phony will create a fog of words around God and distract you with beautiful and fanciful experiences. The teacher who you go to for the experience of God will first show you yourself and tell you to clean up.

Usually no one will tell you that you are ugly in consciousness. Few people even tell you that you have in your own consciousness an instrument that can transform that ugliness. When that is done, the natural flow of the cosmic current can pass through you. If you properly train and rebuild yourself, you can enjoy that process and awakening beyond imagination. You must have the discipline and consciousness to live off your own energy. The teacher acts as a touchstone, a mirror, and a guide.

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About Yogi Bhajan

There are three in me. One is Harbhajan Singh. One is Yogi Bhajan. One is Siri Singh Sahib. Siri Singh Sahib is a very direct hassler who'll nail you on the spot. He'll find what is wrong with you, analyze you like anything. Yogi Bhajan is that compassionate, analytical, intelligent man who tells you this is this because of that, "But it is up to you, son or daughter, to do whatever you want." Then there is Harbhajan Singh who will say, "Well, let us all freak out. Don't worry, there is no problem in the world, everything is all right, God and me, me and God are one.

—Yogi Bhajan, 1979

HARBHAJAN SINGH PURI WAS BORN ON AUGUST 26, 1929, at the time of sunset, in the little village of Kot Harkarn, in the district of Gujaranwala in what is now Pakistan, then part of India.

He was the first son born into a family which had prayed for the birth of a male heir for over 25 years. With one of those prayers had gone a promise that such a son would be carried to the shrine of Vaishnoo Devi to give thanks for the blessing of his birth and to give him the immediate experience of that holy place.

So it was that a tiny infant, Harbhajan Singh, was tied to his father's chest, nestled under his flowing beard, and carried up the steep slopes to the cave of Vaishnoo Devi in fulfillment of that sacred promise. Although young Harbhajan Singh was but an infant whose age was measured in days rather than months or years, the impact of that first visit, the sacredness of that prayer, and the determination to fulfill that commitment were events which were to shape his entire philosophy and experience of life. Thus began his practice of visiting every possible holy shrine and holy person, and of pursuing the study of all the teachings, scriptures, and technologies of the religions of the world.

CHILDHOOD

Harbhajan Singh had been born into a landlord's family whose combined holdings included their entire village. Consequently his birthday was a very festive occasion, one which was celebrated throughout the village. Each birthday he would be weighed, and as many kilos as he weighed, that many gold coins, along with seven times that number of kilos of wheat, would be distributed to the poor people of the village. From this tradition of feeding the poor on his birthdays, the consciousness of *seva* and the practice of feeding people was established in him very early in his life. His early education was unique in that he was the only boy attending a girl's Catholic convent school, a school that provided the finest education available in the area. He frequently unnerved the Mother Superior with his profound and unanswerable questions.

SANT HAZARA SINGH

Yogi Bhajan studied Kundalini Yoga, Tantric Yoga and Gong Meditation under the direction of Sant Hazara Singh, master of Kundalini Yoga and Mahan Tantric of that time. We can get an impression of Sant Hazara Singh and the kind of training he gave Yogi Bhajan from some stories told by Yogi Bhajan.

Keeping Up

On one occasion young Harbhajan Singh was attending a sporting event, and in order to see better over the crowd, he jumped up and hung onto a heating duct. Unfortunately, the duct collapsed and brought down half the wall and ceiling on top of him. He was quite seriously injured, since half of his body was temporarily paralyzed, and he was rushed to a hospital. This accident occured at the time of his final examinations for graduation from secondary school, and under the British system, to miss the finals would require attending school for an additional year. At the time of the examinations, Sant Hazara Singh visited him in the hospital. When he heard that his young student would have to spend an extra year in school, he insisted that such a waste of time for a bright young man could not be tolerated. The tests must be taken! Harbhajan Singh was not only in great pain, he couldn't write and could barely speak. He protested, the doctors objected, but Sant Hazara Singh would accept no opposition. Harbhajan Singh was packed up on a stretcher and carried to the examination hall. Sant Hazara Singh then proceeded to convince the examiner that Harbhajan Singh should be allowed to take the test, and that he be read the questions and have somebody be assigned to write down the answers. The tests were passed. The body healed. But most importantly, Yogi Bhajan was permanently imbued with the principle of "Keep up." The uncompromising persistence of his teacher pushed him beyond his self-imposed limits, beyond the limitations others would impose. He learned to keep up, to never give an inch, to relate to the Infinite and not to the finite. "It's not the life that matters, it's the courage that you bring to it."

Challenge

On another occasion Yogi Bhajan told a story about an incredible test that Sant Hazara put him through.

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As they were taking a walk together, they passed a large tree. Sant Hazara Singh said: "Bhajan, you are so big and strong, could you maybe show me how you can climb this tree?" So the young Harbhajan Singh, proud of his young strength, climbed up the tree. As he sat down on a branch of the tree to take a rest, Sant Hazara Singh called up to him and said: "Very good, now wait there until I come back."

The young yoga student sat there waiting unwaveringly for his Master to come back. He had to wait three days, drink the dew from the leaves, relieve himself from the branches, before Sant Hazara Singh returned. When his teacher returned, the young yogi never received a word of compliment or even concern on how he managed. Yet, Yogi Bhajan says about his teacher: "He brought out of me, not the man, not the godly man, not the great man, but a real human. There's nothing in the world I can pay to him in tribute, compliment, and thanks. He did the most wonderful job. I used to say I was a nut, but he tightened all my nuts so well that I became the best. That's why calamity is my breakfast, tragedy is my lunch, and treachery is my supper. You can write it down. It will help you. Is there anything else which can bother you? If you can eat all these three things and digest them, you are the best person."

Commitment

A perhaps painful lesson in Yogi Bhajan's life was taught to him at the hands of Sant Hazara Singh when in 1947 Sant Hazara Singh announced to his student, Harbhajan Singh, that he (Sant Hazara Singh) was now about to enter a period of "living hell" and he declared, "Your orders are that we will never see each other face-to-face again." Santji was to spend many years as a freedom fighter and gained great renown. He went on to live a married life. He has since left his body, and his orders were obeyed by his devoted and disciplined student. The pain of that separation must have been great. Yogi Bhajan recollects one occasion when he was passing by Santji's village (Doraha) and sent word through a messenger that he was in the vicinity. Word came back from Santji, "I know he is there, tell him to proceed."

Yogi Bhajan on Siddhis

Yogi Bhajan in his younger years had what is called the water siddhi, or power over the water element. Here he describes how he got rid of that "curse."

You know when I had all those powers, I was very funny. One day I made a pretty big mistake. We were sitting as a group. And all of a sudden rain clouds came and rain poured down. But on that two-acre area where we were sitting, not one drop fell. Everybody was very happy. They appreciated "Yogi Baba" very much as a great sadhu. When everything was over, we were eating langar [the group meal], and this very very old man came to me and said, "You did this?" I said, "What? I didn't do anything." He said, "You wished that there should not be rain?" I said, "Well, it was inconvenient. We were so much into God and so happy and ecstastic." He said, "You see these trees and these plants? You took away their water. Why did you do that?" I said, "I didn't DO anything. I did wish, yes. I'm not denying this. I did wish it should not rain here." He said, "It should not get granted." "You mean my wish got granted?" He said, "Are you blind? See it." I said, "Yeah. But I have so many men, thousands of men, I'll tell them tomorrow to water the whole thing. I can tell them now. Just saying one word, it'll all happen." He said, "Aah. That's good. So you have control over water?" I said, "Kind of." He said, "Then when your soul will not be free, it shall go through the water." I said, "Well, it will take a bath. What difference it will make?" He said, "Half of the lifes live in the water. It shall go through all those incarnations. You want that?" I said, "Wait a minute. What are you saying?" He said, "I am telling you something you do not understand. If you have a *siddhi*, or a control on one of the elements, you have to go through that element." I said, "Oh. I understand." And that was that last day I ever did anything like that.

So, I went to Amritsar, I stood before the gate of Harimandir Sahib (the Golden Temple), I said, "Blessed are You who has taught me all. Blessed is me who shall never learn again these hanky pankies." And I gave it up. That's it.

Intervening in His will for the better, is admissable. For the worst, you are wrong. Yes, you are uplifting. Yes, divine. Any other control, direct, indirect, mental, verbal, or impractical–you are causing a cause, you are starting a sequence where you have to face the consequences. As a teacher you can't have consequences. Therefore, you don't start the sequence. That's a law in life. You don't cross that law. Just as when you carry a basket you must keep its bottom well down, so things don't spill.

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MASTER OF KUNDALINI YOGA

Under the watchful eye of Sant Hazara Singh, Yogi Bhajan perfected the disciplines of Kundalini and Tantric Yogas. By the remarkably young age of sixteen, he was acknowledged by his teacher to have attained mastery of Kundalini Yoga.

YOGIC TRAINING

Besides studying Kundalini and Tantric yoga with Sant Hazara Singh, Yogi Bhajan took further training in yoga under Acharya Narinder Dev of Yoga Smriti, who taught Hatha Yoga and the impact and balance of the nervous system. The latter subject proved invaluable to him in the United States, where he found most people suffering from disorders of the nervous system.

The world renowned Sivananda Ashram in Rishikesh (where renowned masters Swami Chidananda, Swami Vishnu Devananda and Swami Satchidananda studied) served as a spiritual fountain for that flow of eternal Truth which is known as Vedanta philosophy. From this famous source of divine wisdom, Harbhajan Singh was able to fill his heart and mind with inspiration.

FAMILY LIFE

From his saintly grandfather, as a young child, Harbhajan Singh heard inspiring stories of the Sikh Gurus, stories of Sikh history, that shaped his values; values and virtues that later he shared with his yoga students.

Harbhajan Singh went on to complete his formal education—he holds a Ph.D. in Psychology—to pursue a career as a government officer, and to live a householder's life. He was married in 1953 to Sardarni Inderjit Kaur, and together they raised their three children.

GURU RAM DAS

One of the most important experiences in the life of Harbhajan Singh was the recognition of his very personal Guru, Guru Ram Das. This was the turning point which was to mark out his future and his destiny. As a government officer he had been posted to various districts throughout India, and in 1960 he was assigned to the district surrounding the city of Amritsar.

Throughout the duration of this assignment, he was determined to take this opportunity to wash the marble floors of the Harimander Sahib, the Golden Temple. As a Sikh, he recognized the special significance of the Golden Temple and the holy city of Amritsar. But above and beyond that, his personal spiritual pursuit had convinced him that only through humility and the performance of humble selfless service could he find the fulfillment which he was seeking. He had spent many years as a student of spiritual and religious teachers. He had also spent many years functioning in his capacity as a teacher, and he had attained the *siddhis* (powers) of a perfected yogi. *(See sidebar on previous page.)* Yet he knew that there was a need in his life for a teacher, for a guide and Guru to whom he could belong beyond the personal, individual ties with any earthly being. He longed for the final touch of infinite love and understanding which would make all of the pieces of the puzzle of life fit together. So, every day for four and a half years, the government officer Harbhajan Singh went and washed the floors of the Harimander Sahib, the Golden Temple.

By cleaning the floors of his beloved Guru's House, he came to realize that he was indeed a blessed son of the House of Guru Ram Das. He has always said that he is who he is because he washed the floors of the Golden Temple, not because of any of his titles or degrees.

TO THE WEST

There were many incidents leading up to the time when Harbhajan Singh, the customs officer at Palim International Airport, would depart from that same airport in September 1968 to begin an entirely new phase of his life. The final event occurred when a Canadian gentleman appeared at the Customs Depot in New Delhi. He happened to express dissatisfaction with his efforts to locate a yogi to come to Canada to teach at the University of Toronto. Harbhajan Singh talked with the gentlemen about his own yogic training; the position was offered to him; and within a short time, he was making preparations for his departure.

As it happened, upon reaching London, the airlines had lost his luggage. All he had with him was a small Air France bag, containing a tape recorder and a Gurbani Kirtan recording of

Kundalini Yoga As Taught By Yogi Bhajan

From the first moment he began to teach Kundalini Yoga he declared, "I have come to create teachers, not to gather students. I have come by my Guru's grace to serve those souls who shall serve the Aquarian Age." He began to share a body of teachings which we call "Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan." With perfect consciousness and grace he built an institution, a house of teachings, to serve the Aquarian consciousness. A student asked him, "How can I get to know you better?" He replied, "I am my teachings. Read them, practice them, and you will know me." By his sacrifice, devotion and consciousness he left us a legacy, not a lineage, and a path; not a personality.

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Sukhmani. His luggage was never returned. Thus he entered Canada with just the set of clothing he was wearing, virtually penniless, only to learn that the gentleman whom he was to contact in Canada for his teaching position had been killed in an automobile accident.

The Hand of the Guru is evident as we look back upon these events. Harbhajan Singh had arrived in the West, and now he was to set out to discover the course which the Guru had set for him. He soon secured a job as a clerk in a major book publishing house, taught yoga at a local yoga ashram and at a popular housing facility known as Rochdale, and became affectionately known to his students there as Yogi Bhajan.

In December 1968, an old friend from New Delhi who had settled in the United States invited Yogi Bhajan to come to Los Angeles for a weekend visit. Yogi Bhajan immediately sensed that in Los Angeles was the center of a youth movement toward self-knowledge, self-discovery, and expression of real and meaningful values. He saw that the Guru had guided him there because he had been well equipped with knowledge, experience, and a technology which could fulfill the longing of those searching souls. He began teaching Kundalini Yoga, first at the East-West Cultural Center and then in a furniture store at 8800 Melrose Avenue.

MAHAN TANTRIC

In 1971, Yogi Bhajan became the Master of White Tantric Yoga (the Mahan Tantric). At any one time, there can be only one living Mahan Tantric. While alive, Sant Hazara Singh was the Mahan Tantric. When Yogi Bhajan was studying with Sant Hazara Singh, there had been one other student named Lama Lilan Po. When Santji passed on, the power of the Mahan Tantric was transferred to Lama Lilan Po. In 1971, when Lama Lilan Po died, this mantle of authority was bestowed upon Yogi Bhajan, giving him the power and responsibility of the Mahan Tantric.

The Mahan Tantric facilitates White Tantric Yoga. During White Tantric Yoga meditation, much subconscious negativity is released from the participants. In order to release that negativity without its projection onto the partner, the Mahan Tantric filters the negativity through his own aura. *(See the Mind & Meditation chapter for more on White Tantric Yoga.)*

SIRI SINGH SAHIB

Each aspect of his life had prepared him for the many-faceted role he was to play in the West, as a spiritual teacher, organizer and administrator of a vast network of communities and businesses throughout the world, and finally as the Chief Religious and Administrative Authority for Sikh Dharma in the West. In 1970, Yogi Bhajan became the first Siri Singh Sahib, and was given the authority to create a Ministry for Sikh Dharma in the Western Hemisphere. His unprecedented inspired leadership has set a standard of excellence, and it has birthed a Dharma whose roots have grown deep within the communities in which it serves.

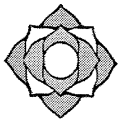
MAN OF PEACE

As Yogi Bhajan has worked diligently to spread the science and practice of Kundalini Yoga throughout the Western Hemisphere and beyond, he has become widely recognized as a world leader and champion of world peace and healing. He has been actively involved with inter-religious dialogue. In June 1985 he established the first International Peace Prayer Day. This annual event has become a day of unified prayer for world peace and is attended by many prominent, internationally recognized figures in the realms of religion, politics, and humanity.

Yogi Bhajan has been able to draw upon the wisdom imparted to him by the many teachers in his life, and upon the tried and tested cultural traditions of an ancient and noble society. He has utilized his training in the yogic sciences and his knowledge of simple dietary practices derived from a culture which was still in touch with its own folk medicines. Combining all this with his innate wisdom and enlightenment gained by serving the House of Guru Ram Das, the man who was known as Harbhajan Singh, molded by the Guru as a messenger of Truth, was set upon a mission to serve, guide, and shape a community of individuals destined to evolve into leaders and teachers for the Aquarian Age.

(Exerpted from A Man Called the Siri SIngh Sahib; 3HO website)

"Keep up!"



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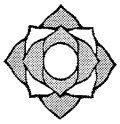
PART THREE

Awakening the Consciousness

CHAPTER 7



Sound & Mantra

The science of reality is to find the sound and to resound in that sound. Then the soul shall excel and God shall dwell within you.
–YOGI BHAJAN

We have to just experience and develop that Word of the Guru resounding in us. We are to become the temple of the shabd. That's all a human can do.
–YOGI BHAJAN

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Mantra The creative projection of the mind through sound. *Man*=mind, *Trang*=wave or projection. The science of mantra is based on the knowledge that sound is a form of energy having structure, power and a definite predictable effect on the chakras and the human psyche.

Mantras Mantras are formulas that alter the patterns of the mind and the chemistry of the brain, according to physical and metaphysical laws. The power of a mantra is in its sound vibration. The mantras used in Kundalini Yoga elevate or modify consciousness through their meaning and rhythmical repetition. It is beneficial to link a mantra to the breath.

Naam Vibrational identity. What we vibrate, we become.

Naad The essence of all sound. It is the vibrational harmony through which the Infinite can be experienced.

Naad Yoga The science of Naad is based on the experience of how sound vibrations affect the body, mind, and spirit through the movement of the tongue, the mouth, and changes in the chemicals in the brain.

Shabd is the sound current or vibration that dissolves the ego which obstructs the truth, and prevents us from perceiving and acting from our authentic Self.

Shabd Guru A quantum technology of sound which directly alters our consciousness through the power of Naad. The Shabd Guru is considered a special sound current which is a Teacher as it removes the constrictions and distortions of the ego.

Siri Guru Granth Sahib An encoded form of the Shabd Guru which allows us to program our mind/body computer to resonate with the Infinite. It is quite literally the embodiment of the intrinsic wisdom of the sound current.

The Nature of Sound

"Every element of the universe is in a constant state of vibration manifested to us as light, sound, and energy. The human senses perceive only a fraction of the infinite range of vibration, so it is difficult to comprehend that the Word mentioned in the Bible is actually the totality of vibration which underlies and sustains all creation. A person can tune his or her own consciousness into the awareness of that totality with the use of a mantra. By vibrating in rhythm with the breath to a particular sound that is proportional to the creative sound, or sound current, one can expand one's sensitivity to the entire spectrum of vibration. It is similar to striking a note on a stringed instrument. In other words, as you vibrate, the universe vibrates with you."

–YOGI BHAJAN

WE LIVE IN A SEA OF ENERGY. ENERGY VIBRATES. Everything in the manifest creation is vibrating. Even seemingly solid, inanimate objects are constantly vibrating, simply vibrating at a slower or lower frequency than animate objects. Some vibrations are audible; sounds we can hear with our ears. Thoughts are silent sounds, electromagnetic vibrations. The higher the frequency, the less dense, and more etheric the quality of the vibration we hear and speak, the more our own vibrational frequency is raised. Raising our own vibration brings us closer to experiencing and merging with the highest vibration of all—God—the original creativity of the universe.

The entire universe was built on sound, on vibration. Putting it poetically: God spoke, and the world came into being. More precisely, God vibrated, and all the universes and worlds, solar systems, oceans, land, and sky, and the myriad of beings that inhabit them appeared. There is a vibratory frequency that corresponds to everything in the universe. By vibrating a particular combination of sounds, you tune into various levels of intelligence, or consciousness. Situations, people, and events respond to the signals you send out. The vibratory frequency of a mantra draws to you whatever you are vibrating.

Chanting Mantras

Chanting mantras, either silently or out loud, is a conscious method of controlling and directing the mind. Happiness, sorrow, joy, and regret are vibratory frequencies in the mind. Call them attitudes, or beliefs, but fundamentally, they are vibratory frequencies or thought waves. They determine the kind of program our mind plays. The scenario we choose becomes our vibration, defines how we feel and what we project to others. We can exercise our right to choose at any time.

We are creating with every word we speak, and even with every word we think. When we chant a mantra we are choosing to invoke the positive power contained in those particular syllables. Whether it's for prosperity, peace of mind, increasing intuition, or any of the other multitude of possible benefits inherent in mantras, simply by chanting them we are setting vibrations into motion that shall have an effect. It doesn't actuallly matter if we understand the meaning of the sounds or not.

(From *Kundalini Yoga: The Flow of Eternal Power* by Shakti Parwha Kaur Khalsa)

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The Science of Naad Yoga *Why Chanting Works*

Naad is a process of harmony through which the *aad*, the Infinite, can be experienced. *Naad* is the basic sound for all languages through all times. This sound comes from one common source or sound current. It is the universal code behind language and therefore behind human communication.

The science of Naad Yoga is thousands of years old. It works with the movement of the tongue in the mouth, language, and chemical changes in the brain. There is no system of nerve connections between the sections of the brain—no wiring. Rather, there is a neurotransmission fluid. Different chemical liquids are secreted from different parts of the brain. Messages are transmitted from each part of the brain through the fluids, which are called *naad namodam rasaa*. *Naad* refers to communicating harmony; *namodam* means addressing; and *rasaa* means juice.

We can alter consciousness by changing the chemical composition of the brain fluids. The state of mind, personality, and power to project from our authentic self is tied in with the use of our word.

"If your words have the strength of the Infinite in them and are virtuous, and you value them, you are the greatest of the great. If you do not value your words, you have no value. Your own word is your value as a human being. Your word is your value."

—YOGI BHAJAN, *The Teachings of Yogi Bhajan*

MERGER THROUGH THE WORD

There are two caves (*gupha*) in the body which generate through the creative process. One is the *bij gupha* or seed cave, which relates to the male and female sexual organs. The other is the *gian gupha* or cave of knowledge, which relates to the tongue and mouth. The science of Naad Yoga is concerned with the *gian gupha*, in which the movement of the tongue in the mouth while chanting is likened to the male and female sexual organs in the *bij gupha*. It creates the experience of merger with the Divine.

Laya Yoga & Naad Yoga

Laya yoga is what synchronizes the essence.
Naad Yoga is what creates the essence.

Laya Yoga uses the universal sound current—*naadam*—and the awakening of the chakras to transform awareness. *Naadam* is not a physical sound as you might think. It is the vibration of the creativity inherent in the universe and in your inner being. Sounds and words imbued with that relationship and harmony, which awaken perception and intuition, are the mantras of Laya Yoga.

THE NAAD MERIDIAN POINTS ON THE UPPER PALATE

The upper palate forms the roof of the mouth. It consists of two parts: the hard palate and the soft palate. The hard palate is what we commonly think of as the roof of the mouth, extending from directly behind the teeth up to the fleshy soft tissue that is suspended from the rear of the hard palate.

There are 84 meridian points located on the hard palate of the roof of the mouth. 32 pairs of points (64 points) are located on the hard palate surface directly behind and along the inside of the teeth, i.e. four points with each tooth. The other 20 points are located in a curve or "U" shape on the central part of the palate, with 10 pairs of points along each side. The location of the points are not exactly the same for each person, since palate shapes vary, but the general curved pattern is universal.

THE HYPOTHALAMUS & THE MERIDIAN POINTS

The movement of each part of the tongue stimulates these meridian points. The points are like a keyboard input to a computer. The computer is located in the hypothalamus area of the brain. It receives the impulses from the repetition of the patterns of sound in the Shabd. This is translated into instructions that regulate chemical messengers that go to all vital areas of the brain and body. The hypothalamus lies just below the thalamus in the midline of the brain. It is connected by blood vessels to the pituitary gland—the master gland of the body. The hypothalamus is known to regulate vital functions like hunger, drinking, body temperature and sleep. It also triggers the regulation of moods, emotional behavior and sexuality.

The special patterns of the Shabd Guru stimulate the hypothalamus to change the chemistry of the brain. This adjusts the functions of the endocrine system and the metabolism to create a neutral balanced mind, and to strengthen the immune function. Many positive states of mind can be created using the Shabd Guru. It can conquer depression, enhance intelligence and intuition, and open the power of compassion.

Yogi Bhajan on the Word

How to heal with the Word? Whatever you say, it is the application of your mind, body, and spirit. The most powerful thing of all is the *prana*. Word becomes the *pavan guru*, and word cannot be erased. It becomes the akashic record. The universe is balanced by the Word. If for one moment, the whole world shall have no sound, this entire galaxy and galaxies of galaxies and universe will disintegrate. To keep it going in balance there has to be sound. This is called *shabd*. I always believe the power of mantra is the power of man over God.

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Varieties of Mantra & Sound

Bij Mantra Seed mantra. The seed of the sound is planted in the unconscious. Example: *Sat Naam*

Ashtang Mantra These have 8 parts or beats (or 8 "limbs"). The rhythm of the Kundalini and its movement naturally responds to the *ashtanga* beat. The quality of each part covers the spectrum of the projected qualities of consciousness. Examples:

Ek Ong Kar Sat Naam Siri Wahe Guru
Ra Ma Da Sa Sa Say So Hung

Trikuti Mantra balances energies of generating, organizing, and transforming. Example: *Wahe Guru* (the Gur Mantra.)

Darshani Mantra This is a visual method of meditation. You mentally project the mantra on an inner screen and concentrate on it as it passes across the screen.

Simran Literally "remembrance." In *simran*, the meditative mind flows in remembrance of Oneness through the sound current.

Japa Literally "to repeat". The practice of recitation out loud to develop the power of *simran*.

Ajapa Jap Repeating without repeating. The silent recitation which automatically develops within as a result of *japa*. "*Ang Sang Wahe Guru*," when every cell is vibrating the rhythm. The whole universe sings for you, and you listen.

Sound can be subtle as well as audible. Here are distinct ways of experiencing sound.

Bhekhri This uses the tip of the tongue to form the syllables aloud.

Khant This is a subliminal vocalization. The sound is silent, but the syllables vibrate at your Throat Chakra.

Hirday This is the sound current vibrating at the heart.

Anahat This sound current is referred to as "Unstruck Melody." This is when the mantra resounds in every atom and fiber of your being. Its vibration becomes a part of you. It is created when the inner sound is produced from the Navel Center using the tip of the tongue. This triggers the higher glands to produce what is referred to as *amrit*, the sweet nectar of ecstacy.

What Does Chanting Achieve?

The Impact of the Inner Silence of Anahat

What is the real goal of the chanting we do in meditation?

Answer: The ultimate state of mind is called *anahat*–the Infinite Unstruck Sound or vibration. It brings intuition, inner strength, and the capacity to be completely open to do what you must do as a unique part of the totality of Being. In this state you are joyful, truthful, compassionate, and relaxed. Each time you perfect a mantra or *shabd*, you are like a master musician who can evoke these elevated states of being from the instrument of self.

How does chanting achieve this?

Answer: Chanting is a science called one-star spirituality which tunes and attunes you. Think of yourself as a Divine instrument with strings. When you chant, the vibration of the strings causes all thirty trillion cells of your body to resonate, to dance–forming the patterns that shape you physically, emotionally and mentally.

You are created with seventy-two *surs* or strings. They vary in dominance over a seventy-two hour period. The Crown Chakra–the thousand petalled lotus–impacts each of these strings with a thousand-fold vibration. Hence you have 72,000 vibratory impacts that send energy throughout, and create, your system.

The central tuning string is the main vagus nerve of the parasympathetic system which is called the *ik tara*–one-star. It acts as a tuning drone for all the other strings. When the central channel of the *sushmuna* in the spine is activated and the two support channels of *ida* and *pingala* move with it, the entire system begins to vibrate.

When you chant, at first it is conscious and out loud, then it becomes mental. If the rhythm is right and your concentration and surrender to its pulse is practiced, then your central nervous system vibrates it, and you simply listen. *Anahat* is that state in which your nervous system vibrates the mantra without your conscious effort, and the mantra is attuned to the Infinite. You vibrate in concert with a pattern beyond anything you could create from your finite self or ego.

What about silence? Isn't that the ultimate?

Answer: Silence is filled with *anahat*. The inner silence is the silence of the ego, when the mind vibrates silently in perfect unison with the unlimited self. When you chant, the nervous system becomes synchronized, and the flow of thoughts moves with the higher self. Then the ego relaxes, and the mantra is vibrated by every cell. You let go and are truly silent. In that silence you can feel, hear, and act on the call of the soul.

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Making Mantra Effective

In the science of Naad Yoga, there are three key elements that can enhance the experience of *naad*:

- RHYTHM: The most important element is to maintain a crisp, precise rhythm. Strictly maintain the correct number of beats for the specific mantra. (Most Kundalini Yoga mantras are chanted in 8 beats, though some will be in 6 beats or other rhythmic configurations.)

- PROJECTION: When you chant mantra, you are projecting your *prana*. Project from the purity of your soul. Be conscious of which chakra you are projecting from.

- PRONUNCIATION: Use the correct pressure of the tongue on the meridian points. Maintain the correct balance and rhythm of the syllables making up the words.

The Third Chakra & Mantra

An illustration of the above elements is found in the special relationship of the Navel Point to the use of mantra. When you speak a mantra and vibrate the tip of the tongue, you want to speak it from the central channel–the *sushmuna*, and vibrate from the Navel Point at the same time. When the tip of the tongue and the Navel Point are correlated, that extra pulse of energy coming from the navel moves the words into the realm of *anahat*–"without boundary." The action of speaking receives a powerful projection, like the will of a warrior. It is vibrated without speaking out loud. Each cell vibrates the energy released from the Navel Point.

Example: After clearing the pranic channels and sitting very straight, try chanting the steady rhythmic pulse of *Har*, being conscious of the tip of the tongue and pulling the Navel Point in. (Use the tape, *Tantric Har* and experience what happens when you systematically build and release the energy of the Navel Point.)

Word in the Heavenly & Earthly Realms

The upper triangle is heavenly, the lower earthly. They mix at the Heart Center, the human realm. Sound and the pulse of the naad rule in the upper chakras, and in these subtle realms your emotions follow the essence of your truth. Ordinary speech comes from the Earthly realms and reflects the animal or impulsive nature. The breath is reactive to those impulses, and your words reflect these emotions. At the Heart Center you are balanced as a human and pulled equally by the higher and lower realms. Your breath and word are in concert, and your words can become the Word. Your words serve your higher consciousness with duty and respond to lower impulses with compassion.

Yogi Bhajan on Mantras in Kundalini Yoga

Question: Why do we draw so heavily on the Sikh tradition for the mantras that we use in Kundalini Yoga?

Answer: Those mantras just happen to be correct mantras. It's not because they come from the Sikh tradition. The mantra "God and Me, Me and God are One," you will not find anywhere, but it works. It is an *ashtang* mantra. The sound is correct, so we use it. It doesn't have to only be in Gurmukhi (the vibratory language of the Siri Guru Granth Sahib). I draw correct mantras from wherever I can. There are tons of mantras–I only use those which I know will be very elementary and will work.

Yogi Bhajan on the Power of Prayer as Word

Sometimes I close my eyes when you ask me a question. I do a little prayer and hold myself to penetrate into the psyche of the answer so it could be correct. There is no power on the Earth for a living human being but his own technique and his own prayer, his own dharma, his own faith, and the Words of the Higher One. God has not given us the Word. God has given us *prana*, the life force. The Guru has given us the Word.

• • •

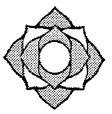
The power of prayer works at the Arcline. The Arcline obeys no rule of nature. It is the base of the Radiant Body. Prayer is the power of a person to get to his Infinity when he's himself, not just when he's confronted.

• • •

There are only four powers in the Earth. God is impotent against these powers:

The power of prayer.
The power of the prayer of the mother.
The power of the prayer of the beloved.
The power of prayer of a noble woman.

The science of Reality is to find the sound and to resound in that sound. Then the soul shall excel and God shall dwell within you.



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The Quantum Technology of the Shabd Guru

GURU NANAK, THE FIRST GURU OF THE SIKHS, saw the pain of people everywhere. He experienced the vast flood of information from the entire cosmic consciousness. And he laid down perfectly the patterns of the Shabd Guru that command the brain and mind with rhythm, sound, concentration and breath. Those Shabd patterns are a legacy to be used and shared with all as an antidote to the maladies of the times. The Shabd Guru technology is for everyone, for in every human is the Light of the same Creator.

SOUND AS TEACHER

"Shabd" means sound, "Guru" means teacher or knowledge that transforms you. The simplest meaning of Shabd Guru is a special sound that is a teacher. But what is it that we learn from the Shabd Guru and how does the use of sound act as a teacher?

Look at a deeper definition of Shabd Guru from its root structure. "Shabd" comes from *Sha-* and *-bd*. *"Sha"* means the expression of the ego, the attachments we identify with. *"Bd"* means to cut out/off or to eradicate. The root meaning of *Sha-bd* is that which cuts the ego. It is not just any sound. It is not just a sound of wisdom or a song of truth. It is a sound that cuts away the ego which obstructs the truth from you.

Shabd is not just any sound. It is not just a wise sound or a song of truth. It is a sound that cuts away the ego which obstructs the truth from you.

Ego is formed by the mind's constant automatic processing that attaches us to and identifies us with objects, feelings and thoughts. The ego is not inherently bad. It is just limited.

The ego is useful and even necessary for functioning. But when your actions are attached to the ego as if it is your real nature and as if it defines your reality and scope, then you create pain, unhappiness and problems. Your spiritual reality is that you are part of a vast creation. In experience, you are a creature that is not separate from the larger matrix of life and consciousness. You can act with passion and commitment as you remember and intuitively connect to the larger Self that is you and to the larger world in which you act.

The ego creates a kind of forgetfulness. You forget the Creator. You forget vastness. The energy of the mind begins to act in narrow ways with petty feelings and limiting beliefs. You act according to the information patterns of only a small part of your potential and experience.

What is the alternative? If we cannot base our identity in the known or on any limited position of ego what can we do? Act egolessly. Base an identity in the Infinite and the connection to your sense of the Infinite. That may seem a great or mystic accomplishment, but it is the natural state of the Self. We are part of the Infinite by nature. It is only the mind that forms a limited sense of self. We do not need to *create* an Infinite self. It already exists. That existence is called *Sat Naam–Sat* is reality, truth or existence. *Naam* is the identity or creative name. We are all in essence a reality that vibrates and creates. Most of the time we act as if we are not. That is the pain imposed on our life by ego. The Shabd removes that pain by removing barriers which prevent us from perceiving and acting from the Real Self.

This is one of the miracles of grace embodied in the teachings of Sikh Dharma. Each of the ten Sikh Gurus carried the Infinite identity of the Shabd Guru within very different personalities, ages and situations, and yet each affirmed they were all one Light. Their identity, as well as that of the other enlightened men of many faiths who contributed the shabds, mantras and music, are captured in the sacred scripture of Sikh Dharma. Each of these shabds has embedded in its sounds, rhythms and words, the Infinite identity they shared. They awaken the soul, clear the mind and do not depend on any finite identity, ego or group. They sang Shabds that, through the power of their actual sound current, merge the one who recites them into the Infinite, beyond the limits of time and space. It is exactly such a technology that is needed. It establishes a link with the sense of the Infinite no matter what mood and position you begin with. There is a shabd to lift every possible position of the ego into egoless merger.

***Naam* is the identity or creative name. We are all in essence a reality that vibrates and creates. Most of the time we act as if we are not. That is the pain imposed on our life by ego.**

The practice of *jappa* of the Shabd Guru changes the frequency of all our words. When we speak from ego our words carry a hook, a calculation for what we believe we need or want. When we speak egolessly our words go to the heart of the person and speak wisdom that is true regardless of advantage. Words spoken in ego are ruled by impulse and intellect. The words tuned by the Shabd Guru are ruled by integrity, intelligence and intuition.

It is the function of the Shabd Guru to make our ego nothing so we can serve and be served by everything. In a cyclone you go to the eye of the storm to escape its turbulent power. In an Age swirling with chaotic change, the path to the center of the storm is through the Neutral Mind, established by quelling the conscious and subconscious reactions to the ego. A sense of identity based on the experience of the subtle and the Infinite within us is the only source of stability and power in the Aquarian Age.

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The second word in the phrase Shabd Guru is "Guru." In its inner Naad, or atoms of sound, it becomes *Gu-Ru. Gu* means darkness or ignorance. *Ru* is light and knowledge. *Gur* is a formula or instruction. A Guru then is that which gives a Gur, a formula or technique, that transforms darkness into light, ignorance into knowledge, the gross into the refined.

A Guru is an active knowledge. It is not the intellectual knowledge that simply classifies or analyzes. Guru changes you. Guru develops the capacity to see. It removes darkness. The Shabd Guru transforms the practitioner by removing the barriers erected by the needs of the ego. The encounter with the Guru is through action. It gives you *Know How,* not just *Know What.* It gives you procedural knowledge that is in your cells and your subconscious, not just representational knowledge in your ideas.

To encounter the Shabd Guru is to learn by doing, by experience, by engaging in a practice. That key practice for Shabd Guru is the meditation and repetition of specific primal sounds and phrases.

That may seem simple. But simple does not necessarily mean easy or without challenge. The greatest challenge is the practitioner's own subconscious. The mind is not trained to base itself in its relationship to the Infinite. It is based in ego. It is filled with reactive thoughts that try to maintain the attachments of the ego and try to avoid pain. When you repeat the patterns of sound and thought in a Shabd, those thoughts counter the direction and intensity of the habitual thoughts. The Shabd provokes a release of the stored subconscious patterns of thinking and feeling. If, under the torrential flood of subconscious feelings and thoughts, you persist in repeating the pattern of the Shabd Guru, then the new pattern establishes itself. Your mind clears, and you awaken dormant inner capacities or enhance existing ones.

When you repeat the patterns of sound and thought in a Shabd, those thoughts counter the direction and intensity of the habitual thoughts based in ego.

From where do the patterns of the Shabd Guru come? They exist from the beginning of creation. They are the tides and rhythms of the movement of the creative pulse of Infinite consciousness. They vibrate in all things continually.

It is only the ability to hear and feel them that is needed. That capacity comes to a mind that is fearless, neutral, open and awakened. The ten Gurus of the Sikh path heard perfectly. They put that rhythm and pattern of energy into the poetic compositions of the Siri Guru Granth Sahib. That's why it is called a Granth rather than just a collection. Granth means "knot." It is a knot that binds the pattern of awareness into the words of the songs. Each Shabd is a template for an aspect of awareness and a potential of consciousness. Each Shabd is a kind of spiritual DNA that naturally restructures the mind and stimulates the brain.

THE IMPACT OF THE SHABD GURU

The impact of the Shabd Guru comes from its masterful use of the technology of sound and rhythm. It is a "quantum technology." A technology is the application of a science. The sound patterns of the Shabd Guru are based on the science of sound. In the West this would be the science of reflex to create changes in neurotransmitters to command the state of the brain and mind. It is "quantum" because it manipulates the smallest particles of sound and energy into effective combinations and patterns. It uses the quantum patterns like seeds that act as blueprints for constructing larger patterns. The atoms of sound build the molecules of language, thought and mind.

In time we will unravel many of the mysteries of this complex relationship of sound, brain, neuro-endocrinology, psychology and behavior. From the movement of the tongue to its reflexes to the neuro-endocrine cascades leading to the change of mental state. We are at the beginning of that study.

The techniques of the Shabd Guru codified in the Siri Guru Granth Sahib and in the mantras of Kundalini Yoga wait for us to mine their secrets. But every person can use them right now to elevate themselves, to heal, to develop stamina, to increase intuition. They do not need to understand the science of the process. They only need to apply the technology.

Because the reflex points are stimulated by the movements of the tongue, you get the maximum benefit from the pattern of a Shabd by consciously repeating the sounds out loud. That is called *jappa*—conscious, conscientious recitation. Rotating the tongue over the 84 reflex points in the pattern of the Shabd produces the maximum impact on the gross level of the neuro-endocrine system. As the Shabd gets established in the nervous system and your subconscious, every cell of your body will resonate sympathetically and vibrate the pattern with you. That is called the state of *ajappa jap*—of repeating without repeating. In that ideal state, the resource released by the Shabd Guru is always available to you regardless of the momentary focus of your attention on daily tasks. It may be the result of great devotion, much practice and mastery, or it may simply come by grace. When that state is reached, you still repeat the Shabd out loud, but the dimensions of joy and awareness that accompany the practice are limitless. You recite the Shabd in the beginning of the practice of the Shabd Guru in order to clear the mind, and attain an awareness. When you reach a stage of mastery, you still recite the

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Shabd out loud because you have become the Shabd and the Shabd has become you. There is a merger between the personal experience of you and the impersonal experience of Infinity beyond you and within you. The core technique to precisely vocalize the Shabd of the Shabd Guru is useful and true for the most novice beginner and for the most exalted master. The repetition of the songs of the Shabd Guru is a tool as timeless and unconditional as the Shabd Guru itself.

The ancient seers and the Gurus have left us maps and tools to guide us into the territory we want to explore. They also give us the clear warning not to confuse the maps for the actual territory. They implore us to realize that no amount of study replaces the knowledge which comes through experience.

To vibrate perfectly requires a combination of Shakti and Bhakti. Shakti is the power of precision and discipline in the repetition. Bhakti is the feeling of surrender and devotion.

The human body is in fact a wondrous musical instrument. It is constructed with 72 strings. Each string or "sur" acts like a meridian—it is a flow of the energy of life called *prana*. The inflow of cosmic energy into the body cascades like a waterfall through the crown of the head—the Tenth Gate, and collects in seven pools or special vortices. Those pools are called chakras or energy centers. The 72 strings are controlled by three central strings or channels. These are the *ida* and *pingala*—the left and right channels at either side of the spine, and the *sushmana*—the central channel up the middle of the spine. The upper centers vibrate with the release of each independent thought. The thoughts of the mind are released at a rate as high as one thousand thoughts in the blink of an eye. These vibrations or patterns of thought "pluck" those strings. The strings vibrate into the 72,000 channels. Their vibration creates the shape and function of the physical body, the emotional body and the mental body, just as you stroke a string on an instrument and the vibrating string forms a shape in the air.

If you can vibrate a pattern in the central channel it will induce a synchronous pattern throughout all the rest of the strings. This is known as sympathetic vibration. To vibrate a Shabd in the central channel you must become still, bring your full attention to the sound pattern and let go of your attachments by devotion or surrender. To vibrate perfectly requires a combination of Shakti and Bhakti. Shakti is the power of precision and discipline in the repetition. It is the pure energy which infuses all implementation without human tiredness. Bhakti is the experience of surrender and devotion; it is the devoted dedication which provides the energy to complete everything. Shakti and Bhakti are form and flow, sun and moon, rhythm and tone in perfect blend. That opens the intuitive knowledge of the central channel—Gyan.

The thousand thoughts released by the mind can easily distract you. They can pull you away from the Shabd. But the rhythmic Naad of the Shabd Guru engages and synchronizes the flow of thoughts. The pulse of the atoms of sound produces a pattern of energy that structures the space of the mind to link with the Shabd. This produces an active stillness, a shuniya, a zero-point in the consciousness. In that stillness you are like an instrument perfectly played in an orchestra. The sound of your instrument merges into the larger tune and becomes one with it.

Another map for understanding the mechanism and impact of the Shabd Guru traces the reflexes between the tongue and the brain. The body is perfectly designed to use the Naad or rhythm of the Shabd Guru. There is a connection between the movement of the tongue in the mouth and the chemistry of the neuro-transmitters in the brain. The originating end of this connection is the array of 84 reflex points on the upper palate of the roof of the mouth, the "keyboard" of the computer of consciousness *(See The Science of Naad.)*

AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmations and positive statements are helpful and good to use. Mantras are effective and gradually create changes. But the Shabd Guru, as captured in the Siri Guru Granth Sahib, is unique. The patterns are a perfect weave of rhythm, sound, tone, focus, and meaning. They act as informational DNA for the spirit. There is nothing as effective and universal as those patterns to program the consciousness to be in alignment with the soul.

THE POWER OF WORDS

Words are the perfect neuro-stimulators to activate and connect many areas of the brain. When combined with repetitive movement and with the powerful limbic/hypothalamic influence of the breath, they are a potent tool to elevate moods, enhance your range of feelings and command the cellular basis of your consciousness and state of mind. Science has not mapped all the twists and turns of the brain's neural maze. There are still secret corners, unknown territories and surprises to discover. One of the richest sources of understanding how to use words and rhythms to create whole brain patterns and to integrate emotions and thinking is captured in the quantum technology and primal sound templates of the Shabd Guru. The rhythmical phrasing and the sonorous use of words are maps into those secret areas.

The Shabds of the Guru capture the patterns of sound and energy in templates of consciousness. Part of the effect comes from the rhythmical combination of basic sound elements that underlie all languages. The Shabd Guru uses common language in an

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uncommon way. Like all samples of the Word coming from people absorbed in the ecstasy of the Infinite, it is filled with meaning, structure and poetic richness. It is poetic, purposeful and potent. The simple primal word units in linguistics are called phonemes. They are the smallest unit of speech that distinguishes one word or utterance from another. The patterns of the Shabd Guru use this quantum or atomic level of language and the corresponding structures imposed on our brains by the universal grammar that underlies all language. It doesn't matter what your language is. Repeating primal sounds vibrates the base of language itself.

THE PRIMAL SOUNDS—QUANTUM PATTERNS

Repeating the pattern embedded in a Shabd ingrains that pattern of primal sounds into the brain. It affects us by the pattern of the sound itself as well as by the higher levels of symbolic meanings. That is why, to have the maximum impact, we repeat it while giving our full attention, reproducing it in the same manner as it was spoken—without rushing or slurring, and by vibrating it in the central channel of the spine and brain.

These sounds are universal and based on the full use of your brain's potential. It is already yours. It is in your cells. The person who uses them and has the experience is the person to whom it belongs. It is not specific to any religion or group. It is the science of sound for personal experience and development.

Each primal sound is a unit that is pronounced by a particular part of the mouth. When we form a word to speak it, the tongue moves and touches the palate, the top of the mouth and the teeth in a well-defined area. It directs the pressure of the air and vibrates the vocal chords and specific areas in the skull. These primal sounds form unique combinations that use these areas of reflex to direct the patterns of the brain. Not every combination of sounds will create a pattern of wholeness or a pattern for healing. The Shabds are a treasure chest that records a perfect sample of patterns of wholeness and healing. They form a well-tested legacy for our use.

Yogi Bhajan, as the expert on the ancient linguistic technologies of the yogis, explained that the linguists of old had two systems of grammar to understand the structure and effects of language. One is normal grammar as we think of it. The other is called *nirukta* or "beyond the forms." It didn't translate the basic word units, like "*Ma*", from common meaning. It interpreted them according to the energy, emotion and awareness they create. This was a very sacred and secret science. It was used to awaken human potential and to heal. He explained the discovery of 84 reflex areas on the top of the mouth. The tongue hits these areas as it forms the primal sounds. The act of creating each primal sound contacts a pattern of points that sends a message directly into the hypothalamus, a central area of the old brain that directs impulses and feelings and helps integrate the activity of the two hemispheres of the brain. By rotating the tongue across these points using the primal sounds, different parts of the brain are systematically called into action. These specific sound sequences are healing. They create wholeness, repair the body image, adjust the flow of thoughts and never create any harm. They apply to all people regardless of temperament or constitution. It is possible to use combinations that are targeted for just one quality alone. But that is an entire science and requires individual diagnosis and great sensitivity of the practitioner. Using these primal sound patterns balances everyone and lets the individual's constitution select the special energy it needs. An analogy is white light versus the colors of the spectrum. All the colors are in the white light. You can absorb from the white light just the frequencies you need regardless of who you are because all the frequencies are in it. These primal sound patterns release the full range of the healing and sustaining energy of your brain. Each person individualizes its effects just by using it.

These sounds and shabds are perfect to share with everyone openly without special precautions or restrictions. One student asked if he had to be initiated. He had received a mantra from a particular group as part of meditation training. The answer is no. These sounds are universal and based on the full use of your brain's potential. It is already yours. It is in your cells. The person who uses them and has the experience is the person to whom it belongs. It is not specific to any religion or group. It is the science of sound for personal experience and development.

This is very important. Repeating the primal sounds captured in the Shabd Guru is really about listening—listening with wide open ears and full attention. It is whole brain listening. It is not simply concentrating with a singular, robotic focus on the sounds; it is an opening up of the sphere of awareness to the sound current.

The structure and words in the primal sounds of the Shabd Guru do something very useful to the inner chatter and dialogue. They balance the inner critical voice and the incessant rationalizations given by the dominant left hemisphere areas. By keeping a relaxed and mindful attention on the rhythm of the sounds, the full range of feelings and intuition is drawn into contact with the inner stories and the abstractions we use. When I meditate, when I do *naam simran* with a phrase from the Shabd Guru, I do not try to stop the inner chatter. I simply let the feeling of the primal sounds rise and match the thoughts thrown into the mind by my inner dialogues. The left brain and its allied parts are busy fabricating stories and reasons. I blend this with the steady centered rhythms of the shabd. The two combine into greater emotional

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and conceptual clarity. The brain will always produce streams of inner chatter and seek out sensations. It is designed to do that. So do not try to create silence or block thoughts. We just synchronize them with the sounds and the breath. That new energy and the new resources from other parts of the brain lets us naturally experience our feelings and thoughts in useful and authentic ways.

THE ROOTS OF LANGUAGE & THE VEHICLE OF WORD

When all our energy is spent and hope has abandoned us, we search for the rhythm of upliftment. When we are exalted and victory is ours, we search for the overtones of triumph to be joyous. Sound is in our genes. Word is potent and we seek it when we want to regenerate or express ourselves. It is the heritage of all humanity.

Words are sounds that we produce and use in language for communication. Sounds are natural vibrations like wind and bells. Words are psychoactive. They activate parts of our brain and the neuro-chemical channels of our emotions. Words are associated with different areas of the brain and different hemispheres. You can awaken different brain areas by the words you use and the charge you put behind them.

THE CRUCIAL MIND-BRAIN-BEHAVIOR LINK

Sound, breath and their rhythms are the crucial link in the mind-brain-behavior chain. Scientists have documented our capacity to self-heal, to affect the immune system by thought and emotion, to rapidly change behaviors believed to be incorrigible, and to act in a state of flow that produces top performance and a generalized state of delight. The mystery has been: what is the link?

The old model of the brain and nervous system is finally giving way to a basic understanding of the subtle complexity of the intimate interconnections between our genes, cells, nerves, glands and actions. The brain is no longer thought of only in terms of the nerves or as a computer. The brain is understood as part of a labyrinthine supersystem of chemical messengers, neural pathways, perceptions and self-regulating loops of information and energy. It is all tied together by chemistry and rhythm.

In this supersystem the link between sensations, thoughts and the rest of the body is the limbic system, the hypothalamus, and the pituitary and pineal glands. This group of neuro-endocrine centers coordinates the neural imprints and associations of the cortex with the brain's chemical messages. The messengers are hormones and neuro-peptides. They form an ocean of information and energy swirling between all our cells. Those cells have receptors, special sites that can recognize the messenger chemicals. The result of the message is a change in metabolism or physiology. The genes and the complicated cellular machinery produce new chemicals that release energy, change cellular shapes and structures, trigger healing and immune responses and create emotions and moods.

Hypothalamus

The top of the pyramid, and the center of information of the mind body system, is a collection of psycho-active centers no bigger than a large walnut. It receives information from all the senses, from the ideas and associations of the "higher" cortex, and from all parts of the body—from genes, cells, muscles, and movements. It sends information in the form of chemical messengers, neuro-transmitters that prepare the body-mind to learn, to express feelings and to act. That flow of information is not linear and one-directional. It reverberates in waves. It pulses like a musical rhapsody. The conductor of the hypothalamus keeps the attention of all the parts and uses rhythm as the central driver to coordinate all the separate instruments of feeling, awareness and energy. The whole super-system of nerves and glands is regulated through intricate combinations of biorhythms. The central driver for those rhythms is the breath. It is the baton of the master conductor. When each part is alert to the conductor, aroused and mindful, the stroke and pattern of the baton sets the mood of the music and makes the whole orchestra act together in a perfect flow. The rhythm and quality of the breath, along with the properly used sound or Shabd, is interpreted like a code in the hypothalamus. Each stroke of the breath, and stimulation of the 84 points by the tongue is a beat of the baton that releases waves of neuro-chemical messages to activate the pituitary gland which commands all the other glands which regulate the level of our immune function, the quality of our emotions and the flexibility and effectiveness of our actions.

The breath rhythm and quality, and properly used sound or Shabd, is interpreted like a code in the hypothalamus. Each stroke of the breath, and stimulation of the 84 points by the tongue is a beat of the baton that releases waves of neuro-chemical messages to activate the pituitary gland which commands all the other glands

When we learn to regulate our self using the Shabd Guru and the regulation of the life breath, we take charge of the fundamental linkage of mind and body. Changing the patterns and rhythm of sound and breath with the Shabd Guru uses the neuro-endocrine link to affect four important systems:

- the autonomic nerves, sympathetic and parasympathetic, that control states of excitement, relaxation and high performance;
- the endocrine system that produces hormones and controls our moods and the feeling of vitality and energy;
- the immune system that keeps us healthy and resists disease and the ravages of stress;
- the senses and central nervous system through the neuro-chemical ocean of the body that connects all the cells.

This is the power of the Shabd Guru! It uses sound, breath and rhythm to command the mind-brain-emotion-body-action loop. If

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shabd and breath is the conductor, you are still the composer. You can change the notes creating chords of happiness or sadness. You can bring the instruments to a rising crescendo or lull them with gentle melodies. You can write a grand symphony or a playful jingle. You can create feelings of joy, enthusiasm or calmness.

The details of all those chemical and neural mechanisms is complex and is beyond what you probably need or want to know from this manual. At this point in time, any complete scientific explanation must be partial because the research is not complete. The limbic link of the hypothalamus is well established. The impact of the breath is well known. The power of sound is just beginning to be studied. This whole area of study is enjoying a renaissance of interest. A flood of new discoveries will come out over the next few years. The number of chemical messengers we recognize will probably go from around 500 to over a thousand. While all the details are being worked out, you can read the real message from the bigger picture. You can enjoy the impact of the quantum technology and the practices of the Shabd Guru and all the effects of personal transformation.

Here is the basic sketch of the levels of that key linkage. It tells you about the big picture, so you can appreciate the mechanisms and potentials that are called on by this simple and elegant form of exercise. These points are only the signs for the major off-ramps into the amazing territory of energy, excellence and healing in the body.

The Conductor: the limbic-hypothalamic-pituitary axis

The hypothalamus is a region of the limbic system whose main job is to receive information from the cortex, the cells of the body, and the senses and transform them into the chemical messengers that trigger emotions, metabolic activity and actions.

It is the real master of communication in the body-mind. True, we are more conscious of sensory images and internal dialogues, but even these must be translated into a common language that can reach all the types of cells in the body. All the radically different functions of the instruments of the body are coordinated here. The hypothalamus sends branches down through the brain stem into areas that govern arousal, attention and metabolism. It sends other branches upwards into the cerebral cortex, limbic cortex and the central relay station of the anterior thalamus. By communicating in both directions it responds simultaneously to the turbulent demands of inner and outer environments. More importantly it establishes a state of the body-mind, a readiness for action of physiology, emotion and stream of thought. It is those stabilized states, those chords of feeling, the arias in our opera, that make up the emotional mosaic of our sense of self and our life. If you try to maintain a state of mind by holding one thought it is very difficult. The thought is slippery and is immediately joined by hundreds of other competing thoughts. But if you stimulate the hypothalamic conductor to set the state of the body-mind, it is like tuning a particular frequency on the radio or a channel on the television. In that mode or state certain thoughts are easy to hold, others are excluded automatically. This conductor guides your mood, your mode and your mind.

Bodily movement sends sensory information, stirs metabolism, improves circulation and hence communication to the conductor. Breath is the central link to the rhythms used by the conductor. The sound patterns of the Shabd Guru are the musical score that create appropriate states of consciousness. All the instruments of the body pulse and communicate in rhythms. The conductor has to pull these streams together into a harmony. The sound and breath record and drive the other rhythms of the body. All the instruments pay attention to the strokes of the breath.

Endocrine glands: instruments for energy and moods

The conductor interprets the thoughts of the mind from the nerves of the brain and sends hormones to the pituitary gland. That gland is a "master gland." In the East it is associated with the "third eye"- the intuitive functioning of the human that can know things not consciously recognized by the mind. We have traced some of the paths that start with the associations made in the cerebral cortex, then go to centers in the hypothalamus, and then activate nerves that project into one of the two lobes of the pituitary. Those nerves produce "releasing factors", neurosecretions—messengers that tell the pituitary to release hormones into the blood stream. Those hormones travel to special receptors throughout the body.

But it is not a simple relay. The state of the hypothalamus and the mode in which it responds depend on input from the key rhythms in the body. Breath is linked to our emotional and metabolic state. Subtle regulation of the breath can change the type, balance and range of hormones released in the system. This in turn cranks up the metabolism with extra reserves of cellular energy for top performance, and modulates the moods that are the background for our emotions. The field that specializes in studying these mechanisms is called neuro-endocrinology.

The depth and the frequency of the breath along with the pitch, rhythm, intensity and sequence of sounds one creates are especially important in cueing the pituitary function and its integration with the pineal gland. Regulating the breath with primal sounds or the shabds turns the breath into *pavan guru,* a teacher through the very action and sensitivity of life.

Autonomic Nervous System: Instruments for Action & Relaxation

The autonomic nervous system is the system we associate with our capacity for emergency response. That is the half of the autonomic system called the sympathetic system. It is the gas pedal of our body. It

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speeds the breath, sends the heart racing, and raises the blood pressure.Once it is turned on by anger or fear, it lasts a long time. The whole body gets one message—wake up and go! The other half of the autonomic instrument section is the parasympathetic system. It is the brakes. It slows the breath, and relaxes the digestion, nerves and circulation. You become calm and easy going. Its message is "relax, take it all in and enjoy what you have." Together they send "go" or "relax" messages to all the organs of the body (lungs, heart, intestines, adrenals, etc.).

The Shabd Guru is one of the best tools to strengthen the parasympathetic system and balance the rhythm of the autonomic system so it can repair itself.

The senses and the mind generate impulses that go to the conductor. The conductor evaluates these according to the overall state of the body-mind based on the input from cellular messengers and from the status of the rhythms in the body. Then it cues each part of the autonomic system to send our neurotransmitters to create change.

One of the major impacts of this balance of gas and brake is the distribution of blood flow throughout the body. It can make you warm or cold. It can nourish tissue or create degeneration. It can stimulate the growth of tumors or initiate shrinkage as it cuts off blood supplies. It changes basic processes like the clotting of blood, the healing of bruises, and the strength of the immune system's response to infections and stress.

There are two important points about this part of the mind-brain link. The health of this balance is maintained by a constant, stable rhythm of activity in the nervous system. You probably heard of circadian rhythms—daily rhythms like sleep and waking. But the most important rhythm for the conductor is the ultaradian rhythms, ones which are shorter and occur all through the day. If these shorter rhythms get out of synchronization, then you get cellular jet lag, psychosomatic illnesses of every kind and a general emotional slump or even a chronic sense of malaise. Maintaining this core rhythmic quality of the nerves, commanded from the conductor, is an essential task to feeling good, being happy and staying healthy. Second, you can change the balance of the autonomic system by switching the relative openness of one nostril over the other, and by switching the ratios of the inhale and the exhale. It is such an important regulatory mechanism that the body handles it on its own when everything is stable. It is called the nasal cycle and is well documented. It varies from about 65 to 150 minutes in individuals with a strong average at about 90 minutes in most healthy people. It turns out that this is a fundamental driver for all the rhythms in the body, In fact research shows that even the hemispheres of the cerebral cortex shift levels of activity with the shift of the nostrils.

Consciously resetting this rhythm with the Shabd Guru helps to heal many problems that come from overworking the sympathetic side of the autonomic system. The Shabd Guru is one of the best tools to strengthen the parasympathetic system and balance the rhythm of the autonomic system so it can repair itself.

Immune System: instruments for defense

The new field of study that connects psychology, chemistry, neurology and the immune functions is called psychoneuroimmunology. The main thing to know is that immunotransmitters form communication links between the producing and responding cells of the immune system and the hypothalamic centers. Through this connection the immune system interacts with both the endocrine and the autonomic systems.

Using the Shabd Guru and breath to entrain the rhythms of the hypothalamus and hence the whole body, creates a healing response in the immune system. It improves the use of cells like natural killer cells and helps the removal of toxins and the fight against viruses.

Senses & Central Nervous System

The limbic-hypothalamic-pituitary team sends and receives messengers from all over the body. The senses receive and transmit stimulation from the environment which alert the conductor who sends back instructions of how open or closed to be. One of the most common comments after a deep recitation of a Shabd is the astounding clarity of physical vision. The eyes seemed to have cleared and there is a new sense of dimension. This is the feedback loop between the senses, and the conductor when the breath is used to enhance the rhythms regulated by the hypothalamus-pituitary axis.

The hemispheres of the brain are part of this as well by coding different types of emotions in different areas. Their constant shifting of dominance creates dynamic blends of moods that interact with the endocrine system via the conductor. We change the composition of our internal chemical ocean to establish a basic state of experience. We learn and grow, or get stuck and show illness, according to the flexibility of our super-system to switch states in a timely and appropriate way.

THE SHABD GURU PRESCRIPTION

This outline of the mind-body-breath link, and the central role of the hypothalamus, gives you some idea of how responsive and subtle the mind-body system is. It should also leave you more confident that you can create great changes in your self, from top to bottom, from cell to brain, and from feelings to moods. It is the incredible process of creation, or perhaps the wisdom of the Creator that made every molecule in communication with every cell and thought. Inherent in

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that design you have a perfect tool in the Shabd Guru and the breath that is both powerful and easy to grasp.

There are many mysteries to that design that are yet to be uncovered. There is the connection to the pineal gland. It is a tiny piece of tissue in the bottom center of the brain that looks like a wilted mushroom. It is usually thought to become useless after puberty. It's linked to hormones that regulate sexual growth and give sensitivity to light. But it has many functions in the neurochemical conversation of the body. There is a special connection between its higher functions and the use of the breath. When the breath is very slow (e.g., taken in at least four breaths a minute or less, or in certain segmented ratios) a channel is opened by the hypothalamus between the pituitary and the pineal glands. This flow creates a release of what is called *amrit* or inner nectar. When this message is sent, the potential of the entire nervous system becomes active and is accelerated. Vitality cascades through all levels of the mind-body linkage. Nerves scintillate. The muscles regenerate and become strong. The glands send ecstatic waves of messengers to declare victory and healing. That capacity is yours. It is in your very design. It comes from no drug, no special belief. It is a result of your whole brain and supersystem coming into synchrony.

In the body, the concordance of many rhythms from different organs and groups of cells can resonate in many modes. That resonance can be induced by the ratios of sound and breath induced by the Shabd Guru.

This is the capacity of exercise, breath and attention. It is the prescription that uses no drugs. You are the drug factory. All the required chemicals are produced within your own body. The number of messengers and the range of effects are much greater than simple sedation or excitation. The hormones from the pituitary and the pineal gland are now known to increase the enjoyment of social relationships and the ability to bond with others. There is a chemistry to our relationships too.

THE PENDULUM EFFECT, ATTUNEMENT & RESONANCE

Two processes enhance the impact of the quantum patterns of the Shabd Guru: the pendulum effect and resonance. Watch a pendulum swing. Tap it slightly exactly as it reaches its zenith. A little tap will make it gain energy. It is just like pushing someone on a swing. It takes very little effort to keep the swing going against the forces of friction and gravity if your timing is just right. The pendulum effect in the Shabd Guru comes from the timing and synchronization of the tongue and breath with repetition. Instead of effects from high levels of effort, the effect comes from a gradual build up of synchronization and the energies natural to the body-mind system that are released. When this happens it is not a jerk or a lightening bolt. It is more like a spreading wave of alertness or lightness. It is your own system uncoiling itself rather than a force shoving it.

Resonance is the other factor that creates the spectrum of specific effects. When the opera singer hits high high C and the glass shatters, that is resonance. It is the attunement of a particular frequency to the shape of the glass so that the energy can be absorbed by that glass. Different shapes have different fundamental frequencies at which they can vibrate. That is the basis for instrument design. The body has many cavities that resonate to specific words and sounds. High pitches will be felt in different areas of the body than low. The assembly of many rhythms in the body from different organs and groups of cells can resonate in many modes. That resonance can be induced by the ratios of sound and breath used in the Shabd Guru. This is, in fact, the underlying basis of the power of music to affect our consciousness so deeply. It is the resonance of the body cavities and the body's subtle systems produced sympathetically by the tones and the complexity of the resonating patterns that create.

CONCLUSION

There are two powerful tools at your disposal: words and rhythm. A simple, conscious use of these has profound effects. Words and sounds are psycho-active events that are rooted in the body and give roots to the sense of self. Rhythm increases our sense of balance, of control of our movements and general well-being.

WE DO NOT NEED NEW CHOICES. We are flooded with choices. We need an elevated capacity to make choices. We do not need more information. We need the wisdom to use all the information. We do not need another religion. We need the experience of a lifestyle or path—a dharma—that creates the spiritual fitness to act believably on our beliefs. The Shabd Guru is a special kind of technology with a unique contribution to develop potentials and handle the problems of the new age—the Aquarian Age. In the body it produces vitality; in the complex of the mind it awakens intelligence and develops wisdom and intuition; in the heart it establishes compassion; in each person's consciousness it builds the clarity to act with fearless integrity.

Excerpted from Basis, Use & Impact of the Quantum Technology of the Shabd Guru *by Yogi Bhajan and Gurucharan Singh Khalsa.*

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Tuning in with the Adi Mantra Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo

The Adi Mantra is the first technology of a Kundalini Yoga student or teacher. It is a meditation. It is a state of consciousness. It is the link between you as a finite personality and you as a flow of the Infinite consciousness that guides the Kundalini energy. We always start a class or a personal practice with this mantra.

Practice this mantra to become a master of the ability to put aside your own fears, pride, expectations, and manipulations. Let the link of consciousness touch you and teach through you.

Chanting the Adi Mantra

To center yourself before doing Kundalini Yoga, chant the Adi Mantra at least three times. *Adi* means "first" or "primal." Mantra is the creative projection of the mind through sound. This mantra is the first creative action. It centers you into the higher self and reminds your lower minds that it is not your ego that will practice or teach Kundalini Yoga. It is an invitation to your higher self to take the helm and guide the course of the experience. Technically it is the linking mantra for the Golden Chain. The Golden Chain is the inner spark of kundalini that is passed person to person; teacher to student; guru to teacher; cosmos and God to guru. By chanting this and linking yourself consciously, the exercises and meditations that you practice are guided by your higher consciousness and all the teachers that have brought this opportunity to you. It makes you very receptive and sensitive to the messages of your body, mind, and intuition.

However, it is only to be used as a link when you are to teach. It is not like an individual mantra, which is complete in itself. It is a hook that creates a flow, which you serve. If your need is spiritual linkage and guidance then there is another form that is used: the complete Adi Mantra. *(See Meditations With Mantra chapter.)*

Whenever you begin your Kundalini Yoga practice, start by sitting in an Easy Pose with spine erect. Press both palms together at the center of the chest with the fingers straight up. Press the second joint of the thumbs tightly against the sternum at the level of the 5th-6th ribs. Concentrate at the Brow Point. Inhale deeply and chant the words in one long breath as you exhale. The word *Dev* rhymes with "save." It is chanted a minor third higher than the other sounds. The gentle pressure created by the sound increases like a gradually growing wave on *dayv*.

The sound *ong* is created in the inner chambers of the sinuses and upper palate, like a conch. It is made with all the air coming through the nose. The mouth is open so that the cavity of the mouth acts to enhance the resonance of the sound. It is the "ng" sound that is emphasized. (Make sure the lips are firm while chanting the sound "*ong*." Otherwise, the sound *ahang* is created, which means "ego!") The first part of *Namo* is short and rhymes with "hum". The "*oh*" sound is held much longer. The first syllable of the word *g'roo* is pronounced as in the word "good." The second syllable, "*roo*", has a sound that rhymes with the word "true." The Adi Mantra is to be chanted on one breath. IF a short breath must be taken after *Ong Namo*, do not draw the breath out so much that the rhythm of the mantra is changed.

The meaning of the mantra

Ong is the creative energy of the total cosmos and consciousness of the Creator as experienced in the creation. It has the connotation of energy and activity. It creates involvement without attachment. It generates *shakti*, the generative force of life. (The sound is not *Om*, which is the sound for withdrawal and relaxation.)

Namo means to bow to or to call on, with respect and receptivity. It is the type of bowing that grants dignity through acknowledging a higher consciousness and discipline.

Ong Namo calls on your consciousness to become subtle and receptive to its higher resources. It instructs the conscious and the subconscious to let go of the normal restrictions to functioning that is imposed by the limited ego.

Guru means wisdom or teacher. It does not mean a personality, but a source of knowledge. Not just any knowledge. It is the kind of knowledge, which transforms you, alleviates pain and increases awareness. *Guru* in the spiritual context is the embodiment of the Infinite. The word can be broken into parts: *Gu* means darkness or ignorance; *ru* means light or knowledge. *Gur* means a formula to systematically attain a goal. So a *guru* is something which can give you a *gur* to transform your *gu* to *ru*!

Dev means subtle, etheric, divine or belonging to the realms of God. It implies sophistication and wisdom.

Guru dev namo calls on the subtle wisdom that guides you in an impersonally personal manner. It is a wisdom that is stored and transmitted through the subtle and radiant bodies of the aura. It is the realm and guidance of Guru Ram Das.

If the limited individual ego in which we normally live is a small pond, then *Ong namo* releases us into a vast and endless ocean. *Guru dev namo* gives us the experience of the wisest Navigator and all of his charts to guide us to the many ports we are to serve and experience.

Mangala Charn Mantra

Ad Guray Nameh, Jugad Guray Nameh,
Sat Guray Nameh, Siri Guru Devay Nameh

If you choose to, after the Adi Mantra, you may chant the Mangala Charn mantra three times.

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Japji Sahib

ONE OF THE GREATEST RESOURCES available to teachers of Kundalini Yoga is the vast repertoire of *shabd*, of mantra, of perfect templates of Infinity captured in the rhythms, content and tones of sound in the Siri Guru Granth Sahib. The Siri Guru Granth is a highly sophisticated experience of mantra. It is 1430 pages of the spoken words of seven of the ten Sikh Gurus along with those of other enlightened people of many faiths. It is not a scripture, but a Siri Guru. By chanting its words, one recaptures the consciousness achieved by the great souls whose words have been codified and passed down to us through the ages within its sound current.

The very beginning section of the Siri Guru Granth Sahib is known as *Japji Sahib*. The forty *paurees* of *Japji* (*pauree* means step, like on a staircase), the many mantras, the various sounds of *Japji* as captured by Guru Nanak are one of the core sources for mantra and *shabd* in Kundalini Yoga. Every word is part of the rhythm and tide of Infinity passed on, practiced, and used as a tool.

Sometimes students and even new teachers may be reluctant to use mantras, as they think they are associated with religion. This is not the case. Mantras were given by enlightened beings, some of who were Sikh Gurus, as a gift of transformation for all to use. They are not the possession of any religion, they are the heritage of humankind. They are perfect tools because they came through yogis who had completely clear and neutral minds. These mantras are imprinted with the signature of the Infinite. As teachers, playing *Japji* or any of the musical renditions of particular *paurees* in the background during relaxation is effective.

Yogi Bhajan on Japji Sahib

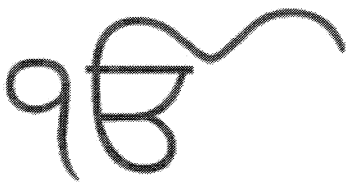
Once a man came to me and asked, "I want to be the wisest man in the world."

I said, "Read *Japji*, and you will be." He never came back. Where is he? I don't know. That's all it takes. If anyone can understand *Japji*, he can understand the entire wisdom of God. In those forty *paurees* the whole thing is contained. The entire Siri Guru Granth is the explanation of *Japji*.

There is as much structure in each gem of the Shabd Guru as you wish to find. For example, there are 8 chakras, including the entire aura, and five tattvas—earth, air, fire, water, and ether. Eight times five gives you 40. If you take the first step, the Mul Mantra, it is the Eighth Chakra at the frequency of ether. If you go all the way down to the final 40th step, it is the earth element in the First Chakra. Repeating the entire Japji adjusts all the elements in all the chakras and completely adjusts your subtle and physical bodies. Yogi Bhajan has given the specific effects of repeating each of the paurees individually 11 times a day. See the following page for the benefits each one can bring.

Japji acts as an inner compass that always gives direction to the many aspects of the self. The rich variety and beautiful poetry in which it is delivered to us is part of the gift of the House of Guru Ram Das and the Shabd Guru. Share it freely and never hesitate to explore it more deeply in your personal practice as well as to use it with the many other varieties of mantra and *shabds* that we've been given in this tradition.

A copy of Japji *can be found at www.sikhnet.com*



Yogi Bhajan on Reading from Siri Guru Granth Sahib

First the psyche of the person consciously confronts the ideas and ideals of oneness which the ego does not want to accept. The ideals are reinforced by the verbalization, and a subconscious release happens which relaxes the entire physiology of the person. Then the real thing: the tongue and lips, the most delicately sensitive organs of the body, play on each other in a certain permutation and combination, stimulating systematically the pituitary and pineal reflexes in the brain. In a most subtle way the personality begins to swing away from fear complexes and toward a freer, more expansive self-reflection. By very consciously using the tongue in pronunciation to relate and touch the meridian points of the upper palate, one is able to achieve the total effect.

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The Effects of the Paurees of Japji

Reciting the entire Japji daily will balance all aspects of your self, and activate your soul. Or, you may choose one pauree to work on a particular facet. In that case, recite it 11 times a day.

· The ***Mul Mantra*** is a fate killer. It removes the fate and changes the destiny to prosperity.
· The second half of the ***first pauree*** is an antidote to depression. It will lift you from depression, insecurity, nightmares, and loss.
· The ***second pauree*** imparts patience and stability.
· The ***third pauree*** transforms insufficiency into suffciency, turns depression into elevation, and transforms low self-esteem into complete self-confidence.
· The ***fourth pauree*** blesses those trapped in feelings of poverty and lack of means. It blasts through the trap of these feelings like a thunderbolt.
· The ***fifth pauree*** must be recited when you feel a sense of failure within yourself. When you feel that you are not up to the job this pauree will grant you all success.
· The ***sixth pauree*** dispels limitation. Recite it when you feel limited, cornered, trapped, or coerced.
· When you suffer from greed, madness for power, overbearing expansion and the need to control, when you become trapped in your territoriality, the ***seventh pauree*** will heal you.
· The ***eighth pauree*** gives the power to be a perfect sage.
· The ***ninth pauree*** gives expansion.
· The ***tenth pauree*** grants grace.
· The ***eleventh pauree*** gives virtuousness.
· When you feel small, the ***twelfth pauree*** gives you solidarity of self, self-impressiveness, and self-respect.
· The ***thirteenth pauree*** gives you the occult knowledge of infinity. It brings deep intuition.
· When you cannot find your path in life; when you cannot see the direction to your destiny, and when you cannot achieve fufillment; the ***fourteenth pauree*** will show you the way.
· The ***fifteenth pauree*** brings salvation.
· The ***sixteenth pauree*** gives knowledge of the structure of the universe.
· The ***seventeenth pauree*** brings freedom and resurrection.
· The ***eighteenth pauree*** fights madness, deep feelings of inferiority, and self-destructive behavior
·The ***nineteenth pauree*** brings universal knowledge, inspiration, and revelation.
· When the monsters are nipping at your heels, the ***twentieth pauree*** wipes away all your sins.
· The ***twenty-first pauree*** will maintain your status, grace and position.
The ***twenty-second pauree*** brings victory in legal battles. It gives you the strategy.
· The ***twenty-third pauree*** dispels darkness and elevates the self.
· The ***twenty-fourth pauree*** breaks through all limitations with the force of a thunderbolt, so powerfully that it affects generations; it has the power to kill misfortune.
· When you recite the ***twenty-fifth pauree*** all your needs become pre-fulfilled. Prosperity, virtue, estate, and wealth are yours without asking.
· The ***twenty-sixth pauree*** transforms nothing into everything. In your business it banishes losses, misfortunes, and miseries.
· When you are stuck and you cannot see the window of opportunity before you, the ***twenty-seventh pauree*** shows you the way. It removes obstacles so you can leap over hurdles.
· The ***twenty-eighth pauree*** is the strongest permutation and combination of words in the world. It unites you with God.
· The ***twenty-ninth pauree*** is a shield of protection from enemies. It vaporizes animosity towards you.
· The ***thirtieth pauree*** places you upon the throne of divinity. It makes you into a sage and a saint.
· The ***thirty-first pauree*** pulls all virtues from the heavens.
· The ***thirty-second pauree*** pays your debts and completes your karma.
· The ***thirty-third pauree*** destroys your ego and brings forth your divinity. It removes negativity, neutralizes your destructive nature, and prevents harm to others by your hand.
· The ***thirty-fourth pauree*** brings stability.
· The ***thirty-fifth pauree*** gives you the capacity to do your duty and fulfill your responsibility.
· The ***thirty-sixth pauree*** brings divine realisation. It grants complete understanding of the Heavens and the Earth.
· The ***thirty-seventh pauree*** cuts the karma. It eliminates the impact of all bad karmas.
· The ***thirty-eighth pauree*** gives you the power to rewrite your own destiny.
· The ***shalok*** brings self-satisfaction, elevation, acknowledgment, and respect.

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Mul Mantra

The Ballad of Enlightenment

Ek ong kar, sat naam, karta purakh, nirbho, nirvair,
akal moort, ajoonee, saibhung, gur prasad. Jap!
Aad sach, jugad sach, haibhee sach,
Nanak hosee bhee sach.

THE MUL MANTRA WAS GIVEN BY GURU NANAK—a great yogi, healer, and founder of the Sikh lifestyle. This mantra captures a complete philosophy and psychology of human potential in one compact phrase. That philosophy is the essence of Kundaini Yoga and humanology. It states that in the dimension of awareness, there is an existing perfection, and in the dimension of consciousness, a possible evolution.

One morning while doing his *sadhana* in a river, Guru Nanak disappeared for three days in an ecstatic awakening. When he reappeared all observers said he seemed to have a glowing light all around him—an aura so strong that most people could see what was normally invisible to them. In this mystic state of realization he sat with his students and uttered this mantra. It was the first thing he said to capture the fullness of his vision of the human being and the Cosmos.

This entire mantra is a compass that points towards God. The chant describes the human-in-God consciousness. It doesn't describe God—who is indescribable. It orients you like a compass in the direction to walk and to go.

This complete mantra has everything in it. It is a technology and a description and a technique. It forms the basis of the consciousness that we wish to develop and that exists in our very soul. Technically the Mul Mantra goes up to *Jap*. *Aad sach, jugaad sach, haibhee sach, Naanak hosee bhee sach* is a Mangala Charan—a mantra that connects the speaker and the Infinite, the Infinite and the speaker. Yogi Bhajan has often referred to the Mangala Charan part of the Mul Mantra as a kundalini mantra.

The entire Mul Mantra is the highest of all mantras, and it contains in it the root of sound that is the basis for all effective mantras. To repeat it, to use it in meditation, to go into the depth of it, is to be entranced by the depth of the soul. It is the technique called *sahej sukh dhyan—sukh* means comfort, *sahej* means easy, and *dhyan* is the depth of meditation—that comfortable and happy way to meditate that is slow, with little exertion and perfect balance. In the philosophy of Guru Nanak and with the understanding of a yogi, we can look at life's goal: to remain in perfect flow and contact with our sense of Godhood, to live in the known and unknown will of God. Guru Nanak has said that we only sin when we forget our Identity; when we forget in our essence, in our being and our vibration the reality of God and Guru in our soul.

When we recognize the exalted state of awakening described in the Mul Mantra, we act in alignment with the pattern of Universal Truth. We live with the kundalini risen, with awareness as the guide, and we act not from ego but from the deep currents of the soul and life. We are awakened in intuition, intelligence, and instinct.

Ek ong kaar The universe is one without division. One creator is in every action and thing. We are connected with all things. We are a creative consciousness

Sat naam Truth is our identity. We are vibrating our existence.

Karta purakh We are creative beings. We exist to do everything God dictates. This is a direct order coming from the essence of our very nature. There is a simplicity to the beauty of actions done within the will of our highest consciousness.

Nirbho, nirvair Living in our True Identity, we are fearless and revengeless.

Akal moort, ajoonee, saibhung: We are to live as God has made us. We are the very image, the personification of God. We are Infinite and we exist in the sovereignty of our own unique identity because we have come here already pre-destined. *Akal Moort* is our pattern which exists beyond death. *Ajoonee* implies that this is so by grace, that we are not caught purely in the cycle of birth and death. We have been sent, and we come freely. *Saibhung*: we are sovereign and autonomous, yet we act with the integrity of totality.

Gur prasad: How can we experience this understanding? *Gur Prasad* is the blessing, the grace, the transforming touch of the Guru, the teachings embodied. Grace alone completes our full merger with the Infinite. This experience is a gift from the Guru.

When your merger is complete with gurprasad, what is the natural desire of your soul? To meditate...

Jap! To repeat and vibrate consciously. Chant out loud. Penetrate. Focus. What do we meditate on? The kundalini mantra, a Mangala Charan, the connection in the elevation unto God:

Aad sach, jugad sach, haibhee sach, Nanak hosee bhee sach. Meditate on that which was true in the primal beginning, is true through every activity and age, is true at this instant now, and Nanak says will be true forever.

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Mantras Frequently Used in Kundalini Yoga

ADAYS TISAI ADAYS

Aadays tisai adays

Aad aneel anaad anaahat, jug jug ayko vays

I salute Thee, the Primal One, pure, in the beginning, through all time, through all the ages–the One.

These are the words of Guru Nanak and a salutation to the Infinite–to the God beyond the Infinite God. If you master this *pauree* of *Japji*, the entire knowledge of the universe and beyond will come to you without ever reading a book. This mantra initiates you into that knowledge which is within all. It is the yogi's humble bowing to the Infinite.

AD GURAY NAMEH

(MANGALA CHARAN MANTRA)

Aad guray nameh, jugaad guray nameh

Sat guray nameh, siree guroo dayv-ay nameh

I bow to the primal wisdom.
I bow to the wisdom true through the ages.
I bow to the true wisdom. I bow to the great unseen wisdom.

You are guided from the primal core and beginning, through every moment of experience and activity, guided in your heart's deepest truth and being by the unseen Infinity of your highest self. This is a mantra which clears the clouds of doubt and opens us to guidance and protection. It surrounds the magnetic field with protective light.

ADI SHAKTI

(KUNDALINI BHAKTI MANTRA)

Aadee shaktee, namo, namo

Sarab shaktee, namo, namo

Pritham bhaagavatee, namo namo

Kundalinee, maataa shaktee, namo, namo

I bow to the Primal Power.
I bow to the all Encompassing Power and Energy.
I bow to that through which God creates.
I bow to the creative power of the kundalini, the Divine Mother Power.

This devotional mantra invokes the primary Creative Power which is manifest as the feminine. It calls upon the Mother Power. It will help you to be free of the insecurities which block freedom of action. By meditating on it one can obtain a deeper understanding of the constant interplay between the manifest and the unmanifest qualities of the cosmos and consciousness.

AD SACH

(KUNDALINI SHAKTI MANTRA)

Aad such, jugaad such, haibhee such

naanak hosee bhee such

True in the beginning, True throughout the ages,
True at this moment, Nanak says this Truth shall ever be.

This mantra connects the speaker to the Infinite and the Infinite to the speaker. It is from *Japji*.

Aad such jugaad such haiBHAY such

naanak hosee bHAY such

There is a slight difference from the above. This is the 17th Slok of *Sukhmani Sahib*, the words of Guru Arjan, the 5th Sikh Guru. When things don't move, this mantra adds the seeds of prosperity into your personality. All that is stuck shall move.

AAP SAHAEE HOA

Aap sahaaee hoaa

Sachay daa sachay dhoaa, Har, Har, Har

The Lord Himself has become my protector.
The Truest of the True has taken care of me. God, God, God.

This mantra takes away negativity from the surrounding environments and from within. It is a gift that lets you penetrate into the unknown without fear. It gives protection and mental balance.

ANG SANG WAHE GURU

Ung sung wha-hay guroo

The dynamic, living ecstasy of the universe is dancing within every cell of me.

This mantra eliminates haunting thoughts.

ARDAS BHAEE

Ardaas bhayee, amar daas guroo,
amar daas guroo, ardaas bhayee
raam daas guroo, raam daas guroo,
raam daas guroo, sachee sahee

This is a simple permutation and combination of words that manifests beyond the realm of creativity and activity. This mantra assures that all needs are provided for and guarantees the prayer will be answered. It can help when going through Shakti Pad. Chant this mantra to help release a difficult situation. *Ardas bhayee* is a mantra prayer. If you sing it, your mind, body and soul automatically combine and, without having to say what you want, the need of life is adjusted. It guarantees by the Grace of Guru Amar Das (the hope of the hopeless) and Guru Ram Das (the King of the yogis and bestower of blessing, past, present, and future) that the prayer will be answered.

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AJAI ALAI

Ajai Alai	*Invincible. Indestructible.*
Abhai Abai	*Fearless. Everywhere.*
Abhoo Ajoo	*Unborn. Forever.*
Anaas Akaas	*Indestructible. Within everything.*
Agunj Abhunj	*Invincible. Indivisible.*
Alukh Abhukh	*Invisible. Free from wants.*
Akaal Dyaal	*Immortal. Kind.*
Alayk Abhaykhe	*Unimaginable. Formless.*
Anaam Akaam	*Unnameable. Free from desires.*
Agaahaa Adhaahaa	*Unfathomable. Undamageable.*
Anaatay Parmaatay	*Without a master. Destroyer of all.*
Ajonee Amonee	*Beyond birth & death. Beyond silence.*
Na Raagay Na Rungay	*More than love itself. Beyond all colors.*
Na Roopay Na Raykay	*Formless. Beyond chakras.*
Akaramung Abharamung	*Beyond karma. Beyond doubt.*
Aganjay Alaykhay	*Beyond battles. Unimaginable.*

This is from Guru Gobind Singh's *Jaap Sahib,* which rouses the soul and the self. This brings great sensitivity to the Being and gives the ability to be able to compute what people are actually saying automatically. Once you recite this mantra correctly, it will give you the power that whatever you say must happen. When you chant this mantra you have the power to surpass anything.

DHAN DHAN RAM DAS GUR

(SHABD FROM SIRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB)

Dhan dhan ram das gur jin syreaa tinai savaari-aa
Pooree ho-ee karaamaat aap sirjanhaarai dhaari-aa
Sikhee atai sangatee paarbrahm kar namaskaari-aa
Atal athaaho atol too(n) tayraa ant na paaraavaari-aa
Jinee too(n) sayvee-aa bhaa-o kar say tudh paar utaari-aa
Lab lobh kaam krodh moho maar kadhay tudh saparvaari-aa
Dhan so tayraa thaan hai sach tayraa paiskaari-aa
Naanaak too(n) lehnaa too(n) hai gur amar too(n) veechaari-aa
Gur dithaa taa(n) man saadhaari-aa

Praise unto Ram Das the Guru, the one who created you, established you.
You are such a miracle! The Creator has installed you on a throne.
Your Sikhs, & all conscious people bow to you because you manifest God.
You are unchanging, unfathomable, immeasurable. Your limit cannot be perceived.
Those who serve you with love are carried across the sea of existence.
The 5 obstacles (greed, attachment, lust, anger, ego) cannot exist where you are.
The realm that you rule is the true place. True is your glory.
You are Nanak, Angad, and Amar Das the Guru.
Oh, when I recognized you, my soul was comforted!

This *shabd* reaches the realm of miracles. The impossible becomes possible. When life seems stuck, praise the domain of Guru Ram Das, the realm of the true Reality. It is the realm of the heart, of the Neutral Mind, where all things become pure.

BOUNTIFUL, BLISSFUL, AND BEAUTIFUL

(MANTRA OF BLISS: AFFIRMATION OF THE DIVINE SELF)

I am bountiful, blissful, and beautiful.
Bountiful, blissful, and beautiful I am.
Ek ong kaar sat gurprasaad
Anand bhayaa mayree maa-ay satiguroo mai paa-yaa
Satiguroo taa paa-yaa sehej saytee
Man vajeeaa vaadhaaeeaa
Raag ratan parvaar pareeaa shabd gaavan aaeeaa
Shabdo taa gaavho haree kayraa man jinee vasaa-yaa
Kahai naanak anand hoaa satiguroo mai paa-yaa

The Creator and the Creation are One.
I know this by the Grace of the Guru.
Oh my mother, I am in Infinite bliss for I have obtained the True Guru (the Word, the Shabd Guru).
I have met that True Guru easily, naturally;
divine music bursts in my heart.
The rhythmic beats are like cosmic jewels
and bring all powers through Divine Songs.
When God resides in you, the mind is filled by
and echoes with divine praise.
Nanak proclaims I dwell in supreme bliss
for I have merged with the True Guru.

This mantra is for self-esteem and self-confidence. After the affirmation "I am bountiful, blissful, and beautiful" are words from the first part of *Anand Sahib*—the Song of Bliss—and the mantra *Ek Ong Kar Satgur Prasad* which elevates the self beyond duality and establishes the flow of sprit.

CHATTR CHAKKR VARTI

(LAST FOUR LINES OF JAAP SAHIB)

Chattr chakkr vartee, chattr chakkr bhugatay
Suyumbhav subhang sarab daa sarab jugtay
Dukaalang pranaasee dayaalang saroopay
Sadaa ung sungay abhangang bibhootay

Thou art pervading in all the four directions,
the Enjoyer in all the four directions.
Thou art self-illumined and united with all.
Destroyer of bad times, embodiment of mercy.
Thou art ever within us.
Thou are the everlasting giver of undestroyable power.

These are the last four lines of Guru Gobind Singh's *Jaap Sahib.* This mantra removes fear, anxiety, depression, and phobias, and brings victory. It instills courage and fearlessness into the fiber of the person. It gives *saahibee*—control over one's domain—self-command and self-grace. Recite this when your position is endangered, when your authoritative personality is weak.

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DHUNI

The *Dhuni* tape is an instrumental piece played on a one-stringed instrument. It has a rhythm which works perfectly with the mantra *Sat Naam, Sat Naam, Sat Naam, Ji, Wha-hay Guroo, Wha-hay Guroo, Wha-hay Guroo Jee.*

EK ONG KAR SAT NAM SIRI WAHE GURU

(ADI SHAKTI MANTRA)

Ek Ong Kaar Sat Naam Siree Wha-hay Guroo

The Creator and all creation are one. This is our True Identity.
The ecstasy of this wisdom is Great beyond words.

This eight part (*ashtang*) mantra corresponds to the body's eight energy centers (7 chakras, plus aura). These eight words are the "code" letters or the phone number of the direct line to connect you, the creature, with your Creator. It was the first mantra Yogi Bhajan taught during his first year in the United States. This mantra creates a responsive interrelationship between you and the universal creative energy. It is very powerful for awakening the kundalini energy and suspending the mind in bliss.

Ek ong kaar-(uh) saa-taa-naa-ma Siree wha-(uh) hay guroo

(LAYA YOGA KUNDALINI MANTRA)

This is the Laya Yoga form of the Adi Shakti Mantra. The rhythm of the chant gives it a "spinning energy." It rotates the energy of all the chakras and the aura. It will make you creative and focused on your real priorities and it helps you to sacrifice what is needed to accomplish them.

EK ONG KAR SAT GUR PARSAD

(SIRI MANTRA)

Ek ong kaar sat gur parsaad,
sat gur parsaad ek ong kaar

God and We are One.
I know this by the Grace of the True Guru.
I know this by the Grace of the True Guru.
That God and We are One.

This mantra is a *gutka shabd*—one that reverses the mind. It is the essence of the Siri Guru. If the mantra is chanted just five times, it will stop the mind and put it into reverse gear. The Siri Guru will sit in your heart. It can stop anything negative. It is so strong that it elevates the self beyond duality and establishes the flow of sprit. This mantra makes the mind so powerful that it removes all obstacles. Its positive effects happen quickly and last a long time. It needs to be chanted with reverence, in a place of reverence. This mantra brings great intuition to the practitioner. After chanting this mantra, anything you say will be amplified and created with great force. So have a positive projection and do not say anything negative for a while.

Normally when you chant mantras correctly, you benefit, and when you chant them incorrectly, they don't have any ill effect. But if you chant this mantra incorrectly, it has a backlash. Normally we invoke the sacred before practicing this mantra. Chant the Mul Mantra or the Mangala Charn Mantra before practicing it.

GOBINDAY MUKANDAY

Gobinday, mukanday, udaaray, apaaray
Hareeung, kareeung, nirnaamay, akaamay

(GURU GAITRI MANTRA)

Sustaining, Liberating, Enlightening, Infinite
Destroying, Creating, Nameless, Desireless.

This mantra can eliminate the karmic blocks or errors of the past. It has the power to purify one's magnetic field, making it easier to relax and meditate. It is a protective mantra, an *ashtang* mantra (having eight parts). Besides helping cleanse the subconscious mind, it balances the hemispheres of the brain, bringing compassion and patience to the one who meditates on it.

GURU GURU WAHE GURU

Guroo guroo wha-hay guroo guroo ram das guroo

(GURU MANTRA OF GURU RAM DAS)

Wise, wise is the one who serves Infinity.

This is a mantra of humility, relaxation, self-healing, and emotional relief. It calls on the spirit of humility and grace of the realm of Guru Ram Das, with its spiritual guiding light and protective grace. It reconnects the experience of infinity to the finite, and therefore rescues you in the midst of trial and danger.

The first part, *Guroo Guroo Wha-hay Guroo* is a *nirgun* mantra (*nirgun* means without any qualities)—one which vibrates only to infinity, having no actual finite components. It projects the mind to the source of knowledge and ecstasy. The second part, *Guroo Ram Das Guroo* is a *sirgun* mantra (*sirgun* means with form). It therefore projects the mind to Infinity and then gives a finite guiding relationship on a practical level. This mantra was given to Yogi Bhajan by Guru Ram Das in his astral Self.

HAR

Har is one of the aspects of God—the Creative Infinity.

HARI (Haree)

Hari is Creation in action.

HAR HARAY HARI WAHE GURU

Har haray haree wha-hay guroo

This is a shakti mantra plus a bhakti mantra. It expresses the three qualities of the word *Har*, the Creative Infinity: seed, flow, & completion, unto the Infinite. This mantra can bring you through any block in life..

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HAR HAR MUKUNDE

Har har mukunday

Har is the creative aspect of Infinity. *Mukunday* is the Liberating aspect of the Self. This mantra turns challenges into opportunities; removes fear.

HAR HAR WAHE GURU

Har har wha-hay guroo

Creative God in the ecstasy of Infinite Wisdom.

This creates balance between earth and ether and restores equilibrium. It eliminates father/mother phobias.

HAR HAR HAR HAR GOBINDAY

Har har har har gobinday, har har har har mukunday
Har har har har udaaray, har har har har apaaray
Har har har har hareeung, har har har har kareeung
Har har har har nirnaamay, har har har har akaamay

(GURU GAITRI MANTRA WITH FOUR HARS)

This mantra fixes the mind to prosperity and power. It contains the eight facets of Self. *Har* is the original force of Creativity. The four repetitions of *Har* give power to all aspects and provide the power to break down the barriers of the past. It converts fear into the determination to use and expand the reserve energy of the Navel Point. It invokes guidance and sustenance; all powers come to serve your true purpose.

HAR SINGH NAR SINGH

Har singh nar singh neel naaraayan,
guroo sikh guroo singh har har gayan,
wha-hay guroo wha-hay guroo, har har dhiayan,
saakhat nindak dusht mathaayan

God the Protector takes care of the universe. Those who live in God's consciousness and power, chant Har Har. Meditate on Wahe Guru and live in that ecstasy. Those who vibrate God's Name and relate to God, all karmas are cleared.

This makes one a conqueror of evil. It works on the evolution of energy, and the strength of the masculine energy.

HEALTHY AM I, HAPPY AM I, HOLY AM I

This is a mantra in the English language that works as a positive affirmation.

HUMEE HUM BRAHM HUM

We are we, we are God.

This mantra literally means that we are the spirit of God. It is total spirit. Total spirit represents God. It fixes the identity into its true reality.

HUMEE HUM TOO HEE TOO

Humee hum, too(n) hee too(n), wha-hay guroo

I am thine, in mine myself,
Ecstasy of Inner Wisdom beyond words

JAP MAN SAT NAM

Jap man sut naam, sadaa sut naam

(SHABAD FROM SIRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB)

Oh my mind, vibrate Sat Naam, the Truth

This mantra opens one to the flow of prosperity by attuning the mind to the power of *Har*, the Creative Infinity, the Joy of merger with Infinity.

KAL AKAL

Kal akaal siree kaal mahaa akaal akaal moorat

This protective mantra wraps around animosity and seals it closed. It can remove the very shadow of death.

MUL MANTRA

Ek ong kaar, sat naam, kartaa purakh, nirbho, nirvair
Akaal moort, ajoonee, saibhang, gurprasaad. Jap.
Aad such, jugad such, haibhee such
Naanak hosee bhee such

The Creator and all creation are One. This is our True Identity.
The Doer of everything. Beyond fear.
Beyond Revenge.
Image of the Infinite,
Unborn. Self-illumined, complete in the Self.
This is the Guru's Gift.

Meditate!
Primal Truth, true through all time.
True at this instant, O Nanak, forever true.

These are the first words of the Siri Guru Granth Sahib, uttered by Guru Nanak. The highest of all mantras, it contains the root of sound that is the basis of all effective mantras. *Sahej Sukh Dhian:* the comfortable and happy way to meditate that is perfectly balanced. The goal of life is to stay in perfect flow and contact with the perception of the soul at each moment. Imbalance comes when we forget the reality of God and Guru in our soul. This mantra orients like a compass towards God. It forms the basis of the consciousness of our very soul.

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ONG NAMO

Ong namo guroo dayv namo

(ADI MANTRA)

I bow to the subtle divine wisdom, the divine teacher within

An ancient yogic mantra which allows the chanter to relate instantly to the divine teacher within. *Adi* means primal or first and mantra means the creative mental projection using sound. It is used to tune in before Kundalini Yoga classes, to center us in the higher self, and to spiritually guide both the teacher and the students during the class.

ONG SOHUNG

Ong means creative consciousness and *so hung* means "I am Thou." Chanting the word "*hung*" stimulates and opens the Heart Chakra.

PAVAN GURU

Pavan pavan pavan pavan
ar para pavan guroo
Pavan guroo wha-hay guroo,
Wha-hay Guroo pavan guroo

(PRAN BANDHA MANTRA)

Pavan is the air, the breath, carrier of the *prana*, the life force. This is God in action. This mantra increases the pranic energy and gives the experience of "may the force be with you."

PRITHVI HAI

(ISHT SODHANA MANTRA)

Prithvee hai akaash hai guroo raam daas hai

This mantra balances the Earth and Heavens. It represents the struck sounds of Earth (*pritvi*) and the unstruck sounds of Heaven (*akash*), crowning with the protection of the Neutral Mind, Guru Ram Das. (*Hai* means "is.") This mantra can penetrate the cosmos, transcending past, present, and future.

RA MA DA SA

(SIRI GAITRI MANTRA OR SIRI MANTRA)

Raa maa daa saa saa say so hung

Raa=Sun. *Maa*=Moon. *Daa*=Earth. *Saa*=impersonal Infinity.

Say=Thou.

Saa Say=totality of Infinity.

So=personal sense of merger and identity.

Hung=the Infinite vibrating and real. *So Hung*= "I am Thou."

This mantra is a healing mantra in Kundalini Yoga and is an attunement of the self to the universe. It brings balance. These eight sounds stimulate the kundalini flow in the central channel of the spine for healing. This mantra combines Earth (*raa maa daa*) and Ether (*saa say so hung*), with *Saa* as the link word.

RAKHE RAKHANHAR

Rakhay rakhanhaar aap ubaariun
Gur kee pairee paa-eh kaaj savaariun
Hoaa aap dayaal manho na visaariun
Saadh janaa kai sung bhavjal taariun
Saakat nindak dusht khin maa-eh bidaariun
Tis saahib kee taayk naanak manai maa-eh
Jis simrat sukh ho-eh saglay dookh jaa-eh

God Himself is looking out for us,
gives us the light, and takes care of our affairs.
God is merciful, and never forgets us.
God guides us, giving us good people to help us.
God does not allow hurt to come to us.
I take comfort in the thought of God.
When I remember God, I feel peaceful and happy
and all my pain departs.

These are the words of Guru Arjan, the 5th Sikh Guru, and are for complete protection. It is from the evening prayer (*Rehiras*), which adds energy to one's being, and helps when you are physically weak or have limited wealth. It is a victory song which allows us to be guided by God's graceful and merciful hand. It does away with the obstacles to fulfilling one's destiny.

SA RE SA SA

(ANTAR NAAD MANTRA)

Saa ray saa saa, saa ray saa saa, saa ray saa saa, saa rung
Har ray har har, har ray har har, har ray har har, har rung

Saa is the Infinite, the Totality, God. It is the element of ether. It is the origin, the beginning, and it contains all other effects. It is subtle and beyond. *Har* is the creativity of the Earth. It is the dense element, the power of manifestation, the tangible, the personal. These sounds are woven together and then projected through the sound of *ung* or complete Totality. This is the base mantra of all mantras. Adversity melts before this mantra. It gives you the capacity of effective communication so your words contain mastery and impact. This mantra helps you conquer the wisdom of the past, present, and future. It brings you peace and prosperity even if it wasn't in your destiny.

SAT NAM

(BIJ MANTRA)

Sat naam

This mantra is probably the most widely used mantra in the practice of Kundalini Yoga. *Sat* means truth—the reality of one's existence. *Naam* means the identity. It is a *bij* (or seed) mantra. Within the seed is contained all the knowledge of the fully grown tree. The essence or seed is the identity of truth embodied in condensed form, Chanting this mantra awakens the soul and gives you your destiny. This mantra balances the five elements (*tattvas*).

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SA-TA-NA-MA

(PANJ SHABD)

Saa Taa Naa Maa

Saa=Infinity, totality of the Cosmos

Taa=Life (birth of form from the Infinity)

Naa=death (or transformation)

Maa=Rebirth

Panj means five, and expresses the five primal sounds of the Universe. (SSS, MMM, TTT, NNN and AAA.) It is the atomic or *Naad* form of the mantra *Sat Naam*. It is used to increase intuition, balance the hemispheres of the brain and to create a destiny for someone when there was none. This mantra describes the continuous cycle of life and creation.

SAT SIRI SIRI AKAL

(MANTRA FOR THE AQUARIAN AGE)

Sat siree, siree akaal, siree akaal,
maahaa akaal, maahaa akaal,
sat naam, akaal moorat,
wha-hay guroo

Great Truth, Great beyond Death, Great beyond Death,
Great beyond Death,
Truth is His Name, Deathless Image of God,
Great Beyond Words is this Wisdom.

This mantra captures the frequency of the Aquarian Age as we cross the threshold into it. The mantra helps us to establish ourselves outside the change of time as deathless beings. We are timeless. Everything we do is from the timeless space of the soul.

SAT NARAYAN

(CHOTAY PAD MANTRA)

Sat naarayan wha-hay guroo,
haree naaraayan sat naam

Sat Narayan is the True Sustainer. Wahe Guru is indescribable Wisdom, and Sat Naam means True Identity.

Chanting this mantra gives inner peace, happiness, and good fortune. It makes you intuitively clear and pure in your consciousness. Even a person with low self-esteem can become majestic by chanting it. The words invoke the various names of God to help bring prosperity, peace of mind, and the capacity to look beyond this world to realize the Infinite.

WAAH YANTEE

Waah yantee kar yantee,
jag dut patee, aadak it whaa-haa,
brahmaaday trayshaa guroo
It wha-hay guroo

Great Macroself, Creative Self.
All that is creative through time, all that is the Great One.
Three aspects of God: Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh.
That is Wahe Guru.

This mantra is from the teachings of Patanjali. The practice of this mantra is the culmination of thousands of years of prayer.

WAHE GURU

(GURMANTRA)

Wha-hay guroo

I am in ecstasy when I experience the Indescribable Wisdom.

This is a mantra of the Infinity of ecstasy and dwelling in God. It expresses the indescribable experience of going from darkness to light (from ignorance to true understanding). It is the Infinite teacher of the soul. A *trikutee mantra*, it balances the energies of the generating, organizing, and transforming principles. It expresses ecstasy through knowledge and experience. It is the *gurmantra*, which triggers the destiny. It is said that chanting *Wahe Guru* is equivalent to chanting *Har* 11,000 times.

WAHE GURU WAHE JIO

Wha-hay guroo wha-hay guroo
wha-hay guroo wha-hay jeeo

Great beyond description is His Infinite Wisdom.

This is the mantra of ecstasy. This mantra means "indescribably great is God's infinite, ultimate wisdom." *Jio* is an affectionate, but still respectful, variation of the word *Ji*, which means soul. The word *Jio* sends the message directly to the soul. "O my soul, God is!" This mantra causes a very subtle rub against the center of the upper palate and stimulates the meridian known in the West as the Christ Meridian Point, and in the East as Sattvica Buddha Bindu. The tongue and lips correspond to the Sun and Moon in their movement. Soothe the wounds of life with the infinite bliss this mantra induces.

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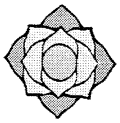
CHAPTER 8



Breath (Pranayam)

The main problem in the world is stress. It is not going to decrease–it is going to increase. If through pranayam *the shock can be harnessed, the entire stress and disease can be eliminated.*

- YOGI BHAJAN

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In the Beginning Was the Word & a Deep Breath!

▸ The breath is a fundamental tool for the Kundalini Yoga student. Mastery of the breath is a foundation for:

- Promoting health and vitality.
- Opening the range and creativity of the emotions.
- Controlling the moods.
- Developing concentration.
- Promoting a feeling of connectedness.

▸ Breath awareness begins with recognizing the breath as both the gross physical breath, as well as the subtle life force of the body and mind called *prana*.

▸ A Kundalini Yogi examines and breaks the habit to ignore the breath. Think of the breath in broader terms than simply respiration. Consider that the breath and its movements are connected to the movements of all the emotions and thoughts.

▸ The breath and the Word are in intimate relationship. They form the platform from which all things begin, and they shape the form and direction of one's life. They govern our communications and our relationships with ourselves and others. If we can consciously harness the pattern–forming abilities of the breath and sound, we can creatively direct our lives and potentials.

For an indepth look at prana see the Yogic Anatomy chapter.

A YOGI IS ALWAYS AWARE of the two-sided nature of perception and experience. The breath is both gross and subtle. It is both "mine" and "not mine." It is both automatic and conscious. The breath shares the nature of both the earthly and the heavenly views of things. The breath and the Word interact to create the matrix of our life and consciousness. Breath and word are intimately intertwined. In the etheric realms of metaphysical creation of the universe, the first thing, after the existence of God, is the Word. The Word is a manifested pattern that is the necessary seed for anything to exist at all. After that infusion of cosmic genetics, there is the energy of *prana* or subtle breath. That energy moves the *gunas*, the three qualities of the Trinity, that weave and compose in their varied blends all our experiences. So, in the Heavens, first is the Word, followed by its servant the breath, *prana*.

In the Earthly realms of physical existence most tangible to us, the opposite is true. As a baby the first act upon leaving the womb is to take a deep breath. We expel the water suspension of the lungs and start the constant pumping of the diaphragm and lungs to live from air–the invisible source of our life on Earth. Then we yell! We proclaim our coming. All the doctors, nurses, and parents wait for that first sound, the Word that signifies we are whole, expressive, and alive. So, in the earthly realms, breath comes first, and then the expression of the Word follows according to the energy given to it by the breath.

Throughout time wise sages have told us that to ascend to the Heavens, to become subtle in our perception, and to command the creation of our destiny, we must first cultivate the breath and then value each word we speak aloud or mentally. The easiest approach to this practice is to use and control the physical breath. This will lead to command of the words and emotions. Then we can create a subtle stillness in the *prana* of the mind, which opens our sensitivity to the Word, which shapes the greater play of life and consciousness.

Simple, Natural Breathing

▸ In correct, simple natural breathing, the Navel Point moves: out on the inhale, in and up on the exhale. We use the inhale to make ourselves wider, and the exhale to make ourselves longer.

Many people learn to breathe backwards: they inhale by pulling the belly in, thus making the space for the breath less rather than more. People who are often anxious or smoke frequently tend to have this pattern. Yet, probably the single most important thing a student will learn in practicing Kundalini Yoga is how to breathe correctly. To teach beginners how to breathe correctly, use a natural calm breath, considering the following:

▸ Encourage the wearing of clothing which is loose around the belly. This allows for unobstructed movement of the diaphragm.

▸ Have the students sit with a straight spine, shoulders relaxed, and eyes closed. Or, you may want to give the beginning students an experience of natural breathing while lying on their backs.

▸ A natural breath uses the nose, which filters, warms, and humidifies the air. The nostrils are connected to the *ida* and *pingala* and therefore *prana* is taken into the body through the nose, stimulating the pituitary and the Third Eye.

▸ Encourage a complete exhale, emptying the lungs.

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Pranayam

▸ ***Pranayam*** is the science of breath, controlling the movement of *prana* through the use of breathing techniques.

Prana=the life force
Pran=first unit
Ayam=expansion

With *pranayam* we expand the first unit, the seed energy. A slight change in this seed vibration can change our entire universe.

▸ *Pranayama* is energy management. The Kundalini Yogi employs a wide range of *pranayam* techniques, using the rhythm and depth of the breath to effect and manage different energy states of health, consciousness, and emotion.

▸ The mind follows the breath. The key to controlling the mind is in controlling the breath.

▸ ***Shuniya.*** The Kundalini yogi is a *pran* yogi, and uses *pranayam* and *bandha* to create the state of stillnesss–*shuniya*–"zero." Into this stillness, a seed–*bij*–is planted to create a new rhythm or pattern of being. Thus, the kundalini flows.

Breath Signatures

The quantity, quality, and circulation of the breath creates the foundation of a vital and creative life. It is a barometer of how much energy we normally run on, and how much reserve capacity we have created for emergencies. The breath is both gross and subtle. The gross aspect is the blend of oxygen, nitrogen, and other elements that chemically constitute air. The subtle aspect is the *prana* or vital force that energizes the mind, body, and consciousness.

Most people do not breath correctly. Breath signatures which create shallow, erratic, upper-chest breathing are common. The lack of relaxation and well-being on a personal as well as collective level, along with other factors, inhibits proper breathing. Yet, of all the positive changes a person can make, learning to breathe deeply, and completely is probably the most effective for developing higher consciousness, and for increasing health, vitality, and connectedness in one's life.

▸ ***Physical***: All movement requires tension, but stress occurs when muscular or mental tension cannot return freely to an uncontracted or relaxed state. Stress causes poor breathing–shallow, erratic, upper-chest breathing with a faster breath rate, which leads to chronic tension and weak nerves. And poor breathing increases susceptibility to more stress. This sets the scene for illness and breakdown in one or another of the body systems.

▸ ***Emotional***: We hold a tremendous amount of tension and emotional trauma in our muscular structure in the form of armoring. Proper breathing, which changes our breath signature, allows the release of armoring. As we increase the general flexibility of the body, and expand the lungs, our sensitivity increases, because the armor decreases.

▸ ***Vitality***: Breathing correctly frees up the flow of *prana*, and as our armoring and tension release, our vitality is increased.

▸ ***Feeling of Connection***: When our vitality is increased, our *prana* is flowing, we feel emotionally secure, and our physical bodies are strong. A deep sense of connection results.

Breath Frequency

When we consciously lower the frequency of breaths per minute, we encourage great benefits. Normally, men breathe at a rate of 16-18 cycles per minute; women breathe at 18-20 cycles per minute.

8 cycles per minute
Feeling more relaxed. Relief from stress and increased mental awareness. Parasymphathetic nervous system begins to be influenced. Healing processes are elevated.

4 cycles per minute
Positive shifts in mental function. Intense feelings of awareness, increased visual clarity, heightened body sensitivity. Pituitary and pineal begin to coordinate at an enhanced level, producing a meditative state.

1 cycle per minute ("One-Minute Breath")
20 seconds to inhale
20 seconds hold
20 seconds to exhale
Optimized cooperation between brain hemispheres. Dramatic calming of anxiety, fear, and worry. Openness to feeling one's presence and the presence of spirit. Intuition develops. The whole brain works – especially the old brain and the frontal hemispheres.

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Long Deep Breathing (Yogic Breath)

Long Deep Breathing is the first technique to teach beginners, after they have learned Simple, Natural Breathing. Long Deep Breathing uses the full capacity of the lungs, by utilizing the three chambers of the lungs:

- Abdominal or lower
- Chest or middle
- Clavicular or upper

Long Deep Breathing starts by filling the abdomen, then expanding the chest, and finally lifting the upper ribs and clavicle. The exhale is the reverse: first the upper deflates, then the middle, and finally the abdomen pulls in and up, as the Navel Point pulls back toward the spine.

Teaching the parts of Long Deep Breathing

First have the student practice by separating the three parts of the breath. Sit straight on the floor, in a chair, or lie on the back. (When teaching beginners, starting out on the back is a good idea.) Initially have the left hand on the belly, right hand on the chest to feel the movement of the diaphragm.

1. Abdominal Breath: Let the breath relax to a normal pace and depth. Bring your attention to the Navel Point area. Take a slow deep breath by letting the belly relax and expand. As you exhale, gently pull the navel in and up toward the spine. For this experiment, keep the chest relaxed. Focus on breathing entirely with the lower abdomen.

The diaphragm muscle separates the chest and thoracic cavity from the abdominal cavity and intestines. The diaphragm is a sheet of muscle that is normally in a dome shape. As you relax the diaphragm and extend the belly, the dome flattens and extra space is created to expand the lungs above it. When you exhale, the dome is re-created and the air from the lower lungs is pushed up and out. This pushing allows a portion of the lower lungs to be used efficiently.

Place one hand on the Navel Point and one on the center of the chest. On the inhale, raise the hand on the navel toward the ceiling. On the exhale lower it steadily. With your hand, monitor the chest to stay still and relaxed. Very soon you will notice all the muscles involved in this motion.

2. Chest Breath: Sit straight and keep the diaphragm still. Do not let the abdomen extend. Inhale slowly using the chest muscles. The chest expands by using the intercostal muscles between the ribs. Do this slowly and focus on the sensation of expansion. Exhale completely but do not use the abdomen. Compare the depth and volume of this breath with the isolated abdominal breath. If you place your hands on the top and bottom parts of the ribs you can feel how the bottom ribs move more than the top ones. They are the floating ribs and are not as fixed as the upper ones are to the sternum. So much of the contribution of the ribs and intercostal muscles comes from an expansion out to the sides of the lower ribs.

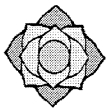
3. Clavicular Breath: Sit straight. Contract the navel in and keep the abdomen tight. Lift the chest without inhaling. Now inhale slowly by expanding the shoulders and the collarbone. Exhale as you keep the chest lifted.

Putting the parts together. Each part of the breath expansion is distinct. If all three are combined, you have a complete Long Deep Breath.

- Sit straight. If the spine is in a balanced position, the ribs and muscles can move freely.
- Begin the inhale with an Abdominal Breath. Then add the Chest Breath and finish with a Clavicular Breath. All three are done in a smooth motion.
- Start the exhale by relaxing the clavicle, then slowly emptying the chest. Finally, pull in the abdomen to force out any remaining air.

Benefits of Long Deep Breathing

- Relaxes and calms, due to influence on parasympathetic nervous system.
- Increases the flow of *prana*.
- Reduces and prevents the build-up of toxins in the lungs by encouraging the clearing of the small air sacs (alveoli.)
- Stimulates the brain chemicals–endorphins–that help fight depression.
- Brings the brain to a new level of alertness.
- Pumps the spinal fluid to the brain, giving greater energy.
- Breathing long and deep, plus concentration, stimulates the pituitary gland to secrete, enhancing the intuition.
- Filling the lungs to capacity revitalizes and re-adjusts the magnetic field.
- Cleanses the blood.
- Regulates the body's pH (acid-alkaline balance), which affects the ability to handle stressful situations.
- Energizes, and increases vitality.
- Aids in releasing blockages in meridian energy flow.
- Activates and clears the nerve channels.
- Aids in speeding up emotional and physical healing.
- Aids in breaking subconscious habit patterns such as insecurities and fears.
- Aids in fighting addictions.
- Re-channels previous mental conditioning on pain so as to reduce or eliminate pain, (for example, in childbirth.)
- Gives capacity to manage negativity and emotions, supporting clarity, cool-headedness, and patience.



Inhale Sat • Exhale Naam

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Suspending the Breath

Basic to the mastery of the breath suspension is *the ability to hold the breath in or out correctly*. Instead, we often instruct students to just "hold the breath." This causes many students to lock the breath in, pull the chin in, tighten the neck and throat muscles, and stiffen the tongue. This homespun technique can create great pressure in the eyes, back of the skull, heart, and neck. Holding the breath in that way for longer than ten seconds stops the breath by creating an opposition between different muscle groups that power the breath. This can be dangerous. Each time you do this improper technique, you train the subconscious to repeat the mistake when you are not fully alert.

Doing it correctly: Instead, you can train the subconscious correctly, and it will serve you well even when you do not consciously direct the breath. To suspend the breath means to relax the muscles of the diaphragm, ribs, and abdomen that are responsible for the constant motion of the breath.

To suspend the breath on the inhale:

- Inhale deeply.
- Bring the attention to the clavicle and upper ribs. Lift the upper ribs slightly and fix them in place.
- Relax the shoulders, throat, and face.
- Pull the chin in.
- Become still and calm.
- If you feel the urge to exhale, inhale a tiny bit instead.

To suspend the breath on the exhale:

- Start with a complete exhale.
- Pull the navel point back toward the spine.
- Lift the lower chest and diaphragm.
- Let the upper ribs relax, and compress.
- Do not bend the spine and ribs when you try to exhale completely– that would interrupt the action of the diaphragm.
- Pull the chin in.
- Become still and calm.
- If the muscles start a reflex to inhale, consciously exhale a little more. This can extend the length of suspension significantly without any strain or struggle.

Benefits of suspending the breath:

- The goal of suspending the breath is the gradual reconditioning of the nervous system.
- Breath suspension allows for integration of the body systems.
- Suspending the breath *in* can temporarily raise the blood pressure.
- Suspending the breath *out* lowers the blood pressure; relaxes circulation.
- Suspending the breath *in* impacts the sympathetic nervous system.
- Suspending the breath *out* impacts the parasympathetic nervous system.
- Suspending the breath allows for centering, and training in the use of good judgement under pressure.
- On the suspended breath you can experience *shuniya*–zero. *Shuniya* is a deep stillness, into which you can plant a seed–*bij*–to create a new rhythm or pattern of being. In *shuniya* the Kundalini flows.

***Shuniya** means zero. The moment you become zero, then all powers will prevail through you. The power of a teacher of Kundalini Yoga is in his zero, his shuniya. In shuniya you become zero, you reduce everything to nothing: "I am nothing. Everything is nothing. There's nothing to be nothing." The moment you become that, then everything radiates from you.*

–YOGI BHAJAN

Points to remember when suspending the breath:

- Remember that the brain will trigger breathing *in* when the carbon dioxide (CO_2) level of the blood rises too high. It does not react to a loss or gain of oxygen. The cue is taken from the CO_2 level. If you prepare to suspend the breath by taking several complete exhales where you blow out the CO_2, you will hold the breath longer and with more comfort.
- If you begin to experience dizziness or disorientation, stop. Dizziness is not enlightenment. You must build this practice with determined regularity and patience. Pushing past your capacity will not help.
- Throughout the practice create a calm internal spot in your awareness and observe the changes of the body and mind.
- In all practices where the breath is suspended in or out, remember that the goal is a switch in metabolic activity, nervous system balance, or emotional control.

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Meditations to Master the Suspension of the Breath

To master the suspension of the breath is to master the inflow and outflow of life itself. There are four meditations that can introduce you to different dimensions of the process and to the different emotional challenges that are part of its mastery. *(Find these meditations in the Meditations Without Mantra chapter.)* They are:

- ***Meditation for a Calm Heart***
- ***Caliber of Life Meditation***
- ***Meditation for a Stable Self***
- ***Composite Polarity Meditation***

As a teacher of Kundalini Yoga, you may wish to explore these techniques in depth. If you take the sequence of these four meditations and practice each for 40 days as a regular *sadhana*, you will become radiantly aware of the impact and nature of breath suspension techniques. This meditation practice will give your teaching projection a new solidity and power.

When you practice these meditations, pay attention to the different feelings that are processed and provoked in each technique.

Meditation for a Calm Heart

The Calm Heart meditation teaches you stillness. It serves as a baseline to learn the feeling and flow of the Pranic Body. Each type of *prana* has a favored area of the body. This meditation accumulates the *prana* of the lungs and heart. When the *prana* is focused in the home location and when its quantity is enough, you are healthy and your mind feels undisturbed. The body functions smoothly, without effort. As the meditation proceeds, the mind will become calm and focused. It will be easy to gain perspective on relationships and easy to have forgiveness for those things that upset or threaten you, allowing a deeper sense of security and awareness to guide your judgement.

This meditation can be taught to any level of student.

The Caliber of Life Meditation

The Caliber of Life Meditation teaches you concentration and endurance. It adjusts the projection and command of the breath, and improves the caliber of your capacity to reach excellence in life. It is known to conquer normal depression and discouragement. It builds tremendous strength into the nervous system.

This is an excellent intermediate-level meditation practice for students who are committed to a regular practice of sadhana. *It can be taught to beginners for a short time.*

Meditation for a Stable Self

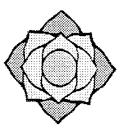
The Meditation for a Stable Self teaches you constancy and visualization. It stabilizes the pranic body. It requires focus on the spinal column in a rhythmic feeling and visualization of the inner energy. The goal is an effortless mental attention to this flow of energy. This meditation will provoke many thoughts and feelings that come from each level of the spinal chakras, so there may be special excitement or uneasiness at a specific stage of the visualization along the spine. The task is to remain unattached to this flow of mental and emotional objects.

This meditation is an advanced practice.

Composite Polarity Meditation

The Composite Polarity Meditation teaches you subtlety and command. It is a precise *mudra* that requires fixed attention to maintain it through the *kriya*. It is subtle. The relation between the heartbeat and the repair of the arcline for health requires careful focus. It is the same in any skill: over time and practice you learn to sense the distinctions that make a difference and that enhance your skill and pleasure in the task. This meditation gets better and better with constant practice. It has dimensions that are difficult at first but which unveil themselves over time.

This is an excellent practice for advanced students. It can be taught to beginners, but do not expect them to notice the finer distinctions that make this meditation so enjoyable and unique.



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Breath of Fire (Agni Pran)

Breath of Fire is one of the foundational breath techniques used in the practice of Kundalini Yoga. It accompanies many postures, and has numerous beneficial effects. It is important to master this breath so that it is done accurately and becomes automatic.

Doing Breath of Fire:

- Breath of Fire is rapid, rhythmic, and continuous. It is equal on the inhale and the exhale, with no pause between them. (Approximately 2-3 cycles per second.)
- It is always practiced through the nostrils with mouth closed, unless stated otherwise.
- Breath of Fire is powered from the navel point and solar plexus. To exhale, the air is expelled powerfully through the nose, by pressing the navel point and solar plexus back toward the spine. This feels automatic if you contract the diaphragm rapidly.
- To inhale, the upper abdominal muscles relax, the diaphragm extends down, and the breath seems to come in as part of relaxation rather than through effort.
- The chest stays relaxed and slightly lifted throughout the breathing cycle.
- When done correctly, there should be no rigidity of hands, feet, face, or abdomen.
- Begin practicing Breath of Fire for a duration of 1-3 minutes. Some people find it easy to do Breath of Fire for a full 10 minutes right away. Others find that the breath creates an initial dizziness or giddiness. If this happens, take a break. Some tingling, travelling sensations, and lightheadedness are completely normal as your body adjusts to the new breath and new stimulation of the nerves. Concentrating at the brow point may help relieve these sensations. Sometimes these symptoms are the result of toxins and other chemicals released by the breath technique. The symptoms may be relieved by drinking lots of water and changing to a light diet.
- Breath of Fire is *not* hyperventilation, nor is it Bellows Breath *(see below)*.
- There are restrictions for doing Breath of Fire while pregnant and menstruating. *(See Roles & Responsibilities of a Kundalini Yoga Teacher.)*

Common mistakes in doing Breath of Fire:

There are three common problems to watch for when teaching beginners:

- *Paradoxical breathing.* As we mentioned earlier in this chapter, many people learn to breathe backwards: they inhale by pulling the belly in, thus making the space for the breath less rather than more. This is called paradoxical breathing. People who are often anxious or smoke frequently tend to have this pattern. It can be easily changed by placing a hand on the chest and one on the belly and doing Breath of Fire slowly with total awareness.
- *Trying to breathe by an exaggerated pumping of the belly.* Breath of Fire is *not* the deep-bellows cleansing breath that pumps the stomach with complete exhales and inhales. Breath of Fire comes from higher up near the solar plexus.
- *A loss of attention to the balanced ratio of the inhale and exhale.* One way to get this right is to do it wrong first. Try to inhale much more than you exhale with each breath cycle at 1-2 times per second. Within 30 seconds you can sense the over-stimulated jumpiness and imbalance of the breathing. Then switch to a much greater exhale than an inhale at the same pace. Almost immediately you will sense a loss of strength, lethargy, distraction, or depression. Now make the breath exactly equal on the inhale and exhale. Listen to the sound of the breath and create a steady rhythm.

Benefits of Breath of Fire:

- Releases toxins and deposits from the lungs, mucous linings, blood vessels, and other cells.
- Expands the lung capacity and increases vital strength.
- Strengthens the nervous system to resist stress.
- Repairs the balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.
- Strengthens the navel chakra.
- Increases physical endurance and prepares you to act effectively.
- Adjusts the subtle psycho-electromagnetic field of the aura so that the blood becomes energized.
- Reduces addictive impulses for drugs, smoking, and bad foods.
- Increases oxygen delivery to the brain, facilitating a focused, intelligent, and neutral state of mind.
- Boosts the immune system and may help prevent many diseases.
- Promotes synchronization of the biorhythms of the body's systems.

Beginning a Practice of Breath of Fire

- Sit straight and place the hands in Prayer Pose.
- Close the eyelids 9/10ths. Roll the eyes up and concentrate at the Brow Point.
- Begin Breath of Fire for 1-3 minutes.
- Then inhale and hold for 10 seconds. Relax. Stay still and place the hands on the knees in Gyan Mudra, palms up. Watch the natural flow of the breath and the constant stream of internal and external sensations. Continue for 3 minutes.
- Inhale deeply, exhale.
- Repeat this combination 3-5 times.

Another good series for beginners is the Pranayam Energizer Series.
(See Sets & Meditations.)

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Alternate Nostril Breathing (Nadi Sodhan)

This simple, yet most powerful technique, is a *pranayama* that is easy to do, yet can take you through all the stages of your yoga practice.

How to do Alternate Nostril Breathing:

- In this *pranayam*, the breath is always relaxed, deep and full.
- Have the left hand in Gyan Mudra.
- Use the thumb of the right hand to close the right nostril, and the index finger or ring finger of the right hand to close the left nostril.
- Close the right nostril and gently and fully inhale through the left nostril.
- Then close the left nostril and exhale through the right nostril.
- Then inhale through the right nostril.
- Close the right nostril and exhale through the left nostril.
- Continue repeating, alternating nostrils after each inhalation.

Benefits of Alternate Nostril Breathing:

- Creates whole brain functioning by balancing the right and left hemispheres.
- Is both integrating and grounding.
- Purifies the *ida* and *pingala nadis*, gently.
- Creates a deep sense of well-being and harmony on the physical, mental, and emotional levels.
- Can help with headaches, migraines, and other stress-related symptoms.
- ***Inhale left, exhale right***. Helps to make you calm and integrates unwanted negative emotions and stress. Excellent by itself before bed.
- ***Inhale right, exhale left.*** Gives clarity, and postive mood. Helps us to focus on what is important.

Nadi Cleansing ("U" Breathing)
A powerful, classical technique which utilizes *Nadi Sodhan* as well as Breath Ratios. *(See Sets & Meditations.)*

Breath Ratios

When breathing in different breath ratios, we are changing the amount of time that we take to inhale, hold, and exhale the breath. In general, we breathe in an equal breath ratio—equal inhale, equal exhale.

Consciously using different breath ratios can yield varied effects.

- By ***emphasizing inhaling***, the sympathetic part of the autonomic nervous system boosts the heart rate and blood pressure, boosts alertness and stimulates us.
- By ***emphasizing exhaling***, the parasympathetic nervous system slows the heartbeat and relaxes the circulation, nerves, and digestive system. It relaxes us and promotes elimination, both physically and emotionally.
- You can use mantra to measure the ratios. For example:

1:4:2 (Inhale 1, hold 4, exhale 2). This is used in the Nadi Cleansing *pranayam*. It is powerfully purifying and cleansing.

Left & Right Nostril Breathing

Through the simple mechanism of closing or opening one of the nostrils, the yogi has a wide array of techniques to control his moods and energies. The quality of *Prana* processed through the two nostrils differs corresponding with the qualities associated with the two sides of the brain. The nerves going out from the two brain hemispheres cross at the level of the eyebrows. The left hemisphere is connected to the right side of the body and right nostril; the right hemisphere to the left side of the body and left nostril.

We breathe predominantly through one nostril or the other at any given time. The dominant nostril alternates rhythmically every 90 to 150 minutes. The length of the cycle reflects universal rhythms, individual temperament, and the personal state of mental and physical balance. The rhythm itself is mediated mainly through structures in the hypothalamus and pituitary, though other areas in the brain are also involved.

You may use the technique of inhaling and exhaling exclusively through either the left or right nostril in order to benefit from the quality associated with that nostril. For instance, breathe exclusively through the left nostril to deal with compulsive eating habits.

Breathing through the left nostril is associated with:

- *Ida*, the *nadi* which ends at the left nostril
- *Apana*, the cleansing energy
- The Moon energy—cooling, receptive
- Calmness
- Empathy
- Sensitivity
- Synthesis

Breathing through the right nostril is associated with:

- *Pingala*, the *nadi* ending at the right nostril
- *Prana*, the nurturing energy
- The Sun energy—warming, projective
- Vigor
- Concentration
- Alertness
- Readiness-for-action
- Will power

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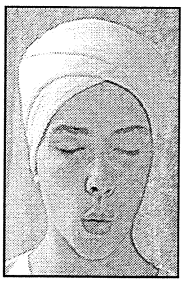
Cannon Breath



Cannon Breath cleanses and strengthens the parasympathetic nerves, and adjusts the digestion. Cannon Breath is Breath of Fire done through the mouth. Often Yogi Bhajan will call for a powerful Cannon Breath exhale to end an exercise.

- The mouth forms a firm "o" shape. (Mouth should not be too puckered, nor should the lips be limp.)
- The pressure of the breath is in the cheeks and over the tongue, though there should be no bulging of the cheeks.

Segmented Breaths

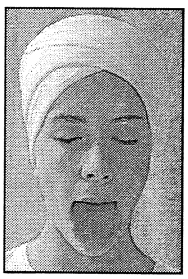
With segmented breathing, we divide the inhalation and exhalation into several equal parts, with a slight suspension of the breath separating each part, and with a distinct beginning and end point to each segment. This stimulates the central brain and the glandular system in different ways.

Instead of inhaling in one smooth motion, we break the breath up into segmented "sniffs". Try not to collapse or squeeze the nostrils in on the sniff, or pull the breath too deeply into the lungs. The goal is for the breath to strike a relaxed, yet focused area in the nasal passage to stimulate a particular set of nerves. Keep the nostrils relaxed and direct the attention to the feel of the breath further along the air passages and to the motion of the diaphragm.

- **4 parts in : 1 part out** healing, energizing, uplifting
- **4 parts in : 4 parts out** clarity, alertness, triggering glands
- **8 parts in : 8 parts out** calming, centering
- **8 parts in : 4 parts out** focusing, energizing
- **4 parts in : 8 parts out** calming, unblocking, letting go

The ratios used in Kundalini Yoga are clearly defined and create stable, predictable, final states of mind and energy. It is best not to experiment since not all ratios are balanced or sustainable. More is not better. So a 25:1 or a lucky 7:11 will not be useful!

Lion Breath

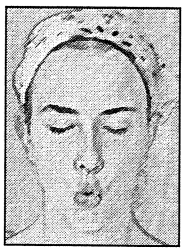


Lion Breath is a powerful breath in the upper chest and throat. It cleanses out toxins, and is good for the throat chakra, and the thyroid.

- Extend the tongue out to touch the chin.
- Breathe powerfully, forcing the breath over the root of the tongue, without any rasping.

Whistle Breath (Beak Breath)

Whistle Breath changes the circulation. The nerves in the tongue activate the higher glands such as the thyroid and parathyroid, and the lung capacity is increased.

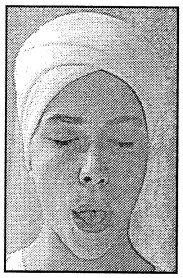


- Pucker the mouth.
- Concentrate at the Third Eye Point
- Inhale, making a high-pitched whistle.
- Exhale through the nose.

Variation:

- Inhale through the nose and exhale with a whistle through the lips. Listen to the high-pitched sound as you breathe.

Sitali Pranayam



Sitali Pranayam is known to have a powerful cooling, relaxing effect on the body, while maintaining alertness. It is known to lower fevers, and aid digestion.

- Curl the tongue into a "U" shape.
- Inhale through the curled tongue.
- Exhale through the nose.

This breath is also used with Breath of Fire and with Segmented Breaths in some kriyas.

You may notice the tongue tasting bitter at first. This is a sign of detoxification and will pass.

Variation:

- Inhale and exhale through the curled tongue.

Sitkari Breath

Sitkari breath is used for cleansing, and boosting glandular function. It is done by inhaling through the teeth, exhaling through nose.

Vatskar Breath

With the Vatskar breath we sip in the air. We do not take air down as if into the stomach. Just bring it into the lungs.

- *Example*: Sipping the air, inhale 8 or more times, then exhale slowly through nose.

For a deeper study of breathing read Breathwalk: Breathing Your Way to a Revitalized Body, Mind, and Spirit, by Yogi Bhajan, Ph.D., and Gurucharan Singh Khalsa, Ph.D., Broadway Books, New York, 2000.

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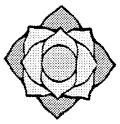
CHAPTER 9



Kriya in Kundalini Yoga
Asana, Mudra & Bandha

The Teachings are the Teachings, and have no one's personality in them. I never edit them; you should not edit them. It is a Golden Chain. My own prayer is that you can perfect what it is, and go with it. It is a funny thing. It is a three-thousand-year-old proven path—it's not going to stop. Why do you want to add something, or subtract something—to satisfy your ego or convince students? It is very deceitful on the part of a Teacher to teach teachings to please people. So honestly give people what we have. Teach like me. Teach exactly as it is. If you are not going to teach Kundalini Yoga purely, then don't teach at all. With Kundalini Yoga you are dealing with the life force of the atom. Don't play with the pranic energy.

- YOGI BHAJAN

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The Concept of Kriya in Kundalini Yoga

▸ The word ***kriya*** means action. But *kriya* is not just any reflex or action; it is an action that leads to a complete manifestation; that lets a seed come to bloom, a thought come into actuality, a desire become a commitment.

▸ A *kriya* in yoga is a sequence of postures, breath, and sound that are integrated together to allow the manifestation of a particular state. When you do a kundalini *kriya*, the result of its repetition is the access to, and mastery of a particular, predictable, and stable state – a facet of your awareness.

▸ In Kundalini Yoga, *kriya shakti* is the power of the soul to manifest itself into each realm of experience: the realm of the mind through proper thought; the realm of the body through proper movement, shape, form; and the realm of action through the power of the will to manifest creativity to serve the Infinite.

You'll find the word *kriya* used frequently—Kriya Yoga, Kundalini *kriyas*, and *kriya shakti*. *Kriya* is also called *tattva shakti*, which is the ability of the great soul of the Universal Self to create new categories and levels of manifestation in mind, body, and the world.

When you learn to act with *kriya*, then action becomes aligned with the larger pattern of the Self. We get into *kriya* by the removal of the blocks, attachments, blindness, and ego that hold us back from acting when we ought to act.

To act with *kriya* is a state of spontaneous flow. It's free of all the blocks. You apply great effort just when great effort should be applied. You apply great relaxation just when great relaxation should be applied. There is a perfect match between the inner and outer, between the inner resources and the outer demands. There is no gap of doubt, no hesitation, no partial support of the action by only one area of your mind and not another. That sense of wholeness and appropriateness to the action creates a grace in your body, a central power in your thought, and a projective ability in your mind.

Mastering *kriya* brings with it a sense of grace, power, and the ability to complete things. You act both timelessly and timely. *Kriya* is not a random collection of actions. Just as you put together a transmission in a car, there's a number of gears that have to be in place, and they have to be there in a certain sequence. Then the power that's in the motor can be transferred to the wheels, and you can go where you need to. Just so, a *kriya* in yoga is a sequence of postures, breath, and sound that are integrated together to allow the manifestation of a particular state.

Asana (Posture) in Kundalini Yoga

Each *asana* or posture in a *kriya* is an exercise, a meditation, a connection to energy flow, and a self-diagnostic instrument for the Kundalini Yoga practitioner.

▸ *As an exercise*, the posture is used to isolate specific muscles, to pressurize specific points or areas that act as reflex triggers to enhance the functions of the glands and organs, and to re-direct, flush, or increase circulation.

▸ *As a meditation*, the posture creates a special link and foundation between the body and the mind. Each posture stimulates an area of the body as the meditation technique employed begins to release emotional masking and blocks. The frequency of the mind's thoughts and the emotional tone of the experience are intimately tied to the posture.

▸ *As a connection to energy flow*, the posture opens an energy pathway between meridian points. Even a baby in the womb moves and goes through 84 postures. If the baby skips one of those postures, that means that energy pathway isn't as developed, and they'll have to compensate later. That is why some postures are unexpectedly powerful and initiate great changes.

▸ *As a self-diagnostic tool*, particular postures may give you signals of pleasure or discomfort and pain that indicate conditions of the musculature, glands, or emotions.

Teach the Teachings As Given

An important aspect of the power of the legacy of Kundalini Yoga that we as teachers can convey to our students, is that each *kriya* is whole unto itself, a perfect jewel that acts to create a flow. They are perfectly designed sets meant to produce predictable and subtle impacts on the total Self. This is the mastery of the Master. Yogi Bhajan has emphasized the importance of keeping the teachings as given, with the exception of reducing the timing of postures.

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Reflections on Asana & Kriya

Science is good, but it grinds very slowly. There are problems with scientific method because there is no trust in the human capacity to be extraordinary. In yoga, we say: "Become a real human being. Realize your full potential." The West and scientific statistics look at you in relation to the average. The West compares you to someone else; but yoga compares you to your own potential. It's a completely different relationship.

What about posture?

Everyone understands that a posture may build a specific muscle group. We begin to expand that. There may be reflexes–this hand may be connected to something else in the body. There may be interconnections throughout the body, connecting its most distant parts in unexpected ways.

Take a posture as a yogi

You'll go through stages as you adjust to the effects of the posture. At first, you may feel awkward. You may fall back on your Western habit of extroversion and look at everyone else instead of yourself. When you first take a posture, you take it very consciously. It's new. The first thing you do is take the unconscious, full of habits and patterns, and you put it into a specific, consciously established, fixed or rhythmic posture or *asana*. Awkwardness comes because you encounter the rigidity of your own ego and habits–consciously.

If you hold it, it starts to feel better. The *asana* starts to find a natural place in you. Your body adjusts, the shoulders relax, you relax the muscles you didn't need to use. You find a muscle that you didn't know you had. You place your mind in the right way. Suddenly there's a relationship established between you and you. Suddenly, that which is conscious starts to feel natural, starts to give form, shape, flows of energy, and patterning, to that which is unknown in you. There starts to be a bridge, a communication between the conscious and the unconscious, between your right-now intentional patterning and all the patterning you don't even know you had. You start to give all of that energy a new form.

So, first there is awkwardness, then the posture begins to be natural, and then you start creating form. If you hold the form long enough, the unconscious picks it up and says, "Oh, I can do that," and starts doing it. The unconscious does what it usually does: it starts replicating and repeating it, even without thinking about it. First you create the form, then you start transforming all the things you're not even aware of.

Entering what is called kriya

When that process connects the conscious and the unconscious, it forms a bridge of energy that re-aligns you between the body and the mind. Then you enter into *kriya*. *Kriya* is the spontaneous fulfillment of action through the engagement of *asana* that links the Infinite Self of you to this finite moment. It has to tear apart the old attachments, and reform you in the transformed relationship between this body and the world body, between this moment of your mind and your total mental potential. That is posture in the form of *kriya*, expressing the joy of your soul! It is different than the mechanical perspective we take in most Western thinking. It's a creative project, not a static body. Every posture is a dynamic, formative creation.

If you do this with your physical body, you are also establishing a posture of emotion and attitude. You are taking a stand. We say that in English. If you ask someone their attitude, don't they answer both verbally and show you a posture? Which do you believe? The words they say or the posture they take? You believe the posture more than the words. The body doesn't lie. The body records that shaping and displays the practiced truth of your own habits.

We go through another change when we take a posture. A posture makes you conscious of a body area. As you hold it, you become self-conscious. Then you become conscious of yourself, and if you really put yourself into it, you become a conscious self. And if you reach this awareness across many postures, you become a conscious consciousness.

The ultimate posture

These are the stages of refinement in relationship established by posture between you and your Infinite Self. With *asana* that leads to *kriya*, which is a spontaneous flow of life energy, you start by posturing with your ego. Then *asana* gives you a posture. Then *pratyahar* comes, when your mind substitutes a positive thought for a negative thought, and re-aligns you toward your goal. The mind commits. Once you have a committed position, then you start to have a projection. Projection is called *Akaal Moorat*, which literally means "timeless picture." You start to look like Infinity. You start becoming a picture of you beyond you. The final stage would be perfection, *Saibhung*–self-illumined, when you are a resource unto yourself, communicating with your own Infinity–needing nothing. The ultimate posture is one of prosperity. The ultimate posture is not of you fulfilling your own requests. The ultimate posture is one asking for that which is yours.

That's what yoga posture is all about. It's very practical. There's no such thing as an abstract concept without a posture, *kriya*, or *sadhana* to give you the capacity to experience it.

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Angles & Triangles

Kundalini yoga is a science of angles and triangles. Every angle created with the body has a corresponding energetic effect. For instance, lifting the legs 30 degrees affects the navel point. Lifting the arms 60 degrees affects the heart and lungs. From the yogic view, the body is a whole, energetic, vibrating, creative entity–seven chakras, three *gunas*, five *tattvas*, ten bodies–a huge complex of energies on many different levels. Certain actions encourage that energy flow, and gives you the strength you need to experience yourself and enjoy this world.

In Kundalini Yoga, we are aware of the balance of the geometry of the body and how it affects the flow of energy, motion, and emotion. There are 18 major muscle groups that get involved. You can sense the body's balance by exploring the many triangles between key points. For example, a triangle is formed between the Navel Point and the hips. If that's off even the slightest amount, it will create energy problems. You may find yourself unable to express yourself with enough energy.

By practicing a wide variety of Kundalini Yoga *kriyas*, you will balance the angles and triangles throughout the body and give a new vitality to your entire structure.

Experiencing the Triangles

Following is a an example of a guided visualization that can be used to bring awareness to the triangles of the body. This can bring a sense of connection, flow, energy, and balance to the triangles.

- Experience the triangle from the tips of the big toes up to the Navel Point. Feel the feet on the ground steady, secure.
- Experience the triangle from each side of the pubic bone down to the tip of the sacrum, feeling it balanced equally on the two sides. If you like to visualize, see it bathed in a reddish-brown color, or just in pure white.
- Experience the central triangle made by balancing the two sides of the pelvis and moving into the navel.
- Meditate on the triangle from the Navel Point up to the nipples. Feel the balance equally on both sides of the triangle. If you like to visualize, imagine a spring green color, or imagine pure white.
- Meditate from the nipples up to the neck point of the collar bone. Feel the triangle equally on both sides. If you like to visualize, see a blue radiance in all that area, or pure white.
- Meditate on the triangle between the two outer corners of the eyebrows and the tip of the chin. Feel very light and airy.
- Meditate on the double triangle: the eyes to the tip of the nose, and the eyes and the Brow Point–a lower and upper triangle. Feel like you're flying in the sky, weightless. If you wish to visualize, see all the colors of the blue sky up into the Heavens. Feel at the crown of the head a huge projected light that goes to Infinity and connects to all the stars, all realms, all levels of being.

Warm-up Exercises

Yogi Bhajan never taught warm-up exercises himself when leading Kundalini Yoga *kriyas*, but acknowledges that in some instances warm-ups can be useful. Here are the options to choose from if you determine it is necessary to include a warm-up before teaching a Kundalini Yoga *kriya*:

- You may choose any short Kundalini Yoga *kriya*. Some examples of good Kundalini Yoga *kriyas* for warm-up purposes are listed at the end of the Sets chapter.
- Pranayam sequences are especially good for waking up the body and opening the lungs.
- Do a few repetitions of the short version of Sun Salutations (*Surya Namaskar*) included in this Manual. (Yogi Bhajan taught this in the seventies, so we include it in the Kundalini Yoga archives!)
- You may also lead Life Nerve Stretches, Spinal Flex and Cat-Cow, all of which can stand alone, and which can be used as a warm-up series.
- You can also recommend that students do their own stretching exercises before coming to class, or before the class begins.
- If leading warm-ups, always identify when you begin the *kriya*. In this way, the students are clear about the sequence of the *kriya*, and understand that we maintain the integrity of sets as they were taught by Yogi Bhajan.

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Basic Sitting Postures

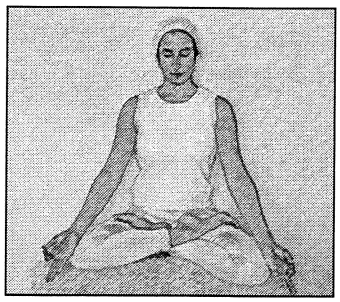
When an exercise in a kundalini *kriya* requires sitting in a meditative or cross-legged posture, any of the sitting positions listed here will be appropriate, if not specifically given by Yogi Bhajan. The main requirement is for the spine to be straight and the posture to be balanced, with Neck Lock applied. When sitting for meditation, it is important to feel balanced and stable. If one is leaning to one side or has great pain in the knees or ankles, one cannot meditate. If you do get into meditation in an off-balance posture, you run the risk of misdirecting the energy and blood circulation that the *kriya* has stimulated.

Remember that all parts of the body are interconnected and affect each other. Your posture should always feel well-balanced and comfortable to you. It should reflect harmony.

Choosing a Surface to Sit on

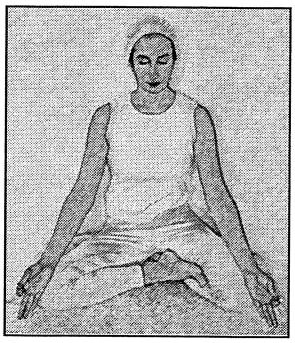
Choose the surface for meditation with consideration for the care of the spine and electromagentic integration of the nervous system. The surface must be neither too cold, nor too hard. That is why most yoga practitioners sit on a sheepskin or mat. A thick pad or large pillow will not work well enough because neither offer enough support to stabilize the spine. A sheepskin is just the right thickness. It provides an electromagnetic insulation from the ground, to prevent feeling tired or drained of energy when meditating. The next best materials to sit on are wool, cotton, and silk. The worst surface to sit on is concrete or stone.

In any of these sitting postures, some people may be too stiff in the lower back, or have pain in the knees, legs, or ankles. Sitting on a stiff cushion that lifts the buttocks about 6 to 8 inches can help the back and take pressure off the knees.



Lotus Pose
(Padmasana)

Bend the left leg so the left heel comes to the groin. Lift the left foot onto the upper right thigh. Bend the right leg so that the right foot goes over the left thigh, as close to the abdomen as possible. *(This posture may also be done reversing the legs.)* Straighten the spine. Lift the chest and press the lower spine slightly forward. In this position you will feel locked in place. Once you are in it you can meditate very deeply and the position will maintain itself. There are very few exercises or meditations which require this posture, but it is recognized as one of the best *asanas* for deep meditation.



Perfect Pose (Siddhasana)

This posture is excellent for stimulating the nervous system and utilizing the body's sexual energy. It requires practice to perfect, but once it is mastered, simply sitting in this posture puts you into meditation. Bring the left heel under the sex organ. The left heel should touch the spot on the pelvis between the sex organ and the rectum. Bend the right leg and put the toes of the right foot behind the left knee. The toes of the right foot are contained in the bend of the left knee. Only the big toe is exposed. Pull the spine straight.

Sitting in a Chair

If none of the basic sitting poses are comfortable, you may sit in a straight-backed chair that gives you firm support. It is essential that the feet be equally placed on the ground ensuring that the lower spine and hips do not get out of balance, and that the blood distribution in the pelvic area will be balanced with respect to the two sides of the body.

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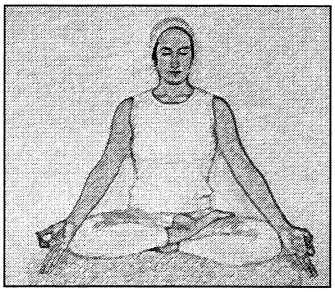
Easy Pose (Sukhasana)

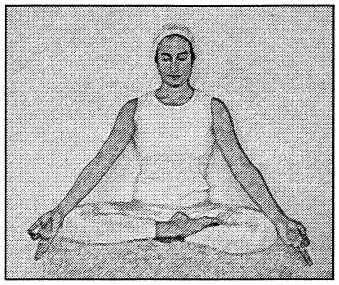
The following three variations of Easy Pose require less flexibility and are easier on the knees than the Lotus Pose. The drawback is that you must be more conscious of keeping the lower spine slightly forward so the upper spine can stay straight.



Variation One

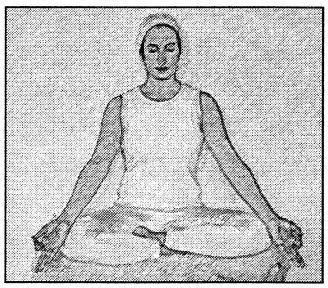
Half Lotus (Ardha Padmasana)

Put the left foot into the groin so that the sole of the foot is against the uppermost part of the thigh. Place the right foot over the left ankle, so that it rests on the right thigh, sole of the foot turned up as pictured.



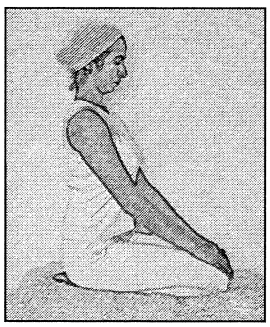
Variation Two

Assume Sukhasana and lift the heel of the foot near the groin. Arrange the foot on top so it rests directly on the calf, with the ankle of the top foot about two inches up from the ankle of the bottom foot. In this pose, make sure to press the lower spine forward. It will have a tendency to slip backward.



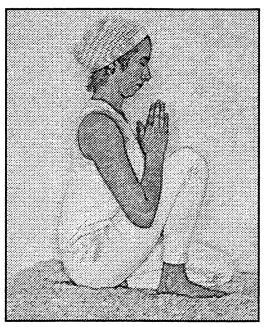
Variation Three

If the first two postures are too strenuous, try this variation. Put one foot under the opposite knee and then draw the extended foot under the other knee. Pull the spine up straight and press the lower spine slightly forward.



Rock Pose (Vajrasana)

This *asana* is well known for its beneficial effects on the digestive system. It gained its nickname from the idea that one who masters it can "digest rocks." It also makes you solid and balanced as a rock. Start by kneeling on both knees with the top of the feet on the ground. Sit with the heels under the sitting bones. The heels will press the two nerves that run into the lower center of each buttock. Keep the spine pulled straight.



Virasan (Hero or Warrior Pose)

Sit on the left heel, with the right knee up near the chest. Hands are in Prayer Pose. The heel is ideally on the perineum, near the anus. Instead of collapsing the foot, one may put padding under and over the left foot, to comfortably maintain the right position. If you sit with the flat part of the foot turned out and the spine crooked, you tip to one side. Sitting on the heel straightens the spine.

Rock Pose or Easy Pose?

Question: Many students feel Rock Pose is more comfortable than Easy Pose during yoga class or meditation. Is it acceptable to use them interchangeably, especially if one has back problems?

Answer: For many Westerners who are not trained to squat or sit on the ground, it is uncomfortable to sit cross-legged in Easy Pose. It is in fact not "easy" at all. The central need is to have a straight spine, all locks applied appropriately, and an alert mind.

Sitting on the heels in Rock Pose, using a small bench, sitting on firm meditation pillows, or sitting straight in a stable, firm chair can be a close substitute for Easy Pose.

Full Lotus provides the best meditative advantage since it automatically locks the projection from the Navel Point, applies a light *mulbandh*, and balances the energy of the Earth and Ether through the upturned soles of the feet.

Easy Pose does not lock the Navel Point and sacral motion as tightly, so it requires a gently applied *mulbandh*. Rock Pose requires the *mulbandh* and an additional focus on the spine to keep it straight and aligned. It lessens the lock on the sexual area, so it needs a slightly more conscious application of the Root Lock. Rock Pose does have the benefit of stimulating the digestive functions from the pressures in the buttocks and quadriceps.

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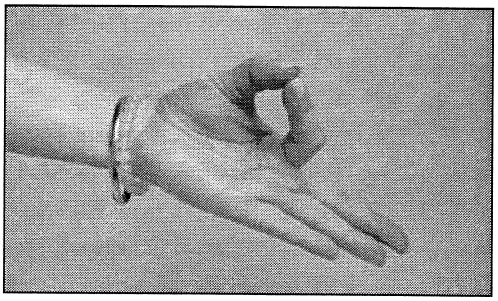
Basic Mudras (Seals)

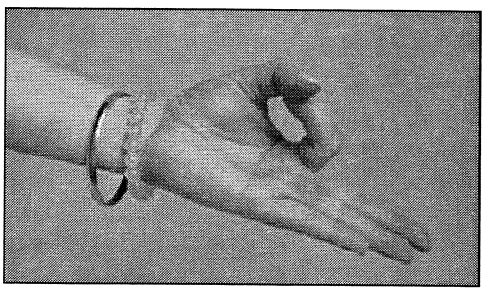
A mudra is a position of the hands that locks or seals and guides energy flow and reflexes to the brain. The hands are an energy map of our consciousness and health. The yogis mapped out the hand areas and their associated reflexes. Each area of the hand connects to a certain part of the body or brain, representing different emotions and behaviors. The hands become a keyboard for input to our mind-body energy system. Each finger relates to a planetary energy and the quality that each planet represents. The thumb relates to the persona of the individual.

Touching the thumbtip (fleshy part, not the nail) to each of the fingertips creates specific results. This is the most commonly practiced way to seal a mudra unless otherwise indicated. Exert enough pressure to feel the flow of energy, but not enough to whiten the fingertips.



Gyan Mudra (Seal of Knowledge)

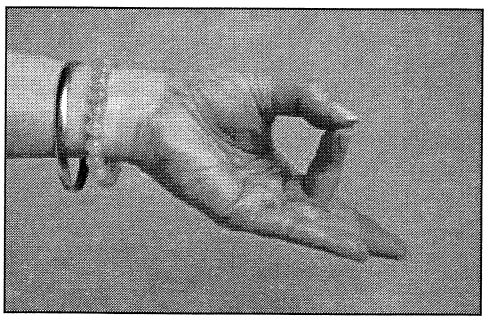
To form Gyan Mudra, put the tip of the thumb together with the tip of the index finger. This stimulates knowledge, wisdom, and the power to compute. The energy of the index finger is associated with Jupiter, representing expansion. This mudra is the one most commonly used. It gives receptivity and calmness.



Gyan Mudra ("active")

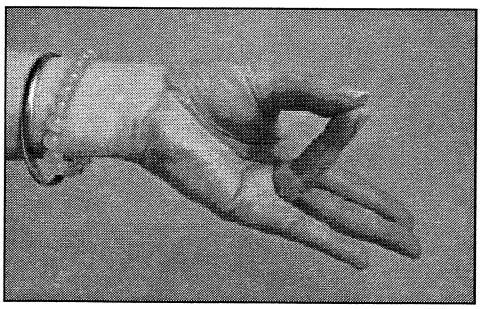
Locking thumb over index finger

In the practice of powerful *pranayams* or exercises the "active" form of the mudra is often used. In the active form you bend the index finger under the thumb so the fingernail presses against the back of the thumb.



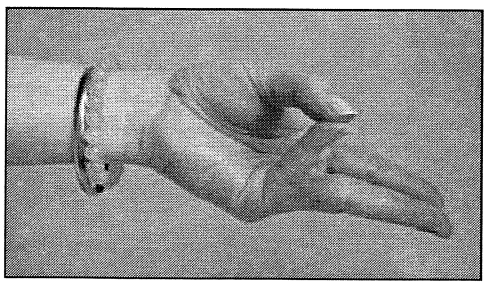
Shuni Mudra (Seal of Patience)

To form Shuni Mudra place the tip of the middle finger on the tip of the thumb. This mudra is said to give patience, discernment, and commitment. The middle finger is associated with the planet Saturn, which represents the task master, the law of karma, the taking of responsibility and the courage to hold to duty.



Surya or Ravi Mudra (Seal of the Sun, Seal of Life)

This mudra is formed by placing the tip of the ring finger on the tip of the thumb. Practicing it gives revitalizing energy, nervous system strength, good health, and the power to win. The quality of the ring finger is associated with the Sun or Uranus. The Sun represents energy, health, and sexuality. Uranus stands for nervous system strength, intuition and change.



Buddhi Mudra (Seal of Mental Clarity)

To form Buddhi Mudra place the tip of the little finger on the tip of the thumb. Practicing this opens the capacity to communicate clearly and intuitively. It also stimulates psychic development. The little finger is symbolized by Mercury for quickness and the mental power of communication.

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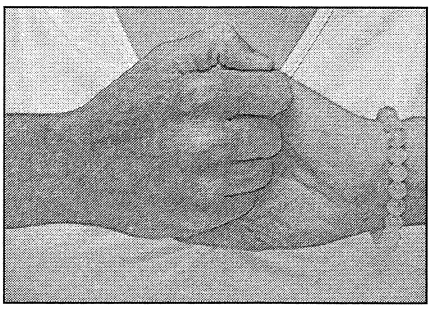
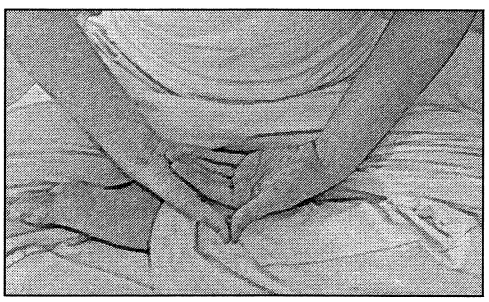
Prayer Pose *(Pranam Mudra)*

In Prayer Pose the palms of the hands are flat together to neutralize the positive (right, or male) and negative (left, or female) sides of the body. This is always used when centering yourself with the Adi Mantra in preparation for doing a *kriya*.



Bear Grip

For Bear Grip place the left palm facing out from the chest with the thumb down. Place the palm of the right hand facing the chest. Bring the fingers together. Curl the fingers of both hands so the hands form a fist. This mudra is used to stimulate the heart and to intensify concentration.

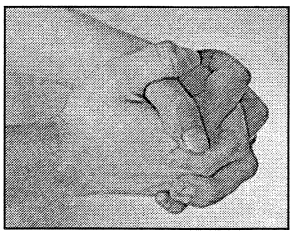


Buddha Mudra *(Hands in the Lap)*

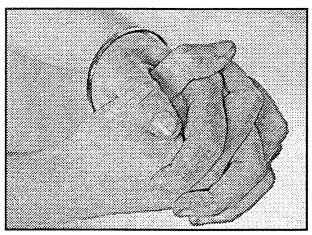
For a man, rest the left palm face-up in the lap with the right hand palm-up on top of it. Put the thumb tips together. The hand positions are reversed for a woman.

Venus Lock

This mudra is used frequently in exercises. It derives the name because it connects the positive and negative sides of the Venus Mound—the fleshy area at the base of the thumb—on each hand to the thumbs. The thumbs represent the ego. The Venus Mound is associated with the planet Venus and the energy of sensuality and sexuality. The mudra channelizes the sexual energy and promotes glandular balance. It also brings the ability to focus or concentrate easily when you rest the hands in this mudra in your lap while in a meditative posture. For men, place the palms facing each other. Interlace the fingers with the left little finger on the bottom. Put the left thumb tip just above the base of the thumb on the webbing between the thumb and index finger of the right hand. The tip of the right thumb presses the fleshy mound at the base of the left thumb. Reverse the entire sequence of alternating the fingers for women.



Venus Lock for men



Venus Lock for women

The Mastery of Simran

Having practiced the Yoga of Sat Naam
the Mahan Tantric meditates on Wahe Guru.
In Gyan Mudra, he holds his breath and applies the Mahabandh.
In Shuni Mudra, he gets the realization of Hari.
In Ravi Mudra, he recites the Wahe Guru Mantra.
In Buddhi Mudra, he receives the wisdom of Brahma.
In Brahm Yoga is the Mastery of Naam.
Oh Yogi! God comes and lives in your heart.
All errors, pains, and karmas fly away
when you chant God's Name and get liberated!

—YOGI BHAJAN, *Furmaan Khalsa*

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The Body Locks (Bandhas)

▸ The **bandhas** are the **locks** applied to body areas, which direct the *prana* and *apana*. The locks are the basic techniques that accumulate the effects of the efforts of the practitioner. They allow an equilibrium to be established, that has enormous impact on the entire system of the body and mind.

▸ There are three main *bandhas*:

Neck Lock (*jalandhar bandh*)

Diaphragm Lock (*uddiyana bandh*)

Root Lock (*mulbandh*)

▸ When all three locks are applied together with the correct posture and concentration, it is called:

Great Lock (*mahabandh*)

Yogi Bhajan on the Locks

It is a fundamental law of most exercises in Kundalini Yoga that you will apply *mulbandh*, though it is not asked for in detail in all instances. You will be told to put yourself in a posture with a certain sound current and a certain breathing pattern. But all the *kriyas* have certain things in common which are assumed. First is the proper posture and second the locks. You are required to apply these three locks properly and appropriately. Then one is said to be in the state of *mahabandh*—the Great Lock. This yoga was designed carefully by saints and masters and is the fastest route to elevation and happiness.

THE CENTRAL AIM OF THE PHYSICAL EFFORTS OF YOGA is to generate a special capacity and flow of life energy within the body and aura. This energy is increased in both quantity and quality. It is then directed into a natural pattern of circulation and flow that releases the healing powers of the body and the discriminate functions of the mind. In this state of inner health and clarity, the sense of being and spirit awakens. Kundalini Yoga benefits the body and also is a vehicle for enhanced consciousness.

Prana, the energy that flows into the body and aura, and *apana*, the energy that flows out of the body for cleansing, are the generative and eliminative qualities of energy. They are the positive and negative sides of the life force. If both of these qualities exist in sufficient amounts, and are blended together, a new phenomenon is created. This blend induces a neutrality and calmness that allows the life force to flow in a different manner. The yogis described this as the opening of the flow of energy into the *sushmuna*, the central channel up the spine to the brain. As this flow and circulation gets established, the kundalini energy awakens. This potential for awareness and spirit first manifests as increased concentration and clarity. This is taken to all the different areas of your functioning, as the energy travels through the chakras or energy distribution centers. This produces a blissful and super-conscious state in which it is easy to distinguish the real from the unreal and to direct the play of the senses.

The efforts at posture, breathing practices, and meditation all catalyze this central process of transformation. After a series of exercises or during practices it is desirable to contain the blend of the *prana* and *apana*, so that the kundalini energy can establish itself, deepen its effect, and initiate the opening of the channels it flows into. This blend is achieved through the use of the body locks, the *bandhas*.

Neck Lock (Jalandhar Bandh)

This is the first, most basic and most generally applied of the locks. It is a general rule to apply it in all chanting meditations and during most pranayama exercises. Whenever you are holding the breath in or out, it is usually applied unless instructed otherwise.

To apply Neck Lock:

- Sit comfortably with the spine straight.
- Lift the chest and sternum upward.
- At the same time, gently stretch the back of the neck straight by pulling the chin toward the back of the neck.
- The head stays level and centered, and does not tilt forward or to either side.
- The muscles of the neck and throat remain loose. Keep the muscles of the face and brow relaxed.
- The stretch is automatically applied by the shift of relative position between the chin and chest. Do not force the head forward or down. That will only result in a sore neck.

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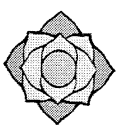
What the Neck Lock achieves:

- It seals the energy that is generated in the upper areas of the brain stem.
- It prevents undue changes in blood pressure that can sometimes be induced by exercise and breathing. It acts as a safety valve that regulates that pressure by reducing dizziness that can result from a practice.
- It is easier to focus on internal sensations and perceptions without distraction from the peripheral senses when you hold this lock.
- It creates nerve reflexes that stimulate and balance the thyroid and parathyroid glands.
- It directs the flow of pranic energy into the central channel past the neck and in the central channel relative to the heart. Without the neck lock, the *pranayama* energy could flow to the ears or eyes or other places. With the lock, the heart is calmed and the flow of energy is natural.
- Helps contain the energy of the Moon Center at the chin.
- In the yogic texts, it is emphasized that this lock prevents the nectars of the brain from dispersing too quickly. The word *jala* refers to the brain and its watery secretions; *dhar* is the upward pull or open gate. *Jalandhar* is the upward pull that opens the gate to the brain's watery nectars. In Yogi Bhajan's terminology, the higher glands of the brain—pituitary, pineal, and hypothalamus—are stimulated in certain practices to secrete hormones and to form a communicative relationship to each other. When the pituitary secretes, it is referred to as "the turning of the lotus of the moon." It was represented as a cooling flow that would mix with the heated energy from the navel area and the lower nerves. By applying this lock there is an increased concentration of those secretions that allows a new level of interrelatedness between the glands. There are potentials in the mostly dormant pineal that can only be awakened by concentrating the "nectar of the moon." Fortunately this lock is a simple systematic practice that gradually leads to opening that special connectedness.



Diaphragm Lock (Uddiyana Bandh)

The name of this lock—*uddiyana*—comes from a Sanskrit word meaning "to fly up." It is not the physical anatomy which "flies up," but the energy in the lower abdomen rising. The diaphragm forms a barrier between the upper thorax and the lower abdomen. It is a physical muscular barrier, as well as an energetic barrier. In rhythm with the breath, the movement of the diaphragm muscle fluctuates the polarity of ethe nergy in the middle of the body. This action is regulated by the "U" nerve, a plexus under the 8th or 9th thoracic vertebra. The barrier is also a psychological one. The functions that go on below the barrier are more unconscious and reactive, and the functions that occur above it are more conscious and more flexible. The *uddiyana bandh* crosses this mid-body barrier. It vertically integrates the emotional qualities and allows circulation of the pranic energy into the central channel, the *sushmuna*.

To apply Diaphragm Lock:

- Never do *uddiyana bandh* on a full stomach.
- Apply this lock only with the breath fully exhaled.
- Sit comfortably. Inhale deeply, then exhale completely, expelling all the breath out.
- Pull the entire abdominal region, especially the area above the Navel Point, upward and back towards the spine. The Navel Point itself does not contract, though it is pulled upward from above.
- Never collapse the chest downward when you apply this lock. Lift the chest.
- Gently press the lower thoracic and lumbar spine forward.
- Keep the lift strongly applied for 10 to 60 seconds according to your endurance. Do not strain. Hold the lock with an inner mood of equilibrium and calm.
- Release the lock by relaxing the abdomen and gradually inhaling. At this time, do not release the Neck Lock or raise the chin.
- You can also practice this in a standing position. For many people this makes it easier to isolate the muscles that are involved. Stand straight with the feet spread shoulder-width apart. Bend forward slightly with the hands on the knees. Lift the chest slightly then apply the lock. Feel the full upward pull of the abdomen from below as well as from above the navel.

What Diaphragm Lock achieves:

- Whether it is applied sitting or standing, this lock directly massages the intestines and the heart muscle.
- It stimules cleansing, and is associated with youthfulness and the slowing of all degenerative aging processes.
- The *jalandhar bandh* helps contain the energies of the moon center. *Uddiyana bandh* helps to enhance and preserve the energies from the solar center at the solar plexus. As you pull the lock, the fire element is strengthened and the Heart Chakra is opened. Kindness, compassion, and patience become more accessible to you.

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Root Lock (Mulbandh)

This is the most complex of the three body locks. It is like a hydraulic lock at the base of the spine. It coordinates, stimulates, and balances the energies involved with the rectum, sex organs, and Navel Point. It redirects excess sexual energy into creativity and bodily repair. If there is a lack of sexual vitality, this helps correct it. This *bandh* is frequently applied at the end of an exercise or exercise series to crystallize its effects. It is usually applied in conjunction with Neck Lock.

Root Lock is a smooth motion that consists of three parts.

To apply the Root Lock:

- First contract the anal sphincter. Feel the muscles lift upward and inward.
- Once these muscles tighten and move, contract the area around the sex organ. This is experienced as a slight lift and rotation inward of the pubic bone. It is like trying to stem the flow of urine through the urethral tract.
- Then contract the lower abdominal muscles and the Navel Point toward the spine.
- These three actions applied together in a smooth, rapid, flowing, motion is the *mulbandh*.
- This lock can be applied with the breath retained in or out.
- Root Lock differs from Diaphragm Lock in that the navel area is not contracted, while in Root Lock it is.
- Root Lock is sometimes applied throughout a meditation or exercise. This is possible because the muscle groups used are distinct from the muscles used for upper breathing or torso movements.

What the Root Lock achieves:

- The key function is the blending of the *prana* and *apana* at the navel center. The *mulbandh* redirects the *apana* from its normal course downward to the First Chakra. There it joins the downward flow of pranic energy at the navel. When these meet an inner heat, or *tapa* is created, which then opens the entrance to the *sushmuna*, the central channel for energy flow up the spine.
- It starts the process of transformation from gross to subtle.
- It stimulates the proper flow of spinal fluid.

The Great Lock (Mahabandh)

The Great Lock is the application of all three locks simultaneously, with the breath held out. It is practiced after *pranayama* and exercise. It is done in various postures and combined with different mudras. It is part of the central infrastructure of Kundalini Yoga. Each student must master all the *bandhas*.

- With all locks applied, the body is in a perfect healing state.
- The practice and perfection of this lock is said to cure many ailments: improper blood pressure, menstrual cramps, poor circulation, irregularity, wet dreams, and excessive preoccupation with fantasy. The glands, nerves, and chakras are rejuvenated.

The Bandhas & the Three Gates

For the path of kundalini to flow freely, three key knots (or gates) must be penetrated. We can associate them with the chakras.

The first one is the ***Knot of Brahman,*** which is in the first chakra. The second is the ***Knot of Vishnu*** at the Heart Chakra. And the Third is the ***Knot of Shiva*** at the Brow Point.

The body locks—*mulbandh*, *uddiyana*, and *jalandhar bandh*—are important in unlocking these three gateways. *Mahabandh* puts a slight pressure on each of these areas so that the *prana* and *apana* can balance in the left and right channels of the spine, and start the flow that pierces these knots. *Mulbandh* mixes *prana* and *apana* and pulls the lower three chakras out of the slumber of the First Chakra through the fire of the Third Chakra. This penetrates the first gate. *Uddiyana bandh* lifts it from the Third Chakra up into the Fourth Chakra, penetrating the second gate. When *jalandhar bandh* is properly applied with the use of mantra, the *ojas* found in the spinal fluid is concentrated and starts opening not only the Fifth Chakra, but begins to penetrate the third gateway at the Sixth Chakra.

As your awareness penetrates the **first lower knot,** you start releasing your attachment to the sensations, names, and forms of things. You form a new relationship to the senses and sensations that come through them. Before you penetrate this knot, every sense grabs your mind, and it's difficult to meditate or to sit still. All meditations that stimulate the Navel Chakra open up the fires of that gate and eventually break through this first barrier to awakening.

As the **knot at the Heart Center** unties, it adjusts the relationship to that which sustains. Vishnu means "sustainer." When tied, you find yourself trying to establish identity through relationships, whether a personal relationship or a relationship to a tradition. As the knot is penetrated, comes a lightness of heart, a playfulness, no longer feeling so attached to the forms of the world. Your personal will expands, and the sense of a larger God dawns. It opens the ability to hear the subtle sounds–the *anahat, naad, shrutis*– the cosmic frequencies the yogis listen to and turn into templates of mantra.

Finally, the **Brow Center** opens. This knot is beyond the five elements. The *ida, pingala,* and *nadis* cross over each other, and the breath balances in both nostrils equally for a time. You go beyond the sense of time and the sense of lower identity. Yogi Bhajan says you see the past, present, and future. You no longer act only at this time, but for all time. When this knot is still strongly tied, you may indeed gain powers, but you'll be attached or tangled with them, just as the lower knots can entangle the external senses.. This is a very challenging knot, because people believe they've opened it just as they enter the psychic realm. This attachment betrays them. When you transcend this, you establish yourself in a non-dual openness and ecstasy, and you can then say, "*Wahe Guru!*"

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Working the Locks

MASTERING THE ROOT LOCK

This works the lowest triangle of energy in the body. If you operate from that area you will have no separation from your actions and immediate senses. It is an area that provides you with the power of instinct and impulse. As you work the *mulbandh,* you will find it much easier to create an observing self. It is basic to yoga that there is the acting and the observing self. The observing self is the knower that is aware, timeless, and participates in the essence of spirit. In these exercises, create the observer with complete certainty. Allow yourself to feel all your senses very openly, but at the same time, be centered and separate. It is the royal position of the King or Queen observing all the activity of the court.

HOW TO DO IT:

Exercise 1

- Sit in Easy Pose with the spine straight. Let the hands and arms relax at the sides.
- Concentrate on the lower pelvis. Inhale and exhale deeply.
- Hold the breath out. Contract the rectum, sex organ, and Navel Point. Hold it tightly for 5 seconds. Relax with the inhale.
- Repeat the cycle several times for lengths of 5, 10, 15, and 20 seconds.

Exercise 2

- Sit in the same manner. Keep the chest lifted and the shoulders and face muscles relaxed.
- This time inhale and exhale completely. As you restrain the breath out, pump the Navel Point in and out 26 times. Isolate the motion to the lower organs. Each contraction will tighten the Root Lock. Each relaxation will loosen the Root Lock.
- After the 26 pumps, inhale deeply. Exhale and continue.
- Continue to repeat the 26-times belly pump with *mulbandh,* for 3 to 5 minutes.
- Relax.

COMMENTS:

Regular practice of these exercises gives you mastery over the Root Lock. It improves longevity, and improves the digestion. It provides a massage for the liver, kidneys, and spleen. If you do not pull the Navel Point and Root Lock 26 times a day, it is very difficult to adjust digestion and the lower spine.

When beginning to learn the Root Lock, there is a tendency toward morning constipation. This can be avoided by choosing a light diet full of vegetables and grains when you initiate the practice. Be sure to take at least 8 glasses of pure water per day.

MASTERING THE DIAPHRAGM LOCK

This will open the central area of the body. It will help circulation and let you feel light and energetic.

HOW TO DO IT:

Exercise 1

- Sit on the heels in Rock Pose. Spread the knees slightly. Place the hands on the knees.
- Do not do this exercise after eating.
- Inhale and exhale deeply. On the exhale pull the Navel Point and abdomen in and up. Lift the chest. Hold the breath out and the lock tightly applied for 10 to 30 seconds.
- Then inhale and relax the belly.
- Continue this exercise for 3 to 5 minutes.

Exercise 2

- In the same position, inhale and exhale. Apply *mulbandh.* Relax it, and keeping the breath out, apply *uddiyana bandh.* Relax it, and keeping the breath out, apply both locks. Relax both locks as you inhale deeply. When you apply both locks, it feels like a smooth wave rising from your base followed by a firm steadiness and suspension as the locks tighten.
- Continue this sequence of locks for 3 to 11 minutes.

COMMENTS:

This simple series will make you sweat. Not all sweats are the same. This sweat will cleanse the skin and will have a special release of hormones and other chemicals that are beneficial. Practice this every day for a few weeks. Be sure to eat lightly during this time. Do not do this exercise after eating.

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Doei Shabd Kriya–
WORKING ALL THE LOCKS

This is a Laya Yoga meditation which works all three *bandhas*. It is a meditation and an exercise combined. It is a powerful physical rejuvenator since it works all nine major glands. It can work out the entire system, and give you a strength and grace to be victorious in the face of challenge and change. It gives you the intuition and sensitivity to establish yourself in relation to the Truth. It awakens the inner realization of your consciousness, so you may find Truth everywhere. *Doei* means two. *Shabd* means a current of sound that relates you to the Infinite. This meditation uses two sounds or *shabds*:

Sat Naam means the true reality identified in Truth, or "I call on Truth, the essence of all Being." *Wahe Guru*, which means the ecstasy of dwelling in the Infinite Truth. *Wahe* is the feeling of ecstasy; *Guru* is the knowledge or means that guides you to that state of being.

HOW TO DO IT:

- Sit in Easy Pose with both hands in Gyan Mudra, the index and thumb tips together. Concentrate at the Navel Point.
- Chant the sound *Sat* as you pull the navel point in and apply *mulbandh*. Keep that lock applied as you shift concentration to the heart center. Chant the sound *Naam* as you apply *uddiyana bandh* and *jalandhar bandh* firmly.
- Shift your concentration to the area in front of the throat. As you relax the *jalandhar* and *uddiyana bandhas* halfway, chant the sound *Wha-hay*. Concentrate at the Brow Point and relax the lower locks as you chant the sound *Guroo*. Imagine the sound traveling from the Brow Point down the nose to the horizon.The *jalandhar bandh* stays slightly applied the whole time.
- The impact of this meditation depends on the rhythmic application of the locks, the systematic shift of concentration, and the musical chanting of the sound. The breath will regulate itself automatically with the rhythm and the effort if you concentrate on the sound current.
- Continue for **3 to 11 minutes**. Gradually build up to 31 minutes with perfect concentration.
- To end, inhale and exhale three times. Inhale deeply and retain the breath as you concentrate at the pineal gland at the center of the brain, for 1 minute.
- Stretch the legs forward and grasp the toes. Holding the toes, inhale up, exhale forward. Continue quickly for **2 minutes.**
- Then inhale, hold briefly, exhale, and relax completely.

Yogi Bhajan on Doei Shabd Kriya

This is the sound current, it is the master key. It relates Infinity to the finite, and the finite to Infinity. It creates a total unity. There is no *naadam*, which is beyond it, and no *naadam* which is not in it. If you chant this and do not come out into an ecstasy it is impossible. This is not a personal possession—it belongs to everyone. Those who receive it and practice it and perfect it become masters. It requires practice. It does not happen in a moment like magic. You must get into the rhythm of it so the whole universe dances around you, and you dance around the whole universe. Then you can enjoy the indescribable ecstasy of the Word. That is *naadam*, or *naam*.

This whole world was created in the vibration of the Word. When this sound runs in us and we link to a part of this current, then that current opens everything up. You can see with the inner heart. If it is correctly done, the kundalini must go up. Practice it 31 minutes on a regular basis and have the experience that produces wisdom. This technique is not a religion or sect. This is an honest ecstasy of the universality of the spirit which resides in all for all. We are not creating anything. We are linking to the totality which is already created and present for us to enjoy.

- Start slowly. As each lock and sound becomes well placed, speed up the sound and create the sound current flow. Practice this *kriya* every day for 120 days.

COMMENTS:

This Kundalini Kriya can take you beyond the finite self and connect your conscious and subconscious with your superconscious divine self. It is from the discipline of Laya Yoga which uses the sound current and the awakening of the chakras to transform your awareness. The two sounds *Sat Naam* and *Wahe Guru* are the seed mantras that open the chakras. Blended in this rhythmic relationship, they allow the kundalini to awaken and travel its course through the *nadis* and the 10 bodies of the human structure.

This meditation is hard work. It will make you sweat. It can create pressure between the 4th and 5th ribs, so the back gets tight. This disappears as your breath becomes a single flow. You will not be aware if you are inhaling or exhaling. You will eventually relax into the sound current, and the locks will be automatic. The pituitary, parathyroid, thyroid, pancreas, and all glands are worked.

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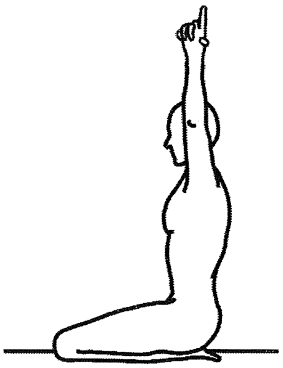
Sat Kriya

Sat Kriya is essential to the practice of Kundalini Yoga. It is one of the few exercises that is a complete action in itself. It is a *kriya*: an action or series of actions that completes a process and has a predictable outcome. Most *kriyas* consist of a series of exercises that synergize. Sat Kriya can stand alone like a precious gem. Any serious student should master this *kriya*. A beginning student should start with 3 minutes every day. The time can be built up from that base.

HOW TO DO SAT KRIYA:

- Sit in Rock Pose. The heels are under the sitting bones. The knees are together.
- Stretch the arms over the head with elbows straight, until the arms hug the sides of the head.
- Interlace all the fingers except the index fingers. Men cross the right thumb over the left. Women cross the left thumb over the right.
- Begin to chant *"Sat Naam"* with a constant rhythm of about 8 times per 10 seconds. As you pull the navel in and up toward the spine, chant (sucking in the sound) *"sut"* from the Navel Point. Feel it as a pressure from the Third Chakra center. With the sound *"naam,"* relax the belly. The focus of the sound *"naam"* can be either at the Navel Point or at the Brow Point (the point where the eyebrows meet at the root of the nose; the area that corresponds to the Sixth Chakra).
- The breath regulates itself—no breath focus is necessary.
- The spine stays still and straight. The rhythmic contraction and relaxation produces waves of energy that circulate, energize, and heal the body. This is neither a spinal flex nor a pelvic thrust. Remain firmly seated on the heels throughout the motions of the *kriya*. The abdominal contraction is focused at the Navel Point. There is an automatic co-contraction of the rectum and sex organ areas as in *mulbandh*, the lower body lock, but the lock is pulled from the navel.
- Continue for **3 to 31 minutes**.
- To end, inhale and gently squeeze the muscles from the buttocks all the way up along the spine. Hold it briefly as you concentrate on the area just above the top of the head. Then exhale completely. Inhale, exhale totally and hold the breath out as you apply a firm *mahabandh*—contract the lower pelvis, lift the diaphragm, lock in the chin, and squeeze all the muscles from the buttocks up to the neck. Hold the breath out for 5 to 20 seconds according to your comfort and capacity. Inhale. Relax. If you practice this as a complete *kriya* in itself, the relaxation is ideally twice the length of time as you practiced the Sat Kriya. (If practiced as part of a *kriya*, follow the relaxation times specified.)



- In the beginning practice Sat Kriya for just 3 minutes. Give your attention to perfecting the form, rhythm, and concentration. To build it up in time and effect, start with rotation cycles: 3 minutes of Sat Kriya with 2 minutes of relaxation. Repeat this cycle 3 to 5 times. Build gradually. Then switch the cycles to 5 minutes Sat Kriya and 5 minutes rest. Then add 3 to 5 minutes to the *kriya* time as you are comfortable and accomplished. Soon you will be able to do the entire 31 minutes.

COMMENTS:

As a *kriya*, it is a process that works on all levels of your being—known and unknown—making you more capable of responding to your own subtlety and totality. Approached with patience, steadiness, and moderation, the end result is assured. If you have very little time and you wish to do a beautiful practice, make this *kriya* part of your daily routine.

- One of the primary actions is to balance the energies of the lower triangle of chakras, the energy distribution centers, by mixing the *prana* and *apana* at the navel center. This generates a heat in the system and opens the inner channels to the upward flow and rotation of energy. The contraction of the navel and the gentle pull of the *mulbandh* guide the forward projection and mixing of the chakra energies. It is excellent for digestive troubles and for transcending fears. The excellence of Sat Kriya is that all the three sisters of the lower chakras are pulled together and act in unison. The correlated action of all three centers multiplies the effect and stabilizes the changes.

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Sat Naam is the bij *or seed mantra. It is small and potent. Great things grow from it. If it is not written in your destiny to be with God and know higher consciousness, this mantra engraves it in your destiny. Sat Kriya is to purify your being. Disease, ailment, weakness, impotency, laziness, and negativity - all improper things will leave you.*

–YOGI BHAJAN

▸ The main impact of this *kriya* is to tone the nervous system, to calm emotional disarray, and to channel creative and sexual energies of the body. The entire sexual system is stimulated and strengthened. It relaxes and releases many phobias about sexual behavior, potency, and capacity.

▸ Those who is very distraught and disturbed mentally will be over-involved in the lower triangle; hence this is an excellent regular practice for them.

▸ It is a direct stimulant to the Kundalini energy to release from its dormant phase at the base of the spine, by activating a reservoir of energy that is stored in the area of the body under and near the Navel Point. Respect the inherent power of this technique. Let the *kriya* prepare the ground of your body properly so you may plant the seed of higher experience.

Alternate positions:

▸ An alternate hand mudra can be done in Sat Kriya. Just place the palms flat together with all the fingers pointing up. This enhances the effect. It is not usually given as a first practice or in most public classes, because it increases the flow of internal energy quickly. If you have done cleansing work on your body and you have no current drug use, then this mudra is excellent to use. A person who has used drugs recently or who has degenerative damage from drug use may experience discomfort when the toxins and old drugs release, or when old emotional blocks coded in the structure of the body start to change.

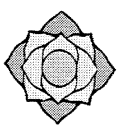
▸ Sat Kriya can be done in Celibate Pose, sitting between the heels, with buttocks on the ground.

▸ For a person who cannot sit on the heels due to knee or ankle problems, the same actions of Sat Kriya can be done in a cross-legged position. However, the effects will not be as strong or precise.

Common mistakes made while doing Sat Kriya:

- ▸ Lifting the shoulders as if doing a shoulder shrug.
- ▸ Moving the back as in spinal flex rather than fixing the spine steady and letting the motion come from the naval area.
- ▸ Accelerating or varying the speed of the rhythm.
- ▸ Lowering the tone rather than keeping it steady.

Feel free to correct your students verbally to correct these common mistakes made during Sat Kriya, and if the speed gets out of control, instruct the students follow your lead.



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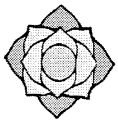
CHAPTER 10



Relaxation

Total harmonious relaxation cures the body. To achieve this there must be a coordination between the three facets of ourselves: body, mind, and soul.

- YOGI BHAJAN

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Relaxation During Yoga Class

The ability to relax is essential for physical and mental well-being. Relaxation is difficult for most people, who tend to turn on the TV, or turn to alcohol or drugs to relax. Kundalini Yoga gives people the tools to be able to truly relax.

Relaxation is an important part of the rhythm of exercise and change in Kundalini Yoga. The physiological and neural state of a student is elevated after completing a Kundalini Yoga *kriya*. It is the physiology of awakening and awareness. During this state, relaxation serves several functions:

- Rejuvenating, especially the parasympathetic nervous system.
- Distributing of *prana* stimulated by the exercises.
- Releasing rigid patterns in the muscles and blood flow.
- Circulating glandular changes.
- Centering one's emotional energies
- Learning how to handle stress and letting go.
- "Memorizing" the relaxation sensation.
- Integrating a new pattern after an old one is broken.
- Creating a rhythm or pulse of energy.

SIMPLE RELAXATION

With beginners especially, simple relaxation is added between exercises. Often the pattern taught by Yogi Bhajan was 1-3 minutes of relaxation between exercises or after a short sequence (for instance, three exercises). The entire kriya and meditation would then be followed by a 10-15 minute deep relaxation, or "yogic sleep" – called *"yoga nidra."*

In more advanced *kriyas* the use of relaxation varies greatly. Sometimes there will be no relaxation between exercises, just 10-30 second pauses. Other times will call for one or two 15-minute yogic sleeps.

Importance of Relaxation

Relaxation is difficult for most people because of a subliminal level of emotional conflict or turmoil. Even as we go about our tasks, there is an inner emotive dialogue that generates patterns of anxiety, anger, hopelessness, or other self-defeating emotions. That is called "commotional living." It drains the reserve energy of the nervous system and creates defenses and armoring against the discomfort.

Relaxation that releases such patterns and that opens us to a new inner organization of our resources is essential. To do it effectively we need to change the distribution of *prana*–the vital life-force–in the body and activate systems of nerves that allow the self to re-organize patterns of being and acting.

Kundalini Yoga and the transformational processes of Humanology are an effective and versatile way to create this level of relaxation. They are technologies of the soul that can be done by an individual for 40 days to completely alter the quality of the daily encounter of life.

We rarely meet life directly. We do it through the mask of the personae, through the maps of our mind, through the unconscious patterns of habit and attention, and through the projections of our emotions. By penetrating to the core of the pattern of commotion, and relaxing into our elementary or core self, life becomes new, fresh, revitalized. Lightness and hope come into every step.

Ultimate Relaxation

Another dimension of relaxation comes from the fact that we are a reality, a soul, a creative expressive essence who can initiate things within this world. We have a dimension of ourselves which is free, spontaneous, and connected to all things. But the process of manifestation into the gross realms proceeds in a flow: from essence to thought forms, to feelings, to patterns of feelings (persona), to desires and projections, and to actions and habits.

We easily forget the essence, the freedom, the choice to begin actions by recognizing the intention and purpose of the heart. Instead, we become entangled in the web of attachments and actions we initiated in other times and situations. We get out of contact with the guidance and choices of our soul as we cross the ups and downs of our own wake from past choices.

To relax in the midst of a hurricane, we must find the center, the inner eye ("I"). To direct the mind in this way, we gather energy, ask ourselves certain questions and statements that guide the mind in a natural sequence through its three primary functional aspects: Negative Mind, Positive Mind, and Neutral Mind. Then we dwell in the presence of the Self and let the miracles happen. With this resource we can be relaxed amidst the greatest challenges, and we can remember our real Selves in the most unreal situations!

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Postures for Relaxation

Baby Pose

This is a good posture for relaxation between yoga exercises in a set, especially after a backward bending exercise. In Rock Pose, rest your forehead on the ground. Arms are alongside the body, palms facing up.

Guru Pranam

This is a variation of Baby Pose. The arms are stretched out on the floor in front of the head, palms together.

Easy Pose

Easy Pose is appropriate as a brief relaxation during a set. Lightly concentrate at the brow, with a relaxed breath, inhaling *Sat,* exhaling *Naam.* This is *not* a time for Long Deep Breathing, or mechanical breathing.

Knees Pulled up

Lying on the back with the knees pulled up and the arms wrapped around the knees is a good way to relax after a forward bending exercise.

Corpse Pose (Shavaasana)

Corpse pose, or *shavaasana,* is the best position for deep relaxation. Lie on the back, arms at the sides, palms facing up, ankles uncrossed.

Leading a Class into Deep Relaxation

Deep relaxation is not just the absence of movement. It brings profound relaxation to the physical body, allowing us to enjoy and consciously integrate the mind-body changes which have been brought about during the practice of a kriya. We may sense the extension of the self through the magnetic field and the aura.

Most people do not know how to relax. Leading a class into deep relaxation is an opportunity for you to teach the students how to relax. You will develop your own style and language for guiding the class into the state of deep relaxation. Following is an example of how it might sound:

- You may want to cover your body with a blanket or shawl to keep warm.
- Lie down on your back with your arms at your sides.
- Rest your arms with the palms facing up.
- Feet are uncrossed.
- Close your eyes.
- Relax the breath. Let the belly naturally rise and fall.
- Let everything else go. You've done all you could and all you should. Prepare to heal, rejuvenate, relax, let go and let God.
- Consciously instruct your body and mind to let go.
- Go through your body systematically and give permission for each part, limb, and cell to relax. Instruct each part of your body to lovingly release tension as you mentally say "relax," or "release," or "*Sat Naam.*"
- (The Teacher will bring attention to each body part: "Relax your feet... relax your legs... etc." The Teacher may bring the students' attention to guiding the contraction of each muscle, and releasing it.)

(See next page for an example of one teacher's guidance of a class into deep relaxation.)

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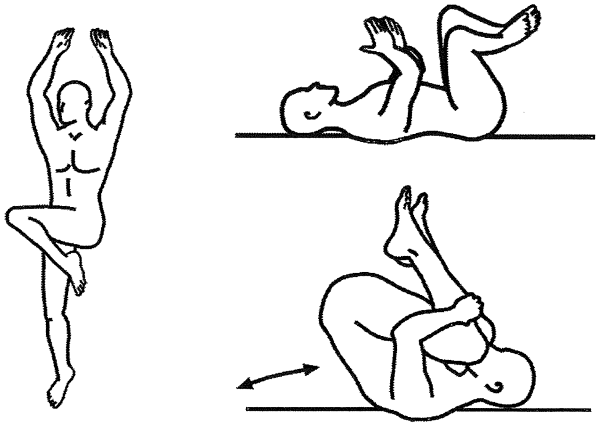
Creating the Environment for Deep Relaxation

- Create a "safe" environment for the students to relax into by assuring, as much as possible, that there will be no interruptions or unnecessary noise.
- If the class is being held in an environment with unavoidable noise, instruct the class to integrate that noise into their aura. Remind them that they do not have to react or resist the noise.
- *Kundalini Yoga music.* Choose uplifting, calm mantra music. Be aware of the particular frequency and rhythm of the mantra.
- *Silence.* If the class is being held in a calm, quiet environment, a silent relaxation can be very beneficial.
- *Gong.* The rhythmic overtones of the gong clear the aura. Yogi Bhajan says: "The mind has no defense against the gong." Proper training is necessary to correctly play a gong.
- *Visualization.* In some instances the Teacher may lead the students in a guided visualization.
- The teacher never lies down and relaxes with the students.

Coming Out of Deep Relaxation

Gently invite the class back to their body awareness.

- Breathe in and out deeply.
- Move your fingers and your toes, rotate the wrists and ankles in both directions
- Stretch the spine, arms overhead, and do a few Cat Sretches to each side.
- Rub the hands and the feet together.
- Roll back and forth a few times on the back.



One Teacher's Guided Relaxation

Lie down on your back with your arms at your sides on the ground. Rest the arms with the palms facing up. Close your eyes. Relax the breath. Let everything else go. You've done all you could and all you should. Prepare to heal, rejuvenate, relax, let go and let God. Consciously instruct your body and mind to be whole and let go. Go through your body systematically and give permission for each limb and cell to relax. Bring each part to alert by contracting it, squeezing it tightly for a moment and with love release the tension as you mentally say "relax."

Start with the feet. Feet relax. Ankles relax. Calves relax. Knees relax. Thighs relax. Back of the legs, relax. Hips and buttocks relax. Pelvis relax. Fingers and hands relax. Wrists relax. Forearms relax. Elbows relax. Upper arms relax. Shoulders relax. Shoulders and neck begin to relax. Neck relax. Muscles all the way down the spine and back relax. All the muscles of the back relax. Buttocks, Navel Point and belly relax. Chest and ribs relax. Squeeze the face like a prune, relax. Click the tongue several times, relax. Press the lips tightly, relax. Squeeze the eyelids closed, relax. Face and head relax.

Now let the healing gaze of your inner eye and heart bless each inner organ and gland and give permission for even deeper relaxation. To heal, to rejuvenate, to lighten, to brighten, to heighten the glow of each cell and open the flow of life to all. Freely. Now, lungs relax. Heart relax. Thymus and the entire immune system, relax. Stomach, intestines, rectum, relax. Pancreas relax. Both kidneys relax. Adrenals reserve of inner fire, relax. Spleen, relax. Liver, the great cleanser, purifier, storehouse, relax, rejuvenate, heal. Sex organs, relax. Thyroid and parathyroid, relax. Upper glands of the brain: pituitary, pineal relax. The brain itself, relax. All thoughts flow smoothly, relax. Good thoughts. Healthy, Happy, and Holy. Let go. Let God.

Now let the entire spine relax, bathe in the inner light and energy. Begin at the base of the spine. Feel a wave-like ripple relax from the spine throughout the regions of the body. All the zones of creativity and sexuality, relax, flow, connect. With the body relaxed, consciously and unconsciously, breathing rhythmically, smoothly, deeper and deeper. With each breath, leave the physical body to heal, to rejuvenate, to rest. Become light, weightless as if you could freely rise in a mental body and float a few feet above the physical, looking down to see it is safe, healing, deeply relaxed. Listen to the music and let yourself go to any radiant, ecstatic place. Be Blessed. Where every promise to God is fulfilled. A timeless place. Relaxed. Complete. Radiant. Peaceful.

(After some time of silence.) Come back to full body awareness. Inhale deeply and stretch the arms up. Exhale. Rotate wrists and ankles. Rub the palms and soles of the feet together, vigorously. Hold your knees onto the chest and rock back and forth the length of the spine several times. Sit up and stretch the arms up. Shake the hands and arms.

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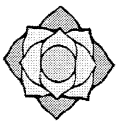
CHAPTER 11



The Mind & Meditation

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Every human being who wants to excel and to develop the character and caliber that upholds the values of the soul, needs a direct, fundamental relationship to the mind.

–YOGI BHAJAN

By conquering your mind, you can conquer the world.

–GURU NANAK

The mind is meant to go for Infinity, unless you train it to desire Earth.

–YOGI BHAJAN

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The Three Functional Minds

- ***Negative Mind*** Reactive, protective.
- ***Positive Mind*** Constructive, risk-taking, seeking fulfillment and possibilities.
- ***Neutral Mind*** Assessing. Reflecting uniqueness of the soul.

Ahangkar The ego-sense which claims the impressions of the mind for its own and reacts to them.

Atman The essential Self, present within all creatures. Pure consciousness. The mind merely reflects that consciousness, so appears to be conscious.

Buddhi The component of the mind which perceives reality, discriminates and classifies the impressions which the *manas* receives.

Chitta The Universal Mind.

Gunas The three conditions of matter: *sattva*–saintliness, pure essence; *rajas*–imperial, active, creative or initiating energy; and *tamas*–inertia or decay.

Manas The recording component of the mind, which receives impressions gathered by the senses from the outside world.

Prakirti Matter. Primal Nature. Evolves under the influence of *Purusha*, so the Self may enjoy experience. Composed of the three *gunas*.

Purusha Unmanifest spirit.

Samskaras Tendencies, potentialities, and latent states which exist in the subconscious and unconscious areas of the mind. They are built up by the continued action of the thought-waves, and create new thought-waves. Our *samskaras* define our character.

The Mind Exists as a Servant to the Soul

SUCCESS, HAPPINESS AND A FLOW OF PROSPERITY are the result of mastering the mind. The mind exists as a servant to the soul, the *Atman*. But the mind is also a vast mechanism with its own characteristics and its own momentum. When the mind is aligned with the soul, each thought that is stimulated from the intellect is perceived and acted on with clarity and reality. When the mind is full of unconscious identifications, emotions, projections, intentions, and attachments, the thought is perceived for other than what it is. This masked thought becomes the basis of many false judgements and fruitless commitments.

If the 81 facets can be controlled so that with each thought, the mind perceives it clearly and surrenders to the intention of the soul, then inner and outer peace are granted.

Yogi Bhajan has outlined the art and science of the control of the 81 facets of the mind. Through the use of Kundalini Yoga, these 81 facets regulate the reaction of the personality, body and mind to each thought. If the 81 facets can be controlled so that the mind perceives each thought clearly and surrenders to the intention of the soul, then inner and outer peace are granted.

THE QUALITIES BEHIND ALL THOUGHTS

In classical yoga philosophy, the soul is accompanied on it's journey from God through the creation by the mind. *(See the diagram on next page.)* The mind is part of Nature, *Prakirti*. *Prakirti*, which includes both material and mind, is governed by the three primary forces or qualities called the ***gunas***. The three *gunas* are ***sattva***, ***rajas,*** and ***tamas***. *Sattva* is subtle, sublime, clear, neutral, and pure. *Tamas* is heavy, confused, concealed, slow, unwavering, and persistent. *Rajas* is fiery, active, initiating and is the power of transformation. These three qualities constantly intertwine, intermingle, intermix, contrast, advance, and withdraw in various combinations with each other. It is these special combinations of quality that exist before the manifestation of thoughts. They are underneath or behind all things in creation. *(See Yogic Philosophy chapter for more on the gunas.)*

CHITTA—THE BASIC MIND

The three *gunas* operate to create the many functions of the Universal Mind, or ***chitta***. The *chitta* is divided into three major functions that reflect the three *gunas*:

- The *sattva guna* is reflected in the ***buddhi mind***. The *buddhi* mind perceives reality, discerns what is real from unreal, assesses neutrally and judges in relation to Infinite identity. It represents the heavenly phenomena in activity of totality as totality.
- The *rajasic* element reflects into ***ahangkar***. *Ahangkar* is the part of the mind that grants identity and attachment. It gives the sense of self, of boundary, of containment, and the beginning of identity to the various blends of quality of the *gunas*. It represents, in its most positive sense, the heavenly activity of the coexistence of totality within a vacuum, for at this point it is unmanifested. Totality within a vacuum means that there are no boundaries or other defining aspects to contain the totality. Instead, all the qualities are mixed, and are defined by their own combinations among themselves.

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▸ The third *guna, tamas*, reflects into the aspect of the mind called ***manas***. This is the lower mind, the sensory mind. It is the one most commonly dealt with by the psychologists in contemporary times. Along with the images, sounds, feelings, and smells of all the senses combining into reactive and creative sequences, *manas* also includes the subconscious reactions and commotions that are stored. *Manas* represents the heavenly activity of the coexistence of totality within the finite.

The mind, or *chitta*, takes on a particular blend of qualities in association with each thought that passes through it. The blend of qualities is the result of the relative levels of activity of the *buddhi, ahangkar,* and *manas* capacities of the mind. The individual, through experience in the world, and through reaction to her or his own mental phenomena, creates various reactions that are recorded into the subconscious and superconscious mind. This accumulation of actions and reactions forms a momentum of the mind. If the thought from the intellect does not perfectly agree with the long established momentum of the mind, the mind reacts by projecting a particular blend of colors around the thought. That color then interacts with the personality, projections, and interactions of that individual.

Basic Characteristics of the Mind

▸ ***First, the mind is largely automatic.*** Since the mind is fast, and beyond the categories of time and space, it supports your actions with many more thoughts than you could ever act on. The result of this is that it is not you who thinks. Your mind thinks, not you. It floods you with thoughts, both wanted and unwanted, intended and unintended. Not all thoughts support the you which is you. You are awareness itself and not all these thoughts. You are actually carried through the soul.

▸ ***Second, the mind is ever moving.*** If it stops it cannot function. It is not a local phenomenon. Just like in the ocean you can feel waves that were generated from far away, so in the mind you have thoughts and feelings from the entire universe and every other person. The places and people you are most attuned to and attached to are what usually fill your stream of thoughts. As you become more neutral and non-attached the scope of those thoughts and feelings widens.

▸ ***Third, the mind functions best on contrasts.*** It seeks polarities and tends to classify things in pairs, in positive and negative, in good and bad. Consider your eyes. They constantly move with motions called saccadic motion. If this is stopped artificially with a drug, you cannot see. Your eyes need the movement to provide contrasts and comparisons so your nervous system can construct your vision. It is the same with the mind. It seeks contrast and polarity. Since the mind is impersonal as well as personal, you find this search for contrast and extremes throughout nature.

▸ ***Fourth, the mind is just as material as the body, only it is subtler.*** Water exists in degrees of subtlety from vapor to liquid to ice. Just so, you can think of the mind as the vapor, the feelings as water, and the neurons and connections as ice. The mind is a structure, a process, and an energy that lets your awareness operate and manifest in this creation. You can observe it and you can change it. You can affect it with gross things like food, powerful things like breath, and subtle things like thought. It has its own flow, structure, and metabolism.

The mind itself does not stop. That is why "a point of stillness" is one of the essential tools you need to look into the mind. This is where special techniques like meditation, mantra, and breath control are needed. Using the mind to try and convince the mind to be still is like stopping a hurricane by blowing at it. There is too much going on. A further difficulty is that you use your mind to observe your mind. Just imagine two mirrors facing each other at a slight angle. If you put a candle in between and look into the mirror, you can see hundreds of candles, reflections upon reflections. The mind can reflect back on itself and create images within images, thoughts within thoughts.

We need to be able to affect the mind without getting caught in an infinite self-reference. To do that, we need to understand the structure of the mind, recognize the origin of thought, and consciously determine which thoughts are consistent with our true self. Facets of your mind regulate the reactions of the personality, body, and mind to each thought. If the 81 facets can be controlled so that the mind perceives each thought clearly, then the mind can align with the intention of the soul. The result is effectiveness, inner and outer peace, and awakened intuition.

FROM *THE MIND: ITS PROJECTIONS AND MULTIPLE FACETS*, BY YOGI BHAJAN AND GURUCHARAN SINGH KHALSA.

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The Three Minds

Negative • Positive • Neutral

There are three functional aspects to the mind:

▸ ***The Negative (or Protective) Mind*** is given for survival. It is reactive, protective, and searches for potential danger. It is senstive to pain, and it shields you from the forces that may disrupt or destroy.

▸ ***The Positive (or Expansive) Mind*** searches for pleasure, fulfillment, and possibility in how you can utilize things in your experience. It is constructive, risk taking, and active.

▸ ***The Neutral (or Meditative) Mind*** is the mind that judges and assesses without attachment in relation to your own purpose and reality. The Neutral Mind observes the actions of both the Negative and Positive Mind, and judges both in relationship to your higher self. Each thought is filtered through the Negative, the Positive, and the Neutral minds.

These aspects of the mind are developed differently in each individual. Some people have a stronger Negative Mind, or a stronger Positive Mind, or a stronger Neutral Mind. Occasionally, all three are strong, existing in balance. This is the enlightened mind. It is flexible and creative, and able to reflect the uniqueness of the soul.

Patanjali's Eight Limbs & the Three Minds

- The *Negative Mind* is mastered with *yamas* and *niyamas*.
- The *Positive Mind* is mastered with *asanas* and *pranayam*.
- The *Neutral Mind* is mastered with *pratyahar, dharana, dhyana,* and *samadhi*.

THE MEDITATIVE MIND IS THE NEUTRAL MIND that runs your destiny. There are three ways to conduct your destiny: Through the law of karma–action and reaction; you can tune into the magnetic field of the Earth and just float with it as a freeloader; or, your life can be run by that magnetic, attractive, creative, meditative, Neutral Mind. That way you do very well.

–YOGI BHAJAN

THE CYCLE OF THE INTELLECT

Imagine the soul giving the radiant impulse to the mind to have *manas, ahangkar,* and *buddhi* activate the intellect to produce a thought. When that thought is released through the intellect, which is part of the mind, it produces feelings, which produce emotions, which then result in desires, which lead to action. This sequence of manifestation is universal. *(See diagram next page.)*

But there is a problem. When the intellect releases the thought, it is compelled to do so from the soul. The mind itself has gathered biases, attachments, and blends of actions and reactions in the subconscious, through experience. When the thought is released, the mind processes it via a complex blend of *manas, ahangkar, buddhi,* positive, negative and neutral forces. The Negative, Positive and Neutral Minds divide themselves into 81 blends–81 different combinations–of these six elements. That mental facet then surrounds the thought that is released from the intellect with a projected color. The color represents a ray in the aura; it also represents the activity of the chakras in the individual. So, the thought becomes clouded, fogged, or surrounded by a particular color. That color then progresses on to produce feelings, feelings go on to produce emotions, as if the thought were that other color. Now that the thought is surrounded by the colors, it is cloaked in such a way that the reactions and desires that follow in the cycle of the intellect are now reacting to the fogged color, rather than to the thought itself. Each of the 81 aspects of the mind produces a specific cloaking action on the thoughts released by the intellect. That cloaking produces a lack of clarity, a lack of accurate structure of the thought and the nature of the color that surrounds it, thus producing much pain from a person's inappropriate actions.

ENTER, THE WILL

The universal release of thought from the intellect, which leads to feelings and then to emotions, desire and action, has two points at which the will–coming from the soul–can be applied:

▸ *Between emotion and desire,* you can be attached or unattached to the specific thought that is going through the sequence. Much meditation is applied at that juncture, because to get emotion to become desire, the element of *ahangkar* and personal attachment must be added.

▸ *Exactly at the release point of intellect to thought,* is the other place where will is effective. This is the same place at which the facets of the mind automatically apply themselves. If will is applied at that level, the mind is trained to surrender the cloud around the thought, and to bring the color around the thought to clear or to white, so that it can be perceived as it is.

KUNDALINI YOGA

The techniques that alter the 81 facets are described in detail in the technology of Kundalini Yoga. It is the process of engaging the conscious, the subconscious and the superconscious at the point of origin of the thoughts. This is most effectively done through *Naad* Yoga.

The colors or rays that the 81 facets utilize are also represented and bal-

continued

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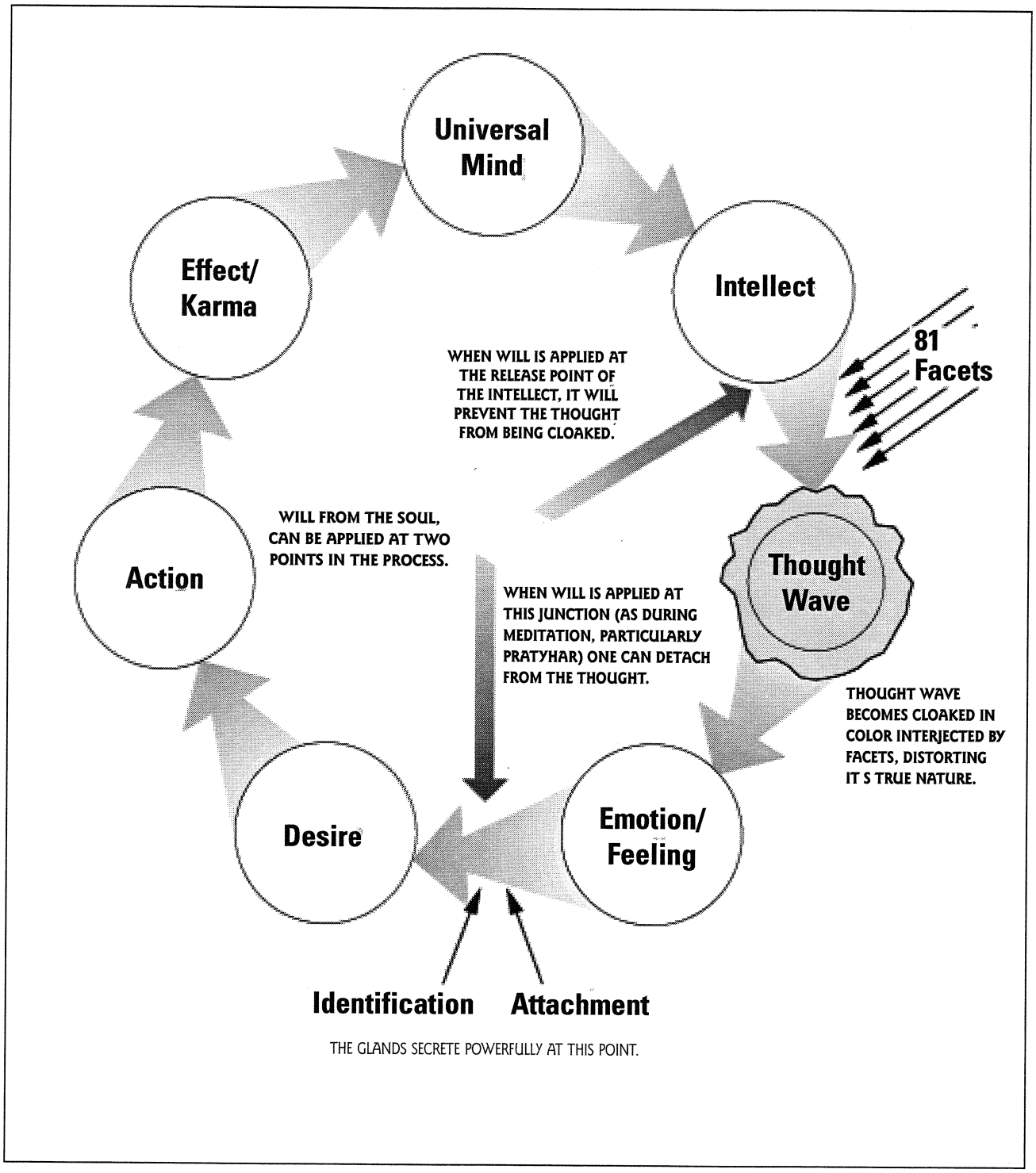

The Cycle of the Intellect

FROM *THE MIND: IT'S PROJECTIONS AND MULTIPLE FACETS*, BY YOGI BHAJAN AND GURUCHARAN SINGH KHALSA.

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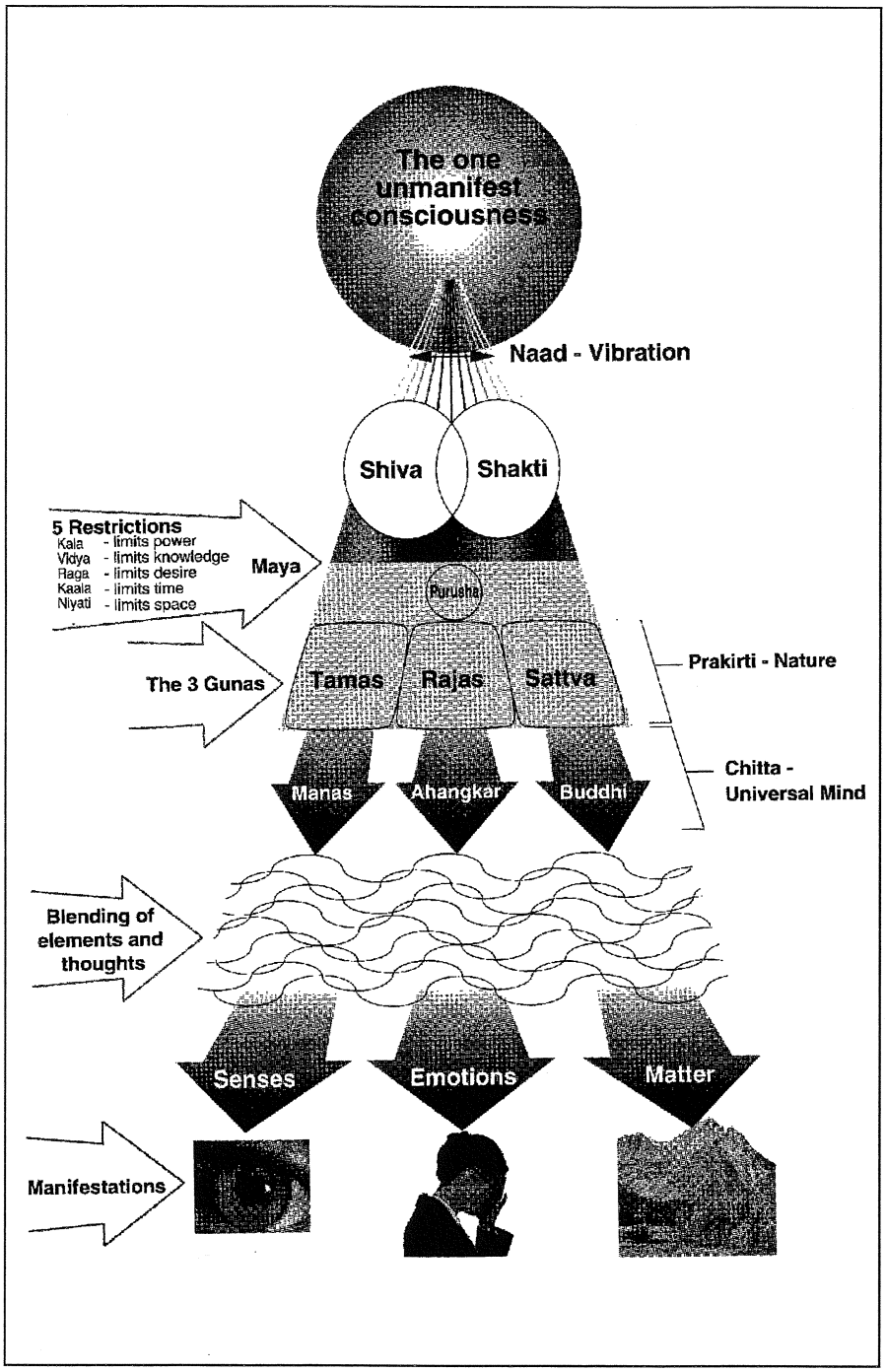

Cosmic Law of Manifestation & Being

The origin and seed of all we experience is unmanifest and subtle. First is consciousness, then vibration, then separation into the three forces or *gunas*. Then the blending of elements and thoughts manifests in the world of the senses, emotions, and matter.

FROM *THE MIND: IT'S PROJECTIONS AND MULTIPLE FACETS*, BY YOGI BHAJAN AND GURU CHARAN SINGH KHALSA.

The Structure of a Thought

Each thought that is produced in the intellect is like a well-crafted sculpture. It has its own form, its own dimension, its own internal structure. Yogi Bhajan has said that each thought has:

- An ***antra***, which is its essence.
- This *antra* has a characteristic ***jantra***–dimensional proportion.
- A specific ***bantra***–the kind of structure that supports it.
- A characteristic ***mantra***, or sound vibration.
- A ***yantra***, or visual form; radiance.
- This thought then engages the universe in a complex way. It is called ***tantra***–the web of polarities that holds the essence of the thought.
- That web has a projected path of action in the universe–***patantra.***
- The perfection and completion of that orbit of action in relationship to the essence of the projected thought, aligned with the soul is called ***sotantra***.

All of these together form a powerful projected reality with the thought. That is its essence. If you can react to the thought at its true structural essence, you can gain power over its manifestation.

When the 81 facets cloak the thought in the color, this internal structure is hidden, and you can no longer react to the thought in its own actual nature with its own specific requirements. It is like trying to drive a car with a paddle–it is ineffective and inappropriate.

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anced through the *chakras*. Starting with the First Chakra through the Seventh, the colors are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple or indigo, and white. White represents the complete balance of all the colors. So when a thought is wrapped in white, represented through the Seventh Chakra, there is both neutrality and nurturance for the true nature of the internal structure of that thought. The white light brings full radiance and blends many colors so the thought comes to fruition and reflects its true nature.

The techniques that alter the 81 facets are described in detail in the technology of Kundalini Yoga. It is the process of engaging the conscious, the subconscious and the superconscious at the point of origin of the thoughts.

This subtle process of evolution from the unmanifest unity to the embodied finite experience is represented within the design and structure of the body itself. Just as the chakras are associated with different areas of functioning in the body, from the base of the spine to the crown of the head, so too, each of the functions covered below is represented by areas and regions in the body. The macrocosm of the universe is reflected in the qualities and structure of the microcosm of the body. That is why the body is so often referred to as a sacred vessel or temple.

- The region from the heartline up controls and relates to the sense of totality, to the sense of connectedness and merger.
- The region from the heart down to the pelvic line, which interacts strongly with air, fire and water elements, is like the realm of the mind with all of its relativities and qualities, comparisons and possibilities. So, it represents the Infinity entering into the vacuum, entering into the identity that is distributed through actions across the experiences of the Cosmos.
- The region from the navel down to the sole of the foot is associated with the faculty of the earth, the stationary, the finite, the embodied and the attached.

The rise of kundalini integrates all these regions and produces the pure white light that releases the will to control the 81 aspects, freeing up the creativity of the intellect directed by the intelligence of the soul.

It is the real task of each person and of all humanity to release the fragments that are caught in the subconscious–the unfulfilled desires, the daydreams, the nightmares and fears, phobias, as well as the possibilities. If all of these fears are released and the thoughts are unclouded, then through concentration and earnest prayer our dreams of happiness, peace, and prosperity in fact come true. Kundalini Yoga and meditation can facilitate an understanding of the working of the mind, and teach us how to plant the seed of peace, prosperity, and health into our thoughts.

Compiled from *The Mind: It's 81 Facets and Projections,* by Yogi Bhajan and Gurucharan Singh Khalsa.

Yogi Bhajan Describes the Balanced Mind

When your mind is balanced and refined, it serves your soul and consciousness and it mixes your *tattvas* to give you both divinity and dignity. The temperament of your soul is divinity. It is the desire to be good that makes you a human. It is living as good that makes you a sage. You live goodness when your personality is touched by the quality of divinity in you. You always have a choice with all these gifts. You can buy any bait for a price and fall apart, or you can be aware of and act from your own ultimate life.

When you sense your own ultimate life and your mind supports you with all the *tattvas*, you have an automatic consolidated dignity. It is a quality that penetrates every action and word. If you can work out the projection and involvement of your mind, it can take you anywhere.

Yogi Bhajan in Dialogue with His Mind

This is how my mind and I speak to each other:

"You are timeless, you are spaceless, you are nothing less. You are just my servant. Tell me how you can serve me. Intuitively show me through vision. If not, shut up. I don't need you. I can do it myself!"

"No, no, no, I am your mind. I am in you. God gave me to you to serve you. I can tell you pros and cons, positive, negative, neutral. I am very good. I am the source of intuition. I am the source of thought. I am the source of ecstasy. I am the source of everything."

I just tell him, "I have found my source. You are part of me and you have gone berserk, idiot, so don't talk to me with this garbage. Let me do devotion. I don't want anything from you, my mind. Go somewhere else, serve someone else. I have seen it all, and now it is my time and my privilege to utter *Wahe Guru*."

"No, no, no. I am your relative, I love you!"

"Yes, everybody is my relative. You won't hurt me. If you cannot see God in all, you cannot see God at all. Let us relay at the same level. Let me say, *Wahe Guru,* and let you say, "Wahe Guru." Let us have a relationship at the same frequency. Let us have the same clarity. Let us have the same reality, because we have the same Guru, the same God."

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Navigating the Inner Spaces of the Mind

Four of Patanjali's eight limbs of yoga practice deal with navigating the meditator through the inner space of the mind. They are *pratyahar, dharana, dhyana,* and *samadhi.* In Kundalini Yoga, we recognize the integrative nature of these states. Emphasis is on mastery through identifying and utilizing these states.

Pratyahar To control and synchronize the mind to the Infinite. It is the science of finding the nucleus of every finite, which is Infinite.

Dharana Concentration. Consistent penetration of thought, consistent projectivity. Holding the mind within a center of consciousness or on an object.

Dhyana Meditation. Deep merger into the object of concentration, which causes a flow of thought waves, uninterrupted and continuous, to which the meditator does not react. One is aware of the thoughts, but not involved with them.

Samadhi Total identification with spirit. The deep experience of "Me and God, God and Me, are One."

Benefits of Meditation

Meditation is the process of controlling and transcending the waves of the mind, allowing the flow of radiance from the soul.

Meditation is for everyone. It uses the inherent self-sensory system, the mind, and the body. Through the use of refined patterns, meditation creates a communication between you and your mind, and between your mind and your body.

Meditations which use mantra, work on the upper palate of the mouth, which controls the autonomic system and the impulsations of the old brain and limbic systems.

Meditation . . .

- Develops the Neutral (Meditative) Mind.
- Takes us from a finite to an Infinite perception of reality, by connecting us to the clarity of the soul.
- Promotes a sense of well-being, inner peace, stability, and calm.
- Develops the intuition.
- Releases reactions and unconscious habits, subconscious fears and blocks, and builds the spontaneous and intuitive link to awareness itself.
- Encourages mastery over transforming emotion to devotion.
- Promotes the ability to focus energy, enhancing effectiveness and efficiency.
- Promotes clarity of mind, mental awareness, and the ability to be present.
- Resolves core issues of stress-producing patterns.
- Develops the frontal lobe of the forehead, which controls your personality.

Simran The continuous experience of the meditative mind. *Simran* is a continuous, meditative, longingly creative feeling, in which life is experienced as a spiritual flow.

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Meditation: A Simple Process

TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
FROM A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN
February 21, 1978

TWO THINGS ARE SIMULTANEOUSLY IMPOSSIBLE: Either we are not a creation of a Creator, and it is wrong that we are in the image of God, or there is no such thing as a sin. It is religious bigotry when we say we commit a sin. We can agree there is no sin and grant that there is ignorance. Some know more, and some know less.

Emotion Becomes Commotion or Devotion. We can also agree that there can be tremendous differences in emotions. Emotions are essential, as life is essential. Everyone is emotional, but our emotion can become commotion. When emotion becomes commotion, then you enter a dangerous zone, because commotion can create a pattern, and then patterns start governing your life. As long as you are emotional, it is alright. It is a learning process. After all, in one second your intellect releases one thousand thoughts. Out of one thousand thoughts, you may not even pick one up. The intellect releases a lot of thoughts, but only a few thoughts become emotions—not all. As long as you are emotional, you are living, trying to live. Even when you become commotional it is alright, but it is just a matter of seriousness, because emotion can get into the subconscious mind.

Emotion can have two options. Either it becomes devotion, or commotion. If it becomes devotion and enters the subconscious mind, there is no pain.

Emotion can have two options. Either it becomes devotion or commotion. If it becomes devotion and enters the subconscious mind, there is no pain. There is no sadness, there is no sacrifice which is not easily done. It is a kind of bewitchment of mind in which one is totally possessed. He is happy with what he is doing, his world is his own, his destination is his own, and he shall make it. That is the devotional part. But, suppose instead of devotion, the emotion becomes commotion and enters the subconscious mind. Then there is a problem. Then you have a pattern, a style of life. And then the pattern will govern you.

Meditation is the art of breaking habits, to purify the mind and to take care of day-to-day things.

These commotions become our pattern. We call them habits. First we create a habit, then the habit creates us. There is hardly any person who doesn't get into a habit. And it is very difficult to break a habit. If there is a wrong habit, you have a lot of trouble. Life becomes unhappy. Don't think that in the past people were saints and now we are devils. That's not true.

You don't live as adults; you want to test all the neuroses of your childhood. I have analyzed people. The subconscious psychology is so heavy in America that most people do not have smooth relationships at all. In dating, in communication, in social life, we show each other how powerful we are. But don't blame the ordinary person. Even yogis, swamis, ministers, and spiritual people have a big façade to impress people.

In our life there is one great weakness. We want to impress others. It is the salesmanship in our very genes, that makes us want to convince each other we are great. Had we taken the attitude that we would show how great we are through actions, our life would be very smooth and happy. We have not learned to win each other over through actions. We believe that through logic and reason, through arguments, we can convince each other and get away with our weaknesses; but the problem is those weaknesses will show up one day or the other.

When I came to America at first I was not aware of the American traditions. I was so simple. And I *wanted* to be very simple. But I was surprised that a lot of promoters came to me. "We want to promote you." After all, I knew English and I knew the word "promotion." I sat down and thought, "Well, I am a yogi. How can this guy promote me more than that? What can he do for me?" I talked to some people. They said, "We can spread you in the United States. We can set up a corporation, twelve billion dollars, fifteen billion dollars, as much as you ask." I said, "And then what?" I heard all their proposals very peacefully and nicely, and then I sat back and I said, "My God, this is what they think a spiritual man is?" That was phase one.

You can't learn anything with ego. You can't know things because of curiosity. Learning won't come to you until you keep yourself pure enough that you can receive it. You can know a lot. You can talk a lot. But when it comes to learning, you should be ready to receive. Then somebody will be ready to give to you.

The Desire to Know the Unknown. In the spiritual realm, ego has no place. Diamonds have no place, and small houses have no place. This is the realm of the Earth. It is good to have things. You can have whatever you want to have, whatever you can afford minus taxes. But that is not all you are. There is a part of you, which is very steadily ingrained in you, and that is your desire to know the unknown.

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Sometimes you wonder, what is this unknown of you? Look at yourself: You have no claws, no strong nails. As a human being, you have no defense mechanism. Have you been made defenseless? No. Your defense lies in your intuition. If you can intuitively know what is going to happen, then you will not enter the sequence and not end up with consequences. That's all the defense you have. And what can give you that intuition? Your mind. How? If you have a meditative mind.

How Do You Meditate? It's a very simple process. Most of the people in the world do not know what meditation is. They think if they can buy a manual for one-hundred fifty dollars and sit for fifteen minutes on a chair, that's meditation. Some feel if they attend Yogi Bhajan's class and learn a meditation, that's meditation. Lots of people have lots of feelings about meditation. But they do not understand real meditation.

Meditation is a process. When the dawn comes, the sun power, the ray energy, is more scattered, and the mind is not controllable. At any time which is peaceful–the best is early morning time, before the dawn–you'll be surprised, that in a couple of minutes, a lot of thoughts will start coming to you–those thoughts which you do not want to touch–the X-rated thoughts, the ugly, angry thoughts, all those kinds of thoughts. If you let those thoughts pass by, this is meditation. All those thoughts that can pass at that moment of your life can never enter your subconscious mind, and they will not bother you again. This procedure of cleansing the mind, of not dumping a lot of thoughts into your subconscious mind, is called meditation.

This procedure of cleansing the mind, of not dumping a lot of thoughts into your subconscious mind, is called meditation.

It takes about three minutes to get those kind of thoughts. And sometimes they continue to bug you for about half an hour. But, if you physically don't move, the mind becomes still. That is the foundation, or the beginning of the meditative mind. It is a purely physical process. It doesn't need any mantra, or a teacher, or any technique, except that the place you sit should be cozy, comfortable and your body structure should be straight. Once your mind starts becoming still and not having any thoughts, you will feel cozy, and that coziness cannot be described even by me. All I can tell you is that it is very comfortable, it is very cozy, and you will want to do it again and again. But in the beginning you cannot do it for a long time. Gradually, as you develop that coziness, this thought-hitting process becomes shorter and shorter.

When the mind is said to be intuitive and you develop it, it is as good an investment as your hair-do, as your good clothes, or your good language. Then whenever you want the answer to something, you don't have to call on anything but your own computer. Just stop yourself. And, in a few moments, your own self will talk to you.

You have to concentrate. It is the mind which can concentrate for you. The mind is given as a tool to you. The mind is not your master. The mind was given to serve you. You develop all other facilities of the world–air-conditioned rooms, good cars, electronic instruments–but the biggest computer which you have is your mind. You never developed it. Now people are trying to learn meditation, but the problem is there are a lot of groups and there are a lot of technologies, and everything is well branded. "This is my technique, this is your technique." But let us talk about what the science of yoga says.

The science of yoga says that whenever a mind can be developed to be under your control, when you do not have thoughts incoming, at that moment your mind is with you. When won't the mind give you any thought? Don't create a thought. Enjoy it. That is the first stage of the intuitive level.

First the mind should be empty, and you should enjoy it. It is cozy. And you can hang in there with that cozy mind for a while. But you'll not be in a position to hang in there for a long time. That, too, you have to develop. But if you can hold with your mind more than five minutes, you have set up your mind to compute for you. That is the beginning. If you can hang on with your empty mind, which is your mind, for eleven minutes, then you can use your mind for directions.

You breathe fifteen breaths a minute. The reverse of it is, if you can have your mind with you for fifteen minutes, you can develop that time, you can compute every consequence of your life through any sequence with your own mind. Is that difficult?

This mind is beyond Time and Space. It is part of the Universal Mind. It is given to you as an instrument to serve you. What happened? It became your master, you became the servant. The mind becomes a monster when it becomes your master. The mind is an angel when it is your servant. It is all in your mind. The meditative mind is a purely beautiful state of living.

Using Mantra for Meditation. Now I am going to discuss with you how you can develop the meditative mind very immediately. When you control your mind, a lot of thoughts come to you–negative thoughts–all garbage, ambitions, thoughts, known and unknown, float around in a negative direction. Negative is like this: If you cut it in the center, what does it become? Positive. You keep chanting the mantra in a positive direction. So each

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negative becomes positive. Within 108 seconds of that moment you achieve, you can see your own soul. After that you will become intuitive and will never be in trouble.

So we pick up one mantra, which is a positive sound, a positive thought. Some psychologists have said if you only chant, "One, one, one," that will work. That will work for his purposes, but it won't work for great purposes. You have to have a mantra which must idealize your *isht*. *Isht* means something you have a great reverence for. If a Christian has a great reverence for Jesus Christ, he can call, "Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ." It can be his mantra. There is no big problem. Mantra is something which, according to vibratory thought level, must be in a position to tune into the subconscious. Everything cannot be a mantra, and not everybody can manufacture a mantra. But if the word can be tuned in at the thought-level basis into the subconscious, and it is the highest word of reverence for that person, that is the best mantra for the person. If that mantra is also repeated when those thoughts hit you, the minus becomes plus. In other words, we chant to make things positive and gain profit easily. It is to cut the time.

Why does a mantra work for you? Because mantra is always that unknown of you. Some people receive a kind of mantra. I asked somebody once, "What is your mantra?" He said, "Nim." I asked him what it meant. He said, "I don't know. I was given it, I paid for it, and I have been chanting it for the last eight years." "Do you enjoy it?" He said, "Yeah." "What has it done for you?" He said, "I don't know, but I like it."

Every body has a capacity. Every mind has a frequency. You have to bring the two together, and then you have to find out who you are. That is the easiest way to live happily.

Though the person was innocent, and didn't understand the meaning of what it did for him, his reverence for that word was so powerful that it always set in his heart something very special. That is all you need.

Life is not equal for all, and it is not equivalent for all. You have to fit in at the frequency of your mind and your body. I have seen that the majority of people do not know how much their body can take. They have never assessed it. Everybody feels a body can take whatever you can give it. That is not true. Every body has a capacity. Every mind has a frequency. You have to bring the two together, and then you have to find out who you are. That is the easiest way to live happily.

Yoga is a science. It is the purest art by which to live. Everything about it can be explained well. It is meant for a human being. It is not meant for angels. There is no such thing as sin. If it is true God has created you, then God has created you for a purpose, and to live only for that purpose is Grace.

"Stopping" the Mind?

A student asked Yogi Bhajan the following question: "My mind is always full of thoughts and arguments. A friend told me that if I meditate I should stop all my thoughts and control my mind so it is quiet. Is that possible with meditation? My mind is awfully noisy."

Yogi Bhajan: "It is not meditation that stops the mind. It is the surrender of the mind to the soul, and the soul to Truth. It is when you prefer the word of Truth to the word of your own intellect."

Those who intellectualize a lot should know that yoga means union with the Supreme Consciousness. It is only at that time, at that moment of union, that the stream of thought stops. In Kundalini Yoga you are given a perfect key for the lock of consciousness. The incessant intellect acts like a file that rubs off the levers from the key. Intellectualizing the Truth to suit your own circumstances and to cater to your fears will never work.

So hold and behold the Truth wherever you are. People will mark the way to you. No person is superior or inferior to another in his potential. When you earn that vision and character, one person will want to see what you behold, they will want to use those eyes, and another will not. In both cases, your mind will be peaceful in the service of the Infinite.

Prayer & Meditation

Prayer is when the mind is one-pointed and man talks to Infinity. Meditation is when the mind becomes totally clean and receptive, and Infinity talks to the man.

—YOGI BHAJAN

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Pratyahar

TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
FROM A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN
August 25, 1978

MANY, MANY THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, the sages sat down and divided the science of yoga into eight different aspects. I would like to talk to you about one part. It is called *pratyahar*. *Pratyahar* is a secret science to reach God. You won't find it discussed fully in any books. All they say is, *pratyahar* means "to contract." Contract what? They don't explain it. In some places they say *pratyahar* is *pratyahar* and whosoever does *pratyahar* reaches God. How are you going to make any sense out of it? That is how these old sciences happen. It goes from teacher to student, teacher to student, and so is passed on. The most beautiful art of yoga and the most pure science of yoga is *pratyahar*. *Pratyahar* means, correctly in English, contract or synchronize.

I will give you an example. Some of my students today sent me a birthday present. I should feel very grateful that the present has come, and they wanted me to participate by thanking them. But when I saw it, I couldn't immediately thank *them*. Since at that time, I had been analyzing just what *pratyahar* is. It is a habit to synchronize towards God. So, immediately out of my mouth came, "Blessed is Lord God, who has given them the heart." I could have said, "Thank you, they are beautiful." But nothing like that happened, and I started wondering why I could not say that. A gift is a source of happiness. But who provides the gift and who is the ultimate provider of the gift? If the consciousness does not synchronize immediately and focus on that point, you are not a yogi.

Bowing to the Source. For twelve years a woman and her husband tried, but they were never blessed with a child. It took twelve years, but finally she got pregnant. A beautiful son came. All they did was start meditating, chanting, and praying. When people came to them saying, "Well, God gave you a beautiful son. We're so happy," they said, "Yes, please sit down and meditate and chant with us." For forty days I saw nothing but kirtan, chanting, and music outside that house. They were so happy, they would request of everybody, "Please, if you really love us, please join with us. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!" That is called *pratyahar*: Under any time, space, and circumstance, under any pressure, depression, or oppression, you do not forget that Infinite One.

That is called *pratyahar*: Under any time, space, and circumstance, under any pressure, depression or oppression, you do not forget that Infinite One.

Pratyahar is Also Called the Science of Dedicated Devotion. It is not simple devotion. Simple devotion is, "Thank you, God." That's simple devotion. But it is also a dedication, because when anything comes, you say, "Thank you, God, for making me thank You." It is of a very high caliber. It is a very simple process for getting away from sensuality and sexuality, when they bring you to the Earth. Thank God for the Earth, and then God won't let you go down the tube. It is the power of the Word of God that you are not limited. The moment you are unlimited, you cannot fall apart. You will only fall apart because of ego. You can't fall apart because of God. Ego confines you to limits, and your spirit then gets inflated. When your spirit gets inflated in Infinity, because you are in mental Infinity, then you are divine. But when your spirit gets inflated when you are confined, then you are like a balloon.

Spiritual Ego–Devotion to Oneself Instead of God. In spirituality you will find spiritual ego. It is horrible. The majority of religious people are very miserable, because they walk on the path of spirituality with ego. They start building devotion towards themselves, develop pride, then freak out. Then they start showing off these *siddhis*– these powers: "I can fly; I can elevate three feet from the ground; I can do this to you." This *tattva siddhi* is to tell another person, "I am superior to you." They become a kind of semi-God-half-cooked, you know? Half-cooked food neither tastes raw, nor tastes cooked. I call them spiritual junkies. You'll find a lot of swamis, yogis, ministers, and rabbis are spiritual junkies. They know a lot of junk. They know a lot of spiritual stuff, but, as humans, they are junkies. They are not grateful. They start showing you they are superior. That's why you'll find an uptight man of God is as dangerous as a cobra, a scorpion, or a lizard–these animals which give you fatal bites, or have their tongues going in and out. This is where you will go if you enter spiritual ego. A snake lives very long. All these spiritual teachers want to live very long–five hundred years–to keep that domain over other creatures of God. They want to enjoy that domain. Because if a man of God is not straightforward, is not truthful, and does not always talk about God, and rather brings his personality into the bargain, that's what he gets.

To practice *pratyahar* means one must synchronize, analyze, and totally shell out everything, and realize the praise of God out of everything. God never made anybody without sense, God never made anybody a sinner. God is not a sinner. How can you

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be of God and be negative, a sinner, an egomaniac or jealous? There are two hundred fifty negative qualities, which you can count, that do not belong to God and with these qualities you do not belong to God. Be careful.

There are two ways of devotion: One is divine, the other is devil. Those decorations are the features you possess. If you want to discipline yourself towards the Divine, then you have to get out of all this nonsense; and if you want to belong to the Divine, you have to master this nonsense. They don't go together. The majority of us are a hodge-podge of half divine and half devil; sometimes divine, sometimes devil. When a person who practices *pratyahar* is a devil, then he's God's devil. When he's divine, he's God's divine one. His dedication to devotion is always divine. Therefore, neither is he a devil nor is he divine. He is the Infinite divine because he can cut through the limits of Time and Space. The caliber of such people is beautiful. They don't stop at anything—they don't and they can't. In *Anand Sahib* the science of *pratyahar* is explained in such a beautiful manner. This is where the Guru talks to the eyes, the Guru talks to the ears, the Guru talks to the breath, the Guru talks to the life. All these similes are nothing but the science of *pratyahar*, which is further than *pranayam*. In the entire Siri Guru Granth Sahib and in *gurbani*, wherever the mind has been addressed, it is *pratyahar*:

Re man eh bidh jog kamaao. —Guru Gobind Singh
Oh, my mind, practice yoga in this way.

When a person directs his own mind analytically towards Infinity, that process is pratyahar.

The science of spirituality is the science of union. Technically speaking, the science of mind is the source of happiness, and when you cannot do *pratyahar*, you cannot be grateful to God, that Infinite Source which continually gives to you. Then you can never learn to enjoy that thing. A thing which does not come to you from Infinity, cannot be with you to Infinity. Remember this law of cosmic consciousness. If material things come to you because of Infinity and you have the synchronization of dedication of your consciousness to feel that it comes from Infinity, then you have grace.

The Cause of All is the Infinite. The science of *pratyahar* indicates the dedicated telescopic view of the Infinite in the presence of finite microscopic analysis. Whenever this finite microscopically looks into anything, out of that microscopic view he or she telescopically understands the cause of it as Infinity, and bows.

Namo sarab diaale, Namo sarab palay.
—Guru Gobind Singh, *Jaap Sahib, 28*
I bow to the One who is merciful to all.
I bow to the One who nourishes all.

The *namo pauree* of *Jaap Sahib* is a most beautiful creation of Guru Gobind Singh through which *pratyahar* can be totally understood. In it, there is a sentence:

Namo tantra tantrang.
—Guru Gobind Singh, *Jaap Sahib, 57*
I bow to that science which unites me to God.

The exact meaning of the word *tantra* here can be understood by looking at a woven cloth—there is a length and there is a breadth. The length is called *tana*, the breadth is called *peta*. Tantra deals with the longitude and latitude of the entire cosmos. Tantra is a science of unison which teaches from the "multison" to the unison through the longitude and latitude of the entire cosmos.

I want to educate you so that you may really understand what Guru Gobind Singh and all the Gurus gave to you as a science. I am afraid that this sweetness on the part of some Indians when they talk to you is diplomatic cleverness, and in your frankness and directness you can innocently be trapped by their approach. I remember in Amritsar, somebody started discussing with me, "Well, how do we know if they are Sikhs or not?" I said, "Well, I'll show you whether they are Sikhs or not." I said, "Bhai Daya Singh, come. This Sardarji is an Indian-born Sikh. Sit down with him in *padma asan* (Lotus Pose), and both chant *Wahe Guru* together for two-and-a-half hours without stopping." I said, "OK, Sardarji, sit down with him and tune in." After exactly forty minutes, that man fainted. At that time, Bhai Daya Singh was not very old, he was only sixteen.

To practice *pratyahar* means one must synchronize, analyze, and totally shell out everything, and realize the praise of God out of everything.

Can't a person spend one-tenth of his time praising God with a single syllable word which represents Infinity? You do not understand one thing: You do not want to relate to your consciousness. You are not going to be judged after death; you are being judged now. Your caliber, your consciousness, your behavior, your environment, your projection, your standard, your faculty of faith—everything is the totality of you. You are being computerized for everything. Therefore, it is required of you that this automatic computer screens you in every activity and totally keeps your record. Therefore, you must answer for everything you

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do, and answer to your own consciousness. Don't answer to me, or anyone else. Nobody will judge you at the time of death but your own consciousness.

When Buddha was given those mushrooms, he knew they were poison. But he also knew that they came as *prasad* (a blessing) from prayer. He took it. He died. Perfect. Guru Arjan Dev could have compromised–he never compromised. Men of Infinity are men of God. No, they are God themselves in the finite shell of a human. They don't compromise. Infinity shall never compromise, because Infinity is a living Truth experienced through finite man. That is called divine.

So the science of pratyahar is an analytical, standardized, mental state of consciousness in which you analytically understand that the very depth and source of any existence coming towards you or going away from you–the cause of all causes–is Infinity.

Can you tell me what is the greatest gift on this Earth? Breath. *Prana*. The first gift is the breath. The second gift is the spiritual teacher. But these two gifts are caused only by what? Explain it to me. The Grace of God, *gurprasad*, God's Will. It is also *pratyahar* when you cause or intend to cause a cause. You are told what the consequences or effect will be, and so you can have total, or infinite, understanding.

I am trying to let you know that this universe is an electromagnetic field. It has longitude and latitude of magnetic wavelengths. This cosmic universe is very communicative–it talks. And in this talking, all personalities are built or marred. Therefore always speak very carefully, consciously, knowing what that shall mean unto Infinity. Remember the Word is God and God is the Word. You are what your words are.

I THINK THIS SUBJECT IS VERY SCIENTIFIC; I should not teach you more than this at this time, except to say that Infinity produces Infinity. You cannot have any shortcomings if you meditate on Infinity. Actually it is the job of the spiritual teacher to tear you apart and show you Infinity. That is the most rational thing he does. It is like a car mechanic. He tears it apart, bangs it around, corrects it, cleans it up, and gives it to you. How you use it is your problem. A spiritual teacher is a workshop of creative Infinity. When you come in that garage that's what happens to you. That is why you sometimes are not happy to come, because all you know is the mechanic's workshop, uniform, language, and tools–chisels, hammers, screwdrivers, and everything–get all over you and you do not know why in the world you came. You know what I mean? Some come only for tuning; some come because of a serious accident.

The Language of Pratyahar. The dialogue of the finite and Infinite becomes one when you merge with Infinity. It changes the language, it changes the scope, it changes the desire field, it changes every electromagnetic approach and frequency right away. I have met some people who have that frequency. I have talked to them and they don't talk scriptures.

I'll tell you something. Once I came home from college and I met my grandpa. He received me, and all he said was, "Blessed is this blessed time. God must be very present that He has given me the opportunity to see my grandson in a very joyful and divine way." I looked around. I said, "Have I turned into an angel?" I moved my hands and arms up and down as if they were wings. He knew that I am very humorous, so he asked, "You are finding your wings?" I said, "Yes, Grandpa, I am just trying to look at myself. Perhaps my wings have grown and you might have seen them." He said, "Yes, your radiance is so excellent. I am seeing the very excellence of His Grace through you and your presence. Come on, sit down, let us talk."

Can you believe this language? Just an ordinary meeting with a grandchild, that's all. It is not that you have to sing *slokas*, take out the Rig Vedas, or always quote the Bible to prove you are very religious. If you can talk like Infinity, live like Infinity, feel like Infinity, and deal like Infinity, then you become a living Infinity.

But first you have to totally synchronize–*pratyahar*.

Inhale Sat • Exhale Naam

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Meditating with Silent Awareness or with Mantra

We do many types of meditation in Kundalini Yoga. What is the advantage of using mantra either silently or aloud as opposed to sitting with silent awareness?

The purpose of meditation is to cleanse the subconscious mind and align the mind with the vision of the soul. It is a mental shower to remove ill thought and attachments. The three basic forms of meditation are:

Suspension Receptive or mindful.
Void Focused with concentration.
Anahat Through *pratyahar.*

Meditation redirects a thought in three ways: with the Negative, Positive and Neutral Minds. The Negative Mind lets it go and rejects accepting the thought. It looks at all things without reaction. If only this approach is used it leads to the state of ***Suspension***. The Positive Mind accepts it and amplifies it with focus and concentration. If only this is used all other thoughts are not seen. It leads to the state of ***Void***. If the Neutral Mind is used by seeing the Infinite in each finite movement, and if an object is seen without barriers by synchronizing it between its finite and infinite aspects–*pratyahar*–it leads to the state of ***Anahat***. In Kundalini Yoga we use all three forms of meditation. Many traditions concentrate on one or two.

Silent Meditation allows the subconscious to dump. Silence makes you aware of the many experiences in the mind. It allows the subconscious to start dumping. You become aware of many thoughts, feelings, and processes that are just below consciousness but which constitute the base for much of our life experience. Watching the breath silently or watching all the objects of the mind is very soothing and gradually provokes awareness. However, it does not remove the deep *samskaras*, the deepest imprints in the unconscious.

Silence, Sound, and "Unstruck Sound" Silent meditation is one part of a three member team: silence, sound, and *anahat*–the "unstruck sound" of the heart.

- Silence awakens you to what is in the subconscious.
- Mantra transforms the content of the subconsciousness.
- Merger through rhythm and *naad* takes you into *anahat,*

which changes the structure of the consciousness itself.

Taking the Support of a Mantra–Like a Thunderbolt

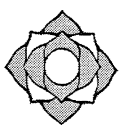
To change the deepest subconscious a seed is needed. That seed, or *bij*, has three main functions: It acts as a focus for the mind. It acts like a fulcrum, over which other thoughts can be leveraged up to the Infinite. It acts as a template of the Infinite to form a new model or imprint in the mind.

Yogi Bhajan describes the process this way: When you meditate deeply into an ecstatic self-hypnosis that joins together heavens, earth and self, the subconsciousness releases a flood of thoughts, wave after wave. Every thought has impact and results. To break old patterns, you must take the support of a thunderbolt, a mantra, to cut to the core of your negative thoughts and turn their energy to positive.

The ideal seed is a mantra. The mantra is not just any sound or thought. In a sense, mantras pre-exist as the DNA of God. They are in each cell of the creation. Their sound has focus, and contains a provocative seed which provides a template for higher experience. Repeating a mantra restructures the patterns in the mind that filter experience.

When you merge into *anahat* through the use of mantra and rhythm, you vibrate a seed, a template of Infinity, that resides in the center of every cell and atom of you like spiritual DNA. When every part of you vibrates, we call that state *Ang Sung Wahe Guru. Ang* means a part of you. *Wahe Guru* is a state of ecstasy. *Sung* means every. So every part of you vibrates as one in a merger in ecstasy of consciouness. You become the mantra and the entire universe meditates on you.

–From Question & Answer column with Gurucharan Singh Khalsa, Kundalini Rising!



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Simran: The Flow of the Meditative Mind

Simran is the goal of meditation. It is a continuous, meditative, longingly creative feeling. It is a feeling, it is a flow, it is a touch, it is a substance: *Ang Sang Wahe Guru. (God is with my every limb, every millimeter, every situation of mine.)*

Japa is the repetition of the Holy Nam. *Japa* is not *simran–japa* gives the power of *simran.*

Meditation is not *simran.* Meditation gives you the power of *simran.*

Raj Yoga is not simran. Raj Yoga is a technology to achieve, receive and conceive *simran.*

Sahej Yoga is not *simran.* Sahaj Yoga is a concept through which you can pursue *simran.*

Prayer is not *simran.* Prayer gives you the power so that your mind can be set for *simran.*

When the state of consciousness reaches *simran,* then you do not need to do anything; God follows you. At that stage the Almighty, the Infinite, the Omniscient, the Omnicompetent God, the Something which you are so proud of, and which you talk about, the scriptures talk about, and saints and sages sing about, that entire Universal Power is totally towards the teeny, tiny individual. Then there is a deep flow of spirituality. Spiritual flow is just like a river: anything can be taken out of it, it still continues. And that flow comes out of *simran.*

–YOGI BHAJAN, JULY 6, 1980

Samadhi–Enlightenment

Yogi Bhajan describes the experience of *samadhi,* or enlightenment in the following poem from *Furmaan Khalsa–Poems to Live By.*

THE BELOVED

When I joined myself to Truth
I got drenched with the color that never fades!

The rhythm of my breath
Became the very sound of God's Name.
And sitting perfectly in chardi kala,*
The True Guru took me by the hand.

My burning desires:
My attachment, greed and pride all vanished.
My lust and passion, my flaming anger,
Were all destroyed
When the True Guru held my hand.

I perfected the Yoga of *Sat Nam.*
Divine Radiance filled my Destiny.
My Master showed me the invisible Path
And, merged in Light, my Lotus bloomed.
Light flowed everywhere . . .
Effortlessly!

I became the Beloved when I learned how to love.
Oh People!
I became majestic and God came to live within me.

Beloved.
I became the Beloved.
It just happened.
God did it.

When I joined myself to Truth,
I became filled with Light.
Inside . . .
Outside . . .
Light and more Light!
Drenched in Light...
The True Guru held my hand.

* *chardi kala* means a state of kundalini risen

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Preparing for Meditation

Meditation is a personal, private experience, even when you are meditating in a group. Yet there are a few universal things that help set the stage for an optimum meditative experience. In a yoga class setting, the environment is already set for you. When practicing on your own, here are a few things that are important:

- ***Environment*** Choose a setting in which you are most likely to be undisturbed. Quiet, beautiful, and sacred is ideal. Best is not too hot, nor too cold. Have something supportive but soft to sit on, such as a sheepskin or a blanket. If you cannot sit comfortably on the floor, sit in a chair.

- ***When to meditate*** Any time is fine. However, yogis know that the best time is 4-7 a.m., or starting 2-1/2 hours before the rise of the sun. This is when all is quiet, and instead of dreaming, you consciously process your mind with meditation. Another optimal time of day is 4-7 p.m., when the sun is setting. Before going to sleep is also a good time to meditate, thus settling and clearing the mind in preparation for deep sleep. It's best not to have a full stomach when meditating.

- ***Tune in*** *with Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo.*

- ***Do yoga exercises and pranayam*** Doing yoga and breathing exercises in preparation for meditation is a key principle in the practice of Kundalini Yoga. The balancing effect on the nervous system and the stimulation of the more subtle energies of the mind and body, facilitates the process of meditation. Also, meditating at the end of a yoga set is the true completion of the process of Kundalini Yoga. It dedicates the energies of the mind, body, and soul to their true state of transcendence and grace.

- ***Spine straight*** No matter how you are seated, it is important that the spine be straight, and the posture balanced. The spine acts as a central channel for the energy of the nervous system. *(See Kriya, Mudra, Bandha chapter.)* Maintain Neck Lock.

- ***Clothing***. Wear comfortable clothing. To fine tune your experience, cover your head and wear clothing of natural fibers.

- ***Mudras***. In Kundalini Yoga, hand positions or *mudras*, are an important part of meditation. A *mudra* is a position of the hands that locks and guides energy flow and reflexes to the brain. *(See Kriya, Mudra, Bandha chapter.)*

- ***Slow down the breath***. As you breathe deeply and rhythmically, scan the body for tension and let it go as you exhale. Begin inhaling vibrating the word *Sat*, exhaling *Naam*.

- You are now ready to get into the meditation of your choice.

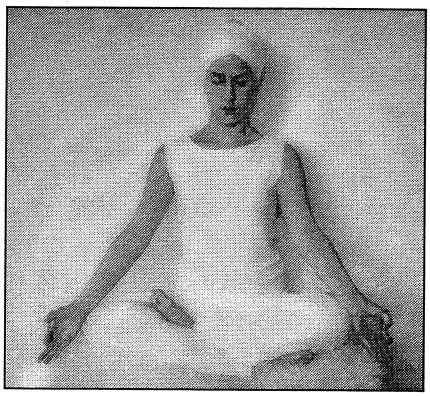
Keeping Steady During Meditation

There is a myth that when you sit down you should be able to quiet your mind. The mind generates thousands of thoughts per second. When you sit quietly and turn the focus inward, you become very aware of what is going on in the background of your mind. Distractions are the rule. Just keep going back to the mantra or other points of focus. Do not evaluate or react to the extraneous thoughts. Let them be processed by the mantra. The mind never stops, but you can create a stillness, a calm, which will serve you all through your life.

Have patience with yourself. Perhaps at first you will achieve only a minute or two of fully focused meditation. Trust the process.

Choosing a Meditation

The range and variety of meditation techniques in the Kundalini Yoga tradition is truly extraordinary. In the Sets & Meditations chapter of this manual you will find over 60 different meditations—a mere fraction of the hundreds of meditations that Yogi Bhajan has passed on. Yet in this compendium, you will find a comprehensive group of meditations, tailored to specific applications, which you can begin to teach to your students, or practice on your own. Included are meditations which use the breath, others that use mantra. There are group meditations, healing meditations, Venus Kriyas, and meditations for children. There are meditations that reduce stress, work on addictions, increase vitality, and clear the chakras. You can also read *The Mind: It's 81 Facets and Projections,* and find over 40 meditations keyed to the various aspects of the mind's structure. For a comprehensive approach to active walking meditation, see *Breathwalk*, by Yogi Bhajan and Gurucharan Singh Khalsa.



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Meditation Focus

There are several different places to focus the eyes while meditating, depending on which meridians and parts of the brain are to be stimulated.

At the Third Eye Point *(Shambavi Mudra)* The Brow Point, the root of the nose. Here, the attention is on the brow and the eyes are gently raised. The *sushmuna*, the central nerve force, is stimulated. This stimulates the pituitary; intuition is developed.

At the Tip of the Nose *(Agiaa Chakra Bandh)* This is the highest lock. It is referred to as Lotus Point Meditation. This controls the mind, which is locked in a triangle. When the optic nerve concentrates at the tip of the nose, the *ida* and *pingala*, then *sushmuna* get to a center of balance. This stimulates the pineal gland and the frontal lobe of the brain. New energy pathways are created in the brain patterns.

At the Moon Center This is the tip of the chin, with the eyes closed and rolled down. This is cooling, calming. You see yourself clearly.

At the Crown Chakra The Tenth Gate; the top of the head.Eyes are closed and rolled upwards, as if looking through the top of the head. This stimulates the pineal and the crown energy center.

1/10th Open The eyelids are light and relaxed. This stimulates the optic nerve slightly so your system doesn't shut down. It makes you calm, and develops intuition. Eye focus may vary as indicated by Yogi Bhajan's instructions. (You will often find instructions in Kundalini Yoga manuals to keep the eyes 9/10ths shut. This is the same as 1/10th open, although eye focus and mental concentration will vary.)

THERE ARE TWO PARTS OF THE BODY which have to be worked on through meditation. If these two areas are undeveloped in your life, you don't have a chance:

- the frontal lobe of the forehead, which controls your personality.
- the upper palate of the mouth, which controls your autonomic systems *(See Sound & Mantra.)*

Whenever you meditate like this (on the tip of the nose), the frontal lobe will become hard. As you meditate more, it will become like lead. And the funny thing is, one day automatically it will not be lead. It "breaks." You will have intuition to see the unseen, know the unknown, and hear the unheard, and your life will not be the same as it is now.

–YOGI BHAJAN, Khalsa Women's Training Camp, July 1994

Meditation Minutes

Yogic science says that there are specific lengths of time needed for certain desired effects during meditation. Most meditations are done for 11 or 31 minutes.

3 minutes of meditation affects the electromagnetic field, the circulation and stability of the blood.

11 minutes of meditation begins to change the nerves and the glandular system.

22 minutes of meditation balances the three minds, and they begin to work together.

31 minutes of meditation allows the glands, breath, and concentration to affect all the cells and rhythms of the body. It lets the psyche of the meditation affect the 3 *gunas*, all 31 *tattvas,** and all layers of the mind's projections.

62 minutes changes the gray matter in the brain. The subconscious "shadow mind" and the outer projection are integrated.

2-1/2 hours changes the psyche in its co-relation with the surrounding magnetic field so that the subconsious mind is held firmly in the new pattern by the surrounding universal mind.

* The 5 *tattvas* we hear about are the 5 most dense, or gross elements. *(See Yogic Philosophy chapter.)*

Meditation Sadhana

"There are two guiding instincts in man. He is either improving his future or blocking his future improvement. If you are conscious of this, and have an honest and sincere urge to improve the future, you will always have promoting habits. If you cannot care for God, at least care for the future." –YOGI BHAJAN

To master the effects of a meditation, practice it as a *sadhana*, a daily discipline. This will develop a life-promoting habit. Habit controls us so much that it is said that we can actually change our destiny by changing our habits. According to yogic science, the human mind works in cycles. We can use various cycles to help replace unwanted patterns of behavior (mental or emotional habits), with new, more positive ones. One commits to a particular meditation or *kriya* for a specific time:

- It takes ***40 days*** to change a habit.
- It takes ***90 days*** to confirm the habit.
- In ***120 days***, the new habit is who you are.
- In ***1,000 days***, you have mastered the new habit.

The duration of 40 days of practice lets the meditation provoke your subconscious to release any thoughts and emotional patterns that hinder you. A good meditation will break your old patterns, put in a seed for a new pattern, and clear the subconscious. Try to meditate at the same time each day. It is helpful to keep a journal of your daily practice.

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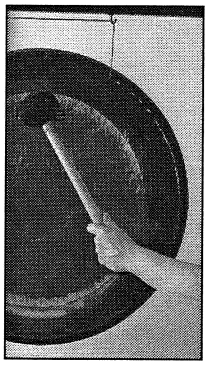
Using the Gong for Meditation

The sound of the gong creates deep relaxation, releasing us from the torrent of thoughts our mind releases, and it stimulates the glandular system to a higher level of functioning. When asked to explain the effects of gong meditation and how to use it, Yogi Bhajan responded:



"The gong is very simple. It is an intervibratory system. It is the sound of Creativity itself. One who plays the gong plays the Universe. The gong is not an ordinary thing to play. Out of it came all music, all sounds, and all words. The sound of the gong is the nucleus of the Word. The gong is not a musical instrument, nor a drum. The gong is a beautiful reinforced vibration. It is like a multitude of strings, as if you played with a million strings. The gong is the only tool with which you can produce this combination of space vibrations."

Emotional Transformation during Gong Meditation Exercises. The gong impacts the body and its meridians. It releases blocks, reduces tension, and stimulates circulation. The result is a reorganization of the emotional energy and feelings that are tied into the body structure.

Before playing a long, deep gong meditation, inform the students to relax the muscles and let the sound of the gong penetrate the body and guide the mind. If they tighten the muscles and try to fight the natural process of change that occurs, they may feel tired or irritated by the gong's strong pulsations.

During a gong meditation or during the relaxation afterwards some people may cry, feel weightless, or laugh uncontrollably. Relax. The release of feelings is a normal process in gong meditation. Play a meditation tape and give the person some water, a tissue, and a little conversation. The gong changes the feelings that are blocked by cutting the thoughts that sustain and recreate the feelings. This can be frightening, arousing, exciting, or delightful. That will depend on the individual.

Playing the Gong. The sequences and rhythms for playing the gong are as varied as music and imagination. A teacher who wishes to learn how to use a gong can begin by viewing the video tapes of Yogi Bhajan when he uses the gong in meditation classes. Also available is a CD called *Spirit Song*. Then, look for courses offered on learning this art. It is inadvisable to play the gong for meditation without proper training.

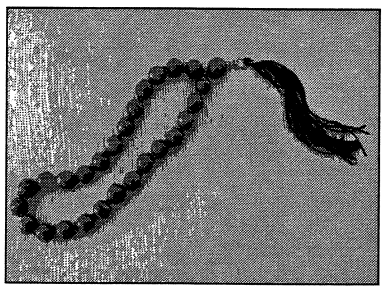
Using a Mala for Meditation

A mala is a simple, effective meditative tool which can help to reduce stress, and enhance wisdom, patience, and health. A mala consists of 108, 54, or 27 beads strung on silk thread with one larger bead, called the Guru bead, from which a tassel hangs. The tassel symbolises a thousand lotus petals.

The Use of Different Fingers with the Mala. Each finger you use relates to a different part of the brain. By running the mala over the first segment of each finger, between the tip of the finger and the first knuckle, you create a different result.

- Index finger (Jupiter): wisdom, knowledge, and prosperity.
- Middle finger (Saturn): patience.
- Ring finger (Sun): health, vitality, and strong nervous system.
- Little finger (Mercury): communication skill, and intelligence.

How to Use a Mala. A mala can be used with either hand. Always start with the bead next to the Guru bead. As you repeat the mantra, with the thumb, move each bead towards the body over the meridian point. Thus, the Guru bead descends and eventually ascends to be the last bead of your meditation. As you hold the Guru bead, repeat your mantra and make a prayer. To begin again turn the mala around without the help of the other hand. Move the beads towards you and continue.



Using your Mala with a Mantra. When reciting the mantra *Sat Naam* move only one bead for both words. With the mantra *Wahe Guru*, move only one bead for the two words. You may also use the mantra *Sat Naam, Wahe Guru*, saying them both with the movement of one bead. You may use any affirmation or mantra of your choice. Generally, move one bead for each repetition of the mantra. The recitation of your mantra may be done silently, in a whisper, or out loud.

For specific mala meditations see the Meditations with Mantra chapter.)

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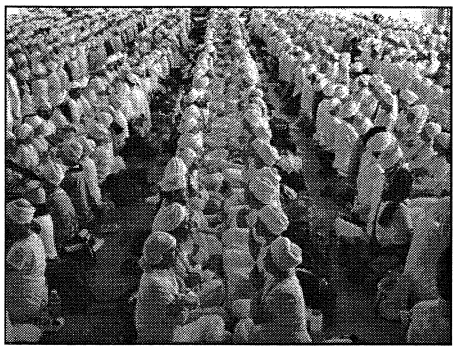
White Tantric Yoga

WHITE TANTRIC YOGA IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF the Kundalini Yoga experience. There is one essential difference from other Kundalini Yoga meditations. White Tantric Yoga cannot be practiced under any circumstances, without the guidance of the Mahan Tantric .

White Tantric Yoga courses are being facilitated all over the world on a regular basis. *(See Resources chapter.)* In addition, there are the three-day White Tantric courses at the Winter and Summer Solstices in Florida and New Mexico and at the Yoga Festival in France. It is recommended that every student/teacher make White Tantric Yoga a regular part of his spiritual practice. These courses also offer opportunities for networking and community building.



"Since ancient times humans have found that they have zillions of thoughts, billions of feelings, millions of emotions, thousands of desires, hundreds of fantasies, and multirealities, and personalities. Ultimately, our mind and thoughts rule us and bog us down. We try every method available to get rid of this pressure because it is eating us up inside. White Tantric Yoga enables you to break through those subconscious blocks, so you can enjoy life. In the shortest time, you can experience release from a lot of the burden and extra weight that you carry in your head. As you see and act on each moment with clarity, you will gain a deeper understanding of yourself and your life will change. Your mind, body, and soul will act together as one. This is the path to personal freedom and awareness, and will bring more success to every area of your life." –YOGI BHAJAN

What to Expect

White Tantric Yoga is done in pairs as a group meditation. You will sit facing a partner and follow instructions for meditation given on video tape by the Mahan Tantric, Yogi Bhajan. Every course is facilitated, in person, by a representative of the Mahan Tantric. Each course consists of between six and eight *kriyas* each day. A *kriya* is a meditation incorporating a yoga posture or hand position, a mental focus and/or a mantra. Sometimes the meditations are accompanied by music. These *kriyas* vary in length from eleven to sixty-two minutes. There are breaks between each *kriya*. The environment is peaceful, and the atmosphere is friendly, supportive, and uplifting.

Envision the energy of the universe as parallel or perpendicular in nature, like a cloth woven together. As a cloth becomes stronger when it is stretched on the diagonal, so does the White Tantric diagonal, or "Z" energy, strengthening the participants.This energy, when directed by the Mahan Tantric, cuts through the blocks that are stuck in the subconscious mind. Using the diagonal "Z" energy, the Mahan Tantric, Yogi Bhajan, connects his subtle body to the subtle bodies of the participants through the course facilitator.

About the Mahan Tantric, Yogi Bhajan

Yogi Bhajan became a Master of Kundalini Yoga at the age of 16 in his native India. He came to the West in 1968. The authority to be the Mahan Tantric (Master of White Tantric Yoga) was bestowed on him in 1971, when the presiding Mahan Tantric, Lama Lilan Po of Tibet, passed from his body. There is only one Mahan Tantric at any given time. White Tantric Yoga was a tradition passed on from teacher to student in a mystical and selective way. As a pioneer of this Age, Yogi Bhajan decided to open the experience of White Tantric Yoga to anyone who wanted this powerful experience.

Preparing for White Tantric Yoga

There are no prerequisites for participating in White Tantric Yoga. Beginners will tune into their internal energies and enjoy a deep and sometimes challenging meditative experience. More advanced meditators will deepen their experience and make new inroads to their spiritual awareness.

Wear loose comfortable white clothing. (White combines all colors and enhances the magnetic field and auric strength). Bring a white cotton head covering which will stay securely on your head during the exercises. Wear shoes that slip on and off easily. White Tantric Yoga is practiced with the feet uncovered. Bring a blanket or sheepskin to sit on and a light blanket to cover yourself with during relaxation periods. Because this is a cleansing process you will be asked to drink water.

WHITE, not Red or Black

White Tantric Yoga should not be confused with black or red tantric. These forms of yoga also transform energy, but in a different way and for different purposes. Black tantric directs the energy to manipulate another human being, and red tantric directs the energy solely for sexual purposes.

In 1971 Yogi Bhajan offered the first White Tantric Yoga course in Los Angeles. Until 1986 he traveled throughout the world presenting as many as thirty White Tantric Yoga courses each year to thousands of students. In 1987, using his unique abilities as a Master, together with modern technology, he began to present White Tantric Yoga as a video-taped series.

"The beauty of White Tantric Yoga is that it is subtle, it is exalting, and it works to give you the mastery of life." –YOGI BHAJAN

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Yogi Bhajan on The Mahan Tantric & the Subtle Body

(Summer Solstice, 1988)

The Subtle Body of the Mahan Tantric lives, as an everlasting factual fact. Why is it so? It is a privilege to tune into it.

It is surprising to me that people do not understand the simple formula of how the Subtle Body works. The Subtle Body gives the opportunity to understand and master the subtlety of life. It can help you to understand what is going on around you. Basically you have to understand that electricity is created by rotation and cross-rotation of the electromagnetic field, and this field works from one place to another. It means there is no distance. That's the principle behind wireless telephones.

That is why, within my lifetime I am trying to educate you—because there can only be one Mahan Tantric, and God knows on whom this crown shall be bestowed—or whether it will be or not. To protect you, to save you, and make you understand, I am using a very attained power of mine as Mahan Tantric and Master of Kundalini Yoga. I am mixing both. Because ordinarily, Kundalini Yoga could not be taught openly and freely to all people all the time. A person had to qualify, initiate himself, come out to perfection—and then come to meet the Master. If the Master qualified him, then he gave him the *kriya* or *sadhana* to practice. But I openly taught it and survived, so I feel God is very kind and merciful to me, and He wants the mission to be complete.

WHITE TANTRIC YOGA VIDEO COURSES

Understanding the nature of the Subtle Body gave us the thought about the nature of the tantric energy. We cannot stop the tantric energy; we want to enrich ourselves; we want to grow; and we want to progress. That's why we started using the wireless telephone method—through the video courses.

Whenever you will come to these courses, through the television, you'll go through the energy, but your Subtle Body will tune in with my Subtle Body. So death for that purpose will never, ever mean a thing. But those who will believe that I am dead, I shall be dead for them. And those who shall believe that I live, I shall live a hundred times more powerfully, stronger in them than they have ever experienced.

With these words I would like to tell you that we have an everlasting, loving, beautiful relationship, here, hereafter, unto Infinity, and even beyond that. Believe me. Even if you can't believe it, it is true."

Celestial Communication

Celestial Communication is *mudra* in motion. A tool for mental relaxation, it is meditation with mantra and movement of the arms and upper body. The meaning of the mantra is expressed through movement. The mantra will move the spirit, and at the same time, the head and feelings will be heard. Yogi Bhajan describes its impact:

"Everything comes from stress. If you want to get rid of this inner-grown stress, here is one solution. There's no power more than the power of the word, and when the word is formed through the body, the entire being is purified, relaxed..."

"Celestial communication is a *sadhana* in which you communicate with the Infinite God through your body, mind, and soul. You interlock all three. The *shabd* is there, sound current is there, rhythm is there, projection is there, the mind is there, and the body is there. It is very subtle and effective..."

"This system is given to mankind to excel. It will work wonders with people of all religions and from all places. It is a methodology which will give you a tremendous amount of relief in your inner being...."

"Creativity, when combined with physical, psychological concentration in meditation balances the human energy, and gives strength to the radiant body. This brings prosperity and success. Celestial Communication is our gift to the world. It relaxes the tense parts of the brain through the nerve connections of the tips of the fingers, activating the meridians. The fingers move with the *prana* to communicate, and this "cantaloupe" becomes a human brain. The tension of the neuro-pattern is relieved into a relaxed pattern of its own originality. It is a fantastic release. The brain comes out of its fatigue. And men can do it. It's not only for ladies..."

"In the last days of the journey of my life, all the knowledge which has been carried from the great Masters, I would like to leave on record to share with you. That is the best present I can give you. You will have something to pass on to those who follow you, and from then onward the generations shall benefit from it. But you have to practice it, experience it, understand it, share it, and enjoy it. These songs and music are like time capsules for the coming generations to follow, sing, and enjoy..."

Celestial Communication videotapes are available through Ancient Healing Ways.

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Sat Nam Rasayan

"Deep Relaxation in the True Identity"

SAT NAM RASAYAN MEANS "DEEP RELAXATION IN THE TRUE IDENTITY." It is an ancient healing art. The purpose of Sat Nam Rasayan is to serve humanity. Sat Nam Rasayan works on a subtle level through the projective meditative mind. Sat Nam Rasayan allows the healer to access and balance the five elements (air, earth, ether, fire, and water) and the pranic body.

Sat Nam Rasayan is part of the Golden Chain. The experience and mastery of the Sacred Space, the meditative projective mind, was passed on by Yogi Bhajan to Guru Dev Singh Khalsa, who has developed the School of Sat Nam Rasayan, to codify and establish a modality for teaching this sacred healing art. You can find classes and practitioners of Sat Nam Rasayan in many cities worldwide, many with ties to Kundalini Yoga communities.

Even if you do not plan to become a healer, Sat Nam Rasayan is a great tool to add to your Kundalini Yoga teaching skills. A Sat Nam Rasayan Course taught by Guru Dev Singh Khalsa typically includes Kundalini Yoga & meditation and awareness-increasing meditation practices. The exercises, done by healer and client, help participants experience directly their own capacity to open, stabilize and become aware of the sensitive space and ultimately the Sacred Space. Sat Nam Rasayan will enhance your awareness of your subtle body and expand the capacity of your meditative mind. This develops your ability to "hold the space" when you teach Kundalini Yoga classes and opens your compassionate awareness so you can be sensitized and present to each student in your class.

Guru Dev Singh has said that if you are able to become nothing and reach the state Yogi Bhajan calls *shuniya*, God himself will grab you and you will become his servant. As a Sat Nam Rasayan healer/practitioner you will learn the nature of surrender, and then the Sacred Space starts to serve you. The mind of the Sat Nam Rasayan practitioner can become transcendant and in the vastness of this consciousness healing can occur. This state is a pure meditative absorption between the practitioner and client, in the Divine.

Guru Dev Singh: "In the Age of Pisces humans approached God, making an effort to cleanse and purify themselves in every way. Now, in the Age of Aquarius, it is God who approaches humankind and we need only be aware of it and allow it to happen. Spiritual practices are no longer as rigid or difficult as before, they are, however, more subtle. In this Age, it is not a question of trying to know but rather of recognizing that Knowledge is already within us."

Venus Kriyas

Venus Kriyas are Kundalini Yoga exercises done with a partner, usually a partner of the opposite sex. Although Venus Kriyas are less intense than Tantric Yoga, they fall into the category of a more advanced Kundalini Yoga practice, because they intensify the experience of the exercise through the polarities of the male-female interaction. Therefore, it is important to adhere closely to the following guidelines when teaching Venus Kriyas:

- Always tune in with *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo* before practicing Venus Kriyas.
- Do not line the students up in lines as in Tantric Yoga. Two people can sit together anywhere. If you line up, then the energy is shared diagonally. That is not the intention of Venus Kriyas. The energy is only intended to be shared between partners.
- Venus Kriyas should never be done to sensually or sexually seduce one's partner. Explain to the students the importance of approaching these exercises with neutrality and purity. If done with the wrong intention, they lose their effectiveness and in fact, it can be more damaging than helpful.
- Limit the exercise to 3 minutes (unless specifically taught otherwise by Yogi Bhajan.) Yogi Bhajan has said that doing these *kriyas* correctly for 3 minutes, and no more than 3 minutes, is very lucky.
- Do not teach Venus Kriyas in Beginners classes, or a class with even one or two beginner students. Reserve Venus Kriyas only for those with Kundalini Yoga experience. Use your judgement to assess when your students have the disicpline to practice Venus Kriyas without sexual connotation.
- Do not create an entire class using Venus Kriyas. Just use one or two along with a Kundalini Yoga *kriya*.
- Venus Kriyas are NOT to be done by pregnant women.

See Meditations With Mantra chapter for examples of Venus Kriyas.

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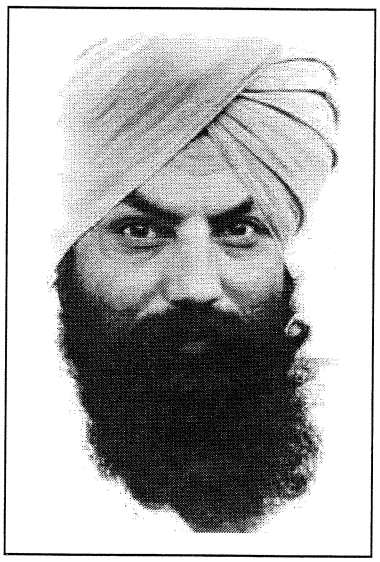
Tratakum (Gazing) Meditation

THIS FORM OF MEDITATION WHICH INVOLVES GAZING, is a powerful technique to focus pranic energy and increase the ability to concentrate. The pranic energy gives life to the atom, all matter, and the mind. The general technique of gazing is called *Tratakum*. The stories around gazing are many, and the simple truths are well obscured.

The eyes do not act simply like a camera. Instead they constantly scan and interpret the sense data. Patterns (for instance, mandalas) stabilize the eye movements. Where there is such organization, the eyes stay in motion to establish order. They do not interact passively with the world of the senses. Also, the eyes reflect the internal world of your body and tensions. An iridologist can analyze your health and past record of diseases by looking at the structure and coloration of the iris. A spiritual man can tell how open and accomplished you are by the pranic glow from your eyes.

Tratakum is a powerful technique to focus pranic energy and increase the ability for concentration.



As the different facets of an object of concentration present themselves to you, you actually experience different facets of your own self. The outer object is nothing but a gateway to the many facets of your self-experience. In a real sense, you become what you meditate on.

In White Tantric Yoga, the eye into eye contact by partners is essential to completing the energy flow; but the practice is so powerful, it cannot be practiced without the presence of the Mahan Tantric who separates the energies of the individuals. Otherwise there is a chance in Tantric Tratakam that the mental merger is so complete that the individual identity may be confused.

Guru Yoga

In the yogic scriptures it says, "Even a glance from the eyes of a holy man can cure mental and physical imbalances."

If you identify a new quality in an object of meditation, you have contacted and brought out that quality in yourself. For these reasons, pictures of saints and objects of inspiration have always been subjects of meditation. If you pick a saintly person and meditate to experience his qualities of humility, service, and healing, you learn to express these qualities in yourself. But there is a level beyond this. Not all pictures have the same effect, even if the pictures are of the same person. One picture may show happiness, another sadness, and another contemplation. Meditation on each will provoke those qualities. It is extremely rare for any master to give a photo that shows neutrality and a direct stare from the eyes. This is the only type of picture suitable for Tratakum.

Yogi Bhajan: "People will enjoy beaming who have meditated on that picture of mine. Not all pictures do something. However weird that particular picture is—sometimes you don't like it—that's the only picture that works. All other pictures can do nothing. That's the only one. What should I do? Some people complain to me, 'Yogiji, your other pictures are more beautiful.' But I say, 'I can't help it. Sometimes non-beautiful things are required, too.'"

In such a photo it is impossible to get stuck on the level of personality. In fact, since it is neutral, the photo will be both impersonal and personal. It will reflect you better than a mirror. In a mirror you can fool yourself with your own face. In the Guru Yoga photo you cannot. In such a photo there must also be a light in the eyes of the teacher. A photo with the direct stare of neutrality can heal and give you the instant ability to contact your own higher guidance.

We are fortunate to have such a picture of the Mahan Tantric. If it is meditated on properly and seriously, the karmas can be erased and individual destiny expanded.

Teachers are connected by the Golden Chain, unto Infinity. Guru Yoga allows you to ascend the Golden Chain. It is an action done with humility.

Nothing else has the value of this meditation. It is a must for any student or teacher of Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan to have an experience of this. The practice is called "mental beaming." It gives the mind the ability to project to Infinity through the creative power of the imagination.

For instructions on how to do the Tratakum Meditation, a full-size copy of Yogi Bhajan's Tantric picture, as well as other Tratakum meditations, see the Meditations Without Mantra chapter. A glossy 8.5"x11" photo can be purchased from Ancient Healing Ways. See Resources chapter.

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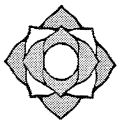
CHAPTER 12



Sadhana

A person once said about sadhana: "Once sadhana is done, nothing should happen to you." I said, "No, when sadhana happens, everything should happen to you, and you should come out as a winner, you should come out victorious!" That is what sadhana gives you. It doesn't give you a written guarantee from God. The one who does sadhana builds himself such a powerful personality, he can conquer anything! That is why I do my own sadhana. I have been doing it for years. I do it even now. Some people ask me, "You are a Master, why do you do sadhana?" I say, "To remain a Master!"

–YOGI BHAJAN

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Sadhana

▸ *Sadhana* means a daily spiritual practice. *Sadhana* is a self-discipline that allows one to express the Infinite within one's self.

▸ *Sadhana* is a discipline of the mind and body to serve the soul. *Sadhana* keeps the mind clear to accurately guide our actions.

▸ Yogi Bhajan has given thousands of lectures full of yogic knowledge, exercises, meditations, recipes, remedies, and spiritual insights. Repeatedly he stresses that listening and reading are only a first step, and that one has to practice regularly. The motto of the Age of Aquarius, the New Age we are entering into, is "I know, therefore I believe." A practical personal experience is required to integrate these ancient spiritual truths. The regular personal daily practice of yoga, meditation and related exercises is called *sadhana*.

Sadhana

In sadhana the sadhu lives.
In sadhana the nectar of God's Love rains down.
In sadhana come the blessings of Simran, Awareness, and Divine Understanding.
In sadhana is the meditation of Raj Yoga.
In sadhana see God's glory.
In sadhana experience Infinity.
Sadhana is the daily meditation of the sadhu.
Oh Yogi! Become one with God!
—YOGI BHAJAN

Sadhana, Aradhana, Prabhupati

THE ESSENCE OF *SADHANA* IS IN THE SEQUENCE *sadhana, aradhana,* and *prabhupati*—discipline, attitude, and mastery. These three steps are inseparable. To understand daily *sadhana*, we view it within the context of *aradhana* and *prabhupati*.

SADHANA

Sadhana means a practice of self-discipline that allows one to express the Infinite within one's self. It is a time each day to notice the patterns that lead away from higher consciousness and to transcend those patterns.

Sadhana is a conscious activity. We consciously choose to rise up, to exercise the body, and to meditate. Each day is different. Each day, we are different. Every 72 hours all the cells of the body totally change. Sickness comes and goes. Motivation waxes and wanes. But through all the flux of life, through all the variations of the mind and heart, we consciously choose to maintain a constant and regular practice.

MORNING SADHANA—*Cleaning the Subconscious*

The 108 yogic scriptures called the Kundalini Upanishads, call for at least two-and-a-half hours of *sadhana* before the rising of the sun. The duration of two-and-a-half hours is determined by the law of karma: everything you give, you receive back tenfold. So if you dedicate one-tenth of each day to your higher consciousness, your whole day is covered by the returning energy.

To exercise before sunrise is important because the angle of the sun to the Earth is very good for meditation. Also there is much *prana* in these hours, and the body rhythms are more set to support physical cleansing than during the rest of the day. Few people are awake and busy, so the clutter and bustle of daily activities does not interfere with your practice.

Though many challenges may come to stop this constant early morning practice, as we conquer each one, we will build our willpower, confidence, and ability to concentrate. This is no small accomplishment. If at the same time each day, we tune all of our mental and physical rhythms to each other, then the entire day flows better. Besides this, if we learn to meditate at the same time every day, this natural rhythm will make it easier and easier.

In meditation, we are clearing the subconscious of fears. As each fear comes up and we look upon it neutrally, the fear loses its power over us. We become more flexible and feel more free. Most fears were learned at a particular time of day. So these fears tend to occur most intensely at the time of day they were originally experienced. By meditating at *sadhana* time, we slowly attract the anxieties from all other parts of the day. Normally we react to anxieties on their time and conditions. In meditation, the effects of old fears come to us on *our* time and under *our* conditions. Since they come at the same time each day, it becomes easier and easier to deal with each one. Eventually the mind is cleared of the clouds of fear and begins to see the light and power of creative consciousness. Then the morning meditation clears out the daily worries and projections so no further long-term subconscious fears can accumulate.

After practicing a regular *sadhana* for some time, the effect begins to seep into the deeper parts of the mind. This might take 40 days or one and a half years. It

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It seems that on a daily basis, when you do *sadhana*, nothing happens. But you don't do it out of greed. You do it to conquer your laziness, your ego, your stupidity, with your essence of commitment. That's all *sadhana* is. We don't do it to get anything. —YOGI BHAJAN

depends on the individual, the intensity of effort, and the starting condition. The subconscious mind finally gets the message. It understands that we are sincere, that meditation is a priority, that every day at this time we begin to wake up automatically without the aid of an alarm, and that even when traveling we will meditate every day on time. The subconscious begins to support us, and *sadhana* begins to feel effortless. The subconscious, which directs about 60 percent of our activities and responses by habit, has now acquired a habit to have the consciousness of *sadhana*.

ARADHANA—*Connecting to the Universal Self*

In the beginning, *sadhana* may seem like a negative activity. It imposes discipline at the cost of some other activities such as sleep! It is difficult to deal with the many influences that resist your attempts to be regular.

But as *sadhana* becomes *aradhana*, only positive feeling is left as a result of experience. The higher mind is able to connect with the Universal Self. The mind becomes more active now in its subconscious clearing. If we find resistance now it is not from external changes. We confront a basic inner question: "Am I willing to act and think in my highest consciousness, or do I want to hang on to my old identity even longer?" If the choice is for the higher self, then *sadhana* becomes a joy, and we leap up each morning to meet it.

If we put off the decision, we will start feeling tired or sick to avoid getting up, and we will fall asleep whenever we meditate in an attempt to avoid this commitment to the self. Another pitfall at this stage is the feeling that we have "made it." Since the physical habit is firmly established, we become lax in the mental discipline of concentrating on the Infinite.

It is just like climbing a mountain: when we reach a high plateau, our impulse is to camp and look at the valleys below. But waiting too long makes the muscles slack, and soon we may even forget why we wanted to climb to the top when this level is so comfortable. We know the rest of the climb is harder, narrower, and colder than what we have already experienced. So we resist the last step.

This is an apt metaphor for climbing the heights of self-realization. When we have practiced enough to confirm an attitude, we relax. We make it to *sadhana*, but fall asleep. We meditate, but sometimes the words are just mechanical motions without meaning, because we lose touch with our initial motivations. This is part of the subconscious reorganization of our motivation and intent. At some point in this, we may feel absolutely no motivation to do what we have set out to do. It is then that the regular habit of *sadhana* and the earlier commitments are essential. The thought of duty and of the *Nam* itself may become our only reasons for continuing. If we are constant through this dark time, we can tap new sources of energy and strength within ourselves. We will build a dependence directly on the Infinite and never need to rely on a finite motivation or structure.

Why is it important for a Kundalini Yoga teacher to do sadhana?

IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY FOR A YOGA teacher to do a regular *sadhana* to maintain and improve his radiance and impact. As Yogi Bhajan says, "A teacher who does not have a beam of energy within him or herself cannot teach Kundalini Yoga."

In this chapter, we are primarily referring to morning *sadhana*. However, every practice of regular daily yoga and meditation done in a group or by yourself is a *sadhana* and can add to your radiance as a Kundalini Yoga teacher. It is recommended from time to time to chose a special *sadhana* aimed at specific psychological or physical areas.

If you teach a lot, your body might remain flexible from demonstrating the exercises. But you can never surrender as much to the exercises and go as deep as when you do yoga for yourself. If you do not have a personal practice of spiritual growth along with your teaching, your teaching will run dry, and become flat and uninspired.

As teachers of Kundalini Yoga, you encourage people to do a *sadhana*, to develop a daily practice. For some people, that can be as simple as an 11-minute daily meditation. Some might develop 45 to 60 minutes of yoga. Others can start to rise in the early morning, and for some, a full-length two-and-a-half hour *sadhana* is their only desire.

The best way to have a potent projection as a teacher is to develop your own *sadhana*. Your influence as a teacher is not from control, but rather from control over your own inner shadow. We all have an inner shadow inside of us. It is brought out, provoked, and conquered by the way we act in relation to our *sadhana*. When that shadow is conquered, when you know you can conquer all shadows that come to you, you can also be the light that awakens people within their own hearts. You need to have a certain steady level of consciousness to pull people up. You can never get people to *sadhana* through any form of coercion; you can only do it by the light of awareness that you show in your own heart. That's why doing a *sadhana* as a teacher is one of the very first conditions for effectiveness in the teachings.

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PRABHUPATI—*Mastery of the Universe*

The word *prabhupati* literally means "spouse of God." Once *aradhana* has cleaned the subconscious, we enter into *prabhupati,* or mastery of the universe. This is the state of neutrality. Our motivation is neutral. No finite thing motivates us. No money, no fame, no sex, no personal advancement is enough to determine our actions. We cease to be manipulated by things. We stop being attached to our past, possessions, and hopes, so that we can creatively and freely act in the highest consciousness of each moment. In this neutral state, we sense the Infinite in all things. Nothing motivates us except the sense of the Infinite existence itself. Motivation comes from the center of our being.

The stage of *prabhupati* represents the opening and atunement to the superconsciousness. The conscious mind has merged with the subconscious mind, and there is no conflict in the personality. Everything is experienced as a harmony even if the gross outward circumstance seems challenging or disastrous. A person feels more of the pain of the entire cosmos, and more of its joy, but rests in the neutral and sublime state of mind in the mastery of God. It is the full awakening and integration of compassion into the personality. Compassion gives one a capacity to forgive the unforgivable.

The highest *sadhana* is that your presence should remind people of God. What bigger and more powerful miracle than that can there be, that by your very presence you can invoke Godhood in people?
—YOGI BHAJAN

In acts of compassion a kind of vacuum is created, for the law of action and reaction has been transcended. Nature does not love a vacuum and neither does the universe. So it always must help that yogi who has the compassion to serve .

The person who is true to their *sadhana* begins to glow and gains the ability to guide and inspire others. Just being in his or her presence helps clear the mind of useless conflicts. She has opened the guiding potential of the supermind in her aura.

Group Sadhana

DOING *SADHANA* IN A GROUP DEVELOPS GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS. At the beginning of *sadhana* everyone has a different vibration. Some have traces of dreams; others are already filled with concerns for the day; and still others come with different expectations about *sadhana*. The more people there are, the more these individual differences balance out and create a harmony. The happiness of one person balances the sadness of another. Then the entire group finds its energy directed by the activity of the *sadhana* itself. The individual auras merge and form a group aura. If the group is well-tuned into the Infinite, a rainbow aura forms that reflects all colors. A bluish color of sincerity and devotion predominates. This auric transformation aids the practitioner in making the step beyond ego centeredness.

By the end of morning *sadhana*, when everyone's energy has intermingled and merged, it is easy to communicate and be on the same wave length. We experience this effect throughout the day. There will be fewer misunderstandings in the area of communications.

Yogi Bhajan on Group Sadhana: "All for One, and One for All"

YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD, and your soul is the Divine Guru within. So, you get up in the morning, meditate, chant the mantras, do the exercises, call on your spirit, regulate the breath, and you get together in group consciousness. In that way you help each other. Group consciousness in morning *sadhana* is to help each other. If I am trying to sleep, another is not sleeping. If in this whole group, one person opens up to God just once, we will all be blessed in his openness. That is what matters. If one has walked into *sadhana* with heart and soul in a prayerful mind, we will all benefit. That is the power of the group *sadhana*. All should participate.

But, we still have something of the past in us. We bring up worries about who should lead. "Oh, that leader has brought a very good *sadhana*! That one has freaked out the *sadhana*." The truth is that nobody freaked out the *sadhana*, and nobody made it beautiful. It is the Will of God which prevails through the soul. When you are a servant, and act as a channel, it prevails through you.

If in morning *sadhana* one cannot curtail the barriers and get to Oneness, I don't think there is any other time it can happen. All for one, and one for all. That is the principle.

•

IF YOU MUST DO *SADHANA* BY YOURSELF, then while you are chanting, imagine a million others all around you. Hear them all chanting, with you in the middle not moving at all. Feel that you do not chant physically and yet are leading the chant and letting the chant lead you. As you imagine this, continue chanting.

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Preparing for Sadhana

WE SAY RISE IN THE AMBROSIAL HOURS AND BE WITH GOD, because God is Infinity. Anything which is multiplied by Infinity becomes Infinity. So, early in the morning, get up and multiply yourself by Infinity.

ENVIRONMENT

In a meditative *sadhana* you become supersensitive, and the environment that surrounds you has a huge effect on the ease of going into meditation. Colors, sounds and even the past usage of the room all register in your consciousness and affect its energy. There are rooms beautifully designed and used only for meditation. Just walking in such a room inspires meditation, like being in a forest automatically draws one into a meditative state.

The meditation room should smell fresh. Air should be allowed to circulate, and the temperature should be moderate. Too much cold may harm the body in deep meditation. Too much heat will induce sleep and poor circulation. The spot you sit on should be covered with an animal skin or a wool blanket, since they are non-static and insulate your psycho-electromagnetic field from the electromagnetic field of the Earth. Sharp noises and interruptions should be avoided during meditation and *sadhana*. In some stages of meditation a closing door may sound like an explosion.

PREPARING YOUR BODY FOR SADHANA

Create some routine for your early morning preparaton. Wake yourself gently in the morning and do the standard wake-up exercises. *(See wake-up exercises in Yogic Lifestyle chapter.)* Remember to drink a few glasses of water.

Take a cold shower. You cannot meditate fully if your circulation is still in patterns suited for sleep or drowsiness. *(See Ishnaan in Yogic Lifestyle chapter for the correct way to take a cold shower.)*

After your cold shower routine, put on clothing which is neat and clean, loose and flexible. White is the best color for *sadhana* clothing. Do not wear the same garments to *sadhana* as you wore to bed. You must tell your consciousness that *sadhana* is a special activity that you prepare for and even dress specially for. Your mind will be more alert and more cooperative if it knows an important event is about to take place. Choose a meditation blanket or shawl made of wool, silk, or cotton. Use it only for meditation. Over a period of time, the shawl will absorb the vibrations of *sadhana*. Then just putting it on will immediately aid your efforts.

YOGA EXERCISES

An important part of *sadhana* is a *kriya*, an exercise series. The physical body must be exercised to keep the circulation balanced and strong, to remove tensions and blocks created by emotions, to alter the glandular secretions so that they correspond to the state of consciousness you want to attain, to clean the circulatory system to prevent disease, and to stimulate the kundalini.

A strong exercise series awakens the will. Press through the minor pains of limbering and nerve strengthening. This helps you to stay alert during meditation and chanting. The exercises you practice should be sets as taught by Yogi Bhajan, or a series strictly following his guidelines. The series should leave you with a feeling of greater energy flow, mellowness, alertness, and enthusiasm. Too much exercise can tax the body so much that you will feel drowsy and lack motivation. Therefore, a very heavy exercise and cleansing *sadhana* should be done when there is plenty of time to relax afterwards. A balanced series of exercises that works on breathing, nerves, glands, and spine is perfect for *sadhana*.

CHOOSING THE EXERCISES

Each day of the week has its own energy. In astrology this is symbolized by associating each day with a planet. The daily *sadhana* exercise set could be chosen to relate to these energies. An emotional, calming *pranayam* for Monday; a *nabhi* (Navel Point) *kriya* for Tuesday; a brain cleansing set for Wednesday; a deep meditation Thursday; a sexual energy transmutation set Friday; a strenuous physical cleansing *kriya* Saturday; and a blissful projective Laya Yoga meditation Sunday.

Ultimately you must use your own sensitivity to choose what kind of energy to deal with in the exercises. Or, you can use the chart as a guideline.

DAY	PLANET	QUALITY
Monday	Moon	Emotion
Tuesday	Mars	Energy, combativeness
Wednesday	Mercury	Business communication
Thursday	Jupiter	Expansion & deep thought
Friday	Venus	Love, sensuality
Saturday	Saturn	Karma, constriction, discipline
Sunday	Sun	Purity, energy of self

LEADING GROUP SADHANA

If all the physical preparations have been cared for, you can then set your mind for group consciousness. If you are leading the *sadhana*, check for unexpected visitors and guests. If they do not know the procedure, make them secure with a brief explanation.

Clearly establish who is to start the *sadhana*. When you chant by yourself you are only one voice, but sitting with others the effect of your sound is multiplied by adding to the sound of others, and by others hearing and reflecting your voice.

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The Effect of Sadhana

CHANT *ONG NAMO GURU DEV NAMO*, AND FEEL THE IN-FLOW OF ENERGY and light to the body and mind, and the presence of the Teacher. Meditate on the higher Teacher within, and feel that in all devotion and humility we are asking for guidance in *sadhana*.

Many people build a regular *sadhana* but fall into the pit of boredom, because of false expectations. They want an experience of flashing light and sparkling energy. Although this does occur at times, it is more important to have contact with the Infinite. Realize that doing the same chant or the same exercise we have done many times before can give us a totally different effect today. We are not at all the same person who went to bed a few hours before. The body's cells have renewed themselves, and in the deep slumber of nocturnal meditation we have forgiven ourselves for all the errors made the day before. We are fresh. Let the individual mind rest in the neutrality of the Infinite Mind.

OVERCOMING THE DUALITY OF THE MIND

Yogi Bhajan: "When I tell you to get up and meditate in the ambrosial hours, it seems odd. Why should you get up at 3:30 am? Because you require those two hours to work out your own mind, so that the rest of the day you can work out your life. *Amrit vela naam jaap. Rise in the ambrosial hours and meditate. Be with God.* Whenever your mind will be in duality, you will be in trouble. There is no way you can function. 'Should I go north? Should I go south?' If you can't decide which way you are going to go, you are going to sit right there. You'll neither go north nor south. That's called duality. Life is a gift of God, and duality is a waste of that life.

It doesn't matter who you are. You may be the President of the United States, or a beggar in the street. Whenever you have duality, you will be in trouble. That's the law. Nobody can change it. To have no duality and to have oneness and clarity of mind, you have to keep your mind clean, smart, and healthy."

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

There is a dynamic triangle within each of us between practice, experience, and your experience of the experience. There's a constant cycle between those three.

If you have many beliefs and no *sadhana*, how are you really changing? If you believe very good things about people and you serve no one, what good is that? *Sadhana* becomes a key. In terms of the body and posture there is one law for *sadhana*: "Get up, set up, and keep up." If you don't set up for the day, if you don't posture yourself, ready to engage the day, how are you going to keep up? And how are you going to have a set up if things are already happening before you even get up? So, first you have to get up before things are happening. Then you can set yourself in a posture, attitude, and commitment; ready to engage. Then you have the potential to keep up. If you keep up, you will start having a momentum above Time. And the effective human is timeless above Time. As long as you feel that you are just at the whim of Time, you're not at the level of the extraordinary human that is your normal potential. And it all starts with *sadhana* and posture. That's what a spiritual posture is. It gives you spiritual fitness.

Yogi Bhajan: Wisdom, Commitment & Consistency

Why do we get up for morning *sadhana*? Because we have to face the whole day, and we cannot face the day without a constant level of energy. People love you for three things only: wisdom, commitment, and consistency.

Wisdom is the intuitive nature that allows you to give the right answer by listening within the question that is asked. For every question there is an answer in it.

Commitment is the ability for your whole self to sustain its status in projected reality of action. Then people can trust you. Otherwise, it is like building a cozy bungalow on the top of a volcano. If you act like an earthquake or volcano, who will build upon you?

Consistency is steadiness through time. *Sadhana* gives us sensitivity to know, to feel, and to touch. It gives us intuition to touch reality. The methods are three-fold: *jappa, tappa, sanjam. Jappa* is repetition. *Tappa* is the heat of central impulsation. *Sanjam* is merger through *simran*—meditation on a very slow, conscious breath.

In your consciousness, you must find a time to ask yourself three questions:
1) "How much am I a part of the I AM which made me what I am?"
2) "During my working day, during my existence, during my awareness, how much of the time have I been aware that I am part of the greatness that I am?"
3) "What can I do to extend myself to the greater I AM of which I am a part?"

In finding the answers to these questions, you will find your way from the realm of finite ego to the realm of higher consciousness, and you will have the experience of total relaxation into mental happiness and contentment.

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INTEGRATION & COMMITMENT

The lifestyle of modern civilization induces a split from nature's rhythms and consequently from the natural attunement to our inner life. This leaves a split that runs between the two sides of our brain. It is a popular notion to recognize that our brain has two sides which have differentiated functions. The same difference has been recorded by the yogis. The two sides deal with action, emotion, and perception in opposite ways.

Another element in the *sadhana* process is commitment. Yogi Bhajan once said that 90 percent of today's insanity comes from a lack of commitment and the lack of a capacity to commit. Commitments set the values of the self. The values of the self allow you to subject the power of the self to create. Creativity allows detachment. Detachment allows judgment. Judgment plus forgiveness give progress in the process of expansion of the self.

Sadhana acts as a counselor to the two sides of the self. It encourages a central self to become bilingual and translate the languages of the two sides.

Sadhana creates a meditative mind which can absorb all the stimuli in the environment, compute it, and then act wisely instead of just reacting. The inner observer can understand logic as well as intuition, activity as well as rest, science as well as art. We must develop the bilingual self, fully prepared with a clean sense of values and a deep capacity for commitment. This capacity comes through *sadhana*.

Sadhana: The Ultimate Approach to Change

All these changes that you are seeing in your personality did not happen because you got counseled, or your teacher was great. You all changed because you wanted to change and you did *sadhana*. *Sadhana* changed you. All this other stuff is being done to keep you going. This is a rational approach, not an ultimate approach. The ultimate approach is when you want to change, and you do *sadhana*. Then you shall change.

- YOGI BHAJAN

Yogi Bhajan Answers Questions About Sadhana

Question: What is the greatest reward of doing sadhana?

Answer: The greatest reward of doing *sadhana* is that the person becomes incapable of being defeated. *Sadhana* is a self-victory, and it is a victory over time and space. Getting up is a victory over time, and doing it is a victory over space. That is what *sadhana* is. And when you do a *sadhana* in the sangat, you enrich yourself in multiple ways. First, the isolation which can hit anybody and make them go totally crazy is defeated. Secondly, when all of you meditate on God, the total effect of your *sadhana* becomes multiplied by the number of people participating. *Sadhana* is not a matter of advantages and disadvantages. It is simply a means through which you can defeat all your miseries, misfortunes, and handicaps. It is a very personal thing which does not relate to anybody except yourself.

You are supposed to go through self-evaluation every day. That is what *sadhana* is. On one side is God, the superiority of you; on one side is you; and on one side is the devil or the inferiority of you. Between the three you have to assess yourself.

A *sadhu* is a being who has disciplined himself. *Sadhana* is the technique to discipline yourself. It is a scientific way to live.

Question: I have been having a problem with sadhana. I fall asleep in the same posture every morning.

Answer: Whenever you have a problem with *sadhana*, you are very fortunate, because it indicates you are working on something. That is the time to conquer it, and get it out of your system.

Question: How can I find out what it is?

Answer: There is nothing to find out. Just go through it. Whenever you have a problem with *sadhana*, luck is smiling on you. That is what you have been waiting for. There is a challenge—you can challenge it, and go through it.

Question: How do you challenge it?

Answer: Challenge it by doing it. *Sadhana* gives fearlessness and a sense of self, as well as projection, polarity combination, equilibrium, respectability, totality, internal and external self-knowledge, purity, dignity, divinity, and grace. In addition, it gives you radiance, *pranic* and auric *shakti*. Finally, it gives you the quality of metal which is ever shining. You become a shining, living grace. This quality is embodied in *loh*—iron—which can absorb all the heat. *Sarab loh* means that which absorbs the entire heat and cold of all the universe, and still remains neutral. That is what *sadhana* gives you. When you want to be bountiful, do *sadhana*.

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Question: Is leading the yoga exercises in sadhana the same as teaching a yoga class?

Answer: No. There are differences. One difference is the amount of talking that should be done. In an outside class, there is more need for inspiring, coaxing, and explaining. *Sadhana* occurs in the quiet ambrosial hours. At this time, mostly we should *listen* to the Infinite.

Question: Should I change the exercises and kriyas every day?

Answer: One part of the *sadhana* should stay constant long enough for you to master, or at least experience, the changes evoked by a single technique. Each *kriya* and mantra has its individual effects, although they all elevate you toward a cosmic consciousness. Learn to value the pricelessness of one *kriya*, and all others will be understood in a clearer light.

There is a natural 40-day rhythm to habits in the body and mind. It takes about 40 days of consistent practice to break a habit. It takes about 90 days to establish a new habit in action and in the subconscious. It is good to take these biorhythms into account when designing your practice.

Question: If I have to leave sadhana, what is the best way?

Answer: The same way you entered. Be aware of the presence of the teacher by bowing in your consciousness. Be quiet so nothing is disturbed. Choose a time to leave that is between *kriyas* and meditations. A sharp noise during a deep meditation is a shock to the total system. Do not come and go as you please, but to please the highest teacher.

Question: Should I wake someone up who is sleeping in sadhana?

Answer: No. God should wake him. The experience of *sadhana* is between the individual and God. Do not interfere. You can inspire beforehand. If sleeping is a chronic habit, discuss it with the person at a convenient time, but do not abruptly wake someone. He may be at a different level of experience than you think.

It is our intention, of course, to stay alert and awake during *sadhana*. If you are leading the *sadhana*, you can lead exercises which can stimulate the brain and supply blood to the brain to help people to stay awake.

Sadhana is to bring physical and mental awareness. Some people pretend to be tired. They are not fortunate enough to catch up with that gap. But it is very unfortunate on the spiritual path when, instead of inspiring people, we start criticizing them. That is projecting your hatred.

I feel that in the morning when you go for *sadhana*, you are going to be *sadhus*. What does it matter if somebody just gets up to say, "hmmmmmm?" That person is still doing *some*thing. At least he is not sleeping. It is far better than a person who is snoring at home in bed. Do you understand? *Sadhana* is a willful effort to prove you are not lazy about your own Infinity. When the sun rises early in the day, even idiots rise. But blessed are those who rise before the sun and prove that they are the children of the Almighty. Does it sound clear to you? Those who have guts will open the gates of the heart at 3:30 am.

Question: As the leader of sadhana, should I participate in all the exercises?

Answer: As a leader, your responsibility is to set a good example and to give clear instructions for each step of the *sadhana*. You should do as many exercises as you can without becoming unaware of the group. You must check to make sure that everyone understands the exercise before beginning yourself. Sometimes it will be better not to participate at all. Always join in during chanting, though. When teaching a class outside of *sadhana*, you should participate as little as possible in the physical exercise. Concentrate only on inspiring and serving the students.

Question: Is it mandatory for the same person to lead sadhana every morning?

Answer: In all Kundalini Yoga *sadhanas*, the same teacher teaches every *sadhana* – Guru Ram Das. Anyone who is qualified to teach can lead a good *sadhana*. It can be very beneficial for the group to experience the effects of slightly different styles of leadership.

Question: When chanting in the morning, the pitch often gets low. What, if anything, should be done to change the pitch?

Answer: Chant at a constant, mid-range pitch as much as possible. If your breath rhythm is not correct, your spine is not kept straight, or you do not take complete breaths in the Adi Shakti Mantra, the chant will lose energy and drop in pitch. If you project the sound of the mantra from the back of the mouth in a full and roundish way, the power of the chant will increase as you continue, and the pitch will stay constant.

If you are constant and listen to the sound of your chant, you will hear different pitches. These are actually overtones of the basic sound you are creating. The overtones will be high-pitched, subtle, and seem to float around the room. You cannot identify that tone with one person since it is formed by the combination of group sounds. The overtone is a good sign that the *sadhana* group is tuned in to each other and beyond each other. As you listen to the first overtone and become very calm, you may begin to hear higher and more subtle overtones. This awareness aids meditation on the etheric echo of your chanting, as you sit silently after chanting aloud.

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Question: Is it alright to harmonize with the main tone?
Answer: Chanting is not singing. It is vibrating all the cells of the body, all the thoughts of the mind, and the core crystal of the soul to the same *shabd*. Chanting in meditation is beyond personality. Chanting like a choir with many harmonies turns the group consciousness, which is striving for universality, into individual consciousness responding to social consciousness. Leave vocal harmonizing for *kirtan* and group songfests. Learn to harmonize the body, mind, and soul while chanting.

Question: When I am sick, should I attend sadhana?
Answer: If you are going to be in bed all day with an extreme sickness, then no. If it is not extreme (this includes most menstrual periods), then attend *sadhana* and do what you can. If you cannot exercise or meditate well, then at least attempt to meditate. Afterwards, lie down and rest in *sadhana* while mentally listening to the *shabd*. This way you will get well faster, and maintain the rhythm of a regular *sadhana*. It also eliminates the tendency to have minor morning illnesses to escape the self-discipline of a constant *sadhana*. In other words, participation in a group effort and regularity of discipline are paramount. But do not be a fanatic to the point of aggravating a serious illness.

Question: I am a beginner and can only spare one hour on sadhana. Will one hour have any effect?
Answer: Always do some *sadhana* no matter how short, because every effort of the individual mind to meet the Universal Self is reciprocated a thousand-fold. The ideal is a perfect two-and-a-half hour *sadhana*. But if we are to run, we must first learn to walk. An hour is excellent. As you grow into *sadhana*, you will find time to extend it if you really want to do so. It is good for some people to start slowly. If you try to climb Mt. Everest without climbing even a foothill beforehand, failure could discourage you from all other attempts. Build slowly and constantly at a pace you can maintain, but definitely do something.

Question: Do we need a special place for sadhana?
Answer: A special place or altar is ideal. The care you give the external environment is a sign and symbol to the mind of your intention. The outer reflects the inner. If the place of meditation is sloppy, it usually means you do not value relating to that Infinite Self, or you value it, but do not believe in it or yourself. When traveling, you do your best to bring a sense of specialness with you to wherever you meditate.

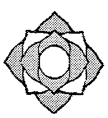
Question: Should I bring my children to sadhana?
Answer: Your children are the future. The future will only be as secure as the foundation that is built into the young generation. It is very inspirational to see the radiance from young children who attend *sadhana*. There is no restriction. These hours of soothing sleep for them are the best, but they are in good vibrations, and subconsciously they have experienced the *sadhana*. So you can just bring them with you so they can live in those vibrations.

Whether or not your particular child should attend is an individual determination. If he has been raised in the yogic tradition where chanting and exercise are a natural part of his environment, then bring him. If he is disruptive during *sadhana*, then his attendance should be discussed with the rest of the group.

Question: Is it important to wear a head covering during sadhana?
Answer: During *sadhana*, be sure to cover your head with a non-static, natural cloth like cotton, and keep the hair up. The hair regulates the inflow of sun energy into the body system. To let the solar energy flow without obstruction, let the hair grow to its full natural length, and take good care of it. If this is done, the amount of energy that goes downward from the Seventh Chakra increases tremendously. The kundalini energy is activated by the radiant force of the solar plexus and moves upward in response to the solar energy coming down. This balances the body energy and maintains the total equilibrium.

If the hair is down, unkept, or uncovered so that it is electrically imbalanced, this natural process of raising the kundalini energy will be impeded.

Question: Is right after sadhana a good time to take a nap?
Answer: Right after *sadhana* is a time to do anything—even to eat ice cream. Right after *sadhana* do whatever you want. What is God's, give to God through *sadhana*. Take what you take during the rest of the day—it is your day.



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Sadhana Mantras for the Aquarian Age

YOGI BHAJAN GAVE THE FOLLOWING SEQUENCE OF MANTRAS ON JUNE 21, 1992, with instructions to continue using them for morning *sadhana* in this order for 21 years. So, until the year 2013, we are set with the best *sadhana* tools possible. Total time is 62 minutes.

1. The Adi Shakti Mantra: Ek Ong Kaar Sat Naam Siri Wha-hay Guroo

(7 minutes)

"One Creator created this Creation. Truth is His Name. Great beyond description is His Infinite Wisdom."

The cornerstone of morning *sadhana* is an Ashtang Mantra, the Adi Shakti Mantra, also called *Long Ek Ong Kars* or Morning Call. This mantra initiates the kundalini, initiating the relationship between our soul and the Universal Soul.

Long *Ek Ong Kars* are chanted without musical accompaniment, whereas the six mantras that follow may be chanted using various melodies with or without instrumental accompaniment. (Musicians take note: instruments are for background to accompany and support the voice. Also, be sure to preserve the original rhythm of the mantra by keeping the length of the syllables intact.)

2. Waah Yantee, Kar Yantee (7 minutes)

This mantra uses the words of Patanjali. It represents thousands of years of prayer. With it, we call directly on the Macroself, beyond the gunas, beyond creation.

Waah Yantee, Kaar Yantee
Jag Doot Patee, Aadak It Waahaa
Brahmaadeh Traysha Guroo
It Wha-hay Guroo

Great Macroself, Creative Self.
All that is creative through time.
All that is the Great One.
Three aspects of God: Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh (Shiva).
That is Wahe Guru.

3. The Mul Mantra (7 minutes)

The Mul (Root) Mantra gives an experience of the depth and consciousness of your soul. There are 108 elements in the universe, and 108 letters in the *mul mantra* (in the original Gurmukhi script). This mantra expands creativity and projects us into action in line with the Creator, and our destiny.

In chanting the Mul Mantra:

- Leave a slight space (not a breath) between *ajoonee* and *saibhang*. Do not run the words together.
- Emphasize the "ch" sound at the end of the word *such*. This adds power.

Ek Ong Kaar	*One Creator, Creation*
Sat Naam	*Truth Identified (Named)*
Kartaa Purkh	*Doer of Everything*
Nirbho	*Fearless*
Nirvair	*Revengeless*
Akaal Moorat	*Undying*
Ajoonee	*Unborn*
Saibung	*Self-illumined, self existent*
Gur Prasaad	*Guru's grace (gift)*
Jap!	*REPEAT (Chant)*
Aad Such	*True in the beginning*
Jugaad Such	*True through all time*
Hai Bhee Such	*True even now*
Nanak Hosee Bhee Such	*Nanak says Truth shall ever be*

4. Sat Siree, Siree Akal (7 minutes)

Yogi Bhajan has called this the Mantra for the Aquarian Age. With it, we declare that we are timeless, deathless beings,

Sat Siree	*Great Truth*
Siree Akaal	*Respected Undying*
Siree Akaal	*Respected Undying*
Mahaa Akaal	*Great Deathless*
Mahaa Akaal	*Great Deathless*
Sat Naam	*Truth Identified (Named)*
Akaal Moorat	*Deathless Image of God*
Wha-hay Guroo	*Great beyond description is His Wisdom*

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5. Rakhe Rakhan Har (7 minutes)

This is a *shabd* of protection against all negative forces which move against one's walk on the path of destiny, both inner and outer. It cuts like a sword through every opposing vibration, thought, word, and action.

It is part of the evening prayer of the Sikhs *(Rehiras)*. *Rakhe Rakhan Har* was composed by Guru Arjan, the Fifth Guru.

Rakhay rakhanahaar aap ubaaria-an
Gur kee pairee paa-i kaaj savaari-an
Hoaa aap da-iaal manaho na visaari-an
Saadh janaa kai sang bhavajal taari-an
Saakat nindak dusht khin maa-eh bidaari-an
Tis saahib kee tayk Naanak manai maa-eh
Jis simrat sukh ho-i sagalay dookh jaa-eh

Thou who savest, save us all and take us across,
Uplifting and giving the excellence.
You gave us the touch of the lotus feet of the
Guru, and all our jobs are done.
You have become merciful, kind, and compassionate; and
so our mind does not forget Thee.

In the company of the holy beings you take us from
misfortune and calamities, scandals, and disrepute.
Godless, slanderous enemies–you finish them in timelessness.
That great Lord is my anchor.
Nanak, keep firm in your mind, by meditating and
repeating His Name
All happiness comes and all sorrows and pain go away.

6. Wahe Guru Wahe Jio (22 minutes)

Chant this mantra sitting in *Vir Asan*. Sit on the left heel, with the right knee against the chest, with hands in Prayer Pose. Eyes are focused at the tip of the nose.

Wha-hay Guroo Wha-hay Guroo Wha-hay Guroo Wha-hay Jeeo

Wahe Guru is a mantra of ecstasy. There is no real translation for it, though we could say, *"Wow, God is great!"* or *"indescribably great is His Infinite, Ultimate Wisdom." Jeeo* is an affectionate but still respectful variation of the word *Jee* which means soul. We establish ourselves for victory and the right to excel.

7. Guru Ram Das Chant (5 minutes)

Guroo Guroo Wha-hay Guroo Guroo Raam Das Guroo

This in praise of the consciousness of Guru Ram Das, invoking his spiritual light, guidance, and protective grace. We are filled with humility.

Guidelines for Leading the Aquarian Sadhana

This is meant to be a model for morning *sadhana* only–times are very approximate. Adjust according to the needs of the group. With a group *sadhana*, it is important to end *sadhana* on time, so that everyone can adjust their schedules accordingly.

- First guideline for *sadhana* leaders: ***Show up!***

If for any reason you are not able to make it on the day you are leading, you must arrange for someone else to lead.

- ***Japji Sahib 4:00 am***

If you are unfamiliar with *Japji* or concerned about fine-tuning pronunciation, use a tape or CD. If possible, read *Japji* tantric style–male-female reading alternate lines. *A copy of Japji can be downloaded from sikhnet.com.*

- ***Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo & Yoga Set 4:20 am***

Dim the lights. A good choice for the yoga set is a basic energizing, Kundalini-raising set, including lots of stretching, Spinal Flexes, and Breath of Fire. It's a good idea to end with Sat Kriya. The yoga set should be about 25-30 minutes. If you are going to play music during the yoga, choose mantra music, and play it at a low volume.

- ***Deep Relaxation***

Dim the lights further, if necessary. Keep the relaxation relatively short–5 minutes. If you choose to play music, keep it very low. Mantra music with a meditative quality is effective.

- ***Meditations (62 minutes). Begin approximately 5:00 am***

Lights can be turned very low or completely off. Keep *sadhana* music loud enough to be heard clearly throughout the entire *sadhana* room, so that it envelops us, and is easy to sing along with, while being sensitive to not making it too loud. Let the music surround and expand you.

- ***After the meditations, starting approximately 6:00 am***

Sadhana ends with a sacred prayer (which can be taken from *Peace Lagoon*), singing the Sunshine song, and chanting *Long Sat Naams*. For a deep experience of *Naad*, one can choose to end *Sadhana* by taking a *hukam* from a *Nitnem*, reading from the Siri Guru Granth Sahib, or having a Gurdwara program.

Hold the space, enjoy the bliss of this ambrosial hour. It will fill your days with connection, sweetness, and purpose. ***Sat Naam.***

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PART FOUR

Yogic & Functional Western Anatomy

Introduction

AS KUNDALINI YOGA TEACHERS WE NEED A BASIC ORIENTATION TO THE BODY. We need to know its fundamental structures and their primary systems and functions. Anyone who teaches exercise and physical awareness needs to understand the tool that we use–the body.

As kundalini yogis we recognize the subtle anatomy such as the meridians and chakras along with the physical structures recognized in medicine. We are aware of the subtle anatomy of energy and consciousness as well as the gross anatomy we learn in standard textbooks like *Gray's Anatomy.*

By understanding these essentials we gain a deeper appreciation of the power and design of the human body and the exquisite flow of energy in each kundalini *kriya.* Kundalini Yoga *kriyas* work on the total being, bringing natural balance to the various systems as they interact with one another. *Kriyas* re-pattern the body systems, systematically breaking down energy blocks and simultaneously releasing the mind. This brings a deep sense of the infinite, and establishes our connection to our soul. Kundalini Yoga recognizes the presence of the Grace of God in the whole process. We call Kundalini Yoga a sacred science.

Please note that in this Western Anatomy section the suggestions of yoga sets and exercises specific to each area are only examples. Keep in mind that the comments accompanying the Kundalini Yoga *kriyas* are ones that Yogi Bhajan gave while teaching or else brief elaborations of basic anatomy–either gross or subtle. They are intended to raise your awareness, give you interesting teaching comments, as well as motivation to keep up in the exercises or habits.

The few examples in this chapter are not meant to limit you but rather to simply steer you in the right direction. Please use the vast resource of sets, *kriyas,* exercises, and meditations gathered over the years in all the many valuable Kundalini Yoga manuals.

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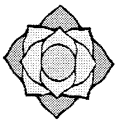
CHAPTER 13



Functional Western Anatomy

"What is Kundalini? The energy of the glandular system combines with the nervous system to become more sensitive so that the totality of the brain perceives signals and interprets them."

–YOGI BHAJAN

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Circulatory System

Organs & Components

Heart	Capillaries
Arteries	Veins

Basic Organ Structure & Function

Heart: Starting at the heart, blood circulates from the right atrium to the right ventricle, to the lungs, and back to the left atrium and left ventricle of the heart. From the left ventricle, the blood is pumped to the arterial system throughout the rest of the body and back through the venous system to the right atrium.

Arteries:

- Carry blood from the heart to the arterioles (small arteries) and capillaries (minute vessels that connect arterioles and small veins).
- Have a muscular layer that is responsible for keeping blood pressure balanced. Contraction or relaxation of this muscular layer either reduces or expands the volume in the artery.

Capillaries:

- Allow nutrients, gasses, and waste products to migrate into and out of the circulatory system; the walls are very thin, and the total surface area of the capillary bed is large, providing a massive surface for nutrient exchange.
- Transport nutrients and oxygen to tissues.
- Pick up waste products and carbon dioxide.

Veins: Return blood from capillaries and venules (small veins) to the heart.

Relationship to Other Systems

The circulatory system delivers nutrients and oxygen to all organs. It also collects toxins for delivery to the lungs, liver, and kidneys for excretion.

Negative Influences & Risk Factors

- Diet high in cholesterol and fats, especially animal fats, which contain free radicals (molecules with a negative charge.) Free radicals in the circulation can damage the cellular walls of blood vessels, which is the beginning of arteriosclerosis, the process in which scar tissue and cholesterol are deposited around the site of injury. Antioxidant vitamins help neutralize the negative charge and prevent injury to blood vessel walls.
- Lack of activity, which is the number one cause of illness in developed countries.
- Obesity.
- Bad posture.
- Nicotine, alcohol, and salt consumption.
- Ethnic or racial predispositions. For example, African Americans tend to have a disproportionate incidence of high blood pressure and other coronary risk factors.
- Stress-induced high blood pressure, which usually has its source in mental, emotional, or physical over stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system and adrenal glands. This over stimulation causes increased heart rate and strength of contraction, along with increased resistance to blood flow at the extremities because of muscle tension around the blood vessels.

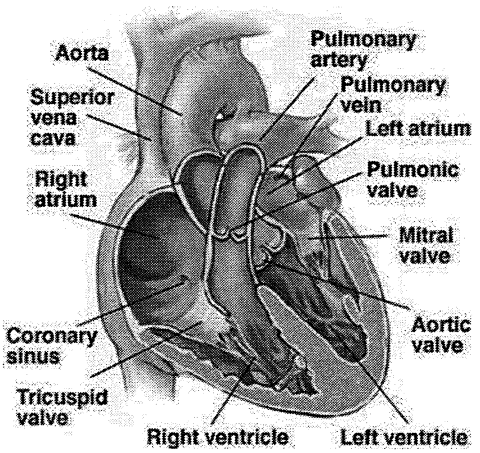
Some Good Foods & Nutrients

Wheat germ, alfalfa, buckwheat, celery, lecithin, green leafy vegetables, nuts, peas, beans, low-fat milk products, cayenne pepper, oranges, lemons, strawberries, calcium, Vitamin E, B vitamins, selenium, ginseng, oat bran and garlic (which lowers blood pressure)

How Yoga Helps

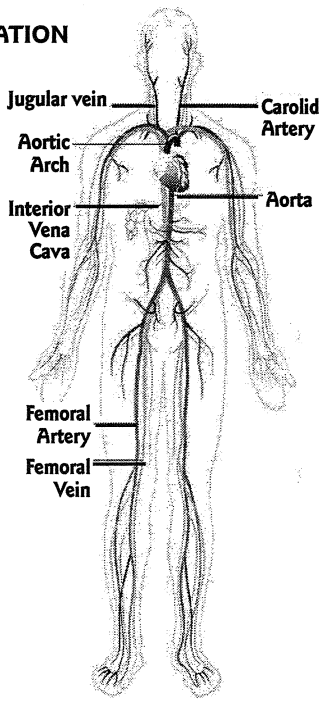
Relaxation with yoga helps reduce the impact of stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. Experiments show meditators have increased cortisol production under stress, but the level is quickly reduced compared to non-meditators, thus they do not accumulate long term damage and lose the chemical responsiveness of the body to changing demands from the environment. Pranayam and aerobic exercise increase oxygen supply in the blood.

- Yoga promotes weight reduction through increased metabolism.
- Yoga strengthens the heart muscles.
- Yoga increases the efficiency of blood flow by increasing the



THE HEART

BLOOD CIRCULATION



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number of small peripheral blood vessels. The volume of the circulatory system increases, and so does the efficiency of getting nutrition and oxygen to the peripheral tissues and waste products from the tissues. One of the mechanisms for this effect seems to be an increase in nitric oxide, which helps regulate peripheral blood flow at the local cellular level. This mechanism is stimulated through exercise and meditation, especially when consciously paced breathing is used.

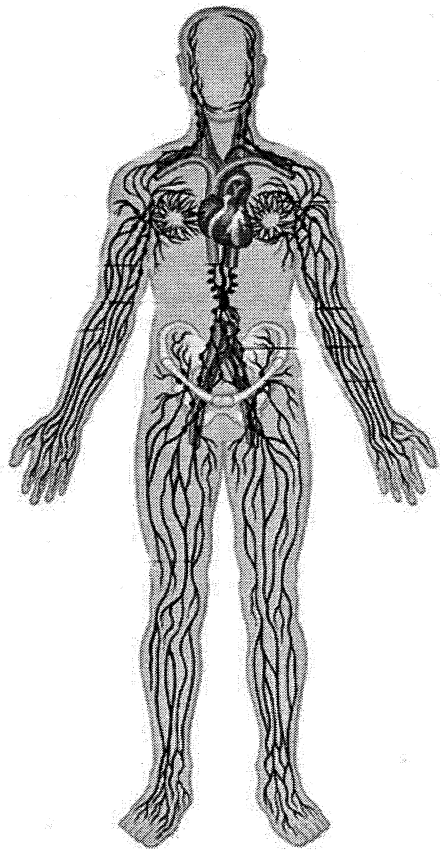
Suggested Yoga Exercises & Other Support

- Many of the more aerobic sets, such as Abdominal Strengthening *(Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 57.)
- Heart Center sets *(Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 65 & 67.)
- Relaxing tension, opening circulation, and moderating blood pressure: Left and alternate nostril breathing with deep, slow breaths *(Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 81.)
  Sitali and Sitkari pranayam *(Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 79.)
  Breath of Fire.
  One-minute breath: 20 seconds inhalation, 20 seconds hold the breath, 20 seconds exhalation.
- Arm, torso, and leg lift exercises, such as Ego Eradicator and cross-crawl exercises.
- Spinal Twists, which assist the return of blood and lymph to the heart and assist in the elimination of toxins.
- Cold showers, which stimulate and dilate the capillaries to improve circulation to the skin and outer layers of tissue.

Caution!

For students with high blood pressure:
These students should consult their physician before commencing yoga, as people with high blood pressure are often cautioned to avoid strenuous exercises and tensing of the muscles that might increase blood pressure.

For students with low blood pressure:
These students should consult their physician before commencing yoga, as circulation to the extremities can decrease during prolonged yoga positions. They should also be careful not to stand up too quickly, which may result in fainting.



THE LYMPHATIC SYSTEM

Lymphatic System

Organs & Components

Lymph Ducts & Nodes
Tonsils
Spleen
Bone Marrow
Thymus

Basic Organ Structure & Function

- Parts of the lymphatic system are located throughout the body, with concentrations of lymph nodes in the groin, armpits, and neck.
- The primary function is to return fluids from the peripheral tissues back to the circulatory system.
- Bodily fluids are filtered and bacteria are killed at the lymph nodes.
- Contraction of the muscles pumps lymph through the lymph ducts.
- The bone marrow, blood vessel walls, and spleen manufacture, grow, and store lymphocytes (white blood cells), which help the body defend against infection.

Relationship to Other Systems

The lymphatic system facilitates the movement of salts, water, bacteria and wastes from the tissues and returns them to the arteriovenous system (the system of arteries and veins).

Negative Influences & Risk Factors

The lymph system is often the body's first point of contact with foreign bodies, chemicals and bacteria. It can be the route for the spread of infections and cancer in the body. The lymphatic system does not have its own pump like the circulatory system, so keeping it healthy is a process of constant detoxification through movement, breathing, and proper nutrition. Poor eating and a sedentary lifestyle allow the buildup of toxins, bacteria and other illness producing processes.

- Drugs—particularly marijuana—lower immunity.
- Poor mental or emotional states can depress the immune system.

Some Good Foods & Nutrients

- Onions, garlic, ginger, chlorophyll (yogic green drink), kelp, coenzyme Q_{10}, fresh and live foods, that are high in prana
- Antioxidants, and vitamins A, B_6, B_{12}, and C; manganese; zinc; copper; selenium; Echinacea, and Goldenseal (take for specific conditions, not ongoing as a tonic.)

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How Yoga Helps

- Upper body yoga exercises support the lymphatic system.
- Long deep breathing enhances lymphatic circulation.
- Increased physical activity flushes the system mechanically and boosts immunity.
- Yoga detoxifies the liver, lungs, and kidneys, taking pressure off the lymphatic system.
- Yoga enhances a personal sense of well being, thereby boosting immunity.

Suggested Yoga Exercises

- Upper body exercises, particularly the dynamic use of the arms and shoulders, to stimulate and drain the upper lymphatic system.
- Sat Kriya *(Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 44*)*, leg lifts, and many navel exercises, which enhance circulation in the lower lymphatic ducts.
- Massage for the Lymphatic System (*Physical Wisdom,* p. 8.)
- Exercise Set for the Lymph System (*Kundalini Yoga for Youth & Joy,* p. 18.)

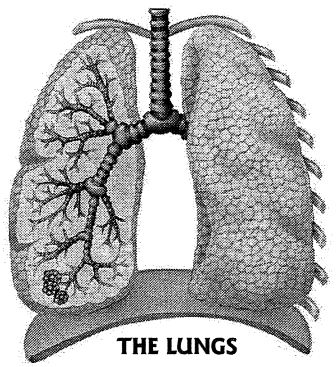
Respiratory System

Organs & Components

Nose
Pharynx
Larynx (voice box)
Trachea (windpipe)
Bronchi (larger air passages in the lung)
Bronchioles (smaller air passages in the lung)
Cilia (small hair like structures)
Lungs, Alveolar Sacs
Ribs
Diaphragm

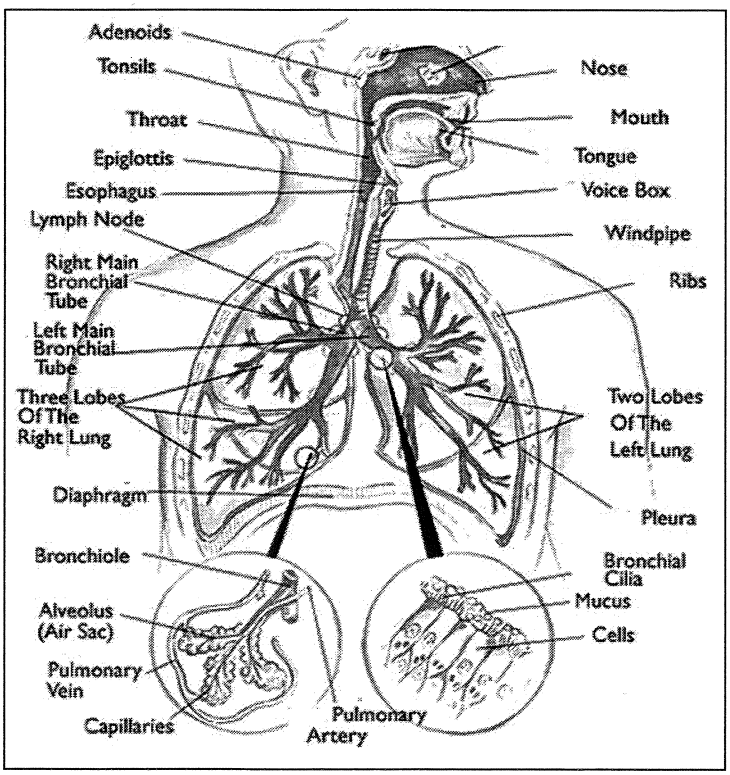
Basic Organ Structure & Function

• *The mechanics of breathing* begin with the lungs, which reside in a chamber created by the ribs, rib muscles, and diaphragm. The diaphragm does the majority of the work of respiration. Elastic tissue within the lungs allows them to expand and contract. Contraction of the rib and diaphragm muscles creates a vacuum in the chamber, which forces the lungs to expand and fill with air. When the diaphragm and rib muscles relax, the elastic tissue returns the lungs to their original size, expelling the air. Air travels through the nose and past the larynx, and into the trachea. The air then travels down into the air passages in the lungs into thousands of alveoli.



THE LUNGS

• *Gasses pass across the alveolar cell membrane.* Gasses in high concentration travel across this



THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

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membrane to an area of lower concentration. Compared with the air in the alveoli, blood entering the lungs has a higher concentration of carbon dioxide and a lower concentration of oxygen. Therefore, carbon dioxide travels from the blood to the alveolar air while oxygen travels from the alveolar air into the blood.

• *Carbon dioxide dissolves readily in water, but oxygen does not.* Therefore, red blood cells capture the oxygen and carry it to cells throughout the body where the oxygen, in conjunction with sugars and starches, is used to generate energy. The waste products of these chemical reactions are carbon dioxide and water. In the body, carbon dioxide is an acidic waste product, so the body maintains alkalinity by removing excess carbon dioxide through breathing.

• *Cilia in the smaller air passages in the lungs help move debris* out of the air sacs into the larger air passages where they are coughed out or swallowed. Cilia in the nose also help keep debris out.

Relationship to Other Systems

- Breathing provides waste removal and oxygen for cells throughout the body.
- The lungs cradle and cushion the heart.
- Breathing creates a rhythmic movement of the spine and pumps the cerebrospinal fluid.
- Controlling the breath can alter the heart rate.
- Brain waves (and thoughts) can be altered by controlling the breath.
- Rapid and erratic breath is associated with sickness.
- Movement of the diaphragm helps pump the lymphatic fluid and massages the abdominal organs.

Negative Influences & Risk Factors

Smoking destroys the elastic tissue, cilia, and air sacs in the lungs. With the cilia destroyed, the lungs cannot remove debris from the air sacs. The body then increases the number of mucus glands in the lung's small air passages so the debris can be caught in the mucus and coughed out. This is what we call smoker's cough. When the air sacs are destroyed, the delicate tissue that allows oxygen to move into the blood is lost, which results in low concentrations of oxygen in the blood. When the elastic tissue is destroyed, the lungs cannot contract normally to their smallest size, and the carbon dioxide that should be expelled remains in the lungs. When carbon dioxide remains in the body, the body becomes more acid. Breathing is by far the easiest way the body has to remove carbon dioxide and thus acid from the body.

Some Good Foods & Nutrients

Oranges, raw fruit and vegetables (especially carrots, beets, and radishes), all berries, nuts (especially walnuts), and millet.

How Yoga Helps

Long Deep Breathing:

- Balances the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous systems, creating a deep, long-lasting relaxation.
- Creates a pulsation at a certain rate in the brain, which stimulates the pituitary gland, the master gland, developing the intuitive consciousness.
- Pumps the cerebrospinal fluid around the brain.
- Reduces toxic buildup in the lungs by properly opening up the air sacs.
- Stimulates the production of chemicals in the brain to work against depression.
- Cleanses the blood of carbon dioxide to make the blood more alkaline.
- Increases oxygen intake.
- Helps release blockages to the flow of energy in the meridians.
- Speeds up the physical and emotional healing processes.
- Helps to break unconscious habit patterns and addictions.

Breath of Fire:

- Helps the body reach an optimum acid-alkaline balance, reducing irritability and plaque production in the arteries.
- Stimulates the vagus nerve and balances the autonomic nervous system.
- Cleanses the blood by removing toxins from the tissues, lungs, and mucus membranes.
- Improves digestion.
- Stimulates the solar plexus and frees the natural flow of energy through the body.
- Strengthens the nervous system to handle stress.
- Increases physical stamina.
- Strengthens the nerve plexus or nabhi.
- Helps to break addictions.
- Increases the vital capacity of the lungs, improving health and the enjoyment of life.

Suggested Yoga Exercises

- All Kundalini Yoga sets, exercises, pranayam, and meditations improve the respiratory system.
- Something New! (*Yoga for the 80's,* p. 32), Exercise Set for the Lungs and Bloodstream (*Yoga for Youth and Joy,* p. 21); in the "Sets" chapter of this manual)
- Preparatory Exercises for Lungs, Magnetic Field and Deep Meditation (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 85.)
- Kriya for Physical & Mental Vitality (*Kundalini Yoga Manual,* p. 15)
- Purifying the Self (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 74)

See the chapter on Breath for a more extensive study of breathing from a yogic perspective.

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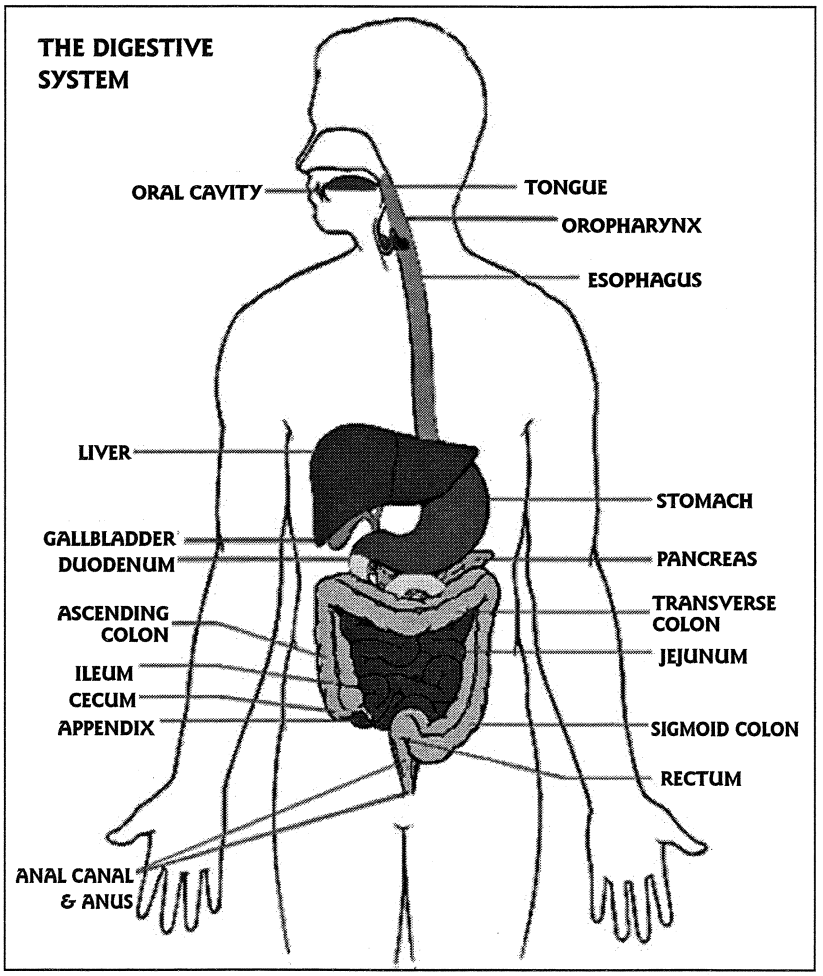
Digestive System

Organs & Components

Mouth	Gall Bladder	Large intestines
Stomach	Pancreas	Rectum
Liver	Small Intestines	

Basic Organ Structure & Function

The digestive system is a huge mining device. First the mouth crushes the food, and then the stomach turns large particles into smaller particles in a churning bath of acid. The gallbladder adds bile to the resultant slurry to turn large fat droplets into microscopic fat particles. Proteins are too large to cross the intestinal lining, so the pancreas adds protein-splitting liquids to break proteins into individual amino acids. Along the way, vitamins and minerals are released and made available for absorption. These extremely small particles are now actively transported across the intestinal lining by protein transporters or are absorbed into the blood. The blood transports this precious cargo to the liver, which builds most of the fats, proteins, and sugars that the body needs. What remains in the small intestine - fiber and other wastes–is transported to the large intestine for drying and is then stored in the rectum for evacuation.



Yogis have long understood the importance of the navel area, which is the autonomic mesenteric nervous system. It has as many neurons as the spinal cord does, but it distributes them diffusely over the abdominal area and intestines rather than consolidating them in a single tract. It is critical to many components of physical and mental health.

Stomach:

The stomach is both a processing area and a storage area, secreting acid and enzymes to begin digesting proteins while it churns the food. Ulcers can be caused by bacteria and aggravated by overly acidic conditions. The nerves in the stomach can vary in the number of receptors from person to person by a factor of more than 100,000. So some people are very reactive to emotions through the stomach. The stomach also produces a substance that allows absorption of vitamin B_{12} for nerve development and maintenance.

Small Intestine:

The small intestine connects the stomach to the large intestine and is made up of the duodenum, jejunum, and ileum. At the microscopic level, the surface of the intestinal lining is covered with small protrusions much like the shag on a carpet. These protrusions increase the surface area to enhance the absorption of the end products of digestion. The small and large intestines contain about five pounds of biologically active bacteria that produce vitamin K among other things.

Large Intestine:

The large intestine is made up of the ascending colon, transverse colon, descending colon, and rectum. It connects to the small intestine at the ileocecal valve, which prevents the flow of waste from the small intestine to the large intestine. The large intestine absorbs water, salts, and products of bacterial activity (vitamin K, B vitamins, and amino acids) from the remaining digestive mix and then stores the mix for elimination and forces it out of the body.

Liver:

The liver is a five-pound organ below the diaphragm on the right side of the body. It is a giant factory that processes all the food nutrients absorbed by the small intestine into useful forms of sugar, fat, and protein. The liver and the kidneys both eliminate toxins ingested or produced by the body. If the liver is overworked due to stress and poor food, it becomes sluggish, which can result in fogginess of the brain, depression, and pain in various areas of the body as the body's cells react to the toxicity of unprocessed chemicals. If part of the liver is removed, it will grow back to full size.

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Gall Bladder:
The gall bladder collects bile, which is made in the liver and which is necessary for the digestion of fats. When bile is needed, the gall bladder secretes it into the duodenum, the first part of the small intestine. The bile emulsifies fats and oils. Gallstones form from an imbalance of bile salts, cholesterol, and lecithin when the diet is too high in sugar, fat, meat, and carbohydrates.

Pancreas:
The pancreas, located under the stomach and directly below the navel, produces protein-splitting enzymes that are essential for good digestion and secretes them into the duodenum. The pancreas also produces insulin and glucagon to regulate how much sugar is in the blood. Insulin decreases the production of sugar by the liver and increases the absorption of sugar by the muscles that move the body and by fat cells. Glucagon increases liver sugar production and decreases sugar absorption by tissues. Diabetes occurs when there is not enough insulin.

Negative Influences & Risk Factors
- Diet of processed or fried food.
- Lack of fiber in the diet.
- Eating late at night.
- Sedentary lifestyle.
- Alcohol consumption, which is toxic to the liver.
- Consistent dehydration.
- Foods that are hard to digest, i.e. they don't eliminate within 24 hours.
- Stress.

Some Good Foods
For the stomach: yogurt, wheat germ, peppermint, ginger, and fennel.

For the liver: beets, carrots, green foods, and daikon radishes.

For the gall bladder: olive oil, cold-pressed oil, whole grains, nuts, carrots, beets, pear juice, grapefruit juice, lemon juice, grape juice.

For the pancreas: avocado, alfalfa, potatoes, beets, carrots, olive oil, papaya, grapefruit, and lemons.

For the small intestine: wheat germ, green leafy vegetables, cabbage, and oranges.

For the large intestine: lots of water, green leafy vegetables, yogurt or acidophilus, and fiber.

How Yoga Helps
- Yoga increases the fire energy at the Navel Point, which aids digestion.
- Yoga increases the secretion of gastric juices and digestive enzymes and speeds up a sluggish metabolism.
- Yoga improves the environment in the intestines so that harmful bacteria and other parasites cannot proliferate or survive.
- Yoga increases the ability of the body to eliminate.
- Upper arm exercises stimulate meridian points corresponding to the stomach and colon.
- Yoga balances the liver.

Suggested Yoga Exercises
- Sat Kriya, Bow Pose, Camel Pose, twisting exercises.
- Elimination (Apana) Exercises (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 55.).
- Nabhi Kriya sets (*Kundalini Meditation Manual for Intermediate Students,* p. 17-20.)
- The Art of Equilibrium of the Stomach (*Owner's Manual for the Human Body,* p. 39.)
- Kriya for the Lower Spine & Elimination (*Sadhana Guidelines*, p. 52)
- Kriya for Physical & Mental Vitality (*Kundalini Yoga Manual*, p. 15)
- Strengthening the Stomach (*Owner's Manual for the Human Body,* p. 40.)
- Exercise Set for the Liver, Colon and Stomach (*Kundalini Yoga for Youth & Joy,* p. 14.)

Caution!
Many foods create a change in the function of the organs and glands of the digestive system. Grapefruit juice, even as little as eight ounces a day, has been shown to slow the liver and change the effect of many medications. St. John's Wort has been shown to stimulate the liver to process more toxins, so it lowers the blood level of medications by processing them faster. Tell your doctor about all herbal supplements you are taking, along with any prescribed drugs.

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Endocrine System

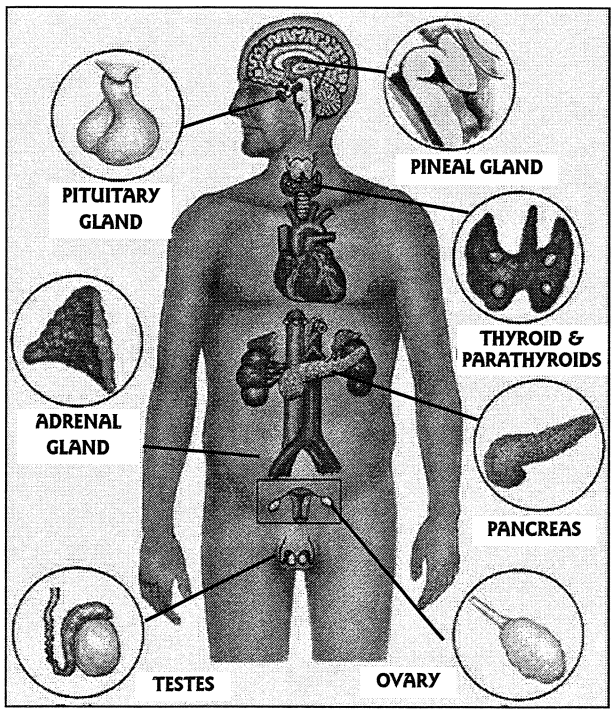
Organs & Components

Pineal Gland
Pituitary Gland
Hypothalamus
Gonads: Ovaries (Female), Testes (Male)
Thyroid & Parathyroid
Adrenals
Thymus
Pancreas

Basic Organ Structure & Function

The endocrine glands are the guardians of the health. Optimal functioning of these organs gives us access to many of the subtleties of life. These glands produce powerful chemical transmitters called hormones. Despite their relatively small size and quantity, these glands exert a great influence on the growth, development and maintenance of the body. They aid the nervous system in regulating many bodily processes. Similar in function to nerve impulses, hormones transmit information with a daily rhythm in a pulsing fashion. The functions of the various glands are intimately intertwined.

Pineal Gland:
The pineal gland is small–approximately .5 cm–and shaped like a pinecone. It produces hormones that regulate levels of sex and thyroid hormones and affect brain activity.



Pituitary Gland:
The pituitary gland, or master gland, regulates the secretion of the thyroid, adrenal, and reproductive glands. It is located just beneath the hypothalamus in the middle of the brain. The pituitary gland produces hormones that influence blood pressure, milk, contraction of the uterus, ovulation, bone maturation and growth, protein synthesis, and use of fat reserves. Some hormones are the basis for feelings of connectedness and social bonding. A well-functioning pituitary gland helps us bond during sex.

Hypothalamus:
The hypothalamus is the main intermediary between the nervous system and the endocrine system, the two major control systems of the body. It is the center of mind-body phenomena. Located in the middle of the brain just above the pituitary gland, and no bigger than a walnut, the hypothalamus receives information from the brain, the cells, and the senses. It sends information throughout the body in the form of chemical messengers that trigger emotions, metabolic activity, and actions in a nonlinear wavelike manner. The optic nerves cross at and intersect the connection between the pituitary gland and hypothalamus.

Thyroid Gland:
The thyroid gland consists of two lobes on either side of the windpipe in the neck just above the sternum. Through the synthesis of many proteins, the thyroid controls body metabolism and growth along with the development of the nervous system. Too little of the principal hormone produced by the thyroid gland can lead to thickening of the skin, lethargy, obesity, and heart failure. Too much can lead to nervousness, anxiety, excessive weight loss, and heart palpitations. Depression and menstrual abnormalities are often caused by either too much or too little thyroid activity. Iodine is vital to the production of this hormone.

Parathyroid Glands:
The four pea-sized parathyroid glands are located within the thyroid gland. They control absorption, retention, and metabolism of calcium and phosphates.

Adrenal Glands:
The adrenal glands sit on top of the kidneys and produce two essential hormones: cortisol and aldosterone. Cortisol is the major controller of carbohydrate metabolism, and it helps the body respond to stress and illness. Aldosterone acts on the kidneys to promote sodium and thus water retention. The adrenal glands produce hormones that promote muscle growth, and they also produce adrenaline, which is responsible for the "fight-or-flight" response.

Thymus Gland:
The thymus gland is located above the heart and beneath the sternum. The thymus gland is involved in maturing the white blood cells that help support the immune system in fighting illness.

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Pancreas:
As mentioned in the digestive system section above, the pancreas produces insulin and glucagon. Insulin permits glucose to pass through cell walls to be used for energy and storage. Glucagon inhibits glucose absorption. Together they balance glucose levels. The pancreas also helps to control carbohydrate, fat, and protein metabolism.

Gonads:
The gonads (ovaries and testes) control secondary sex characteristics and ovulation, placenta formation, milk production in women and sperm production in men.

Ovaries:
The ovaries contain the eggs and produce estrogen and progesterone, the hormones that control the maturation and development of the eggs. These hormones also control the thickening of the uterine wall during pregnancy and it's sloughing off during menstruation.

Testes:
The testes produce the hormone testosterone as well as sperm. The adrenal glands provide a small amount of testosterone in women. Testosterone levels affect the sex drive in both men and women.

Relationship to Other Systems
The nervous system, brain, and glands are intricately linked within the endocrine system.

Negative Influences & Risk Factors
- Chronic stress.
- Exposure to pesticides that mimic hormones.

Some Good Foods for this System
Onions, garlic, ginger.

How Yoga Helps
- Working on the chakras through stimulation of the kundalini energy positively affects the health and balance of the glands, which creates a sense of well-being, allowing the individual to feel connected to all life.
- Focusing on the pituitary point–the Third Eye Point at the brow–activates the pituitary gland. Kirtan Kriya is excellent for this.
- Kundalini Yoga, particularly breath control, can greatly enhance the activity of the pineal gland.
- The breath strongly affects the function of the pineal and pituitary glands and the hypothalamus.
- Sound and mantra have a powerful positive effect on the glands, particularly the endocrine centers of the hypothalamus and the pituitary and pineal glands.

Suggested Yoga Exercises & Other Support
For the adrenal glands
Beyond Fatigue (*Inner Workout,* p.18).

For the adrenal glands:
Exercises that twist and stretch the torso.

For the pineal, pituitary, and thyroid glands:
Wahe Guru Kriya (in the "Sets" chapter of this manual.)

For the pituitary gland:
Kirtan Kriya (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 95)
Ajnaa Stimulation Kriya (*Keeping Up with Kundalini Yoga,* p. 26)
Pituitary Gland Series (in the "Sets" chapter.)
Breath Meditation Series for Glandular Balance (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 72.)
Balancing the Pineal, Pituitary and Hypothalamus (*Owner's Manual for the Human Body,* p. 47.)
Exercise for the Nervous System and Glandular Balance (*Yoga for Youth and Joy,* p. 35.)

For the thyroid gland:
Any exercises that involve movement of the neck, Neck Rolls, Cobra Pose, Cat-Cow, Shoulder Stand.

For the thymus gland:
Tapping on the chest, sets for the Heart Center.

For the reproductive organs:
Frog Pose, Sat Kriya, Camel Pose, and Tree Pose.

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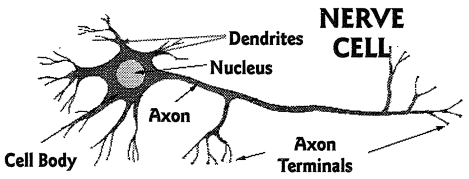
Nervous System

Organs & Components

Neurons
Central Nervous System
Peripheral Nervous System
Spinal Cord
Brain

Basic Organ Structure & Function

The nervous system is divided broadly into two components: the central nervous system, made up of the brain and spinal cord, and the peripheral nervous system, made up of the cranial, spinal, and peripheral nerves. Nerves function roughly like telephone wires that carry electrical signals (nerve impulses) from one place to another so that areas of the body can communicate with each other. Nerve tissue is some of the most specialized tissue in the body. Because it stores memory, it gives up the ability to reproduce itself, though it can repair itself to some degree. For this reason, many injuries to the nervous system are often permanent. The nervous system learns. It grows and changes from stimulus, increasing the number of connections if there is more use and dropping connections if there is less use.



Ultimately, all nerves end at an organ or a muscle or within the central nervous system. Nerves that end in muscles cause them to contract. Nerves that end in organs generally cause them to act or sometimes suppress their action. Nerve signals in the central nervous system cause the brain consciously or unconsciously to sense something and respond.

Neurons:

Nerves are made up of cells called "neurons." Neurons are bundled into nerves, which together form the nervous system, and they communicate with each other via chemical signals.

The Central Nervous System:

The central nervous system (CNS) is involved in both conscious and unconscious sensation and is the source of voluntary motor control. It is the nervous system inside of the skull and spinal canal and consists of the brain and the spinal cord. These nerves depend on the bony protection of the skull and spine to prevent injury. There is a tough skin around the entire CNS called the dura, but within the CNS there is little fibrous structure around individual nerves. If there is a trauma severe enough to violate the skull or spine, there usually is damage to nerves.

The central nervous system "floats" in cerebrospinal fluid that is contained in a sac attached to the skull and the vertebrae of the spine. This fluid is made in the cavities of the brain by filtering salt, sugars, water, and other nutrients from the blood, and it is reabsorbed into the blood. Recent studies show that the cerebrospinal fluid is balanced by secretion through the nasal sinuses. Blocking this self-cleansing mechanism is connected to a significant portion of our headaches–as much as 50%.

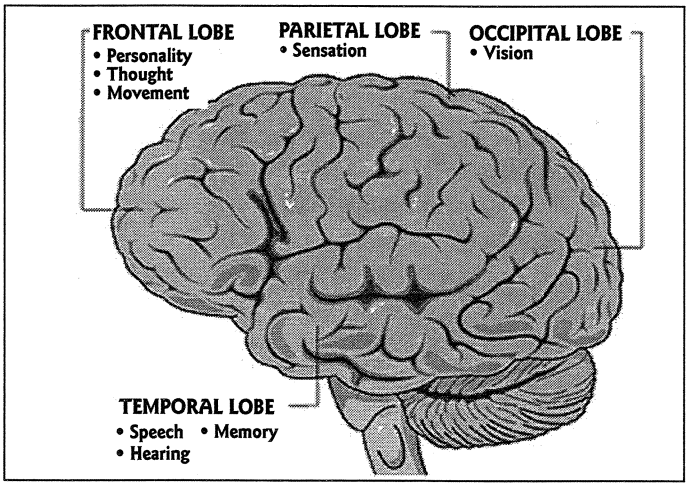
The cerebrospinal fluid is the circulatory system of the central nervous system, bringing in oxygen and nutrients and moving waste products away. Cerebrospinal fluid is pumped through the central nervous system by spinal and cranial movement.

Peripheral Nervous System:

The peripheral nervous system (PNS) is the nervous system outside of the skull and spine. 12 pairs of cranial nerves and 31 pairs of spinal nerves make up the peripheral nervous system. Cranial nerves, such as optic nerves, olfactory nerves, and facial nerves, stem directly from the brain. Spinal nerves extend outward from the spinal cord and become the different nerve plexus of the body (such as the brachial, lumbar and sacral plexus). These nerves are surrounded by a fibrous sheath that functions almost like a conduit for electrical wires. The sheath protects the nerves from traumatic damage and keeps pressure from affecting them.

Autonomic Nervous System:

The autonomic nervous system, which is associated with our



FUNCTIONS OF THE LEFT BRAIN	FUNCTIONS OF THE RIGHT BRAIN
Controls right hand	Controls left hand
Hearing	Sight
Sense of time	Sense of space
Dealing with numbers	Music appreciation
Conclusions	Initiative
Analyzing	Integration
Tensing	Relaxation
Judgment & logic	Intuition
Extroversion	Introversion
Rational	Emotions
Objective	Subjective
Making an effort	Taking things as they come
Learning new things	Unconscious habits
Details	Seeing the whole
Written Language	Insights & ideas

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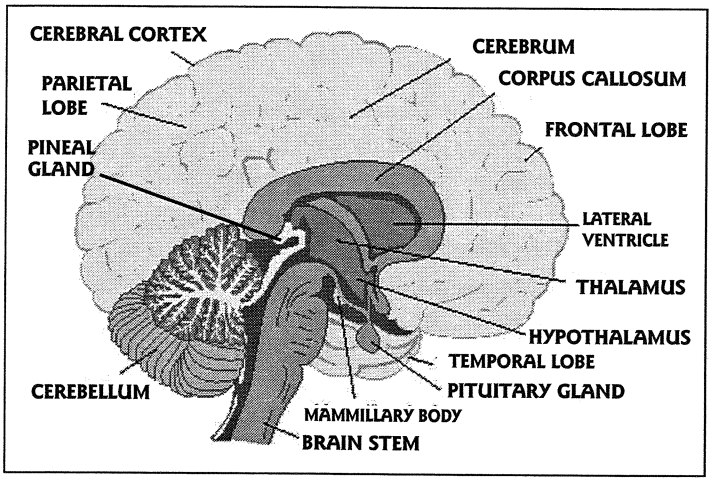

capacity for emergency response, is part of the peripheral nervous system. It includes the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. The sympathetic nervous system is the "gas pedal" of the body; it sends the heart racing, speeds up the breath, and moves blood out to the muscles and away from the core of the body (i.e. the digestive system). It gives the body the message to go. The parasympathetic nervous system is the body's braking system. It regulates the rebuilding functions of the body. It slows the breath, stimulates digestion, relaxes the nerves and shifts the circulation toward the core of the body. It is vital for handling stress since it coordinates the recovery period from stress.

The Spinal Cord:

The spinal cord connects the brain to the 31 pairs of spinal nerves of the peripheral nervous system. The spinal cord runs down to the lower vertebrae and is anchored at the tailbone. Sometimes a problem with the sacrum or tailbone can cause pulling on the spinal cord that results in various symptoms.

In situations that require a quick response, such as touching a hot pan, the body must respond quickly. Reflexes go from sensory organs to the spinal cord and then out to the muscles without involving the brain so that the arm can respond faster. The nerves in the fingers sense the heat and send the signal to the spine, which is reflected immediately back to the muscles of the arm to pull the fingers away from the heat.

Brain:

The brain weighs about three pounds and consists of four areas:

(1) The cerebrum provides the conscious functions of the brain, such as intelligence, intuition and sensory and motor functions. It has four lobes and is divided into the right and left hemispheres. The two hemispheres are connected by a broad band of nerve fibers that transmit messages between them.

(2) The cerebellum controls muscular activity, patterns of movement, muscle tone, balance, and equilibrium.

(3) The pons is the relay station between the cerebrum and the cerebellum and coordinates hearing, taste, eye movement, rhythm, and depth of breathing.

(4) The medulla oblongata contains reflex control centers and is the exit point for cranial nerves.

The thalamus is the part of the brain that is the site of integration of the sensory system. The thalamus filters sensation and "decides" which sensations and thoughts will make it to consciousness and which will go unnoticed by the consciousness. It is pivotal in mediating sensation, movement, learning, and memory.

Relationship to Other Systems

- The nervous system and the glandular system work together to re-pattern the chemistry of the brain. The hypothalamus acts as the intermediary for these two vital systems.
- The nervous system controls most of the other systems of the body via nerves or, less directly, via the endocrine system.
- The autonomic nervous system sends either "go" or "relax" messages to all organs.
- The cranial bones move with the rhythm of the breath, and this motion helps the cerebrospinal fluid to circulate.

Negative Influences & Risk Factors

- The nerves of the brain require a constant supply of sugar and oxygen that is provided by the blood. When there is inadequate blood flow or an interruption in blood flow, nerve damage rapidly ensues. This is called a stroke.
- Drugs, particularly cocaine, prevent the parasympathetic nervous system from doing its job. Marijuana severely affects the functioning of the brain. It is like running an engine without oil, since it interferes with spinal fluid circulation. It also lowers testosterone levels and reduces the number of connections between neurons in areas that affect memory and motivation.

Some Good Foods & Nutrients

Calcium, magnesium, olives, lecithin, celery, cucumber juice, Yogi Tea, ginger, bananas, and onions.

How Yoga Helps

- Yoga increases the energy moving through particular nerve pathways. Breath of Fire particularly intensifies this movement.
- Yoga balances the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous systems. The yogic view is not necessarily to decrease the sympathetic stimulation but to increase the parasympathetic response.
- As we age we lose brain cells. The interconnections between the brain cells increase through exercise, activity, and challenge, which leads to robust circulation and good glandular response. We now know that we generate new brain cells throughout life and that exercise, such as yoga, increases this generation of cells. Researchers speculate that depression comes in part from a slowdown in the production of the needed new cells.
- The neural pathways in patients with chronic pain become hypersensitive to pain. One way to decrease pain is to increase the amount of information traveling down a shared neural pathway, effectively diluting the pain information. Increasing physical activity, such as doing yoga, produces this effect.

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- Meditations that include eye focus, mudra, and chanting aloud actively involve the function of the thalamus.

Suggested Yoga Exercises and Other Support

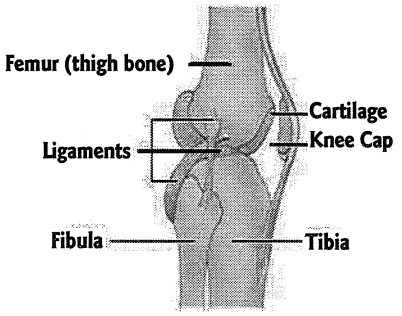
These primarily affect the Central Nervous System but have a secondary effect on the Peripheral Nervous System.

- Gong meditation and chanting - rhythm and sound are the best ways to access the parasympathetic nervous system.
- Cold showers create a powerful parasympathetic reflex.
- Triangle Pose.
- Sat Kriya (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 44.)
- Exercises that involve rapidly changing hand and arm movements help to integrate functions in different areas of the brain, as well as to move the energy along the body's meridians.
- To Activate the Central Nervous System and Stimulate the Pituitary Gland (*Physical Wisdom,* p. 14.)

Pranayam:

- Basic Breath Series (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 81)
- Breath of Fire stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 82.)
- Left nostril breathing stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system and the calming, intuitive, creative faculties of the right hemisphere of the brain.
- Right nostril breathing stimulates the sympathetic system and the action-oriented, analytical faculties of the left hemisphere.
- Alternate nostril breathing balances the activity of the two hemispheres; it gives an experience of altered receptivity and readiness for action and integrates ideas into action.

The Musculoskeletal System



A JOINT

Organs & Components

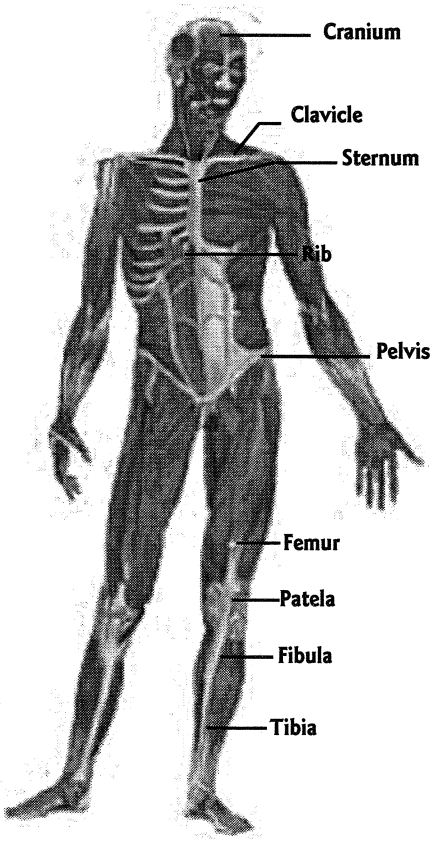
Bones (Long Bones, Membranous Bones)
Muscles (Smooth Muscle, Cardiac Muscle, Skeletal Muscle)
Joints Ligaments Tendons

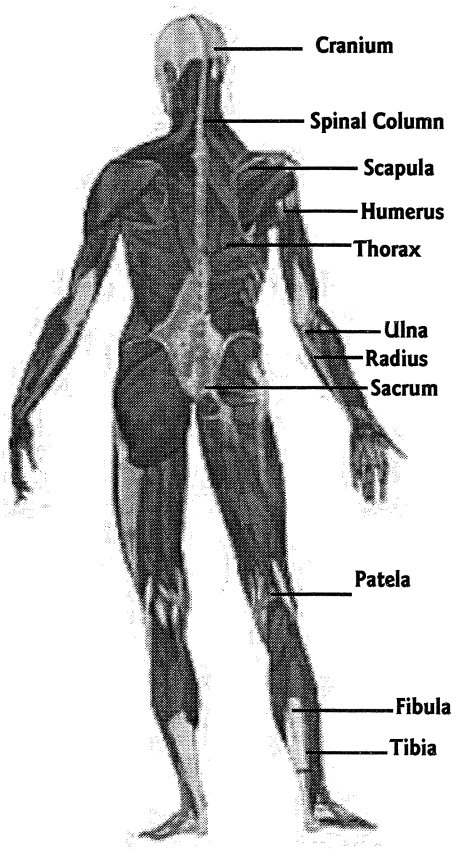
Basic Organ Structure & Function

The musculoskeletal system is made up of bones, muscles, joints, and tendons.

Bones:

Bones are made by depositing calcium and phosphate on a protein matrix. Most of the bones in the body are long bones, which have marrow in their center to help produce both red and white blood cells. The membranous bones are the flat bones, such as the scapula, sternum, and cranial bones.





Muscles:

There are three types of muscles:

1) Smooth muscles are in the digestive system and the artery walls. They move slowly but are able to maintain sustained contraction for a long time with minimum energy consumption.

2) Cardiac muscles form the heart. They have the ability to function in a finely coordinated fashion and to work repeatedly over time.

3) There are two types of Skeletal muscles: Postural muscles are designed to remain contracted for hours without fatiguing, i.e. the muscles deep in the abdomen. Quick-twitch

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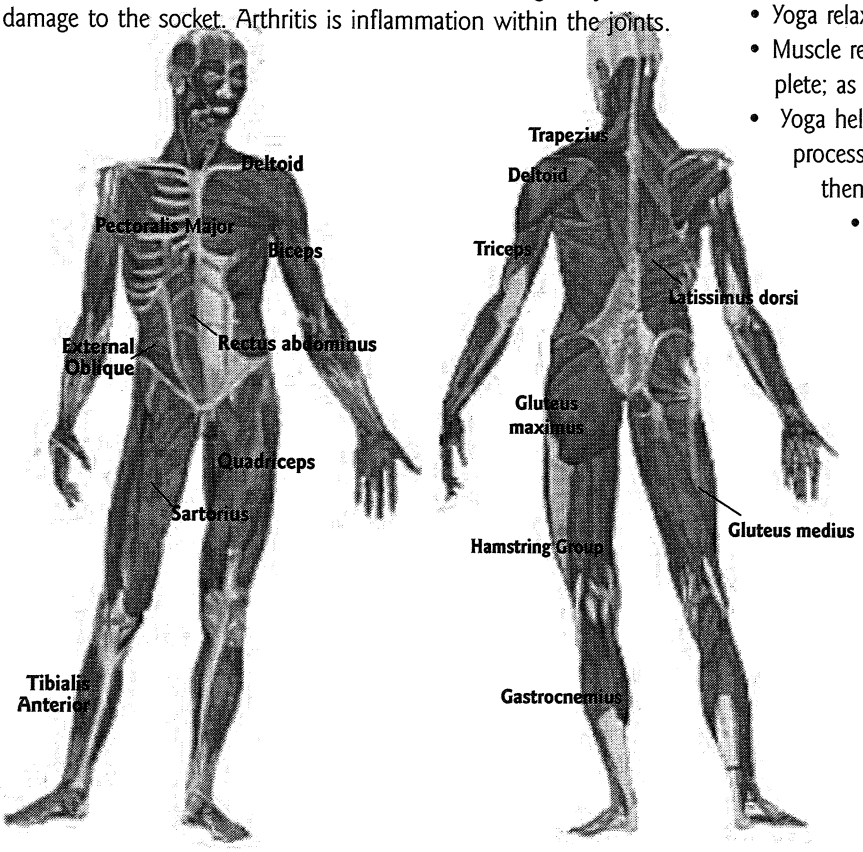
muscles are designed to respond and contract quickly. These muscles fatigue easily when compared with postural muscles, but are much more coordinated, i.e. the muscles in the hands. Skeletal muscles perform three functions: holding posture, performing movement, and producing heat.

Skeletal muscles consist of thousands of bundles of protein fibers that move along each other. When activated by nerve impulses, these fibers contract. Muscles are held together with supporting connective tissue called "fascia."

Muscles get sore from heavy use because of the buildup of lactic acid. Muscle cramps occur if there is a deficiency of calcium and magnesium or when lactic acid accumulates because of a deficiency in oxygen while the muscle is working. This is why it is important to breathe deeply when exercising.

Joints:
Between the bones are joints, which allow for motion. The ends of the bones are covered with smooth cartilage (a type of fibrous connective tissue) and lubricated with synovial fluid. This allows for effortless motion.

Ligaments:
Ligaments are bands of fibrous tissue that keep bones in proper alignment, and act as hinges for the joint. Possible problems include sprains, dislocations, and arthritis. A sprain is a strained muscle or ligament around a joint. Dislocation occurs when the rotating bone is displaced completely out of its socket. It often involves a tear in one or more ligaments surrounding the joint or damage to the socket. Arthritis is inflammation within the joints.



Tendons:
Muscles often pull across joints and connect to the bones via tendons, which are fibrous cords for attaching muscle to bone. The fixed end is called the origin, and the moving end is called the insertion. The mechanics of muscle movement is based on two opposing muscles working together–one muscle relaxing and the other contracting, which allows finely controlled motion of the joint. Muscles can only pull in the direction of contraction–pulling the origin toward the insertion. Besides contraction, the other function of muscles is controlled elongation–allowing the origin and insertion to slowly move apart–that is, not simply releasing the joint but allowing the joint to slowly open up in a controlled way. Many injuries are the result of improperly controlled elongation.

See the section on Spinal Biomechanics in this chapter.

Relationship to Other Systems

Muscles are the main heat generator in the body. Blood circulation is increased by movement. The body adapts itself to the increased energy needs of the muscles by increasing the heart rate and, therefore, the amount of blood that reaches the muscles. Rapid, deeper breathing brings more oxygen to the blood.

How Yoga Helps

- Yoga strengthens the nervous system through use of the muscles.
- Yoga creates a balanced exchange of muscle contraction and relaxation.
- Yoga releases muscle tension through stretching.
- Yoga relaxes specific muscle groups and areas.
- Muscle relaxation remains long after the yoga posture is complete; as a result, related organs and body systems are relaxed.
- Yoga helps the body conserve energy by calming the body processes and the activity in the nerves; this energy is then available for meditation.
- Yogic movement enhances blood circulation.
- Yoga keeps the joints flexible; it helps to clean out deposits in the joints and helps to prevent the buildup of new deposits.

Suggested Yoga Exercises

- Flexibility & the Spine (*Sadhana Guidelines* p. 47)
- Abdominal Strengthening (*Sadhana Guidelines* p.57)
- Purifying the Self (*Sadhana Guidelines*, p. 74)

KINESIOLOGY

Kinesiology is a system of testing the muscles to determine the strength of specific areas of the body. This communication with the body is based on the meridian system. (This system is detailed in *Touch for Health*, by John Thie.)

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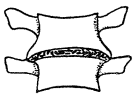
Spinal Biomechanics

Basic Organ Structure & Function

The spine consists of 32-34 vertebrae of which three to five vertebrae are fused into one bone, the sacrum. Yogi Bhajan often counts them as 26, which considers the sacrum functionally as one and the tailbone (coccyx) as one.

The spine is divided into four regions of vertebrae:

- 7 cervical (neck)
- 12 thoracic (chest)
- 5 lumbar (lower back)
- 5 sacral (fused)
- 3-5 coccyx (This number varies among individuals.)



VERTEBRAE & INVERTEBRAL DISCS

Between the vertebrae, intervertebral disks with elastic cores act as shock absorbers to avoid damage during movement. When this elastic core is squeezed out from its proper place, it presses on the nerves. This is called a "slipped disk."

The spine has two mutually exclusive functions that it needs to balance: it houses and protects the nervous system, and allows for mobility. When there is a conflict, protecting the nervous system is the body's top priority and the muscles connected to the spine go into spasm to prevent mobility.

The skull and spine house the central nervous system and have holes that allow nerves to communicate between the central and peripheral nervous systems.

Negative Influences & Risk Factors

Weakness in the Spine:
Common problem areas in the spine that yogic practice can help are upper back, neck and lower back pain. Back pain that is not caused by a pinched nerve, is often caused by muscle imbalance and less than optimal spinal mechanics. People tend to be too strong and too tight in their front thighs, chest, and posterior neck muscles. People tend to be weak in the hamstring, buttock, abdominal, middle back, and anterior neck muscles.

Weakness in the Neck:
A muscle imbalance in the neck, especially weak anterior neck muscles, tends to produce a posture that reinforces the imbalance. The neck tends to straighten and shift the head forward, which puts a strain on the muscles of the upper back and back of the neck.

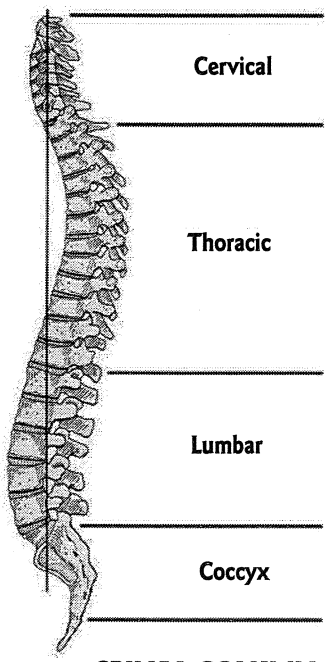
Weakness in the Lower Back:
When the lower back is weak, it tends to arch forward and put pressure and strain on the joints in that region. Good yoga exercises for this weakness are those that involve stretching the overly tight muscles and exercising the weak muscles. Controlled elongation is the most important motion, especially in the abdominal area. This elongation is provided by controlling the lowering phase of leg lifts or sit ups–that means keeping the lower back pressed as flat as possible during any leg lifts and especially during Stretch Pose. *(See the Form & Alignment Chapter in this Manual.)*

How Yoga Helps

- Yoga re-hydrates the disks to normalize structure and function.
- Long Deep Breathing expands the ribs and the spine; the cranial bones move with the rhythm of the breath, and spinal and cranial movement pumps the cerebrospinal fluid.
- The movement of the sacrum circulates the spinal fluid.
- Stretching resets the resting tension in the muscles alongside the spine, and strengthens and re-patterns specific muscles.

Suggested Yoga Exercises

- Kriya for the Lower Spine and Elimination (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 52.).
- Flexibility and the Spine (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 47; in the "Sets" chapter.)
- Basic Spinal Energy Series (*Sadhana Guidelines,* p. 45; in the "Sets" chapter.)
- Exercises that strengthen the abdominal muscles.
- Spinal Flex, Cat-Cow, and Cobra.



SPINAL COLUMN

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Caveats & Cautions for the Spine & Neck

See the Form & Alignment and Roles in Class chapters for more cautions.

In General....

- Encourage students not to be competitive, or push the spine and neck aggressively. More progress is made when moving slowly and consistently.
- When there is pain, numbness, weakness or lack of muscle control in the arms or legs, or especially if there is sudden onset of difficulty controlling urination or defecation, this is indicative of a significant neurological problem. The student should see a physician promptly before continuing yoga.

Warm-ups. It is a good idea to use a warm-up set which increases flexibility before doing a challenging *kriya*. *(See the Roles in Class chapter.)*

Lower Back

- Be sure to keep the abdominal muscles engaged and the lower back flattened against the floor when doing leg lifts.
- If the back arches up that means the psoas muscles (already too strong) are working and not the abdominal muscles.

Neck

- Keep the Neck Lock applied in poses that involve lifting the head. This stabilizes the shoulder blades so that we can use our arms. We can do this with either the upper trapezius muscles or the muscles of the mid-back. However, if we use the upper trapezius muscles, we are hanging our arms on our necks, putting a strain on the neck. Therefore, mechanically speaking, using the muscles of the mid-back is preferred.

Cobra Pose. This is a problem for many people. Stretch the chest forward as opposed to shortening the back, so that the joints of the lumbar sacral spine are not riding on each other. Use modified cobra when necessary (i.e., resting on the elbows rather than the hands.)

Headstand. In Kundalini Yoga we do not do headstands, and we never put pressure on the cervical vertebrae.

Shoulder Stand. Make sure the weight is balanced on the shoulders, not the neck.

Plow Pose. Don't push it! It's better to increase the mid-back stretch before going into it fully.

Stretches. Generally speaking, avoid bouncing stretches, since they send a signal to the muscles to tighten up. Encourage gradual, consistent stretching, synchronized with the breath.

Rest. Regular and sufficient rest is just as essential as regular physical activity to muscle function and development.

Pregnancy & Menstruation *(See the Roles In Class chapter)*
It is important to inform women of the limitations necessary when doing yoga while pregnant or menstruating. Remember that the limitations for doing yoga while pregnant are written for yogis! Start by assuming the pregnant woman has never done any yoga or exercise before.

The Immune System

Organs & Components

Bone Marrow
Spleen
Glands
Lymphatic System
White Blood Cells

Basic Organ Structure & Function

The organs of the immune system manufacture immune cells–white blood cells–that provide the body's defense against chemicals, microorganisms, and cancer.

The spleen is on the left side of the body below the diaphragm. It purifies the blood by removing damaged and old red and white blood cells.

Thymus gland: Located near the heart, below the sternum, the thymus gland is involved in maturing white blood cells. It supports the immune system in fighting illness.

Relationship to Other Systems

The adrenal glands, thymus gland, hypothalamus, and pituitary gland all produce vital hormones in the immune system. Mental or emotional stress can affect this hormonal balance and weaken the immune system.

Some Good Foods & Nutrients

For the spleen: yellow vegetables, bananas, honey, sunflower seeds, yogurt, okra, citrus fruit, buckwheat, olives, cabbage, vitamins C, D, F, B complex, iron, copper, and manganese.

How Yoga Helps

- Yoga has a powerful cleansing effect, and it stimulates blood circulation and massages the internal organs.
- By stimulating the hypothalamus, sound and rhythm have a powerful effect on the immune system.

Suggested Yoga Exercises and Other Support

- Immune Strengthening Workout (*Inner Workout,* p. 41.)
- Strengthening the Immune System I & II (*Physical Wisdom,* p. 4 & 5.)
- Exercise Set for the Lymph System (*Kundalini Yoga for Youth and Joy,* p. 18.)
- All pranayam.
- For the spleen: sit in Rock Pose, place the hands on the thighs, exhale and hold out, and pump the stomach.
- For the thymus gland: Bear Grip; thumping on the chest.

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The Genito-urinary System

Organs & Components

Kidneys	Prostate (males), Testes (males)
Ureters, Bladder, Urethra	Uterus (females), Ovaries (Females)

Basic Organ Structure & Function

The genital and urinary systems are studied together because they are so intertwined anatomically that problems in one often cause problems in the other. They share common neurological and anatomic pathways, such as the urethra. *For a discussion of the genitals, see the section on the Endocrine System in this chapter.*

The urinary system consists of two kidneys connected by the ureters, which are long tubes, to the bladder for storage. A third tube, the urethra, leads from the bladder to outside of the body.

The kidneys are located just above the waist in the back. They remove waste and excess water from the blood to produce urine.

The bladder collects urine and can hold about one liter. When the bladder is unable to empty properly, this leads to tension in the back, neck, buttocks, backs of the thighs, and the outsides of the feet.

Relationship to Other Systems

The kidneys help eliminate toxins that accumulate in the blood. Also, they produce hormones that perform a number of functions, including stimulation of red blood cell production in the bone marrow and regulation of blood pressure.

The kidneys respond to both neurological and hormonal messages.

The kidneys control the water balance in the body. If they absorb more water back into the body, the blood volume goes up and so the blood pressure goes up. If they eliminate more water, then the volume goes down and the blood pressure goes down with it. Therefore, unhealthy kidneys will put a great deal of stress on all other organs and on the heart in particular.

Sitting on top of the kidneys, the adrenal glands communicate to the kidneys primarily through the hormone aldosterone.

Negative Influences and Risk Factors

The kidneys are the most important organs for the elimination of toxins–even more important than the liver. They can be damaged by drugs, both legal and illegal. There is evidence that common drugs such as aspirin, ibuprofen, and antibiotics in even moderate doses can diminish kidney function. Probably the biggest insult to the kidneys is the failure to drink enough water. Eating a lot before bed compounds the problem, since the kidneys concentrate that waste all night. It is critical to monitor and deal with any symptoms of high blood pressure, as high blood pressure damages the kidneys and, ultimately, the heart.

Some Good Foods & Nutrients

Kidneys: lots of pure water, all green vegetables, celery juice, cucumber juice, corn silk tea, basmati rice. (Note: Corn silk tea increases excretion of urine and is not appropriate for all conditions.)

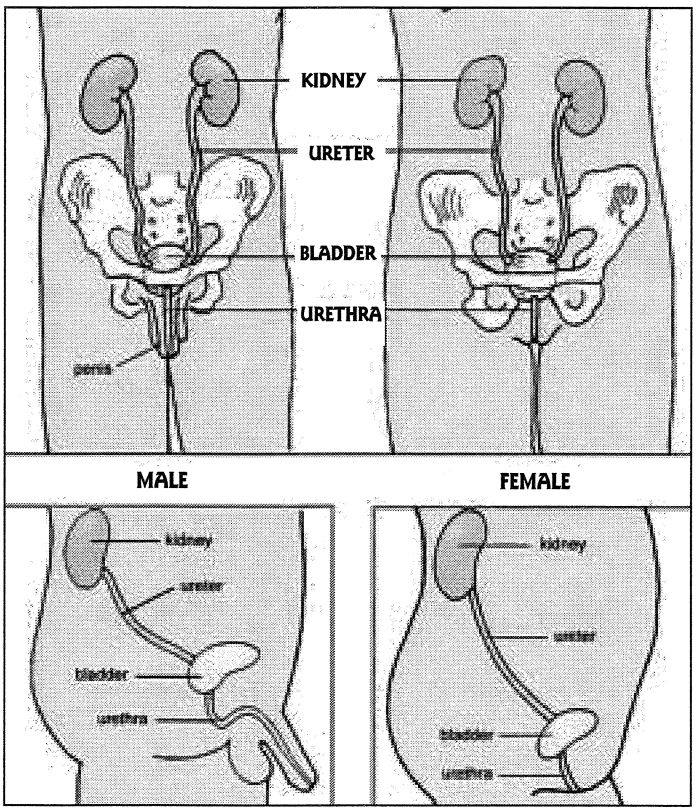
Bladder: eggplant, okra, green leafy vegetables, carrots, wheat germ, pumpkin seeds, olives, vitamins C and E, calcium.

How Yoga Helps

- The kidneys sit right under the diaphragm, so improving flexibility in the spine and diaphragm will open up the nerves and blood circulation in this area; exercises like Spinal Flex increase the blood circulation to the kidneys.
- Many elements of a yogic diet stimulate the kidneys to eliminate wastes and decrease their workload by decreasing the intake of toxins.

Suggested Yoga Exercises & Other Support

- Toning the Kidneys (*Owner's Manual for the Human Body,* p. 36.)
- Exercise Set for Kidneys (*Kundalini Yoga for Youth & Joy,* p. 22); in the "Sets" chapter.
- Camel, Cat-Cow.
- Stopping the flow of urine several times while urinating; this is good for strengthening the perineal muscles and helps to prevent incontinence.



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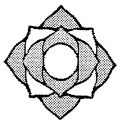
CHAPTER 14



Yogic Anatomy– Prana, Vayus, Nadis, the Kundalini & the Navel Point

"We must awaken our inner computer to an awareness of the Infinite if we are to live healthy, happy and holy. That cannot happen until the Kundalini, the spiritual nerve, breaks through the blockage at the base of the spine, in the muladhara chakra, and then travels upward. You must generate the pressure of the prana and mix it with the apana and generate heat. With this heat of the prana you put a charge on the Kundalini."

- YOGI BHAJAN

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The tie between us and God is the ray of light called Prana. That's why the human is called the Pranee – the one who lives by the Grace of Prana.

- *YOGI BHAJAN*

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Prana The subtle life force, the sub-atomic energy. The first unit of energy. Prana is the motion and coding of life energies through the realms of the mind and body.

Apana The eliminating force of the body.

Kundalini The uncoiling of your essential consciousness, your creative potential, the energy of consciousness, the energy of the soul itself. Literally it means "the curl in the lock of the hair of the beloved."

Nadis Channels of flow for the Prana. There are 72,000 *nadis*, of which 72 are vital. Of those 72, three major nadis are important for the understanding of Kundalini Yoga: *ida, pingala, sushmuna.*

Ida The *nadi* which ends at the left nostril. It brings in the cooling, soothing, mind-expanding energy of the moon.

Pingala The *nadi* which ends in the right nostril. It brings in the stimulating, energizing, heating energy of the sun.

Sushmuna The central *nadi*, or channel through which the kundalini ascends. The *sushmuna* originates from the base of the spine where the three nadis (*ida, pingala,* and *sushmuna*) meet. It travels up the center of the spine to the top of the head. It is also called the Silver Cord.

Vayus The different frequencies and modes of motion of the Prana. Each *vayu* has a natural home in the body. They are: *prana, apana, udana, samana, vyana.*

The Navel Point is a center of energy transformation in the body. This center is etheric. It is located a few inches below the navel, and in front of the lower spine. This center is a vital nexus. It encloses within itself the starting point of the 72,000 *nadis*, including, of course, the 72 vital *nadis*.

For more on pranayam, see Breath chapter.

Prana & Kundalini

Prana is the motion and the coding of energies through the realms of the mind and body. Prana is not kundalini. Kundalini is an emanation of the soul itself, the opening of the soul energy and awareness. Many people are confused by the writings on kundalini because it has become popular to think that there are "kundalini emergencies." Most of these so-called emergencies are actually imbalances of the Prana in one or another of your Ten Bodies or in the chakras. Most healing has to do with rearranging the Pranas in an appropriate way.

Vayus

Prana with a capital "P" divides itself into different frequencies or different types of motion within the areas of the body. These are the ***vayus***. Each of these subdivisions of Prana has a natural home in the body. If too much of a particular Prana accumulates in an area away from its normal functioning or too little is there when it's needed, that creates a disorder, an illness of the body, mind, or emotions. Many of the techniques of posture and breathing and the way we eat, and act, are done to recreate the natural flow, or these subdivisions of *Prana* within our bodies. In this way our body can regain a sense of stillness, flexibility, and spontaneous intuition, so that it becomes a perfect instrument for the soul. We no longer worry about or obsess on our disorders or needs. We can sense the motion that's in the entire universe.

In the ancient times, the science of sensing the motion of the universe and of expanding your knowledge by using it was called *swarodaya*. A yogi would see the condition of the breath of a student, and he would know the state of illness, and the probability of success in the ventures he or she was going to encounter. It looked like a psychic miracle, but it was a sensitivity to the motions of the Prana. By blending the *Pranas* appropriately, you can regulate your moods and expand your mental capacity.

Imagine the *Prana* going into each area of your body. Prana divides into five *vayus*: *prana, apana, udana, samana,* and *vyana.*

Prana (small "p") accumulates between the base of the heart and the neck. It is linked to the function of the lungs and to inspiration. The motion of prana is accumulation and expansion of the lungs and of the internal energy. When you are full of prana, you're ready for life, you're charged with energy, your respiration is open and your mind takes on a sense of positivity.

Apana has its abode below the navel and governs all the functions relating to elimination. It is associated with elimination through the rectum, the bladder, the colon, and the genitals. *Apana* even flows down and exits the body through the feet, although its primary exit is through the rectum. Powerful *apana* is needed these days to deal with the elimination of toxins. It also gives you the ability to know what you need to retain and what you need to let go. *Apana* is associated with earthy qualities that sustain many of the body parts. Someone with too much *apana* will tend to be slow, lazy and have a sense of heaviness, a sense of confusion or stupidity. With strong *apana* comes a sense of security and the ability to put one foot in front of the other.

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Samana rules the region between the heart and the navel and governs much of the body's metabolic activity. It tends to organize, systematize, and decide where things go. *Samana* helps in assimilation. It helps you to know what to assimilate and what to pass on to the colon. People with too little *samana* or upset *samana* have a sense of mental confusion, confused emotions, and an inability to know what is really true for them emotionally. Relationships can be quite confused. People with relationship boundary problems often have upsets in *samana*. Strong *samana* allows you to discriminate, and gives you emotional clarity.

Udana resides in the larynx and upwards into the head. As opposed to *prana*, it throws the air up and out. It is about projection. It is active in all forms of speech as well as in expelling through vomiting. It interacts with all the senses in the head. When *udana* is not properly regulated, the voice is irregular; and there's an inability to create musical notes properly. If *udana* is strong, you can project, and you can create with your word.

Vyana pervades the entire body. It is like a subtle connecting tissue. It governs the overall coordination and movement of muscles and joints throughout the body. *Vyana* gives both the body and your thoughts a sense of integrity, a kind of viscosity to the Pranic Body. When it's very strong, there's a sense of interconnectedness and flow. When *vyana* is disturbed, one part of the body may feel isolated or disconnected from the others. When *vyana* is imbalanced and disturbed, the mind has a difficult time staying with any one thought. Ideas constantly change, and thoughts are scattered into competing parts, instead of all the parts coordinating and connecting.

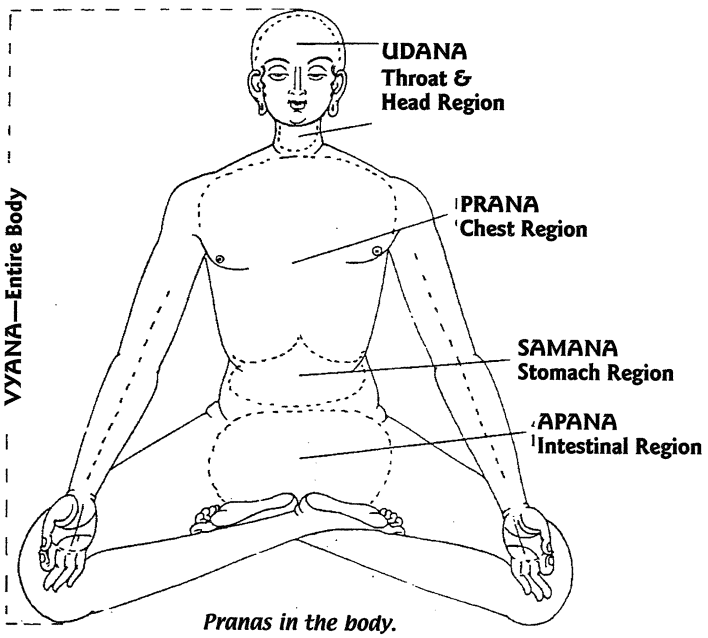
Though there are many more subdivisions of Prana that go along with the different motions of the body, these are the major ones.

The Flow of the Kunalini

One of the central processes in most Kundalini *kriyas* is to strengthen the accumulating energy of *prana* and the eliminating energy of *apana*. When *prana* and *apana*, which act as the central axis of all the Pranas, are strong and balanced, the others tend to adjust. When *prana* and *apana* are both strong, the opposite energies mix together, uniting through the navel by applying *mulbandh*. This opens the doorway to the flow of Kundalini, which is the opening of the soul energy of awareness.

Nadis

What do these different types of Prana have to do with the meridians and channels of flow in the body? In Kundalini Yoga, these channels are called *nadis*. A nadi is not a nerve or a muscle, but just a channel of flow, which may go along a bone or a vein, or may go straight through what we'd think of as space without a physical organ. There are seventy-two major *surs*, or zones, through which the *nadis* flow. Of the seventy-two, there are three major ones: the *ida*, on the left, the *pingala*, on the right, and the *sushmuna*, in the center. Of those three, it is the central channel, the *sushmuna*, which Kundalini Yoga concentrates on mostly, because if you can vibrate the *sushmuna*, then you can vibrate all three *surs*. When you vibrate all three, you vibrate the seventy-two, and you can adjust the entire system. It is for this reason that when we chant and we use the power of *shabd*, we consciously locate that *shabd* in the central channel so that we can vibrate all the seventy-two major meridians. Now, those seventy-two span out to 72,000 channels throughout the body in different systems. It is the interaction with the Crown Chakra that gives 1,000 thoughts per smallest time unit, 1,000 vibrations or seeds of the mind. Those 1,000 strokes of the mind strike the seventy-two major channels, giving 72,000 vibrations. Just think of a string being plucked by a pick. It vibrates and creates a shape in both time and space. The plucking of the seventy-two major channels by the interaction with the mind, gives all your Ten Bodies a shape in time and space. It shapes your physical body, your emotional bodies, and your mental bodies. Kundalini Yoga decodes how to pluck those major strings by using the central channel.



Pranas in the body.

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Prana, Apana, Nadis & Kundalini

PRANA IS THE LIFE FORCE INTERPENETRATING EVERY ATOM of your form—and indeed the universe. *Apana* refers to the eliminative functions of the body. These functions operate at all levels, both gross and subtle to expel negative energy and waste. For the purpose of raising kundalini, let us describe *prana* as the "vital air" above the navel, and *apana* as the "vital air" below the navel.

There are 72,000 currents or *nadis* which emanate from the Navel Point and end in the hands and feet. It is through these that the *prana* is carried to all the parts of the body. Of these 72,000 *nadis* there are three which are most important: the *ida*, the *pingala*, and the *sushmuna*. The *ida* and *pingala* travel the distance between the nostrils (*ida*, left, and *pingala*, right) and the base of the spine. The *sushmuna* originates from the base of the spine where the three *nadis* meet, and travels up the center of the spine to the top of the head. This center at the base of the spine is called the seat of the kundalini and is the place where the kundalini energy lies dormant. The *ida* represents the negatively charged energy (*apana*) or lunar energy which eliminates body wastes and has a calming, cooling and restorative effect upon the body and mind. The *pingala* carries the positively charged energy (*prana*) which has an energizing and heat producing effect on the body and mind.

The kundalini will not awaken and rise until these two energies—*prana* (positive) and *apana* (negative)—are integrated and balanced in the Root Chakra. This pressure is required to raise the kundalini and cause its ascendance through *sushmuna*, also called the Silver Cord.

Thus, through inhalation and retention, *prana* is directed down to the Navel Chakra, while the *apana*, through exhalation and retention, is drawn upward from the Root Chakra to the Navel Point. The meeting and uniting of the two forces in the pranic cavity creates tremendous heat in the Navel Chakra—not hot heat, but white heat. The combined energies are often described as energizing the filament of *sushmuna*, meaning that *sushmuna* lights up like the filament in a light globe suddenly plugged into its source of electric power.

Responding to breath control and mental direction, the integrated energies depart the Navel Chakra and descend to the Root Chakra where they stimulate the kundalini. Further breath and the application of the will causes the kundalini energy to rise, charging the higher centers of consciousness. In this way the lower forms of energy can be transmuted into higher forms.

The first law of thermodynamics is that energy can neither be created nor destroyed, but rather, it can be changed from one form to another. In order for this energy to flow, certain blockages and impurities in the nerves have to be removed and the channels must be cleansed. This is most effectively done through the power of the breath and mantra in conjunction with various postures and locks.

Kundalini Yoga teaches that to raise the energy through the *sushmuna*, the student can apply hydraulic locks, which implies the conscious application of pressure. It requires such pressure to raise kundalini and the *prana-apana* of the lower chakras and send them ascending up the *sushmuna*. Pressure in the Root Chakra sends *apana-ida* force up to the Navel Chakra. Applying the hydraulic lock in the diaphragm sends it further upwards to the Throat Chakra. From there, the Neck Lock takes it into the brain to complete its journey.

In order to stimulate the pineal gland, or the seat of the soul, the Tenth Gate or Crown Chakra at the top of the head must be "unsealed." Under normal circumstances the gate remains sealed. But when kundalini heat rises, the pineal begins to transmit a beam of radiation and project it toward the pituitary. The pituitary, in turn, projects impulsations, and something like a "cosmic colorvision." When both the pituitary and pineal are aroused and unite in their mystic marriage union in the third ventricle, the majestic Third Eye, the gate to the Crown Chakra opens."

(Beads of Truth, No. 4, 1980)

Questions & Answers with the Master

Question: What is the kundalini? What is it like when the kundalini energy rises? Is kundalini like electricity?

Answer: What is kundalini? It is the whole energy of the cosmos in the individual and beyond the individual. It is the energy of consciousness. Without the constant flow of that energy, you could not live. With a large flow, your mind begins to flow and awaken. You stop living in imaginary realities and become very dutiful to the tasks and joys of life. You experience it when the energy of the glandular system combines with the nervous system to create such a sensitivity that the brain in its totality receives signals and integrates them. A new clarity accompanies your perception, thought, and intuition. Normally you use a small portion of the brain's potential. When kundalini awakens, one understands the effect and impact of an action at the beginning of a sequence of action and reaction. He has the choice to take an action or not. In other words, a person becomes totally and wholly aware. That is why it is called "the yoga of awareness." Just as all rivers end up in the ocean, all yoga ends up raising the kundalini.

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The kundalini is the creative potential of the human being. To get this experience of the kundalini, technology and science is needed. After the eighth year of life, the pineal gland does not secrete fully. Some people think it is functionless in the human structure. Kundalini Yoga activates its dormant potentials in the brain. It needs to tap the reserve energy that is stored near your Navel Point. There is a pure source of energy at the navel area that is known, perceived, and understood by the yogis. It is that pure energy that guides and develops your shape and connects you to this Earth. That connection and that pure energy is still there. It is part of your subtle structure as a human being. All you have to do is uncoil that energy and make a functional connection with your pineal gland. Once that master gland, the channel of the soul, has started secreting, it will give you the power to reach your self-realization in relationship to the total universal awareness.

This is what must accompany the awakening of Kundalini. I mean it scientifically. This mechanism happens but I realize that some people are still ignorant of these processes. If I would have talked a hundred years ago about atomic energy people would have said, "It is frightening. It is impossible. Who wants to do that? That can't be inside each substance." They didn't know about the atom, its internal structure, and its potentials. We still have that same ignorance of the internal nature and structure of human consciousness and its potentials. People want it but they are frightened, they make up stories when they lack experience, and they base their belief on rumor and misinformation. This is a human problem, not the problem of an individual. Without knowing anything about what something is or what something actually means, we settle for opinions and get opinionated. That is why I encourage you to ask questions, learn, and experience.

Occasionally you will see certain people who may not be practicing Kundalini Yoga but who are known to have a sixth sense. They have a unique awareness and inborn capacities. They have an intuitive power which tells them that the consequences of certain actions will be disastrous in the end. They have an inner radar which warns them of danger and guides them toward effective actions. If you have this intuitive relationship between your individual consciousness and the universal consciousness, you can compute what someone is trying to say before they say it. What they actually say is unimportant. You will know what they intend and what they mean behind the words. This is not very difficult.

Most people are not aware that they have this ability in them. With a little mental work, it can be activated and achieved. This intuitive capacity is natural. The real action behind it is that you become sensitive to the auric radiance of the other person. That radiance comes from the subtle bodies that compose the unseen human structure. All you have to do is compute the signal of the aura as it comes to you. You will know what that person really wants. If a person comes to you, you immediately know his projection. Before he even talks, you just say, "You have come with many stories, but you are ultimately going to ask me for a hundred dollars. Friend, I don't have it to give to you." I used to speak that bluntly to people, but word started to spread that I am a great psychic. People would seek me out for predictions and for their ego. That is not a good reputation for a simple man of God, so now I am very restrained about showing it.

Question: I have a friend who is a psychotherapist. He teaches Hatha Yoga as a part of his therapy. He told me that Kundalini Yoga is an extremely dangerous form of yoga and that it can lead to insanity if not handled right. Is this true?

Answer: It is very unfortunate that some people talk that way. First of all, they do not know what they are talking about. Is money dangerous? It is just an energy. Kundalini is a latent energy that can be used for total consciousness. The only dangerous thing is the person whose Kundalini is raised properly. That person is totally conscious. He cannot be lied to or cheated or politically swayed. The kundalini is essential. As long as you practice a total discipline or a complete and balanced *kriya*, there is no difficulty. In Kundalini Yoga, you will notice that every meditation and *kriya* has some form of mantra in it. This insures the channelization of the energy.

Second, they don't have any real experience of it. The truth is Kundalini Yoga produces whole human beings, teachers, and yogis. A yogi is one who has a union with the supreme consciousness. Some people teach yoga as if it is a bunch of dumb exercises, but they have no right to call themselves yogis. To teach this yoga you must have authentic experience and practical knowledge of the technology. There is never a problem with Kundalini Yoga taught as the original sacred science.

Question: What about great visions, psychic experiences, or jerking and trembling after meditation? Is this the kundalini rising?

Answer: This is glitter at the bottom of the ladder. These hallucinations, psychism, and nerve weaknesses mean nothing. If a student practicing Kundalini Yoga is very blocked up in the spine and pranic nadis, he may have a one time experience when the channels are cleared. But that is one time, brief, and does not disrupt anything. These things may happen when someone's nervous system has not been properly prepared, or if they do not use the mantra or breathing technique properly. The real measure of kundalini rising is your consciousness from breath to breath and courage you bring to your life. These momentary flashes brought on by weakness have nothing to do with kundalini.

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Question: Is the goal for the yoga student to bring all the energy into the brain?

Answer : No! The energy of kundalini releases from the navel center, then rises to the top of the head. When it descends to complete its cycle of energy, the chakras open fully. By chakras opening I mean the talents of each chakra are consolidated into the character and behavior of that person. It does no good at all to fill a person with energy that he cannot integrate.

Question: Most Kundalini Yoga students let their hair grow. Is this necessary?

Answer: No. You can practice with any length hair, but the hair was the first technique to raise the kundalini energy. When the hair is at its natural full length and coiled over the anterior fontanel for men or the posterior fontanel for women, it draws pranic energy into the spine. The force of this downward positive energy causes the Kundalini energy to rise for balance. This is why you always find grace and calmness in a person with uncut hair from birth if they keep it well. Actually the hair was so important that the word for consciousness, kundalini, actually derives from *kundal* which means "a coil of the beloved's hair."

Question: You referred to the chakras as centers of consciousness. Would you describe the qualities each gives?

Answer: There are seven centers in the body. They are all in the spine. They each have a projected center or chakra. First is the rectum. Second projected center is the sex organ. Third is the navel center. When you pull the rectum and sex organ together, the energy projects to the third center of consciousness. Fourth is the center between the two nipples, the heart center. Fifth is the neck. Sixth is between the two eyes at the top of the nose. And the seventh is the last at the top of the head, corresponding to the pineal gland.

Do these centers have some correlation with the human? Yes. A person whose consciousness dwells in the rectum will never have a normal, direct sexual relationship. One whose center of consciousness is the second center will define themself in terms of sex, may even use pain or other forms of intense stimulation as an approach to pleasure in sex. At the third center of consciousness a person can't overcome greediness. He may try his level best. Somehow he will like to get others' things. They may be useful to him or not. The fourth center of consciousness is the heart center where the nipples and throat form a triangle. Here a person gets knowledge. The fifth center of consciousness is at the throat. He may talk without flowery English, but his words will have that weight that goes right into the heart. At the sixth center of consciousness, a person can know everything around him. He may use the knowledge or not. The pituitary gland gives him the greatest intuition. At the last center of consciousness, which is the highest center, a person becomes most humble. He has extreme humility. In the highest center the ego becomes universal ego, so that person has no pain and no pleasure. What he says happens. That is the highest center of consciousness. In a long deep meditation, you can know where your consciousness is. It can be seen and judged by assessing what your environments are and what are the most important needs in your life. You can know which chakras you are operating from.

Now, knowing does not make any difference. Can you pull it up and change gears in such a way that you can come out of it?

Question: Is it possible for a teacher to raise the kundalini of his students just by his presence?

Answer: The kundalini can be stimulated directly by a teacher. But that teacher is not much of a teacher! The students should be prepared, then given a technology to raise it themselves. Why should they wait at the feet of a teacher like puppies? They should go through the experience, then share the techniques with others.

Question: Does a student of Kundalini Yoga have to be celibate?

Answer: The student should be a householder, raise a family and fulfill the obligations of a spiritual society. Celibacy actually means to be by yourself without abusing your sexual and regenerative abilities. A married person is by himself, for both people are merged as one. Even in marriage the sexual energy is respected and built up. A normal couple will find a frequency of one time a month completely satisfying if approached correctly. If you want to be celibate without ever having sex, remember to practice Sat Kriya each day so you can utilize the energy and not go nutty.

Question: When the kundalini rises, do you go into trance or become rigid?

Answer: A raised kundalini will give you grace of motion. Life fills every cell so you are able to move smoothly with an awareness of the rhythm and music of all your environments. The kundalini makes you alive and graceful, not rigid like some kind of death.

Question: Why are these teachings being shared so openly now?

Answer: The techniques belong to those who practice them. They are the heritage of humanity. I am just a postman with a lot of letters to deliver. You can open them and use them or not—that is your problem. But the world is going through changes. Your future generations will need these techniques to stay mentally healthy and physically strong. These teachings will help humanity as it awakens from adolescence. I am sharing these teachings to create a science of the total self.

From an 1976 interview with Yogi Bhajan

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Using the Gift of Prana

OUR TIE BETWEEN US AND GOD is the ray of light called Prana. That's why the human is called *Pranee*, the one who lives by Prana. *Pavan Guru*, that's what Guru Nanak uttered. *Pavan* means carrier of the Prana. It is what re-vibrates and reconstructs your cells. Life is not only the Earth. Life is everywhere, but it is transparent. Transparent life does not need Prana. It has the sensitivity, mind, soul, projectivity, but it doesn't need the Prana.

Why are we given Prana here? To have sensitivity to feel and forgive others. You know what God is? Forgiveness. God Almighty is with you 24 hours, never takes action. Can you believe the forgiveness, compassion, kindness, though He knows all the negative things you are doing?

Pavan Pavan Pavan Pavan
Par Para Pavan Guru
Pavan Guru Wahe Guru
Wahe Guru Pavan Guru*

OUR LIFE IS BASED ON THE *PAVAN*, the carrier of the Prana, the *Pran Shakti*. We call it *Para Shakti*. This is *Pavan Guru*.

Those who are suffering in their life, they are not suffering because they are not wise. They are suffering because they are not using divine wisdom. Divine wisdom is not what you have been told, that it is something special. It is the simplest thing. What you have in your life is Prana. That is why you are called *Pranee*. *Pranee* is one who consumes the Prana and lives on. That's all. The moment this Prana will leave your body, you'll be called a dead man. As a living man, you are called *Praanee*. *Praanee* means you are living by the grace of Prana. God gave you Prana and if you chant the Name with that Prana, you regain the mental shield.

We chant *Wahe Guru*, that is our Gurmantra. *Sat Naam* is our *Aad Mantra*. *Ek Ong Kar Sat Naam Karta Purkh, Nirbho, Nirvair, Akal Moorat, Ajooni Saibhang, Gur Parsad* is our *Mool Mantra*. Then there's no problem.

—YOGI BHAJAN

**For more details on this mantra including a translation, see Frequently Used Mantras in Sound & Mantra section.*

The Power of Sushmuna, Ida & Pingala

BY BALANCING YOUR PRANA AND YOUR SUBTLE ANATOMY WITH KUNDALINI YOGA, you awaken the self-healing potentials in your body and mind. Your Pranic Body has inherent healing activity that manifests with three qualities according to the primary channel that is used in the healing process: *sushmuna, ida* and *pingala*—the three major *nadis* in yoga anatomy. We use all three in Kundalinli Yoga.

Sushmuna healing is the most subtle. It represents the use of the Neutral Mind to enter into the healing space. It is the same healing space of Guru Ram Das, the fourth Sikh Guru, the Master of Raj Yoga. He was known for healing and miraculous blessings to all people regardless of origin or spiritual beliefs. First, you establish a link with those you want to meditate upon or send healing to. An example of how to enter this space is to chant:

Guroo Guroo Whahay Guroo, Guroo Raam Das Guroo.

Simply imagine dipping that person into a beautiful pool of water that is infinite in extent. Hear every movement and ripple in the water echo the chant. Effectively you do nothing, except be fully present and aware. You are initiating healing through you, beyond the Positive and Negative minds. You are dwelling in the Neutral Mind and healing through the *sushmuna* and consciousness. Healing through the Neutral Mind means that you learn to use awareness as the agent of healing. It is your relationship to your self, experienced within yourself, that is the tool.

Pingala healing is the gathering of force, or shakti. It is the moving of this Prana from one spot to another. This is automatically guided in the *kriyas* of Kundalini Yoga.

Ida healing uses your imagination, beliefs and abilities to project a feeling, visualization or sound that represents the infnite or the sacred. You create an imaginative scene, and that creates a space of healing. An example is to imagine a beautiful beach scene and take that person there with you. When you imagine with your whole mind and all your senses, the *ida* becomes active. Then the other person, in rapport with you, moves away from their previous place of pain.

These three levels of healing, *sushmuna, pingala*, and *ida*, are part of the process of healing in Kundalini Yoga. They are activated and applied automatically in the structure of the *kriyas*. As yoga teachers we do not diagnose, but we do encourage the natural healing processes by the use of the *kriyas* and meditations. Healing in this sense is an ongoing natural maintainence of the body/minds' ability to heal itself. If you are a professional with a license to treat people, you will find the practices of Kundalini Yoga can enhance your skills regardless of which form of healing you are trained in. Kundalini Yoga is a source to elevate awareness and maintain the flow of energy in the mind and body, which will enliven any healing approach, and help people care for themselves with a positive lifestyle.

We do certain *kriyas* in a group to enter into a collective self healing space. A ***healing circle*** is when we meditate and chant together in specific ways to multiply the effects of our indivdual minds through the power of the group projection.

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The Navel Point

IN THE ANCIENT SHASTRAS IT STATES THAT, "all yoga starts at the Navel Point." There is an old Indian story which illustrates this point well. Once, a young student asked his teacher how far he must travel to find enlightenment and the true path of the Self. The teacher spread his fingers wide and said, "You must travel the distance from the thumb to the tip of the little finger. If you place the spread hand on your stomach with the little finger at the Navel Point, then the thumb stretches to the heart center. This is the mystical path consciousness must ascend."

In the discipline of the martial arts, the entire concept of balance and force depends on developing the awareness of the Navel Point as a center around which the body moves. In order to truly understand the nature of meditation and consciousness, a clear conception of the energy and function of the navel center is necessary. The Navel Point is not just a "point." It is a center of energy transformation in the body.

According to the science of Kundalini Yoga, the mental and physical levels of consciousness are totally interrelated and co-regulating. There are areas in the physical body that connect with the chakras in the electromagnetic body. The chakras transform different frequencies of energy, and this transformation results in different behaviors and levels of consciousness. There are eight major chakra areas: rectum, sex organs, navel center, heart center, throat, brow point, the anterior fontanel, and the aura, or magnetic field. The first center that must be stimulated in order to raise the energy of consciousness is the navel center. The navel center is described in the Upanishads as follows:

"In the center of the stomach, the navel center reposes in the chakra known as Manipura. Between the navel and the last bone of the spinal column is the Navel Point, shaped like a bird's egg. This encloses within itself the starting point of 72,000 nerves, of which 72 are vital and of these 72 there are ten that are the most important. In order to have proper control over these nerves, one has to take special pains."

The Navel Point does not correspond with the umbilicus, navel, or belly button, although it is related to it. The center itself is etheric, a few inches down and in front of, the lower spine. It has a very important function since thousands of channels carrying the life force of the body converge through this point and can have their different currents, ratios, and intensities of flow initiated and adjusted there. By observing whether or not the Navel Point is centered in its optimal location, and the intensity of the energy coming from it, we can self-diagnose and correct many maladies that would not easily be dealt with by other therapeutic approaches.

TESTING THE NAVEL POINT

There is a simple method for testing the Navel Point. It is based on a physical correlate to the Navel Point–the position, strength, and rhythm of the abdominal heart or navel pulse. The exercises, diets, manipulations, and daily habits that create a constant strength at the Navel Point are the "special pains" mentioned in the Upanishads.

To locate and feel the navel pulse, on an empty or almost empty stomach do the following:

1) Lie on the back. Completely tense and relax the entire body two or three times. This allows the abdominal muscles to totally relax and stimulates the navel pulse for easy location.

2) Do Stretch Pose for two to three minutes. This exercise is even better for relaxation and bringing out the navel pulse.

3) Next, make the tips of your fingers into a little circle. Press the tips down on the belly button toward the spine. Press firmly but with gentleness. You will be able to feel one point with your fingertips that beats strongly. If this beat is exactly in the center of the navel, then we say the Navel Point is centered and in place. If it is displaced, many hard-to-diagnose maladies can exist in the person's body.

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UNDERSTANDING NAVEL POINT MALADIES

Learning to adjust the Navel Point is an elementary skill used by kundalini yogis and is one of the pillars of ayurvedic medicine diagnosis. Two things are measured:

1) Students must feel the intensity and rhythm of the beat of the navel with the fingertips.

2) The location of the beat must be measured from the belly button.

To check Navel Point alignment by physical measurement, there is a slightly different procedure for a male and female.

For a male: Take a string and measure the distance from one nipple to the belly button. Mark the length of the string. Move the end of the string to the next nipple and see if the length from the nipple to the umbilicus is the same. If the lengths are not the same, then the Navel Point needs adjustment.

For a female: You will need to enlist the help of a friend to measure the distance from your toes to your belly button. To reduce any error from hip rotation, put your heels together and press your toes out away from your heels equally on each side.

In a male, the navel generally displaces to the left, in a female, to the right. If the navel beat is found above the belly button, improper digestion, constipation, acidity, diseases of the heart, and general irritation in behavior will be the result. If displaced downwards, the result is loose motion, dyspepsia, colic pain, and bad dreams. If displaced sideways, acute pain results. These pains are located in various nerves of the body and are difficult to remove with drugs. In the female, displacement often leads to such problems as leukorrhea and menstrual irregularity.

THE CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT

There can be many causes of displacement:

- Overeating or eating improper foods. For example, eating too much meat and sugar are common causes.
- A fall, or uneven distirbution of body weight due to jerky motions. For instance, too much weight or a sudden strong jerk on the left foot displaces the navel to the right. A jerk on the right foot displaces the navel to the left.
- Birth control pills, drugs, and tranquilizers can all cause displacement.
- Carrying heavy things during menstruation.

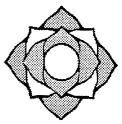
SETTING THE NAVEL POINT

Certain yoga exercises and diet can be used to correct the Navel Point displacement.

- Stretch Pose done every day will help maintain the Navel Point in alignment.
- The Navel Adjustment Kriya *(see Sets chapter)*—which includes Stretch Pose, Bow Pose, Wheel Pose, and Fish Pose—can be done in combination with other *nabhi* (navel) *kriyas*, but only if the additional exercises are done prior to this series.
- Eating a yogic diet can be very effective in correcting Navel Point displacement.
- If the problem is severe, there are many health practitioners who have been trained by Yogi Bhajan to correct Navel Point displacement.

Yogi Bhajan on the Navel Point

There is a very powerful psychic power under the Navel Point. It sits there like a cobra snake and when it wakes up, it travels through the six centers of the body and awakens them with its touch. When it touches the Seventh Center, the person knows all. When it intermingles with the aura, it delightfully enlightens the arcline and makes everything work out for the person.



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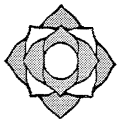
CHAPTER 15



Yogic Anatomy– The Chakras

Men of great knowledge actually found out about the chakras–their workings, their petals, their sounds, their infinity, their co-relationship, their powers. They found that the life of a human is totally based on these chakras. They developed into a whole science. This total science gave birth to Kundalini Yoga. That is how Kundalini Yoga was born.

- YOGI BHAJAN

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Chakra Basics

The human body is like a musical instrument, constructed of 72 strings. Each string or *sur* acts like a meridian vibrating with a flow of the energy of life–the *Prana*. The inflow of cosmic energy into the body cascades through the crown of the head, the Tenth Gate, like a waterfall and collects in pools or vortices–the chakras.

The 72 strings are controlled by three central strings or channels, the left and right channels to either side of the spine–*ida* and *pingala*–together with the *sushmuna*, the central channel up the middle of the spine.

The upper chakras vibrate with the release of each independent thought of the mind. These vibrations or patterns of thought "pluck" those strings. The strings vibrate into 72,000 channels. Their vibration creates the shape and function of the physical body, the emotional body, and the mental body. It is just as if you stroke a string on an instrument and the harmonics in the vibrating string form a shape in the air.

▸ Chakra means "wheel." Chakras are energy centers, or energy vortices. They exist as dynamic energies, and they can help us to understand the way energy is processed by a human being within the vast and complex interplay of a multi-leveled existence. In studying and teaching Kundalini Yoga, we focus on the eight major chakras.

▸ Seven of the chakras correspond to areas of the endocrine system or to nerve plexes in the physical body, and the eighth corresponds to the aura or magnetic field of the body.

▸ The first three chakras are known as the Lower Triangle and the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh chakras are known as the Upper Triangle. The Fourth Chakra, the Heart Chakra is the point of balance between them, where experience shifts from "me to Thee," or from "me to we."

▸ No chakra stands alone. When exploring Yogic Anatomy, we need to shift our understanding from the Western model which needs to analyze and separate, to a more holistic approach that recognizes that everything works in unison. The chakras are all part of a larger cycle of evolution and devolution, manifestation and sublimation. The Lower Triangle chakras focus on elimination and reduction, and are balanced by the Upper Triangle chakras which accumulate, create and refine.

▸ The first Five Chakras are associated with each of the five *tattvas* or gross elements–earth, water, fire, air, and ether, and the qualities each element represents. The upper three chakras correspond to more subtle realms, therefore there is no correlation with the *tattvas*.

▸ *Prana*, the life force, powers the chakras, by clearing the blocks to the free, natural flow of energy through them. Kundalini Yoga facilitates this clearing, balancing, and maximizing of the functioning of body, mind, and spirit.

▸ The chakras affect our perceptions, feelings, and choices. They affect the flow and types of thoughts we have, and the energies we can gather to act upon them, and manifest our thoughts. In all of our behavior, they affect the relationship between the conscious and the subconscious. Opening and balancing the chakras opens the senses, and integrates them into a responsive network that can relate to the larger source field of energy from which we come and to which we return.

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A Profile of The Chakras

LOWER TRIANGLE

First (Root) Chakra — Muladhara

SECURITY & SURVIVAL — **Earth**

Foundations, survival, security, habit, self-acceptance.

LOCATION: The end of the spine between the anus and the sexual organs.

ORGAN/GLAND: Organs of elimination.

COLOR: Red.

QUALITIES: Grounded, centered, secure, loyal, stable. Healthy functions of elimination.

SHADOW: Fear, insecurity. Life feels like a burden; feeling of not really belonging on Earth or in one's culture or family. Weak constitution, elimination problems, reduced physical and mental resistance, sexual perversions.

YOGA EXERCISES: Crow Pose, Chair Pose, Body drops, Frog Pose, Mulbhandh, Front Sretches, Lying on the stomach, feet kicking buttocks.

Second Chakra — Svadisthana

CREATIVITY — **Water**

To feel, to desire, to create

LOCATION: The sexual organs.

ORGAN/GLAND: Sexual organs, reproductive glands, kidneys, bladder

COLOR: Orange.

QUALITIES: Positive, relaxed attitude to sexual functions; patience; creativity; responsible relationships.

SHADOW: Rigid emotions, frigidity, guilt, no boundaries, irresponsible relationships. Problems with reproductive organs, or kidneys.

YOGA EXERCISES: Frog Pose, Cobra Pose, Butterfly, Sat Kriya, Cat-Cow, Maha Mudra, Pelvic Lifts.

Third (Navel) Chakra — Manipura

ACTION & BALANCE — **Fire**

The will of the spiritual warrior.

LOCATION: The area of the navel point, solar plexus.

ORGAN/GLAND: Navel plexus, liver, gall bladder, spleen, digestive organs, pancreas, adrenals

COLOR: Yellow.

QUALITIES: The center of personal power and commitment. Self-esteem, identity, judgment. This is where the strength for inner balance, inspiration and good health is developed.

SHADOW: Anger; greed, shame, despair. Obstacles everywhere. Not enough strength and spontaneity. Conforming in order to be recognized. Refuting ones own wishes and emotions. Problems with digestion, the liver, the gallbladder, and the pancreas.

YOGA EXERCISES: Stretch Pose, Sat Kriya, Peacock Pose, Bow Pose, Fish Pose, Diaphragm Lock, Breath of Fire; all exercises which train the abdominal muscles.

Drawing by Hector Jara (Mukhtiar Singh)

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BALANCE POINT BETWEEN
LOWER & UPPER TRIANGLES

Fourth (Heart) Chakra *Anahata*

LOVE & COMPASSION **Air**

Love and awakening. From "me to we."

LOCATION: The middle of the chest on the breast bone at the level of the nipples.

ORGAN/GLAND: Heart, lungs, thymus gland.

COLOR: Green.

QUALITIES: Compassion; kindness; forgiveness; service; love. Recognizing and understanding these qualities in others. Sacred transformation. Awakening to spiritual awareness.

SHADOW: Grief. Attachment. Closed to surroundings. Easily hurt. Dependent on love and affection from others. Fear of rejection. Helper syndrome. Heartlessness. Heart problems; lung problems; blood pressure problems.

YOGA EXERCISES: Ego Eradicator, Yoga Mudra, Bear Grip, Baby Pose (strengthens the heart muscles). All arm exercises, and exercises which twist the upper torso. All Pranayam.

UPPER TRIANGLE

Fifth (Throat) Chakra *Vishuddha*

PROJECTIVE POWER OF THE WORD **Ether**

Hearing and speaking the Truth. The Teacher.

LOCATION: The throat.

ORGAN/GLAND: Trachea, throat, cervical vertebrae, thyroid.

COLOR: Light blue.

QUALITIES: The center for truth, language, knowledge and the ability to communicate effectively. Authenticity. Healthy self-expression and interactions. Inspiring, teaching. Embodying God's Will.

SHADOW: Lethargy, weakness in expressive and descriptive abilities. shyness, voice problems, insecurity, fear of other people's opinions and judgments. Throat problems, neck problems, thyroid problems.

YOGA EXERCISES: All Chanting. Shoulder Stand, Cobra Pose, Plow Pose, Camel Pose, Cat-Cow, Neck Rolls, Neck Lock, nose to knees.

Sixth Chakra (Third Eye) *Ajna*

INTUITION, WISDOM, & IDENTITY

The union of opposites.

LOCATION: Between the eyebrows.

ORGAN/GLAND: Brain; pituitary gland.

COLOR: Indigo.

QUALITIES: Center of intuition, clairvoyance; visualizing; fantasizing; concentration and determination. Self-initiation. Power of projection. Understanding your purpose.

SHADOW: Confusion, depression. Rejection of spirituality. Over-intellectualizing.

YOGA EXERCISES: Meditating on the Third Eye, Long Chant, Kirtan Kriya. Archer Pose. Whistle Breaths. Yoga Mudra. All exercises where the forehead rests on the floor.

Seventh (Crown) Chakra *Sahasrara*

HUMILITY & VASTNESS

Transcendence. The Tenth Gate.

LOCATION: Crown of the head.

ORGAN/GLAND: Brain; pineal gland.

COLOR: Violet.

QUALITIES: The seat of the soul. Connection to the Highest Self. Enlightenment. Unity. Elevation. Relationship to the Unknown.

SHADOW: Grief. The feeling of being separated from existence, and from abundance. Fear of death.

YOGA EXERCISES: Ego Eradicator, Mahabandha, Sat Kriya. Concentrating on the tip of the nose. All meditation.

Eighth Chakra *The Aura*

RADIANCE

LOCATION: The electromagnetic field.

COLOR: White.

QUALITIES: The aura combines the effects of all the chakras, and constitutes their total projection. The aura projects and protects.

SHADOW: Shy, withdrawn, vulnerable.

YOGA EXERCISES: Triangle Pose, Ego Eradicator, Archer Pose. All arm exercises. All meditation.

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Understanding the Chakras

THE NATURE OF OUR MULTI-LEVELED EXISTENCE

In the midst of the great web of energies which make up this universe, each human being is a complex organism capable of interacting and communicating across the levels of energy in the world. On the grossly physical levels we have the same limitations as all physical objects. We melt and dissipate under too much heat, we break under too much force, and we fall without the support of gravity. But unlike many other things we have the capacity to cross the levels of subtlety in the universe. At levels other than the lower dimensional physical we can still exist, connect, communicate, gather forces, manifest, and think.

We are like a little chakra, a circle or vortex of energy that cuts across many levels of existence. Unlike the outer explorers of modern science who believe in a single level of existence, the inner explorers find that the universe is in its very Essence, multi-leveled.

The gap in our ability to deal with a multi-level universe is like the dilemma many people faced with reconciling the idea that photons can act like a particle or a wave depending on the circumstance and type of observation. We want the security of classifying light in one conceptual box or another. But, in experiment after experiment, it leapt out of the box and beyond any comfortable labeling by our intellectual mind. It is not wave or particle, it is other or it is or/and/neither/both. Experience on that level of physics pushes us close to realms that are fundamentally different from logical physics.

Whatever a photon is, it has phases or levels of manifestation that depends on the viewer and circumstance. Its individual nature depends on the state of the entire universe to which it is connected. Its real essence is beyond our senses—but it exists. Our soul or essence has the same relationship to our mind and to our normal experiences.

We can be particulate or wave-like; like a left brain or a right. But in essence we are beyond those classifications and are more than our senses can capture.

The vortex of energy that we are has sub-vortices, energy centers that cross through and interconnect the levels of existence. Those centers can be thought of in a very earthy way—like a wheel; or in a watery way—like a whirlpool's spinning vortex; in an airy way—like a whirlwind; or in an etheric way—as filaments of divine energy that orchestrate the instruments of the senses and preserve the gateways to our inner life.

The seeming separation we have from everything outside of us is balanced by the intimate unity we share with everything. Both are true and neither alone is complete as a thought. Spiritual practices realize the connectedness and guide us to develop a relationship to all levels of our existence. They tell us not to be lured into a trance-like agreement with a lower-dimensional definition of what it is to be a human being. The senses are attractive. The drive to manifest, to reproduce, to feel is universal. It is an irresistible force called maya. It is a veil that hypnotizes and creates illusions. The opposite flow is transcendence, enlightenment—the kundalini force of awareness.

Each of us can act in alignment with the greater field from which we originate and in which we live. We can consciously link to the source field, which some call God or spirit. Or we can draw the veils closed and pretend that we are totally isolated and act only within the gross, lower-dimensional, clear-cut rational and tangible world.

INTEGRATING OUR MANY DIMENSIONS

The chakras or energy centers are central to the regulation of how tightly those veils are drawn. This realization affects how robotic or free we are able to act. It changes the range of our perception, feelings, and choices, which affect the flow and types of thoughts we have, as well as the energies we can gather to act and manifest our thoughts. They affect the relationship between the conscious and the subconscious in all our behaviors. Opening and balancing the chakras opens the senses. It integrates them into a responsive network that can relate to the larger source field of energy.

The kundalini is the thread of the Infinite pushed through the small eye of the finite needle of creation.

Every part of us: the body, an organ, a cell, or a molecule, vibrates and relates to that larger field. Each part can create a blend of qualities of energies that can be a seed along which the Infinite can align and manifest. This used to be called magic, shamanism, or alchemy. It was cross-dimensional thinking. It is the art and science of a conversation with the soul.

The only instrument up to the task of decoding these interconnections between dimensions is the soul—awareness itself, in the awakened human being. The masters (all explorers of the inner realms of the possible human), agree on the path. They say each experience is unique but the process of gaining that awareness has many common features and laws. The Infinite field that we ultimately are is so creative, original, and complex that no individual is ever repeated; none of us are simple cogs from a Cosmic cookie cutter. We are each made with more love, uniqueness, and potential than that.

Long intellectual classifications of the steps of transcendent experience are avoided as false distractions, betrayals of the humility needed to approach the Infinite, and by their very nature inau-

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Reconciling the conscious and subconscious emotions in the specific arena of each chakra will create a flow of energy and personality in which the human is consistent and not defeated, and has conscious goals. - YOGI BHAJAN

thentic. The most authentic expression of the Infinite is the life of a saint. The only real record of the awakened realms are our actions and our compassion. Every word, action, success, and failure is the textured expression of the attuned Will of God manifesting through each individual in the actual experienced process of life. That is why the histories and artifacts of a saint's life are so useful and powerful. They point us accurately toward the moon even if they are not the moon itself. They train us where to put our attention and where to surrender the veils of the ego. They pass on goals, attitudes, and beliefs that help you apply a sadhana, a discipline, to the self-initiation and awakening of the kundalini. The doors of the soul are opened as the chakras are balanced and awakened, with special techniques rather than life rules.

THE FIRST (ROOT) CHAKRA (*Muladhara*)

Foundations, Security, and Habit

The First Chakra is located at the base of the spine. One of its facets is the quality and functions of earth. Here "earth" means the final step of manifestation in the realm of the senses; the most public areas of life. It is also the most veiled to the spirit. It is the most deeply wrapped in the illusions of separateness, aloneness, and tangibility. It represents the functioning of the mind and emotions when we are most unconscious.

This is not bad. It is necessary. When we perform our best in any activity, a large part of that activity is automatic and unconscious. When you ride a bicycle well, you do not think of the pedals. The pedals are your focus only when you first learn to propel the bike and balance at the same time. Then the conscious action becomes an unconscious habit.

The First Chakra is the realm of habits. It is the land of automatic behaviour. It is a repository of deep instinctual patterns we use for survival. Our potential for survival response is unconcious and deeply shared, regardless of intelligence, race, or age. The things stored and tapped in the First Chakra processes allow little individuality. The character of the First Chakra is to "reduce everything to the bottom line."

The First Chakra is associated with elimination, with the anus and large intestines. From the anus, the food you eat is returned to the Earth in a digested form. With little variation, everything you eat is universalized to its base components. At the upper regions of the body you care a lot about each smell, taste, color, texture, and sensation. By the time it comes to the Earth, it is reduced to what is common, universal, most tangible. The many subtle qualities are lost.

No chakra stands alone. They are all part of a larger cycle of evolution and devolution, manifestation and sublimation. The function of elimination and reduction is balanced by the upper areas that accumulate, create and differentiate.

The First Chakra functions are very important in our modern times. We are surrounded by pollution from many chemical sources. There are thousands of chemical insults to the body that we cannot avoid. Our front-line defense is to reduce them, eliminate them, and return them to the Earth. Strong eliminative capacity is essential for survival.

The function of elimination applies to physical, mental, and emotional realms. Thoughts that become obsessive, sadness that will not go, depression that is a lack of feeling, all need the strength of the First Chakra. The ability to create and act on regular habits is partly an earthly function. Planning may come from the Sixth Chakra, projection from the Fifth, and order from the Third, but the final actions that support and make it "in hand" will require the touch of the First. It is the drone, or the base-tone, that supports the variety in the melodies of life.

If you eliminate too fast, it is diarrhea. You can die quickly of typhus. You loose water, dehydrate, and get no nutrients. People stuck on a habit, who are extremely rigid, let no new ideas, feelings, or people into their life. They wither emotionally. Over-functioning of the First Chakra leads to many maladies. Or imagine the reverse, you cannot let anything go. The toxins build up. You reach a state of self-poisoning, bitterness.

The First Chakra is associated with the sense of smell. When you hold all the toxins in you begin to reek. People keep their distance. When it functions well you radiate a sweet smell. The exact composition of that smell will vary according to the functioning of the overall frequency of your consciousness, due to the mix of glandular activity that accompanies the chakras involved. This is the basis of aromatherapy.

Smell is linked to survival. It can tell you not only about sickness, it can also let you know how different and how much the same someone is. It is found that many patterns of sexual bonding and the ability for monogamy is influenced strongly by the smell and by proper hormone releases during intercourse and other forms of stimulation. Those smells are often imitated in the aromatherapy used for romantic influence.

The First Chakra has strength in its functions of elimination, of setting foundations and reducing complex things to common elements. In its best use, this gives purity, security, and universality. Problems arise when this is the focus of consciousness without connection and synchronization to the other chakras. Then its

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functions become exaggerated. Elimination and lack of appropriate levels of attachment accelerate. This leads to insecurity. Each idea, feeling and substance is reduced to its most basic elements, so differences are lost. This loss of context can lead to compulsions and fixated behaviors. The loss of context and the mixing of all the *tattvas* in this chakra to make up earth can create a clouded behavior that forms its own singular world. Traditional writings call this *tamas*–heavy and confused, or perverse behavior, disconnected from the natural expression of our identity.

Techniques that strengthen the key functions of this center and integrate its energy with the higher centers are used frequently in Kundalini Yoga. Sat Kriya is one of the best examples of that. In non-householder traditions of the spirit, people would remove themselves from daily life to emphasize the energy of the higher centers and remove themselves from "earthy" influence. Kundalini Yoga embraces the householder life and transforms the energy of each chakra so the practitioner becomes as a lotus on the water–able to elevate his or her consciousness regardless of the environment.

When the First Chakra is functioning perfectly and it is well integrated with the other chakras, it gives you certain abilities. You are secure, stable, steadfast, positively relentless, and loyal. You show great endurance under non-ideal situations. There is a sense of self-sufficiency that comes from the quelling of the negative mind: "I don't need anything. I'm not under threat, I'm not without resources." The checklist of imminent threats is empty. You can grasp and hold the world. You can easily accept doing something at a particular time and place. You easily receive material objects, money, gifts, etc. You feel you have a base and are not bothered by a sense of drifting emotional homelessness.

One of the periods in life that affects this the most is the very first 40 days of an infant's journey on Earth. When you were an infant, your body was totally connected to your mother. Your blood and her's mixed. The sound of her heartbeat pulsed the cosmic drum to which you danced in a watery world full of feelings and warmth. To be ripped away from her–to physically loose touch–was greatly disorienting. In the tradition of Kundalini Yoga, the child is kept with the mother from the instant of birth for 40 days. Visits and extra stimulation are discouraged. The mother is often cared for–fed, massaged, served–by a loving volunteer. The baby is kept in constant contact and is massaged at least twice a day by the mother. The sense of connectedness and emotional security that comes from this magic time cannot be replaced even by years of psychotherapy and meditation. It lets the infant have trust: "I'm here, I am welcome, the Earth is OK, I can be here, I should be here. My needs are met. What I need is already here."

Many spiritual teachers say one of the most difficult things for the modern person to do is to first trust the Earth, then themselves, then the invisible. The great sage Guru Nanak says in his sacred poem *Japji*, "Why do we worry? When the flamingo flies away, God takes care of its young." Our lack of this basic instinct of trust stops the flow of energy to the higher centers or chakras. It impedes our wholeness and our complete emotional development. We engage in many defenses against the uncomfortable feeling of rootlessness and insecurity. We become depressed, cut off, and full of grief. We reject the world before it rejects us. We hold onto something, anything, in order to deny the insecurity and lack of personal center in the storm of life. It leads to fanaticism, torturing, perversion, and narrow-mindedness. With the First Chakra strong, trust is automatic. We trust a person to be a person. Mastering the earth element you know earth can be reshaped. Water (emotions) can be added to the dirt (old habits) and in the new flexibility with a little heat (will, challenge and discipline) a new vessel can be made. A healthy first chakra lets change occur in steps.

THE SECOND CHAKRA *(Svadisthana)*

To Feel, To Desire, To Create

Each chakra is a vision of the world. It is a perspective that organizes all of our feelings, thoughts and values to encounter the world and to act within it. The vision of the Second Chakra is about desire and passion, about duality and polarities, about movement and change, and fundamentally about creativity.

The element associated with the Second Chakra is water. Consider the qualities of water. It flows and moves freely. It doesn't run up hills, so water under the influence of gravity seeks the lowest spot, just as feelings under the pressure of desire seek out a situation of rapport, a situation where similar feelings can become fulfilled. Water doesn't have a set shape. Just as feelings are not fixed. Water is much more mobile than earth and through patient and constant repetition, water can even shape earth. Just so, feelings can give form to habits. There is a limit to the speed at which water can move and with which you can move through water. Have you ever leapt off a high diving board and unfortunately landed flat? Water which has a mobile nature suddenly seemed as solid as a wall. People who function strongly through the Second Chakra and have opened to the world of feelings move, at a speed dictated by those feelings. If they don't feel ready to move, they won't, regardless of the outside pressure. If they feel they are ready to move, they will, regardless of the appropriateness of the outside world. Someone who is dominated by the vision of the Second Chakra sees the world in terms of feelings, in terms of desires and impulses, and in terms of the fulfillment of passions. Sex from the Second Chakra represents the seeking of a polarity and the fulfillment and

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release of the energies created by that polarization.

Unlike the First Chakra, where the vision of the world is singular, secure and isolated, the Second Chakra requires others. When the Second Chakra is well developed, you have opinions, you make distinctions, you like blue but not red, you prefer hot rather than cold. You're not someone who lacks contrasts and contours.

A well-functioning Second Chakra paints the world with passions, motivations, and opinions. It prepares the way for compassion in the Fourth Chakra because there are things you dearly care about and want.

Language in the Second Chakra is often sensual, colorful, and goal-oriented. It is flexible and fluid just like water. Many people experience this as the ability to lie or to create a line or a story in order to get to the real passion underneath. It is like flirtation; whatever you may be talking about, flirtation ultimately has a sexual connotation. In fact, that's the art of flirtation: how to talk sexually without saying anything directly sexual.

From the yogic point of view, the experiences of the Second Chakra provide the first taste of merger, of going beyond one's isolated self, dissolving with, through, and into another. The momentary forgetfulness in the ecstasy of sexual release is a taste of the much greater bliss available to us as we let go and merge with the Infinite Polarity, where our finite and infinite have intercourse into a creative sense of awareness. This is very much what was meant by the Tantras, i.e., using sexuality as a way to experience the spirit.

The combination of creativity and passion found in the Second Chakra is one of the reasons that we often see such quirky and temperamental personalities attributed to artists. In the Second Chakra, desires, pleasures, and the pains and struggles of finally expressing your creation in the light, are all mixed together. When all the other chakras are balanced in relation to the second, sexuality becomes joyful, varied, expressive, and rarely has the connotations of confusion, struggle, pain or perversion that seem to be on the rise in our culture.

Stimulation of the Second Chakra is the common form of stimulation in our society. They say everything sells if you just add sex, so we see sexy bodies draped across cars, walking in shoes and voraciously consuming every item of food. It is not that all the shoes and the cars and the food give you good sex. It is that seeing a sexual object provides stimulation, reminds you to have passions, asks you to have feelings, and tries to engage you with the deep subconscious tides of your own passions.

In the classical symbols for the Second Chakra, there is an animal in the center of it. It is an alligator and a serpent. It represents a kind of monster or serpent that travels deep under the ocean, the kind of thing sailors were always on the lookout for that might capsize their ships. Our mind rides on the ocean of the unconscious of feelings in a little boat. It can be capsized at any moment by the power of one wave of emotion. This symbol reminds us that despite all of our rational and intellectual thoughts, regardless of our systematic plans, if we don't have a mastery of, and a good relationship to our passions, our boat can be overturned. Modern research has found that thinking and feeling go together, that our memories are sorted within our mind as much by feelings as they are by meanings or by other forms of content. It simply isn't true that thinking is a purely non-emotional function. The emotions and passions expressed through the Second Chakra, and the thoughts and assessments that are given through the Sixth Chakra stimulate each other. Thoughts and imaginations about different things produce feelings, and feelings regulate the flow, intensity, and believability of thoughts.

Imagine the rising tide. With the tide, all boats rise. As you elevate your mood and your capacity to feel, all your conscious intentions gain more clarity and contrast. You're able to throw yourself wholeheartedly into an action, towards a goal.

Taste is the sensory system connected with the Second Chakra. Without passions, life has no taste, and taste itself is conveyed by the watery mixtures of chemicals that we take in through our tongue. When you experience great passion, then the tastes within your mouth also change. In the state of yoga, you unite with the Infinite, at that point your brain produces an *amrit*, a sweet nectar, and the tastes within your mouth change. Someone asked me, "What does this have to do with the sexual organs, which are certainly located lower in the body?" But to the tantrics who understand the use of polarity to stimulate passions, the tongue represents the male organ and the lips the opening of the female organ. The constant vibration of this into speech is the production of seed, and those seeds are what give the creativity in the world. You can create on the gross level directly through the Second Chakra and the physical organ, or you can create through the word and through vibration. In both cases, you're mastering the art of blending polarities.

When the Second Chakra is too weak, the world seems flat. There is little passion. You don't really have opinions about this or that, and your body doesn't show the effects of motivation, of loving the senses, of movement. It tends to be constricted and limp. When the Second Chakra is overactive, there is nothing that is not sexual. You have a kind of sexual mania. Relationships will be about the fulfillment of your passion, regardless of what you say, regardless of the other roles. Someone with a very strong Second Chakra may have difficulty maintaining a business relation strictly for business. They cross over boundaries. They cannot maintain themselves because it seems to them that regardless of how the

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other person is actually talking, they're always really talking about sexual stimulation.

In yoga, the exercises that we do, such as Frog Pose and Sat Kriya, (that are known to work on the Second Chakra and on all three of the lower chakras), provide balance and full functioning of the chakra. Don't think of the exercises as stimulating to increase or reduce a chakra's functions. Rather the intent is to balance, and to interconnect the chakra with the play of all the other chakras.

THE THIRD (NAVEL) CHAKRA (*Manipura*)

The Will of the Spiritual Warrior

The Third Chakra is the center of energy, of will power, of a sense of control and coordination. It is associated with the region around the Navel Point. It is fed by the fire from the solar plexus and associated with the adrenals and kidneys. It's ruled by the element of fire. It coordinates and develops the sense of sight and vision. Of the three chakras–the First, Second, and Third–that make up what is called the Lower Triangle, it is the most subtle. It is the driving force to act and to complete the conceptualization, and the visualizations that one has in life.

The Navel Center is a beginning. It's the first point through which we are fed, nurtured, and given the energy to live as a fetus in the womb of the mother. Once your physical connection with the mother is severed, the Navel Point continues in the more subtle function of being an area to collect energy from the cosmos. As you walk and alternate the motion of your legs and arms, there is a function of the body and the hairs on the body to gradually accumulate energy at the Navel Point.

The Third Chakra near the navel is considered the reserve pool of energy within the body. It is from this area that the Kundalini energy is said to be initiated. The reserve energy at the navel gathers strength, and then goes through two small reserve channels down to the base of the spine and awakens the slumbering kundalini which lies coiled through the First Chakra. Then the kundalini energy begins its constant journey of awakening and arousal along the spine.

The stimulation, strengthening, and distribution of energy at the Navel Chakra is a central part of a kundalini *kriya*. The first thing you do when you wake up in the morning is Stretch Pose: raising the heels and the shoulders six inches and doing Breath of Fire. This stimulates the Navel Point. That energy, when it flows properly, creates a coordination among all the organs of the body. The eliminative functions are triggered, the sense of having enough energy to support your actions is gathered, and the will to project that energy to support your actions is given to you.

The energy lotus of the Third Chakra has ten petals. Ten represents the number of completion, the sense of the individual self represented by the number one and the sense of the infinite self represented by the number zero. Ten petals means that the person who has mastered the Third Chakra knows how to initiate and to complete an action. That is why it is associated with the archetype of the spiritual warrior, one who is able to know one's mission and formulate the energy to act and complete it.

A spiritual warrior is conscious of each action, but not necessarily aware of the entire purpose of a particular mission. A spiritual warrior knows to serve the True King, to act in relation to the higher consciousness, but has not necessarily awakened the upper chakras of the heart and the brow and intuition. The essence of a spiritual warrior is fearlessness, an ability to act with integrity regardless of conditions.

A person who is strong at the Third Chakra will have a sense that their life and the quality of their life depends on what they do. They are doers. They can shape, direct, and develop what happens within their life. There's a deep confidence. The fire element associated with this chakra represents a willingness to initiate.

When in doubt in the First Chakra secure your stations and hold to your old habits. When in doubt in the Second Chakra, find your feeling and follow your passion. When in doubt in the Third Chakra, act. Do something, shake the boat, project your point, or get a vision, an image sent from the higher commander in self. A person acting in the Third Chakra is rarely still.

When this chakra dominates, the person is exuberant and expressive. It is associated with colors like yellow. Dressing from the Third Chakra will bring bright colors, grand expressions. It will grab your attention and seize your eyesight.

When the Third Chakra energy is insufficient, a person has to compensate. If you don't feel you have enough energy to accomplish your task, you reach out for other sources of energy to gather that. This can be stimulants, drugs, or food. When you have a lot of feelings, (whether they be anger or blame, resentment, or just raw ambition), and yet you feel that you don't have the right or the energy to express them, you begin to gather energy instinctively into the Navel Center. It is the gathering, an accumulation at the Navel Center that prepares you to initiate action, to initiate the kundalini and awareness, to begin the path of embodiment.

The Third Chakra is the doorway to the Fourth Chakra. The lower three chakras represent the realm of the unconscious. The diaphragm of the body is like the surface of the Earth, and above that, the Heart Chakra becomes the beginning of consciousness. Making the Navel Point strong is part of gathering the energy and organizing the energies of the lower three chakras to pierce into the upper realms of consciousness. Without a strong Third Chakra, you

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have many ideas and many good intentions but they do not come to fruition. With a strong Third Chakra, even your least intentions create actions and begin to stir the ethers.

The qualities associated with the Third Chakra are highly valued in our culture. We're very supportive of the go-getter, of the one who initiates, of the entrepreneur and risk-taker. We admire the one who raises the hand first and takes the risk to accept a task regardless of the security and the assuredness of its outcomes.

Some of the best kriyas for working on the Third Chakra are Stretch Pose, Sat Kriya, and Archer Pose. *(See box.)*

Notice that the Third Chakra regulates vision, and that it's the Fourth Chakra that gives us the opening to the full realm of feelings through touch. Then the Fifth Chakra gives us the power of creativity through subtle sound. Sight and vision are associated with the stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system. Sight and vision gives us a sense of control. Many successful people who constantly formulate plans visualize their goals and create a concrete image. The tangibility of an image, the concreteness of each of its many parts, builds the sense of focus and will associated with the Third Chakra.

Visualization access gives us a stronger sense of control, accesses the will power, and connects us through the more easily accessible lower chakras. The visual capacities certainly can serve all chakras, but it is ultimately the sense of vibration, the feeling of vibration and the sense of sound, that opens the doorway to complete merger and to the surrender of the highest chakras.

A person who is strong in the Third Chakra will have a relationship to their feelings that uses the feelings to accomplish their goals. They will also look to the past to give them information about accomplishing things in the future. Third chakra actions are not necessarily strategic, but they are always focused and intelligently tactical.

There are many kundalini kriyas that have you relax deeply after the exercises and meditate at the pulse that you can feel at the navel center. This deep meditation at the Navel Point after the energies have been adjusted provides thorough healing and many miraculous cures.

Maha Shakti Kriya

Maha Shakti Kriya is an excellent and short kundalini *kriya* for the Navel Center. Stretch your legs out together in front, sitting up straight. Inhale and slowly raise both legs up to 60°, then exhale as you lower them. Do this 10 times. After the 10th, hold the legs up, stretch the arms out parallel to the ground and balance in in this position with Breath of Fire for 3 minutes as you look at the toes. Then, inhale, hold and relax. It is *Maha Shakti* because *Maha* means "greatest"; *Shakti* is the energy. This *kriya* is a simple stimulation of the navel center to put you into action and to move you toward completing your goals.

The Third Chakra & Mantra

There is a special relationship between the Navel Point and the use of mantra. When you speak a mantra and vibrate the tip of the tongue, you want to speak it from the central channel–the *sushmuna*, and vibrate from the Navel Point at the same time. When the tip of the tongue and the Navel Point are correlated, that extra pulse of energy that comes from the navel moves the words into the realm of *anahat. Anahat* means "without boundary," a sense of powerful projection. The action of speaking becomes infused with the powerful will of a warrior. It is vibrated without speaking out loud. Each cell vibrates the energy that is released from the Navel Point. After clearing your pranic channels and sitting very straight, try chanting the steady rhythmic pulse of *Har*, being conscious of the tip of the tongue and pulling the Navel Point in. *(Use the tape, Tantric Har and experience what happens when you systematically build and release the energy of the Navel Point.)*

THE FOURTH (HEART) CHAKRA (*Anahata*)

Love and Awakening

The Heart Chakra is ruled by the element of air. For the first time we no longer see the chakra; it becomes completely subtle. It represents the opening of feelings and compassion and the very capacity to love. The symbol for the chakra is a triangle going up and a triangle going down, the two triangles overlapping into a six-pointed star. It represents the balance point in the body between the flow of the upper energies of the Heavens and the lower energy flows of the Earth.

The lower three chakras represent the cultivation and mastery of impulse. The opening of the Heart Chakra begins the first true level of self-reflexive awareness, where you can see yourself through the eyes of others, and you can fully see others to be as important as yourself. It is the chakra where "we" starts to mean something. In the first three chakras, one is ruled by the sense of "me."

Once we have activated all the energies and passions of the first three chakras, we can use those passions for the benefit of our larger sense of self. When the Heart Chakra is open, we have a new relationship to our feelings. The most common confusion about the Heart Center is that you can only feel if it is open. Actually, in the subtle quality of the Fourth Chakra you can consciously know what your feelings are, and you can direct them. Someone who loves another may have very strong impulses and

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passions, but they shape the use of those passions to fulfill their commitments and obligations within that love, as a mother does in sacrificing for a child.

The Heart Center rules subtle feeling, the ability to touch. We say that when someone speaks from their heart, it touches us; it grabs us at our very core.

The functions of the Heart Chakra are also about boundaries. This relates to the immune system, to the thymus, as well as to the heart. When it functions very well, the Heart Chakra is like a good immune system that knows when something is foreign and needs to be examined, and when something is part of you and it can be let in. When your Heart Chakra functions perfectly, you know how to let someone in to each of your relationships appropriately.

So, the Heart Chakra is the chakra of relationships and relatedness, but in a different way than the relatedness of the Second Chakra. If it is overactive, you can be subject to too much sympathy. When it's underactive, you can have dependency and diffusion of a sense of yourself.

In the pantheon of the Sikh teachers and Gurus, Guru Ram Das, the fourth Guru represents the rule of the Neutral Mind as well as for the opening of the Heart Chakra. For indeed it takes the Neutral Mind to compassionately weigh others with as much worth as you would yourself.

One of the sounds that we frequently use to stimulate this chakra is *"hum,"* which means "We." *"Humee hum brahm hum"* can both open the Heart Center and activate its relation to the Fifth Chakra.

The Heart Chakra is called *anahata*. It's often interpreted as the sound that is made without striking two things, because at the Heart Chakra there is no conflict; Heavens and Earth come together in balance. Inner and outer merge in a sense of flow and spontaneous action. When you chant a mantra from the Heart Center, it is empowered with the subtlety of air through the use of the mind, to create a subtle or silent mental repetition. When you chant a mantra from the Navel Point, the entire universe vibrates the sound for you, and you simply merge into it.

The Heart Chakra is also stimulated by the use of *prana*. Any blocks in the diaphragm or in the breathing mechanism deeply affect the Heart Center. So, the use of breath by all forms of *pranayam* is a powerful stimulant to this center. The colors that are associated with the Heart Chakra are green and rose pink. Communications from the Heart Center always include the other person as strongly as oneself. So one speaks with kindness, sweetness, and rapport. Unlike Fifth Chakra communications, which tend to be very blunt, those of the Fourth Chakra, which are not necessarily indirect, are nonetheless fully cognizant of the person who is to receive the communication. Speaking to a mate from the Heart Chakra gives each person a feeling of being truly present with the other. It is the basis of real intimacy. It is not true that communication from the Heart Center means that you are only sweet and that you ignore all hard challenges. It is not a Pollyanna form of shallow happiness. The Heart Chakra has tremendous strength associated with it. It brings with it the capacity to contextualize anything you say. Yogi Bhajan has often said that a truth spoken in fear is a lie. This is a comment from the Heart Chakra. To speak truthfully but kindly is the signature of the Heart Chakra.

THE UPPER TRIANGLE
THE FIFTH, SIXTH & SEVENTH CHAKRAS
SUBTLETY & REFINEMENT OF WISDOM

THE FIFTH (THROAT) CHAKRA (*Vishuddha*)
Speak and Create

The Fifth Chakra—associated with the Throat Center and with the thyroid and parathyroid glands—is truly the entering into the miraculous and the mysterious, for it is ruled by the element of ether. Ether is the condition of space and time that allows something to exist. It is the very beginning of the process of manifestation. If you think of the sequence of elements, ether, air, fire, water, and earth, as phases of manifestation, then ether is the most subtle of those five elements. It is the twinkle in the eye of the mother and father. Before they even have the heart connection through the element of air, they have the feelings that begin the process of engagement with each other. It is fire that gives them the energy and focused goal to actually do something, the water, that gives them the passion to flow and merge together, and the earth the power to actually perform the final manifestation.

As the Fifth Chakra opens, you gain the perception of subtlety. You know how to be alert to the very beginnings of cause and effect. You know how to cultivate the implantation of the *bija*, of the seed. The ultimate seed is the Word, so the Fifth Chakra is associated with the power of word, *vaak siddhi*. This power is the power to initiate the manifestation of a physical form or action by simply uttering the words that are the seed of that future manifestation.

One of our greatest powers as humans is to initiate a direction of action. Once we've planted a seed, once we've put it into the soil of maya, it follows the laws of maya. As Newton's first law of motion states, it is very difficult to try to change the course of something once it's already in motion. *Vaak siddhi*, then, is the power to plant seeds that will fulfill someone's ultimate goal and destiny.

The kind of communication that comes from the Fifth Chakra is very blunt. So be it, be it so. It represents the power of projection, but that power comes from the certainty of placing something at the beginning of the cycle of creation and knowing that all the laws of

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the universe shall support it. It is a different kind of certainty than that which comes from the accumulation of personal power in the Third Chakra. The power of the Fifth Chakra is having your tongue and the tongue of God be the same. A very effective kundalini mantra for this chakra is *"Sat Naam Sat Naam Sat Naam Sat Naam Sat Naam Sat Naam Wahay Guroo."* The pulse of the Bij Mantra, *Sat Naam,* is blended rhythmically and attached to the opening of the etheric Gur Mantra, *Wahay Guroo.* The Fifth Chakra is just such a doorway. It is only by mastering the Word and by mastering the skill to initiate actions that come from the soul that one can truly open the doorway to the higher realms of the triangle.

SIXTH, SEVENTH & EIGHTH CHAKRAS: BEYOND THE ELEMENTS INTUITION, BEING & VASTNESS

When we go beyond the Fifth Chakra to the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth, we are now beyond the gross elements. We've gone through all the transformations of our ordinary experience that are coded by earth, water, fire, air, and ether. So, there are no specific gross elements associated with these chakras.

THE SIXTH CHAKRA (THIRD EYE) (*Ajna*)

The Union of Opposites. Intuition and Wisdom.

The Sixth Chakra is at the Brow Point. It corresponds to the pituitary gland. It is represented by only two petals. *Ajna* means "to command." The *Ajna* Chakra, the Sixth Chakra, is the command chakra. It is here that you reach the integrity and integration of the personality. It is from here that you get the sense of intuition of the direction that you want to go. It is here that the major channels of energy, the *ida*, the *pingala*, and the *sushmuna*, all come together. The three rivers of inner energy meet as one at the *Ajna* Chakra. This is the chakra that is associated with what is called the Eye that goes beyond the two eyes. The two eyes give you dimension in the normal world. The Third Eye gives you depth, dimension and scope in the subtle worlds.

The Sixth Chakra allows mastery over the flow of the mind. It's often represented by light, but in this case it is the inner light. When these channels open and someone has the mystic vision, they say that God is like the light of a billion-trillion bursting suns. This is also the chakra we can use to master the duality of the mind. The two petals represent the plus and minus contained in every thought. Anytime the intellect gives you a "yes," it automatically implies a "no." Anytime it gives you light, it also implies a darkness. To master the Sixth Chakra is to never be confused by any of the polarities of life and to be able to read between the polarities, between the lines.

Even the gland, the pituitary, that relates to this chakra, actually has two parts, the anterior and the posterior pituitary. During human growth, each of the two parts of the physical gland migrate from a different origin, and yet they intertwine. The duality, the polarity, and the constant dynamic represented by the two petals of the chakra of the Brow Point is even reflected in its physical structures.

When we chant *"ONG,"* the sound *"ng,"* (the slightly nasalized sound that we also use when we pronounce *"Sa-Ta-Na-Ma"*), stimulates the cavity in the skull in which the pituitary rests. When that cavity is vibrated properly, the pituitary gland awakens and triggers a more active relationship to the other key higher gland, the pineal gland.

THE SEVENTH (CROWN) CHAKRA (*Sahasrara*)

Transcendence. The Tenth Gate

The pineal gland is associated with the Seventh Chakra, the Crown Chakra. The Crown Chakra is one of the easiest ones to see in the aura because it's right over the top of the head. That area of the aura is especially dense because the density of the aura increases at about a 60° angle upwards from the shoulders, and everything within that range becomes easier to perceive. Watch someone who's lecturing and engaged in a higher frequency flow or an intensive intellectual effort. If you relax your eyes, you can often see a kind of disc, or halo of light, the color of which reflects the type of thoughts and the degree of strength of the mind of the person who is speaking.

As the Sixth Chakra was associated with a subtle light, the Seventh Chakra is associated with cosmic sound. There, the awakening of perception is like the shattering crash of a thousand simultaneous thunderstrokes. The ancient seers tried to capture that sensation in the sound of the gong. If you listen to the gong carefully as it cascades into a vibrant crescendo, all the nerves are stretched to their limit. The entire body sense and body image is dissolved into a flood of synesthesia. Under the pressure of that sound, you have the choice: to let go and surrender or to contract and pull out of the experience.

The Seventh Chakra has the key characteristic of surrender–the humility that fills you as you bow before the Infinite. That is one of the reasons that so many different traditions use the act of bowing. The top of the head, the Seventh Chakra, is brought all the way to the Earth. The focus of attention, of blood and circulation and of *prana* becomes focused at the Seventh Chakra and the person is given a new sense of openness and strength. Without the proper opening of the Seventh Chakra, the psychic function that can come from the Third or the Sixth Chakras may lead a student into difficulties. Without humility, the openness to information from the Unknown can result in spiritual ego. That's one of the reasons that

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Yogi Bhajan often says, "May God protect me from the psychics. They pollute and dilute my faith." He is referring to the highest level of sensing and functioning using the intuition with all the open chakras. In that place, you flow spontaneously with the universe with certainty in your rhythm. Many times we stop before attaining that state; we find the temptations of the powers given by the opening of psychic function to be all that we need. That is why most spiritual traditions warn against the development of power for power's sake. Remember, you can be just as crazy in the astral realm as on the Earth. Just because you're dead doesn't mean you're stripped of the ego. So, all the subtle forces that open to your perception as the Sixth Chakra opens, and as the intensity of the lower chakras builds, still need to be integrated with a sense of integrity and wholeness. This integration comes through the operation of both the Fourth and the Seventh Chakras.

THE EIGHTH CHAKRA—THE AURA

Radiance

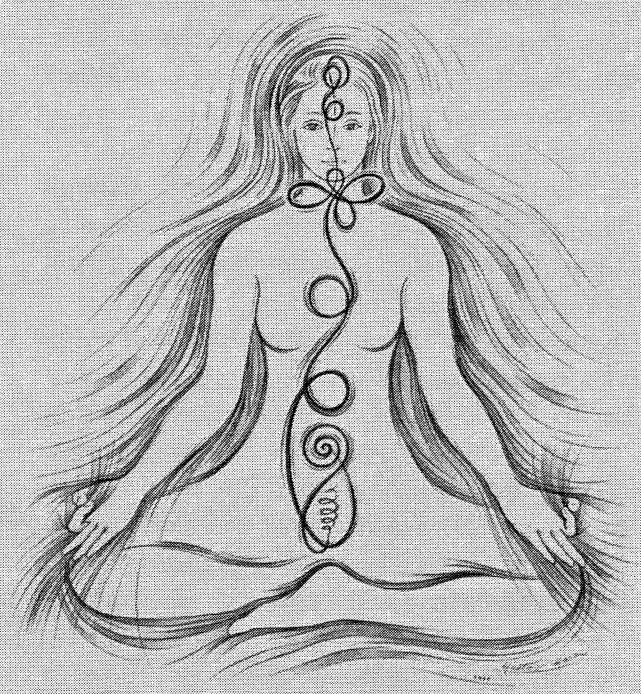
Finally, we reach the Eighth Chakra, which according to Yogi Bhajan is the aura. The aura combines the effects of all the other chakras. To experience this, imagine yourself rising high above your physical body. As you look down at the radiant light of the aura, it appears to be an oval or a circle of light. This chakra is often referred to as the circumvent field or circumvent force, the strength of the energy shell that surrounds all the other chakras. It, too, is a chakra, a circle, a vortex of energy, a place to focus the flows of universal energy. When this circumvent field is strong, negative influences are automatically filtered. When it is weak, you seem vulnerable to everything that passes by or through you.

A strong circumvent field improves the workings of all the other chakras, and relates to the integrity of the body's electromagnetic field. The circumvent field will appear round and symmetrical in the aura when you're healthy. When you're ill, it has various dimples and pockets in it where there is less radiance. The sensitivity that comes through the circumvent field is connectedness. It interweaves you with the entire universe. The soul body loves to associate, dwell and operate through the Fourth Chakra or through the Eighth, with a sense of balance and compassion and love or with a sense of vastness and impersonal reality. This Chakra is not associated with any element, only with a sense of being. It establishes your sense of domain and fills the room with your presence. When the circumvent field is strong, and the other chakras are aligned and functioning well, your presence alone seems to work and direct many of the forces in the universe to effortlessly fulfill your desires and needs.

The Awakened Kundalini through the Chakras

THIS DRAWING OF A YOGINI shows the path of the Kundalini being raised. When you practice Kundalini Yoga, the kundalini energy mixes below the Navel at the seat of the Kundalini, descends to the Root Chakra, spirals up the *sushmuna* (the central column of the spine) to the pineal and pituitary glands in the brain, makes a double loop at the Throat Chakra, flows down through the Heart Center, Navel, and Root Chakra, and returns to its starting point.

You can see that there are four cycles of Kundalini at the *Vishuddha*, the Throat Chakra. These two infinities at the throat chakra lock your words in time and the Heavens. This chakra is the most important, though according to all the book knowledge the *Ajna*, the Sixth Chakra, is listed as most important. But the most important power of a person is the spoken word, both what you speak and how you speak. Ugly words are effective, and praises are effective. The idea of a human is to use grace, not negativity.



Drawing by Hector Jara (Mukhtiar Singh)

"In all the four corners of the Universe, vibrations create victory. The word spoken with manners and radiance effectively gives infinite strength to the speaker, and the experience is Godlike."

—YOGI BHAJAN, 10/1/99

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TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN
April 1989

Regaining Self Esteem

IN SPITE OF A GOOD FAMILY BACKGROUND, innate high-caliber psyche, and good environmental background, in the 60s', thousands of young people lost their self-esteem because of frustration, misguidance, failure of the nation to inspire credibility or loyalty, and an overemphasis on individual needs over those of the community.

To feel better, to feel different, hundreds and thousands of young people got into drugs and tried various rites and rituals. Seeking a different experience, they went to any philosophy, psychology, or procedure that they could participate in with a new idea, thought, mechanism, methodology, or regimentation. In other words, they wanted to expand themselves like infinity, but lacked the deeper understanding that infinity is already within each person.

In 1969 I began to share with these young people the practical knowledge of how to elevate themselves through the grooves of their own goodness. I made them understand that there are five *tattvas* and that there are eight chakras. They learned that they could regenerate their energy just as a cavity in the tooth can be filled to enjoy the chew of life again. They could respond to the challenges of life with excellence, with the full use of their God-given intelligence, using the applied wisdom which they gained by generating their own creative energy through uncoiling their reserve force, the therapeutic energy within, to meet the challenge of life. The hearts of thousands of Americans were touched by these teachings. Many are grateful for this experience, and I am grateful for having the chance to teach them.

The human being has been created as a pattern of energy flows: energy flowing through the spine, flowing through the body and limbs, and flowing through the energy centers known as chakras. The chakra system is composed of eight energy centers: seven in the body and one in the aura or magnetic field.

The **First Chakra** is located in the anus, and when the energy is at the First Chakra level, the person is concerned with basic questions of security and survival. This is the arena of self and self-reverse, or survival and self-destruction.

The focus of energy at the **Second Chakra** level, located in the sex organs, is sexuality, sensuality, and creativity, and is the arena of projection and withdrawal.

At the **Third Chakra** level, located at the Navel Point, energy focuses on identity, power, and judgment and the negative, positive, and neutral views of life.

The **Fourth Chakra** is the Heart Center, the arena of kindness and compassion.

The **Fifth Chakra** is in the throat. Here one experiences the arena of knowledge.

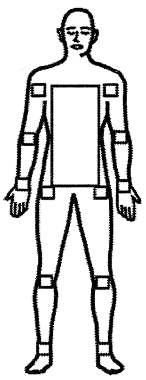
The **Sixth Chakra** is located at the brow and is called the Third Eye Point. Here one sets goals and assesses the long-range effects of one's actions. It is the arena of projection and sophistication.

The **Seventh Chakra** is located at the top of the head. Here one experiences the infinity of self, the arena of elevation.

The **Eighth Chakra** is located in the aura, the magnetic field generated by a human being that surrounds him or her up to nine feet in every direction. The quality of the aura reveals the personality in the projection of power or the depression of defeat.

There are five different, specific frequency ranges of pranic vibrations, each associated with a particular chakra. These frequency ranges are known as *tattvas* and are designated as earth, water, fire, air, and ether. We can most readily experience them as emotions but they serve other energy functions in the body as well.

Self-esteem is nurtured by bringing a balance to the depressed energy of the physical body. When the nervous system and the muscular system cannot handle the outside pressure, the inside self needs to release enough extra energy not only to handle the challenge and bring balance back into the being, but also to release enough extra energy to go one step ahead of the environmental time pressure, to give the person a comfortable, relaxed attitude about the hassle and the hustle of life. In the ancient times the technology of releasing this energy was known as Kundalini Yoga. Now we call it the science of Humanology. And God knows what it will be called in the future. Practically speaking, it is one simple, honest science which works for everyone as an instrument to restore self-esteem. Pranic energy, the energy of life, flows through the limbs and trunk of the body and can be blocked in the energy squares (located in every joint and between the vertebrae of the spine). An excessive blockage results in arthritis, but if the energies flow freely, the life is graceful and healthy. There are also energy squares in every joint of the hand and toes.



Human energy continuously flows through the chakra centers along the spine. It also flows through pathways on the front of the body that are in the form of triangles. These triangles communicate energy throughout the body, and every two triangles have a

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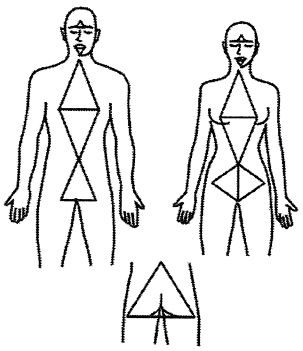
central lotus or chakra.

The first triangle is formed between the eyes and the sixth chakra lotus, or Third Eye point. The second triangle goes from the corners of the mouth to the lunar center in the chin. The third triangle goes from the Fifth Chakra lotus to the nipples and has the Fourth Chakra lotus in the center. The fifth triangle in men goes from the Third Chakra lotus to the outside of the testicles encompassing the Second Chakra.



In women, the fifth and sixth triangles go from the Third Chakra to the left ovary and down to the sex organ encompassing the Second Chakra lotus. The last triangle is formed between the fourth spinal vertebra and the sides of the hips. The end line of the triangle is a line formed by the sides of the hips and the anal opening, encompassing the First Chakra.

Loss of self-esteem can happen at the very moment of conception, if the parents are not in a mental, projectile, angular energy beam. And if at the time of conception the male and the female do not have a mental harmony, the very act of conception can cause the child to be born with low self-esteem.

Loss of self-esteem can also happen during the pregnancy through intense depression on the part of the mother and father, by household problems, social problems, biological difficulties, sociological handicaps, and psychological mismanagement.

Another way the child loses self-esteem is when he or she is raised in environments of unscientific love and is deprived of the inner seeding of the personality. All environmental inner centers may be stretched into diagonal forms, damaging the triangles and squares of the reserve energy and the projective energy. Rather than flowing through established patterns, the energy must compensate by taking imbalanced routes through the body. This results in an unmanageable personality. At that stage the human starts taking the help of bourbon on the rocks and other heavy narcotic drugs and then starts living a neurotic behavior. He or she starts developing a heavy, deep, seasonal depression or permanent mental depression which dulls the sensitivity towards the innate vigor of the personality. The result is a subconscious pattern of loss of self-esteem, which is felt both consciously and subconsciously.

Self-esteem can be very easily and firmly rehabilitated by balancing the *tattvas* at both conscious and subconscious levels, equating the understanding of the participation of the chakras. Reconciling the conscious and subconscious emotions in the specific arena of each chakra will create a flow of energy and personality in which the human is consistent and not defeated with his conscious goals. In other words, if the balance between the *tattvas* and the chakras is established, then there shall be no earthquake because the personality will be harmonious. It shall have ample reserve through the squares of the being, because energy will flow through the body along the proper channels. Also extra energy may be stored in the energy squares of the body for use in times of stress; to write off the pain of the childhood; to overcome negative influences, negative thoughts, and negative company; to cope successfully with the pain of adulthood, the fear of old age, and the pressures of the family; and to withstand the projective animosity of social, economic, and personal environments.

The science of humanology is a very simple, scientific process, and it is very much hoped that people in the Western World will take advantage of this excellent technology. That simply means the emergence of a projected human who knows the science and art of being healthy, happy, and of being holy. By holy I mean everyone has nine holes and the inlet and outlet of these holes should be consciously controlled, consciously directed, and unconsciously patronized. It is my prayer that these ideas may open your heart to some possibilities.

Tattvas & the Chakras

TATTVA	CHAKRA	ENERGY FUNCTION	CONDITIONS
EARTH	First	eliminating energy	fixity, depression, greed, steadiness.
WATER	Second	eliminating liquid	guilt, delusion, pitilessness, creativity, affection.
FIRE	Third	digests food	desire for control, fear, shame, purification.
AIR	Fourth	promotes circulation, flexibility	indecision, anxiety, attachment, hope, forgiveness.
ETHER	Fifth	containment of self	self-control, sense of command, honor, contentment.

In the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Chakras, we are beyond the elements. The quality associated with these chakras is light. If emotion becomes mixed with any of these chakras they become cloudy.

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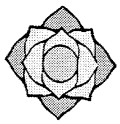
CHAPTER 16



Yogic Anatomy– The Ten Bodies

If you understand that you are Ten Bodies, and you are aware of those Ten Bodies, and you keep them in balance, the whole universe will be in balance with you.

- YOGI BHAJAN

This chapter includes . . .

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Basics of the Ten Bodies

For the most part human beings identify with their physical body, and think of themselves in physical terms–or perhaps at best, as a physical body and a mind. The truth is that the human being is made up of ten bodies: the physical body, three mental bodies, and six energy bodies.

1st Soul Body
2nd Negative Mind
3rd Positive Mind
4th Neutral Mind
5th Physical Body
6th Arcline
7th Aura
8th Pranic Body
9th Subtle Body
10th Radiant Body

- The Ten Bodies are powerful capacities of the psyche. Each body has specific gifts that manifest when strong, and certain deficit tendencies that surface when weak.
- Your caliber is determined by the balance of your Ten Bodies.
- You can strengthen any of the Ten Bodies, by developing an ability to identify which body is out of balance, and then practicing the appropriate technology to strengthen that body.
- In order to understand how each of the Ten Bodies manifests when it is fully developed, it is useful to examine the lives of each of the Ten Sikh Gurus. Though each of the Gurus were Masters or perfected beings, in each of their lives, we can see examples of how each one clearly personified one of the virtues associated with the Ten Bodies.
- The root of all disease exists first in one of these spiritual or energy bodies before it manifests outwardly. Therefore, by strengthening and balancing the Ten Bodies, we can make ourselves healthier as well.

Balancing the Ten Bodies

Kundalini Yoga with its systemized kriyas, works to balance and activate the Ten Bodies. Therefore, a regular, sincere practice of Kundalini Yoga is a comprehensive way to work on all Ten Bodies at once.

If you are aware of a weakness or imbalance in one particular body, and you wish to focus on strengthening and balancing that body in particular, you can:

- Choose a meditation that works that particular body, or which uses a mantra associated with strengthening that aspect.
- Chant the songs (Gurbani) or teachings of the corresponding Guru. You may study his life and words, as well.
- Follow the recommendations in the 'Key to Balancing' suggestions in the Profile of the Ten Bodies, which follows.

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A Profile of The Ten Bodies

FIRST BODY

Soul Body

"Heart over Head"

Guru Nanak ***Humility, Creativity***

Is my life a creative flow from my soul's purpose?
Do I come from the heart?

The first body is your Soul Body. It connects you to your inner infinity. It is the experience of the flow of spirit within yourself. When your soul body is strong, you live by your heart instead of your head, your creativity flows in a simple, pure way. When you master your Soul Body, you come from a place of great humility and creativity. You are so linked with your own infinity that you can relax into the flow of God energy and use it to create beauty in your life. Your soul is the individual expression of spirit; it contains the basic nuclear energy of you, your foundational self.

If your first body is weak, you may come from your head instead of your heart. You may feel stuck, not able to access your purpose and creative flow of life.

Key to Balancing: Raise the Kundalini. Open the Heart.

THE 2ND, 3RD, AND 4TH BODIES ARE MENTAL BODIES, THE THREE FUNCTIONAL MINDS:

SECOND BODY

Negative (Protective) Mind

Guru Angad ***"Longing to Belong"***

Containment, Obedience

Can I determine if there is danger in a situation?
What do I need to consider?

The Negative Mind helps you to give form to the creativity of your Soul Body with the gifts of containment, form, and discernment. It instills in you a longing to belong, which in its highest expression drives you to connect very deeply with your own God self. It gives you patience to be obedient to your own inner guidance.

If your negative mind is underdeveloped, your longing to belong can cause you to get into inappropriate, self-destructive relationships because you are over-influenced by others; you aren't contained enough in your own center.

Key to Balancing: Value your discipline. Develop conscious relationships of integrity.

THIRD BODY

Positive (Expansive) Mind

"Devil or Divine"

Guru Amar Das ***Equality, Positivity***

Am I open to all possibilities that life has to offer?
Do I let these into my life?

The Positive Mind sees the positive essence of all situations and beings. It is expansive and allows resources in. It gives you a strong will and allows you to use your power easily and humbly. It makes you naturally playful and optimistic, and gives you a good sense of humor. It makes your communication strong and direct.

If the Positive Mind is weak, it is like receiving a daily injection of poison. You can be overwhelmed by the input of your Negative Mind, which can be depressing and paralyzing. You may be angry and intolerant, or hesitate to use your own power, your own heat, because you are afraid of the responsibility it brings or afraid that you might abuse it.

Key to Balancing: Strengthen the navel point. Increase your self-esteem. Use positive affirmations.

FOURTH BODY

Neutral (Meditative) Mind

Guru Ram Das ***"Cup of Prayer"***

Service, Compassion, Integration

Do I allow myself to perceive and act upon inner wisdom?

The Neutral or Meditative Mind is the ultimate "win-win" mentality. From here you look at the whole play of life with compassion. The Neutral Mind evaluates the input of your Negative and Positive Minds (and the rest of the Bodies, as well), and gives you guidance within nine seconds. It is a very intuitive vantage point, and allows you to access your Soul.

If your Neutral Mind is weak you may have a hard time making decisions. You'll have the habit of feeling victimized by life because you don't know how to integrate your experiences and find meaning in them. You may have a hard time seeing beyond the polarities of life on Earth and tuning into the great cosmic scheme of things.

Key to Balancing: Meditate.

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FIFTH BODY

Physical Body

"Teacher/Balance"

Guru Arjun ***Sacrifice, Balance, Teacher***

Do I use my strength and assets for the good of all?

The Physical Body is the temple where the other Nine Bodies play out their parts. It gives you the capacity to sacrifice –to make sacred. It gives you the ability to balance all parts of your life. If strong, it represents the teacher, who is able to take abstractions and explain them to anyone, of any age, of any intelligence, of any way of life, and able to bring the information into an earthly, concrete form.

With the Fifth Body one can choose dharma over karma.

If your Fifth Body is weak, you may be angry, greedy, jealous, competitive, ungrateful. Your inner and outer realities will be out of balance. You may have trouble expressing yourself verbally, and you may be afraid to be in the position of teacher.

Key to Balancing: Exercise regularly. Teach.
"Thy Will is my will, O Lord."

SIXTH BODY

Arcline

"Person at Prayer"

Guru Hargobind ***Justice, Protection, Projection***

Am I able to manifest my goals? Do I do so with integrity?

The Arcline extends from earlobe to earlobe, across the hairline and brow. It's your halo, and is the nucleus of the aura. Women have a second arcline which extends from nipple to nipple. The Arcline is your projection, your radiance. It gives you the ability to focus, to be concentrated, to meditate. The Arcline, associated with the pituitary gland, regulates the nervous system and glandular balance, thus protecting your heart center.

You can use the intuition of your sixth center to protect yourself, so that you can deal with the stresses of life without shutting down your heart. The projective power of the Sixth Body helps you manifest whatever you want in your life. "I am, I am," is the Arcline.

This is the balance point between the physical realm and the cosmic realm, referred to in Sikh Dharma as Miri-Piri.

If your arcline is weak, If your Arcline is weak, you may be overprotective and easily influenced. You may have glandular imbalances, which can lead to inconsistency in your moods and your behavior. You may be unfocused and unable to manifest your prayers. You also may not be using your intuition to protect yourself.

Key to Balancing: Awaken the pituitary gland – the Third Eye.

SEVENTH BODY

Aura

"Platform of Elevation"

Guru Har Rai ***Mercy, Security, Love***

Do I feel security in universal love?
Am I unhesitating in uplifting others as well as myself?

The Aura is the electromagnetic field which surrounds your body in the same way the Earth's Magnetic field envelopes the Earth. When it's strong, it acts as a container for your life force, and allows that life force to build up to a level where you feel confident and secure. It is from this position of security that you can treat others with mercy, and your very presence uplifts all.

The Aura is your protection, it is your shield. It can attract positivity and repel negativity–negativity from other people, from situations, and illness.

If your Aura is weak, then you may be paranoid and lack self trust, and negativity can penetrate into the psyche and into the physical body. All illness goes into the Aura first. So if you can heal yourself aurically and keep your Aura strong, then illness cannot penetrate into your physical body.

Key to Balancing: Meditate. Wear white clothing made of natural fibers.

EIGHTH BODY

Pranic Body

"Finite to Infinite"

Guru Har Krishan ***Purity, Energy, Fearlessness, Self-initiation***

Do I fearlessly embrace life?
Do I have enough energy to fulfill my goals?

Through your breath, your Pranic Body continuously brings the life force and energy into your system. This allows you to feel fearless, fully alive, and at one with all creation. When your Pranic Body is strong, and your breathing is deep and relaxed, nothing can bother you. You are self-motivated, and you have enough energy to achieve your goals.

All disease starts with an imbalance in the Pranic Body. If your Eighth Body is weak, you may have constant low-level anxiety and chronic fatigue. You may try to get energy from food or stimulants. You may be fearful and defensive.

Key to Balancing: All pranayam.

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NINTH BODY

Subtle Body

"Mastery or Mystery"

Guru Teg Bahadur ***Calmness, Subtlety, Mastery***

Am I subtle and sensitive and can I penetrate beyond superficiality? What is the REAL purpose of life?

Your Subtle Body helps you see beyond the immediate realities of life to the sublime universal play that lies beyond. When your Subtle Body is strong, you have great finesse and a powerful calmness. Nothing in life is a mystery to you. You learn quickly and master situations easily. You're able to walk into a room and intuitively know what's going on.

The Subtle Body and the Soul Body are intricately connected. The Subtle Body carries the Soul at the time of death.

If your Ninth Body is weak, you may be naive and easily fooled, unintentionally crude or rough in your speech or behavior. You may be restless, because you lack the peace that comes from flowing with the way things are.

Key to Balancing: Do any meditation or kriya for 1,000 days.

TENTH BODY ("One-Plus" Body)

Radiant Body

"All or Nothing"

Guru Gobind Singh ***Royal Courage, Radiance, Nobility***

Is my life an example of courage, royalty, and creativity?

The Radiant Body gives you spiritual royalty and radiance. It's strength makes you courageous in the face of any obstacle. You exert a magnetic presence and command the respect of all who know you. You approach life with an "all or nothing" attitude, and always give 110 per cent. Yogi Bhajan calls the Tenth Body "one-plus" because it's one (your Soul Body), plus your radiance.

If your Tenth Body is underdeveloped, you may be afraid of conflict. You may shy away from other people's attention, because you are afraid of the energy and responsibility that come with the recognition of your inner nobility. You may feel ineffective and unable to come through in situations.

Key to Balancing: Commitment. Do not cut the hair.

ELEVENTH EMBODIMENT

Parallel Unisonness

"Infinity"

Siri Guru Granth Sahib ***Divine Vision, Truth for All***

Is my identity Sat Nam? Do I allow Infinity to flow through me?

Eleven represents the sound current, the wellspring of Infinity from which all mantras originate. Yogi Bhajan says, *"When the God in you, and the human in you are in parallel unisonness, then you are an 11. You have no duality, you have divine vision, and the truth flows from you. You don't have to find anything outside of you. The jewels are all in you–you are rich inside, you have satisfaction and contentment."* In this pure state of consciousness you have the ability to see all events as God's Play, and recognize the God in all. You can direct the play of all Ten Bodies at will. You can direct all parts of your being from an impersonal, expansive space that allows Infinity to flow through you at all times. *"If at anytime, any moment, you misuse your spirtual power, then you are negative, a fanatic. You are without compassion, which is a sign of supreme selfishness. The reality of life is selflessness."*

Key to Balancing: Nam Simran or meditative recitation of the words of the Siri Guru Granth Sahib.

TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER

YOGI BHAJAN ON THE TEN BODIES

First of all, you don't *know* you have Ten Bodies. Secondly, you don't *believe* you have Ten Bodies. Because it is a lot of work to have Ten Bodies. You want just one body. And if you do not know if the Bodies are out of balance in sequence and consequences, you will have terrible results in life. Then you ask, "Why is this happening to me?" It happened to you because you did not make certain parts of your life stronger, balanced, and real in you.

Each of you could have the most radiant Tenth Body! If you do not breathe properly, with only an upper, shallow breath, you can be raped – not only sexually, but socially, and personally. Then you say, "Why don't people listen to me? What is wrong with me?" You don't have the length and the strength of the breath. That's why. You say "I, I should not have fallen into this person. I'm not sure what is the matter." Why? Because you did not have the strength of your Radiant Body.

When your own shield, the Radiant Body, gives its light, you will not only be loved, you will be worshipped. If you have not earned reverence in this life, you have earned nothing. Woman without reverence and man without courage are two donkeys which just carry the weight of life from beginning to end. Woman without reverence has no strength. You must demand reverence. It's your right. You must command reverence. Otherwise you will be exploited and misled. You'll be cheated. Your essence of life is an essential part of your happiness. The benefit is that your energy will be restored. It's a self-healing process. You must have an hour to yourself where you can sit and be thoughtless, desireless, formless.

"I am, I am," is the Arcline, the halo. You are a human being: "*hu*" means halo, light; "*man*" means mind, mental; "*being*" means now.

When the soul desires to leave the Physical Body, the Physical Body's connection with the Pranic Body totally breaks, and the Soul leaves with the Subtle Body. That means your identity is gone. Your Physical Body remains, but "you" are gone. We call it death.

But do you understand what that means? If in subtlety you become very refined, and in activity you become very subtle–very subtle–you are very near to your Soul. The Soul and the Subtle Body are very much related. There's a direct relationship between the Subtle Body and the Soul Body. They never leave each other. So, anything you do which is refined–refined art, refined acts, refined speech, anything which is not gross–will put you nearer to the Soul. That's rather a simple way of reaching your God-consciousness.

If you understand that you are these Ten Bodies, and you are aware of those Ten Bodies, and you keep them in balance, the whole universe will be in balance with you.

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Aspects of the Ten Bodies & the Eleventh Embodiment

	BODY	NEGATIVE MANIFESTATION	POSITIVE MANIFESTATION	VIRTUE	THESE QUALITIES EMBODIED IN THE SIKH GURUS BY:
1	***Soul Body***	Non-creative Overly intellectual	Creative Heart over head	Humility	Guru Nanak
2	***Negative (Protective) Mind***	Overly contracted Unable to calculate danger	Contained Calculates danger Discriminating	Obedience Containment	Guru Angad
3	***Positive (Projective) Mind***	Injection of poisonous thought; no boundaries	Expansive Light where no hope	Equality	Guru Amar Das
4	***Neutral (Meditative) Mind***	Opinionated Reactive	Neutral Integrated Responsive	Service	Guru Ram Das
5	***Physical Body***	Greedy, jealous, competitive	Balance Ability to sacrifice	Self-sacrifice	Guru Arjan
6	***Arcline***	Overprotective, easily influenced	Focused Intuitive	Justice	Guru Hargobind
7	***Aura***	Paranoid Lacks self-trust	Uplifting Nurturing	Mercy	Guru Har Rai
8	***Pranic Body***	Fearful Lethargic	Fearless Motivated	Purity	Guru Har Krishan
9	***Subtle Body***	Gullible Awkward	Sensitive, Subtle Intuitive. Sophisticated	Calmness	Guru Teg Bahadur
10	***Radiant Body***	Ineffective. Shy isolated	Royal Noble Undefeatable	Royal Courage	Guru Gobind Singh
	11th Embodiment Parallel Unisonness	Fanatic	Mastery Divine Vision Sees God in all	Infinite Flexibility	Siri Guru Granth Sahib

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PART FIVE

Yogic Philosophy

CHAPTER 17

Basic Concepts in the Philosophy of Yoga

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There can be many trips, but there is only one way to reach higher consciousness: that is the way of righteous living. There is no other way, every other way will be hanky panky. But the moment you decide, come what may, I am going to give myself to the way of righteousness within me, you will be surprised to see that everything else in this whole world will fall into place for you.

—YOGI BHAJAN

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Introduction to Yogic Philosophy

THE MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE WEST AND THE EAST IS RADICALLY DIFFERENT. In the West philosophy usually means the analytic study of knowledge, the use of language and concepts to analyze and understand our environment, lives and the universe itself. It is removed from experience and application. In the East, philosophy is one with experience. The goal is the establishment of a capacity for the perception of reality by the practitioner. Hence the philosophy of yoga is a chronicle of the experiments of individuals to perceive reality, and their efforts to leave markers and mechanisms so that those who follow can attain that same capacity. Philosophy requires the preparation of the mind and body of the student to perceive the subject of the inquiry.

When we look back to yogic sources and texts we find that the writings are very concise. The *sutras* and holy writings are comprised of short aphorisms. For deep understanding, they need commentary and guidance from an enlightened teacher, along with direct personal experience. Some people think this situation may have come from the absence of the printing press. But at the time they were written, there was no lack of willing labor to reproduce long documents. Their brevity and obscurity may have come from several sources:

1) *The belief that a teacher is essential for the process of learning.* The act of testing and of surrender is essential to being able to perceive certain truths. The interaction with a teacher who will poke, provoke, confront, and elevate is the means of preparing the instrument of the mind.

2) *The realization that the Infinite cannot be accurately represented in any conceptual form.* It can be woven into the process of knowing and into the knower. But every system will fall short of the goal and thus be false.

3) *An effort to obscure the findings in the sutras.* This may have been to test the student, or it may have been for social reasons to restrict the knowledge of transformation only to people who have the special key or guide.

4) *Short verses (sutras) are easier to memorize than long texts, and can serve as a mental "hook" on which to hang a much deeper concept.*

All of this is because philosophy in the East is an active catalyst that stimulates change in the student. It is potent. The results are not abstract or intangible as we think of philosophy in the West. The student is cautioned to choose only the most tested sources of teachings and warned not to simply collect many opinions. Good philosophy implies a well-practiced discipline that generates a coherent vision of the self and of reality.

Our purpose here in taking a brief look at philosophy is to acquire a foundation to understand the framework in which classical yoga is explained. Each major philosophic system in the East is called a *darshana* (which means "presence" or vision). Of the six major systems, the oldest is Samkhya. This system (combined with Vedanta) forms the background for yogic philosophy.

Common Attitudes in Eastern Philosophies

All of the philosophic traditions share certain common attitudes, which are the texture of the investigation of the world and the self:

1) Direct and personal knowledge. All the revelations that originate in the ancient scriptures come directly from the deep meditative personal experience of sages and saints. Each great seer described the results of his or her inner experimentation and the methods they used for testing that vision.

2) Pragmatism. After one has experienced a vision, then what? A vision cannot be maintained and expressed on one's daily life without the elevation of a daily *sadhana* or discipline to maintain it. The practice of a way of living and effective meditation techniques to elevate the consciousness, allow these systems to be experienced by a student of any time period.

3) Suffering. All systems begin with the recognition of the desire to escape the three sufferings:

- Heavenly suffering, provoked by Gods and fate.
- Earthly suffering, caused by the movements of nature.
- Inner or organic suffering, due to imbalance in the psycho-physical system.

Eastern philosophies do not dwell pessimistically on suffering. They simply note that it is everywhere and then inquire into the ways it can be transcended and transformed.

4) Law of karma. There is no action without an effect. The law of action and reaction is an absolute rule of nature. This gives the individual both potency and responsibility. The task is to not take actions that produce negative effects. This requires clear understanding of the sequence and consequence of our actions. Once we act, we speak; once we plant a seed in the fruitful universe, the effect will always come to pass in its own time.

5) Ethical and behavioral commitments. Every path has proscribed and prescribed roles, behaviors, and attitudes that lead us into the experiences of the higher self. These are sometimes simply known as "do's" and "don't's."

6) Yoga practice. All the philosophies that are active include some form of meditation, exercise and prayer. This is true of all the Eastern systems as well as of all esoteric Western traditions.

7) Pluralistic & holistic attitudes. No system claims to have captured the whole vision. The reality they see is everywhere. Therefore the entire universe becomes familiar and something to be learned from. There is great tolerance combined with firm commitments.

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8) The Eternal Self. All systems have in common the existence of an Etemal Self, an Ultimate Knower at the very ground of reality.

Some source texts: Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Gherenda Shastra, Upanishads, Tantras,Siri Guru Granth Sahib, Sidh Ghost, Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.

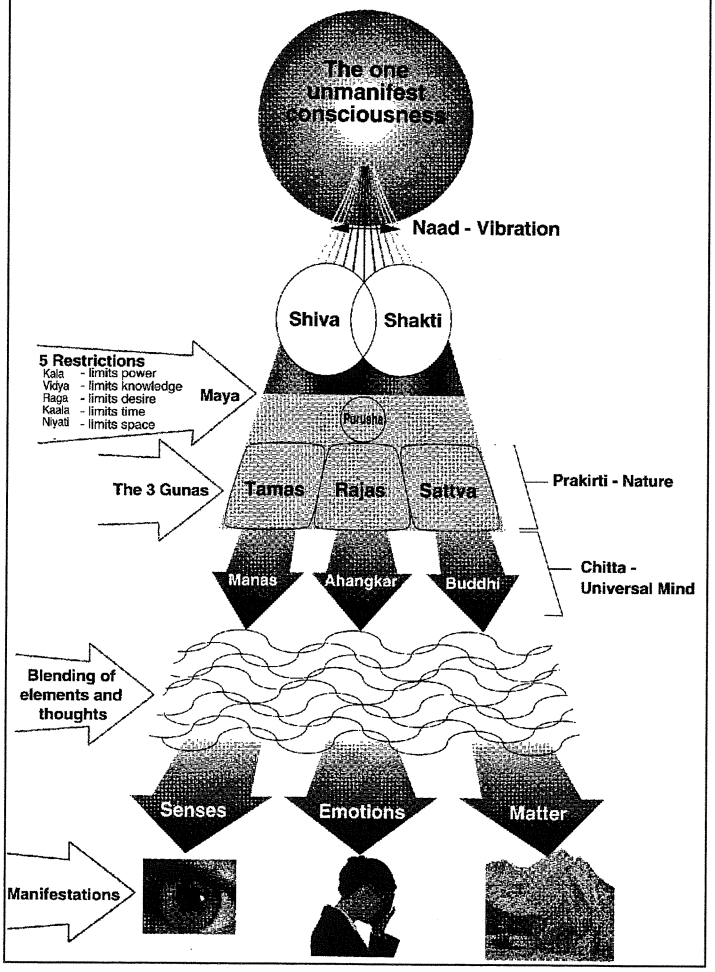
The Chain of Being & Ladder of Subtlety

Materialism and modern science favor a view of the world as flat, that all things that exist can be reduced to a common material substance that has the same order of being and existence.

The yogi, the mystic, and all traditions of enlightened teachers share a different view that encompasses the scientific view but extends way beyond it. They see the universe as a great chain of being. It is an hierarchical network of interconnected realms. The universe has many levels or gradations of Being. It is complex and multi-layered. There is a ladder of subtlety that consciousness must climb if one is to understand the true nature and inter-connectedness of Reality. This ladder exists both within the universe as a whole, and within each one of us.

Cosmic Law of Manifestation & Being

The origin and seed of all we experience is unmanifest and subtle. First is consciousness, then vibration, then separation into the three forces or *gunas*. Then the blending of elements and thoughts manifests in the world of the senses, emotions, and matter.



From *The Mind, It's Projections and Multiple Facets*

At one end of the ladder is the material world described by science. It is full of atoms and molecules. It is real. It exists and has physical laws. At the other end of the ladder is Beingness itself—the Transcendent Reality beyond mind and definition. That reality can never be contained or reduced to simple material components. Nor can it be comprehended by any model the mind may devise. In fact the ladder is more like a path through levels of consciousness in which things evolve and devolve. Before the category of matter exists, the mind exists. Before that and before time, consciousness exists.

In the materialist's view there is only one way to affect things, since there is really only matter and its laws. To the yogi, we can both affect things through the material world, and by combining elements in the more subtle realms of the ladder. This is similar to a lever. If you press the lever close to the fulcrum (at the realm of physical action) you can create change, but it takes a tremendous amount of effort. If you press on the lever far from the fulcrum (at the subtle levels) you can create great changes with little effort. Physical reality is created down through the layers of Being, from subtle to physcial. If you create a combination of elements in the higher mind, the *buddhi*, it will lead to a manifestation through the senses and finally be realized in the physically visible world.

The materialist can use only the epistemology of differences, statistics, and logic. The yogi finds effective uses for all the ways of knowing: differences, similarities, resonances, and identity.

The sages have given many psycho-cosmic maps of this ladder of Being. Patanjali, Samkhya philosophy, Kashmir Shaivism, and teachings of the saints and Gurus depend on this central concept.

An understanding of this vision will unlock many secrets in the yoga literature. It will allow you to approach your *sadhana* with depth and effectiveness.

A person who has never heard an orchestra will appreciate their first concert. But the same person when versed in an instrument, steeped in music appreciation, and having attended many concerts will have a depth and richness of experience that is far greater. Being aware of the map of the chain of Being will introduce you to the instruments of creation, so you can hear its music and understand the mechanism of creation more clearly.

G.O.D.

At the top of the Ladder of Being there exists only pure Consciousness—the One, or G.O.D. (That force which is always Generating, Organizing, and Destroying).

"God is not living on the seventh story, and no lift goes to Him. God is you. He is your expression. He is your identity in existence. That is why God is everywhere. Because wherever you are, God is. Because wherever you generate, organize, and destroy, it is a fraction of the same that is already prevailing in the universal human. Therefore, we can conclude that the human is the image, or the finite activity, of the universal activity in operation."

—YOGI BHAJAN, IN *THE TEACHINGS OF YOGI BHAJAN*

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Maya, the Tattvas & the Gunas

PURE CONSCIOUSNESS EXISTS BEYOND THE CREATION. God decided to come into the Creation to have an experience. At that point a change occurred. That change came in stages like the gradual changes in the colors of the dawn. In each stage there is a little less Oneness, a little more separateness. It is similar to the consciousness of a new born baby. When a baby is born, its consciousness is undifferentiated. It experiences itself as merged into everything. Gradually as the child gets older, it begins to differentiate between that which is "me" and that which is "not me." The process that makes everything seem separated is called ***maya***. Each stage of separateness has its own qualities. The yogis call each stage a ***tattva***. There are about 31 stages going from complete Oneness down to pure individual atom separateness. The final five of these *tattvas* give rise to what we experience as the qualities of matter and the sensations we are used to.

Creation has layers. It is subtle. In the West we pay attention only to the last most dense layer of matter. Guru Nanak and other saints and sages tell us that there are worlds upon unseen worlds. The mind senses all those seen and unseen worlds. Each of us maintains a special balance of the *tattvas* with our mind in order to have a strong body and a unified personality. The quality of our life, our mind, and our health is maintained by the tattvas.

The five densest of the *tattvas*, which we experience as qualities in the body and in all matter, are: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. These are the same 'elements' known to Hermetic science, Chinese medicine and medieval alchemy.

These five earthly tattvas are qualities in our senses and in the world. These five tattvas engage three types of behaviors or qualities, called ***gunas***, that determine the altitude and attitude of your life. These three gunas are: ***tamas, rajas***, and ***sattva***.

The Three Gunas

Tamasic—Animal
Personality Split
Angry, Confused, Stupid
Red Spectrum
Impulsive
God as Existence

Rajasic—Earthling Human
Personality Aligned
Demanding, Positive, Active
Yellow Spectrum
Emotional, Commotional
God as Companion

Sattvic—Angelic Human
Personality Unified to Spirit
Graceful, Peaceful, Disciplined
Green Spectrum
Intuitive, Sensitive
God as Personal & Present

If we use the mind in the ***sattvic guna***, which is clarity and lightness, it makes us saintly and enriches us to be crowned as a Lord of the Universe. We are both connected and effective.

If we use the ***rajasic guna***, which is forcefulness and will, it empowers us to be the king of the territory, to gain jurisdiction wherever we feel, see, and live.

If we use the ***tamasic guna***, which is dullness, unawareness, attachment, and functioning only from need and instinct, it makes a human an animal in this world without any blessings or guidance from the heavens.

To be happy as a human being, we must recognize our basic *guna* and live to it. We must have an effective personality. Our *tattvas* and *gunas* must support us. Our mind needs to project in unisonness the power of our facets to deliver our own angelic self. We must call on our own spiritual and genetic strength. We have been given everything we need.

—FROM *THE MIND: IT'S PROJECTIONS AND MULTIPLE FACETS*

Yogi Bhajan on the Tattvas

There are five elements of which you are made: water, fire, air, ether, and earth. These five elements have five projections: lust (*kam*), anger (*krodh*), greed (*lobh*), negative ego (*ahangkar*), and attachment (*moh*).

Maya The process that gives us the illusion of separateness.

Five Tattvas The densest of the levels of separateness, experienced as the earthly elements: earth, water, fire, air, and ether.

Gunas The three qualities of being or behavior: *sattva, tamas,* and *rajas*.

When you are made of mud, how can you get rid of mud? When you are made of earth, how can you get rid of earth? Nobody can get rid of the five elements of which he is composed. All he can do is channel their projections.

If you go to a teacher and he says, "Get rid of them," you already know that, so what good is it to say so? It is impossible, because attachment is the earth faculty; anger is the fire faculty. How can you get away from these? You can't, because they are projections of the five *tattvas*. But you can channel them positively. You can divert this energy for positive ends.

▸ Lust (*kam*) Water—*Apas tattva*
Instead of being lustful to exploit new bodies, a man can see in a woman, not an object of exploitation, but a mother or sister image to be respected. He can keep his dignity, keep his respect, and change his attitude from exploitation to service.

▸ Anger (*krodh*) Fire—*Agni tattva*. Instead of directing anger at others, be angry at your own negativity.

▸ Greed (*lobh*) Earth—*Pritvi tattva*
Instead of being greedy to possess things, be greedy to spread truth to all people; to possess a high caliber; and to become a great saint or a great teacher.

▸ Negative ego or pride (*ahangkar*) Ether—*Akasha tattva*
Instead of being an egomaniac, identify yourself with the Infinite. Have pride and gratitude that God made you a human.

▸ Attachment (*moh*) Air—*Vayu tattva*
Instead of being attached to earthly possessions, be attached to the whole universe! Be attached to the idea of a healthy, happy, holy life; and to not wanting to see people suffer.

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TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER

A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN *1973*

You, the Tattvas & the Gunas

SAINTS AND SAGES HAVE TAUGHT MANKIND THAT whatever elements are found in the constitution of the Infinite Universe will also be found in the human body. The Universe is the entire Cosmos; and we are a microcosm of the entire Cosmos. If we were to take a thimbleful of sea water and examine it closely, we would find by chemical qualitative analysis that the constituents of the sea water in the thimble are identical to those of the vast ocean. Similarly, the constituents of our individual bodies are identical to those of the Universe. It would be a strange finding if some element were found inside the human body which differed from the elements of the Universe. For there is One Creator who has created this Creation; and all manifested things are born from the One Source of all.

THE ELEMENTS AND GUNAS EXPRESS THEMSELVES

Our personality is dependent on which of the five gross elements predominates in our nature. If a person has the ***akasha tattva*** (the etheric element) predominating, then he will be the happiest, most carefree being on this planet Earth. Yet, the operations of the *akasha tattva* are not perceptible to our sense organs.

The *sattva* and *rajas gunas,* or forces, manifest in the ***vayu tattva,*** the element of air. This *vayu* is the vital force or *prana* in the body. It produces the cells and precious seeds. It keeps all of the bodily organs active and healthy, and circulates the blood and other fluids throughout the body. *Vayu* is not as subtle as ether (*Akasha)*. Though we cannot see *vayu,* we feel its touch.

The influence of the *sattva guna* is present in the first two *tattvas*. However, it is the force of *rajas* which expresses itself in *agni tattva,* the light, or fire energy. The light inside the body expresses itself in and through the gift of sight. ***Agni tattva*** is the main motive energy in the body–digesting our food, producing blood and other fluids, and sustaining the body. It is responsible for the nourishment and growth of the body.

The fourth essence is water–***apas tattva***–a manifestation of the forces of *rajas* and *tamas*. The operation of this element in the body is our capacity for taste, just as ether governs sound; and air governs sight. Also, gland secretions, blood, and semen originate from this element of water.

Pritvi tattva, the basic element of earth, is an expression of the force of *tamas*. It mainly operates through our sense of smell. All the solid parts of the body–bones, skin, flesh, teeth, and marrow–originate from this physical element of earth.

These ***five elements*** maintain the well-being of our physical body. In the great Universe, we likewise observe the play and interplay of the three great forces–*vayu, agni,* and *apas*. When we see lightning and thunder in the heavens, this is the interplay of forces. Without such interplay life could not go on.

The operations of a particular *tattva* comprise the entire body-system. There are main centers as well as subsidiary centers of

The First Five Teachers

THERE IS A MOST BEAUTIFUL STORY in the Shastras about the interplay of these cosmic elements of the Intimate with the microcosmic elements of the intimate. There was a meek and humble *sadhak* [person on the spiritual path]. In his travels he learned from every teacher he encountered. His first five teachers were the five *tattvas* (gross elements) in the universe: Mother Earth, Wind (air), Sky (ether), Water, and Fire.

He first learned from Mother Earth. Just as a child's first teacher is his mother, Mother Earth taught the *sadhak*. She taught the lesson of forgiveness. For even though man heaps mountains of waste and pollution on Mother Earth, she gives in return valuable minerals and food without which man could not survive. He learned the lesson that for all the abuse, criticism and negativity the *sadhak* receives from the outside world, he should give the benefit of his spiritual power, knowledge of self, and loving forgiveness.

Wind taught him to be unattached. He should constantly be on the move to reach as many mature souls as possible. The wind is subtle, not perceptible to the eye. The *sadhak's* ways should be subtle; not an open book for all to read. He should be a mystic, living in the depths of the spirit; not on the surface of existence.

The sky, which is all-pervading, taught him to remain pure and unsullied; and it taught him subtlety. For ether is the most subtle of the five gross elements. Similarly, the Self is also subtle. The clouds of the sky only appear to color it. In reality it is forever blue. The dirt of this life only appears to soil the soul. In reality, the soul can never be soiled by anything.

Water taught him to be cool and compassionate to others; and it taught him to wash clean and purify all who come into contact with him. Just as water is always flowing, the *sadhak* should be continuously flowing and progressive, never stagnant.

Fire was his fifth teacher. Fire is bright. A *sadhak* should burn with spiritual illumination to cleanse the sins and impurities of the people who come to him. Fire drives away cold and gives warmth and heat. Just so, the *sadhak* should remove the people's fear and dread of ignorance, and give them spiritual solace and comfort.

He became the greatest teacher because he consciously related his unconscious essences–the powerful influence of his five elements–to these five corresponding teachers of the universe.

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operation. The chief center of operation of the *akasha tattva* (ether) is the throat–the space between the collar-bone and the nape of the neck. This is the ***vyama-granthi*** region of the body, which comprises the following principal glands: thyroid, parathyroid, salivary, and tonsils. The essential secretions of these glands help mold our minds and keep them nourished. In *vyama-granthi, sattva guna* predominates. For this reason, a person with a supremacy of the *vyama-granthi* in his body possesses a mind in tune with the Supreme Consciousness. The *vyama-granthi* of females is much stronger than that of males. Therefore, in a woman we find that endearing qualities such as affection, love, unselfishness, and steadfastness are conspicuously present.

The main center of operation for the second *tattva, vayu* (air) is the chest region, which is also the seat of ***vayu-granthi***. It includes five principal organs and glands: lungs, heart, thymus, cell producing glands and their subsidiaries. Air is the main protective element in the body. Anyone having *vayu-granthi* in a strong and healthy condition acquires self-control, balanced temperament, purity of thought, and becomes a great, unselfish worker.

The ***agni-granthi***, or fire center, manifests through the spleen, liver, pancreas, and adrenal glands. Just as the heat of the sun makes life possible on Earth, the heat of the *agni tattva* sustains life in the body. The day this internal fire goes out means death to the individual as surely as this world would die if the sun refused to shine. Persons with a supremacy of this *agni tattva* are very vigorous, full of perseverance, and become untiring workers. They have a wonderful capacity for leadership and a directness of manner and speech.

The kidneys, sex glands, and the lymphatic system are physical manifestations of the water, or *apas tattva*. We group them under the term ***varuna-granthi.*** People with a predominance of the *varuna-granthi* are very amiable. In their dealings with others, they are very sweet and pleasing and have a charming manner.

The foundation of the physical structure of our body–bones and flesh–is in the ***prithvi tattva***, the earth essence. People with a predominance of *pritvi-granthi* usually have a body heavy with an excess of blood, flesh, and fat. They are lazy, but also patient, and they keep away from all conflicts and anxiety-producing concerns.

MAINTAINING THE BALANCE

The mystery of the creation and the mystery of our bodies can be explained in terms of the *tattvas*. The trinity of three of these elements–air, fire and water–are the primal constituents of the material world. The whole material system would perish if this trinity were thrown out of balance. And the same trinity of three great elements in the body maintains the breath, body temperature, and so on. They build and nourish the body with the help of blood, secretions, and other fluids produced in the body. If these are thrown out of balance, we ultimately fall prey to disease.

FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE TATTVAS—TRANSCENDENCE

For the spiritual man, the *sadhak*, it is not enough to just have a healthy body. He realizes only too well that this body is a vehicle, which he leaves behind when he reaches his destination.

Similarly, we must transcend the centers in the body over which these essences or *tattvas* rule, to successfully relate *our* essence to the Essence of the Universe. A *sadhak* must not allow his consciousness to remain rooted at the lower centers of earth, water, and fire. For it is only when he raises his consciousness that he gets in tune with Divine Love (the heart center) and Universal Intuition (the throat center). And beyond even this, the true yogi must raise himself. He must merge totally with the Infinite.

Some yogis get *tattva-siddhi* by meditating on a particular center of consciousness. For example, meditating on the ether–its sound and its light for 40 days–will lead to a stage where that ether serves them. But it serves them as a slave who will rebel when free of the master. For when such a yogi who depends on form and the finite in his life dies, he cannot relate to the Infinite; he cannot transcend. And he becomes an earthbound spirit for incarnations. It is only by mastering a mantram or the Shabd Guru, the sacred sound current, that we move from gross to subtle and from subtle to Infinite. Because: *Mantram siddhim siddhim parmeshram. By perfection of the mantram, God will serve one perfectly.*

It is not enough to simply relate our physical elements to the cosmic elements. That identification can be a first step. But after that we must learn a technical know-how by which we mentally and spiritually tune into the Infinite Supreme Consciousness. And that know-how is called yoga: the science of union with the Higher Consciousness. That is each person's birthright, a sacred duty, a longing–to belong to the Supreme Consciousness. Through Kundalini Yoga, the yoga of awareness, the yoga of the Aquarian Age, we can transcend our finite nature and merge with the Infinite.

ETHER	AIR	FIRE	WATER	EARTH
Akasha tattva	**Vayu tattva**	**Agni tattva**	**Apas tattva**	**Pritvi tattva**
Vyama-granthi	Vayu-granthi	Agni-granthi	Varuna-granthi	Pritvi-granthi
Throat region, glands	Chest region	Belly region, blood	Sex organs, lymphatic system	Bones, flesh
Sound	Touch	Sight	Taste	Smell
Sattva	Sattva, Rajas	Rajas	Rajas, Tamas	Tamas
Steadfast	Balanced, unselfish	Perservering, direct	Amiable	Patient, lazy

In the name of the Cosmos which prevails through everyBODY, and the Holy Nam which holds the world.

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The Journey of the Soul—Karma, Dharma, Reincarnation & Liberation

Karma is the law of cause and effect applied to mental, moral, and physical actions. Ego attaches to and identifies us with objects, feelings, and thoughts. These attachments create a bias toward certain lines of action. Instead of acting, we react. Karmas are the conditions required in order to balance or complete these tendencies.

Dharma is the path of life above the wheel of karma, aligned with our soul and destiny, where all our actions are towards the Infinite. It is action without reaction, or karma.

Reincarnation is the cycle of birth and death spurred on by karma. Our thoughts and actions create causes which must be completed, thus creating our next incarnation.

Liberation is release from the cycle of birth and death. When our actions no longer create karma, when we live in dharma, rather than karma, we are said to be liberated.

In Kundalini Yoga we don't worry about the effect, we worry about the cause, because cause has an effect. Effect can never happen without cause; consequences shall never happen without sequence. If a person can be aware enough to know the trend of the sequences, he can control the consequences.

—YOGI BHAJAN

AS THE SOUL JOURNEYS through the vast stages of being, towards awareness of its true nature of Oneness, the individual is subject to the law of karma. In *How to Know God, the Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, it states:

"His desires and acts regulate the speed of his progress. He builds or removes his own obstacles to enlightenment. His present state is continually being conditioned by the karmas of his past, and continually productive of future karmas. Death does not interrupt this process. Neither does rebirth. The individual is merely reborn with a body, a mind, a character and social surroundings which express, as it were, the sum total of his karmic balance at that particular moment in time.

"The doctrine of reincarnation is exceedingly unpalatable to many people because it makes each one of us directly responsible for his present condition. We all dislike having to face this responsibility, and some of us prefer to blame God, or our parents, the existing political system or anything outside of ourselves for making us what we are. If we deny reincarnation and claim that this birth is our first, we are, in fact, disclaiming responsibility for our condition, since it then logically follows that this condition must have been ordained by God, or brought about by the influences of heredity and environment. Hence—if we have been born physically or economically underprivileged—we are provided with a permanent grievance, which permits us to spend a lifetime sulking and cursing our fate, and with a permanent excuse for all our own weaknesses and failures.

This doctrine of reincarnation, which at first seems so grim and heartless, actually implies a profoundly optimistic belief in the justice and order of the universe. If it is we—and not God, or our parents, or our fellow men—who have made our present predicament, then it is we who can change it. We have no excuse for self-pity and no reason for despair. We are not helplessly doomed. We are under no mysterious prenatal curse. All we need is courage and a determination not to give up the struggle."

Yogi Bhajan on Dharma

When karmas remain so do you. Karma has to become dharma. Dharma is where the account is cleared. It is where your discipline and commitments make you positive and graceful. Then you break out of your cocoon and become a leader, elevate all, and leave a legacy. That ability to turn negative into positive, to support all your actions with your facets and manners is the result of meditation. It comes with the refined mind. It is what develops through *sadhana*, *aradhana*, through *jappa* and discipline.

Yogi Bhajan on the Theory of Cause & Effect

The theory of reincarnation is the theory of cause and effect—*ava gavan*—to come and go. It is explained and qualified by 5,000 years of testimony through many scriptures, and scientifically by Newton's Third Law of Motion: "Every action has a reaction, equal and opposite."

Man has divided time into seconds, and space into longitude and latitude. At one second in time, at a certain longitude and latitude of space, when you create a cause and do not complete or experience the effect of it, you have to incarnate again to complete it. That is how when we are unconscious, pretentiously religious, and unrealistic, we create a cycle of life, death, and rebirth.

Sometimes our emotions, feelings, numerous habits, environmental pressures, peer pressures, experience of the past,

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weakness of the moment, and fear of tomorrow stop us from completing the cause our actions have started. Because God is creative, and creative energy is infinite, when we, the micro-gods, cause a cause or start a sequence, even by our thoughts alone, we create a whole incarnation. See how just one spermatozoa with one egg makes the entire human being, so it is very easy to see how one thought, one space, creates an incarnation. We have to live some time in the future to complete this sequence.

We, on our way into the Aquarian Age, must understand our own reincarnation. It is heavy, so we may not want to understand it. Sophisticated living which has a depth and subtleness is the reality, but because we are human we may prefer to be unawakened.

Ultimately our cause and effect has to be Infinity, which is our completion. But by our incomplete thought we load our subconscious and unconscious and cause the unknown to act it out on our behalf. That is, we create our next reincarnation by sowing the seeds that will bear the fruit.

ERASING THE SLATE CLEAN

However, there is a hope. When we meditate in a state of unisonness and tune into the mantra of the *tattvas, Sa-Ta-Na-Ma,* or the mantra of the Tresha Guru, *Wahe Guru,* or the mantra of the *Ik Sharee*, single-sound words, such as *Jehovah–Yaa, Hallelujah–Haa, Allah–Laa, Rama–Raa,* we erase the akashic record of cause and effect. However, this can only happen when the planet Earth and the self are passing through the twilight zones of Time and Space. These are from 4 a.m. to 7 a.m., and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. of local longitude and latitude. In the morning it is called the *Amrit Vela*–the ambrosial hours, and in the evening it is called "prayer time." Any meditation done in the state of unisonness at that time gives us a clear tomorrow and erases the cause of sorrow which we seed through our thoughts. Through meditation we stand redeemed. It is called *Moksha*, Nirvanaa, redemption or liberation.

The balance we achieve will in the end account for our exit from the planet and for our merger with God, or for our next incarnation.

This, in essence, completes and explains the theory of cause and effect, the theory of reincarnation, the theory of the akashic record, or *ava gavan.*

–YOGI BHAJAN, JUNE 17. 1994

THE GIFT OF A HUMAN BIRTH

Before a soul can have the chance to be liberated, it needs to have the opportunity of being incarnated in a human body. To acquire a human body takes 8.4 million lifetimes in other forms of existence. It can also take many incarnations as a human being to come to the point of liberation. Kundalini Yoga does not emphasize the understanding of past lives through regression exercises, because it prefers to deal with the present and the future, and to let the past go. However, it is important to realize that misuse of spiritual responsibility can set you back seriously in the cycle of your incarnations. For instance, there are cases of yoga teachers misusing their powers, who reincarnate afterwards as cockroaches. –YOGI BHAJAN, KWTC 1981

The yogi who has the *tattvas* (the elements) under his control and uses it to show off, his soul and subtle body have to go through 8.4 million lifetimes in that *tattva*. If he can control water, he will reincarnate as a fish. –YOGI BHAJAN, KWTC 1980

LIBERATION

Liberation is not going to God's kingdom from this Earth. There is no such kingdom in some far-off land. The kingdom of God is right where you are. Liberation is when you can be carefree and frank; when you are unable to be a hypocrite; when you say what you feel, and you do not demean what you mean. This is what it means to be informal. Those who have felt the heights of liberation say, "All my chains have fallen apart. I freely float in the air of life, over king and beggar alike. I go over land and ocean equally." This self-trust and ease come from realization. That is genuine greatness. Greatness does not come from giving up your money, leaving your wife and children, escaping into the jungle in retreat. By begging in the street, how can one possibly think they will get nirvana? This begging is not God-consciousness and cannot give you God-consciousness.

–YOGI BHAJAN

The strategies and conditions of an individual person to become liberated are different in each of the *Yugas* (Ages) through which humanity evolves as a whole.

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TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN
April 8, 1971

Cosmic Cycles (The Yugas) & the Ashtang Mantra for this Age

After meditating at the Lotus Feet of my Master, who has granted me liberation from the cycle of time and the cycle of karma, oh, my sweet student teacher of the day, I disclose to you the secret of the Naam. If you care to listen to me this day, and you will practice, you will be liberated.

I have seen God. It is a light equal to millions and billions of rays of sunlight. It is the Cosmic Energy which is the brightest of the brightest and most beautiful of the beautiful. Nothing beyond this can be said. It is the greatest of the great. When the Master, through his blessing blesses you, you will realize this within you.

THE FOUR YUGAS

The scriptures describe Four *Yugas* (Ages) through which humankind has developed:

First was the ***Sat Yug***–the Age of Truth, or Golden Age. In this Age of Innocence, man was one with the Divine, and he realized the vibration which this Cosmic Energy created to make Prakirti (manifestation.) Man meditated on the Nam *"ONG"*–the vibration of the Divine.

Then came the ***Treta Yug***–the Silver Age, when the power of the Truth was weakened to three-quarters of it's fullness. The being became weak. The Nam *"SOHUNG"*–*"I am you"*–was recited. Through this vibration, man acknowledged his identity with the DIvine.

Next came the ***Doaper Yug***–the Copper Age, when the Truth was only half revealed, and man recited *"ONG NAMO NARAYANA."* He worshipped God in the form.

We are now in the ***Kal Yug***, when the Truth is only one-quarter revealed. This Yug is known as the Dark Age, the Age of Steel or Machine Age.

The duration of each is respectively 1,728,000, 1,296,000, 864,000, and 432,000 human years–a ratio of 4,3,2,1. This ratio is found to prevail in many sacred computations. These Four Yugas together make 4,320,000 Earth years. This is called a *Maha Yug*, or Great Age.

The Kal Yug, or Age of Steel, is represented by a circle, the Wheel of Creation. It works with the power represented by another wheel which runs it. Constant vibrations from that Wheel of Cosmic Energy give the power of life movement to this Wheel of Creation. Now, my dear sweet love, you draw one circle over the other–wheel over wheel–and it makes the figure "8", which according to the science of Numerology represents Infinity turned sideways.

Spermatozoa take 8 circles around the egg before union takes place. There are 26 bones supporting the foot, the human foundation, and 26 vertebrae in your spinal column: 2+6=8.

Said the Master, "Whosoever in this Machine Age will meditate on and recite the Mantra which will glorify the Lord, and have eight vibrations, will open the lock of ignorance and darkness. This will liberate that being, and unite him with the Divine."

THE ASHTANG MANTRA FOR THIS AGE

Thus the Master meditated and became one with the Lord, and gave the Mantra:

EK ONG KAR SAT NAAM SIRI WAHE GURU

This mantra has eight vibrations, and describes the glory of God. Thus said the Master, "In the time period two-and-a-half hours before the rising of the Sun, when the channels are most clear, if the Mantra is sung in sweet harmony, you will be one with the Lord." This will open the solar plexus, which in turn will charge the solar centers. The person will get connected with the Cosmic Energy, and thus will be liberated from the cycle of time and karma. Those who meditate on this mantra in silence will charge their solar centers and be one with the Divine. That is why I speak to you of why we should meditate and recite this mantra.

All mantras are good, and are for the awakening of the Divine. But this Mantra is effective, and is the mantra for this time. So my lovely student, at the will of my Master I teach you the greatest Divine key. It has eight levers, and can open the lock of the time, which is also of the vibration of eight. Therefore, when this Mantra is sung with the Neck Lock, at the point where *prana* and *apana* meet *sushmuna*, this vibration opens the lock, and thus one becomes one with the Divine.

THE BLESSING OF GURU AMAR DAS

In the town of Goindwal, Punjab, India, even today this Divine mantra is still inscribed on the walls of the sacred well at the house of Guru Amar Das, the Guru of Guru Ram Das, through whose blessing today we vibrate in the Divine ecstasy. I disclose this secret of the Divine to you today, for the upliftment of humanity. Those who will practice it will be liberated and be one with the Divine.

We are presently in the Kal Yug. Within the Yugas, human development is also influenced by astrological periods, caused by the slow movement of the Earth's axis through the astrological signs. The Piscean Age and the Aquarian Age are astrological periods within the Kal Yug.

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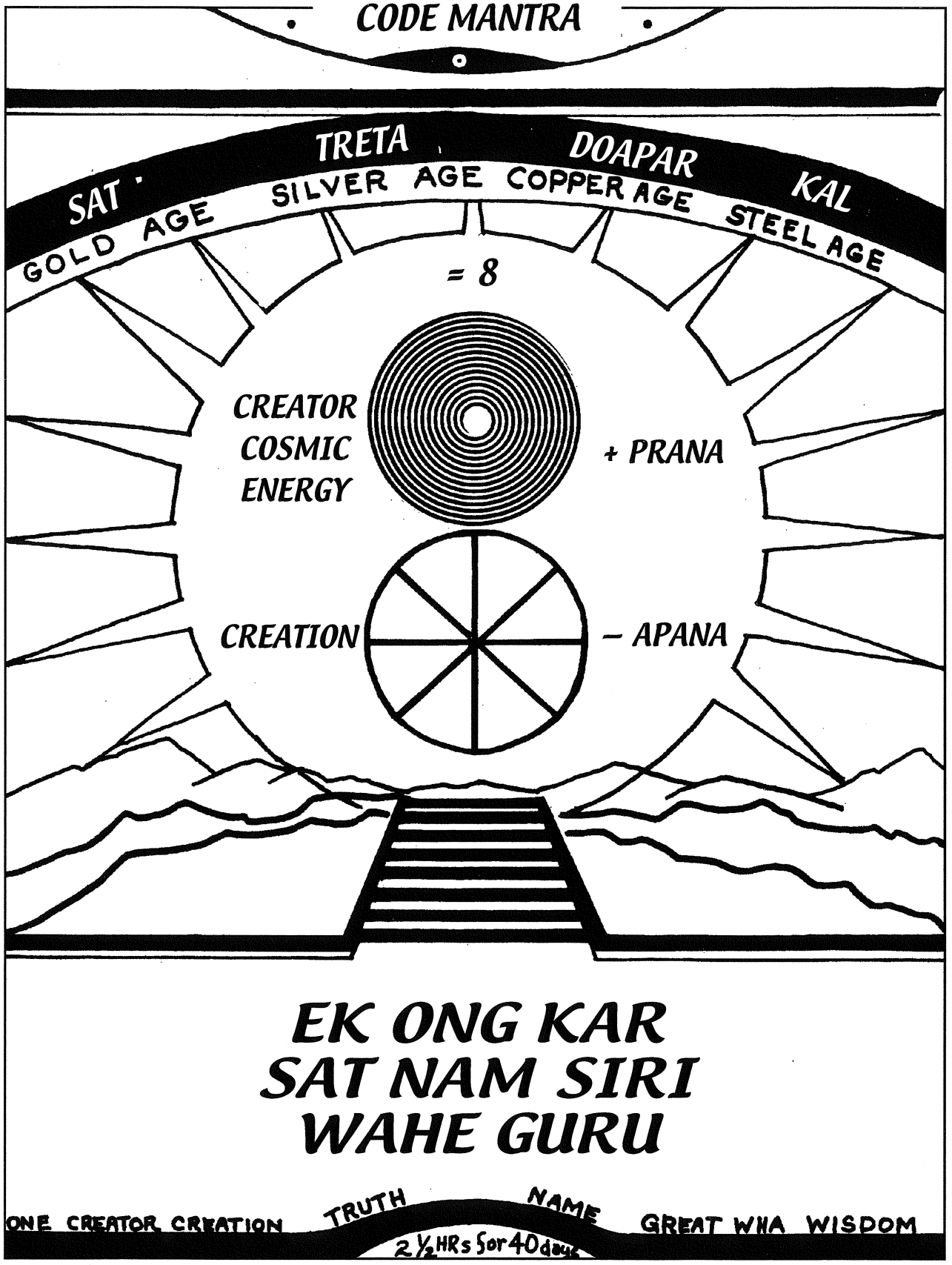

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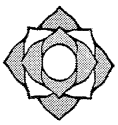
CHAPTER 18



Spiritual Development

I'd like to paint before you a picture of spiritual Infinity. A person feels pressure from this world and starts running towards spirit. Someone uses himself to introduce you to the path. Then when you come to the path, it is not the person, but it is the discipline which is passed on to you. It is called Saram Pad*—when you are introduced to the path. Then* Karam Pad *is the sadhana which you are to do on that path. Then within four to seven years, you enter* Shakti Pad, *where you confront your own ego. It is the last chance in 8.4 million lifetimes where you can escape the cycle of birth and death. Between* Shakti Pad *and* Sahej Pad, *there is no rope, there is no link—it is a leap. Either you leap forward in faith or you fall down to the base and crash. And when from* Shakti Pad *you enter* Sahej Pad, *you become Infinite—that which doesn't change. That's it. Then there is no He, no She, no It.*

—YOGI BHAJAN, AUGUST 1978

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The Five Stages on the Path of Wisdom

Saram Pad

The "honeymoon period" when we consciously enter a relationship with our spirit and our spiritual path. We are happy. We have left the pain of the past and feel the freshness of a new life on the spiritual path. We have found a spiritual teacher and a path, and we feel the blessings of these gifts.

Karam Pad

In this stage we begin the personal work on ourselves. We have become aware of the work, issues, and growth needed to maintain a deeper relationship with our spirituality.

Shakti Pad

This is the most crucial, transitional, and challenging of all the stages. The choices made here, and the transformation that occurs determine whether the practitioner will progress toward mastery, stay at apprentice levels, or quit the study altogether. It is easy to forget ourselves at this stage and become hypnotized by the satisfaction and power of the skills we have gained. If we surrender to the path and goal we began our study to fulfill, we will emerge with strength, empowered with an unshakable direction.

Sahej Pad

A stage of ease, balance, and grace, when everything fits together. We make a decision, and it manifests. The creative force spontaneously serves our needs as we are aligned with our destiny. We sense what serves the moment, then hold the space, allow the tools and prosperity to awaken as each moment manifests, and enjoy the play of life as the Guru works to move the consciousness.

Sat Pad

We are in harmony with the universe, living in great peace, grace, and happiness as a servant of the Divine Will. There is no separation between the duty of the world and the choice of our own will. There is a sense of equality and transcendence.

The job of the spiritual teacher is to give challenges and tests to enable a student to progress from one stage of wisdom to another. It is possible to slip back from a higher stage to another until the higher one is solid in its new perspective.

A MAP OF THE JOURNEY

WISDOM IS ACQUIRED IN STAGES. It is learned by leaving behind the old and risking a venture into unknown territory. When you begin a journey into new territory, a map or a sketch of the road ahead gives you confidence, or at least comfort, to tackle the terrain and obstacles that await you. A map can give you hope, when you seem to be lost. It can remind you to be creative and daring since there are many ways to reach your goal. A map can forewarn you of dead-ends and detours and can record your journey to aid others who will travel to the same territory. It can give you the tenacity and patience to proceed in spite of obstacles. The best maps will show you when and how to prepare yourself for the different stages of the journey.

A seasoned traveler knows that any such map, no matter how accurate or elaborate, is not the same as the territory which it describes. When you walk into the actual territory, the rich sensory, aesthetic, personal, and social dimensions of the actual experience will be yours. No map includes all the ways that the experience will change you, enrich you, and mature you. A map is the surface only. Only the actual experience and challenge of crossing the real territory takes you beyond the surface and opens the doorway to transformation and creativity. Only when you walk up high hills, wade across deep streams, and slip through shadow-filled woods do you increase your strength, build your confidence, transform your capacity for vision, and solidify feelings of integrity and self-worth. None of this can be given to you by the map. None of this will be exactly the same for each explorer who walks the territory recorded in the same map. Still, maps are essential to open the doorway to the deeper knowledge that comes with experience and wisdom.

You must have the skills to guide your mind through the stages of learning and mastery. A map of the stages of wisdom guides you across the levels of mapping that the mind uses at each stage of learning.

The most important map is the one that codifies the territory of the Self and the stages of Self-mastery. Regardless of the area of knowledge and action you encounter, the Self is at the core of that experience. You must have the skills to guide your mind through the stages of learning and mastery. The map of the stages of wisdom is a meta-map of how the mind works in any situation. A map of the stages of wisdom guides you across the levels of mapping that the mind uses at each stage of learning.

Many great people became masters of a discipline and of the Self. From their efforts they left behind records, and sometimes explicit instructions, about the path of wisdom and the nature of

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mastery. Since the map we want is a map of the acquisition of expertise, it can be gathered from any area of knowledge.

In the spiritual world, those sages and saints who successfully walked the path, left many maps, gifts, *sutras*, scriptures, techniques, and inspirations to help us complete the journey and avoid its hazards. One of those maps is the knowledge that spiritual growth, and all inner growth, occurs in stages. Experience does not become knowledge, nor knowledge become wisdom in one step, one flash, one moment. It is not all or nothing, black or white. It is a cumulative effort. When we traverse the stages of mastery, we can skip none of them, even though in the end we see a new, encompassing reality in the self and in the area of knowledge we mastered.

There are five stages, which are universal phases of learning and growth in human emotion, action, and cognition. In the spiritual world, these five stages (*pad* means "stage" or "step") are:

Saram Pad (the novice)
Karam Pad (the apprentice)
Shakti Pad (the craftsman)
Sahej Pad (the expert)
Sat Pad (the master)

The nature of experience and the types of teaching and challenge helpful to the student are different in each stage. Once you understand the stages, you will find examples of the stages in every area of your life.

SARAM PAD: THE STAGE OF THE NOVICE

This first stage is that of the novice. We are called to do, learn, or explore something. This is the first time we are exposed to the subject or the task. It is our first look at a company we will manage, the first instruction on how to drive, the first time we test our walk in the new territory. In this stage, we have little or no experience. There are no memories of success and failure to guide us. We may have heard stories about it, but we have never encountered the actual situation or challenge before.

There are three types of motivation that bring us to *Saram Pad*: necessity, possibility, and destiny. When life gives us pain, problems, failure, and frustration, we search for some other way. The old way seems insufficient. We are after something different, and someone introduces us to another method, or we are struck by a sudden vision of a way out of our pain.

The second motivation arises from possibility. We notice a friend or colleague who enjoys an experience or task. We wonder how to gain that pleasurable state. We receive a sample of the exercise, food, or thought and find it pleasing. Then we seek to increase our pleasure. We begin a quest after something similar. We take on the risks and the vestments of the novice, to seek the possibility of greater satisfaction or amplification of the pleasure we have sampled.

The third style of motivation is intuitive, total, and comes from our creative being. It occurs regardless of pain and pleasure, fame or ignominy, wealth or poverty, or of acceptance or rejection by our peers. This is when we sense a "calling." It is not simply a desire that comes from a part of us that has been neglected or demands expression. A calling is from the whole self. When we act on a calling, there is the feeling of destiny. It feels as if we make a choice with true free will, and that we would make no other choice. It is a sense of the creative manifestation of something that is identified with our real self or goal. It is action from love rather than from passion or fear. We move forward equally comfortable with things that are different and things that are familiar. We seek the unique and the authentic expression of that uniqueness.

Regardless of the motivation that brings us to the threshold of *Saram Pad*, we begin in the same situation with the same challenges. The beginner does not know what to pay attention to. To which of the hundreds or thousands of features, sensations, and actions do you give priority?

We know from experiments in cognitive psychology that the capacity for attention is limited. You can simultaneously attend to only a few items that are unfamiliar to you. The limit of concentrated attention is usually estimated to be seven—plus or minus two—distinct items of focus.

Instructions for a novice are based on features that are easy to identify. Novices are given rules to follow that are direct and absolute, allowing them to focus without being overwhelmed. A good instruction to a novice does not include the exceptions and special circumstances that occur. Ideally the novice drives on easy roads without bad weather or dense traffic. Good rules for a novice are simple to understand. Listing or trying to list all the sensations and exceptions in a real life experience is an ineffective way to teach.

A novice must cultivate obedience, motivation, and discipline.

Rules for novices must be clear and free of context. The job of the novice is to understand the rules and then follow them. The novice does not have an integrated sense of the whole task based on experience. The only way a novice can judge the quality of his or her performance is by how well he or she followed the rules. The personal quality a novice must cultivate is obedience, motivation, and discipline.

The effect of following novice rules is to establish certain habits that become automatic. These habits become automatic so that attention can be trained on other features that detail the next

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level of learning. The rules allow the novice to accumulate experience without great hazard. Students who can easily notice similarities and follow rules by matching behavior, excel in this stage of learning. Excellent novice students are considered to be enthusiastic, rule-followers. They are formula-seekers who do not ask prematurely about the advanced stages which they cannot yet understand.

For a student of Kundalini Yoga, some novice rules would be: do Breath of Fire for three minutes only; do each set exactly as given in sequence and timing; take a five-minute cold shower each morning; never speak an unkind word or gossip. Many times special conditions are created that accentuate the experience of the novice rules: live on a mono-diet for three days; do not speak during a retreat. Each of these experiences emphasizes certain features of the behavioral and emotional landscape. On a spiritual path, the rules help the novice to notice and distinguish between ego and the true Self. The spiritual aspirant develops behavioral habits which choose the true Self.

With practice at this stage, it is easy to move on to the next stage. In music, learning how to strike a note automatically allows you to shift attention to and refine the execution of the notes, melody, and harmonies.

KARAM PAD: THE STAGE OF THE APPRENTICE

The second stage is that of the apprentice. What is called for in this stage is action, doing, and practice over a wide range of concrete situations. The word *karam* means "to do or accomplish tasks." A student needs to get the task or job done in many greatly varied circumstances. During this process exceptions and new features will emerge which were not specified in novice formulas. So there is a need to have apprentice-level feedback about the experiences from a more advanced teacher and from peers who are taking on similar challenges.

The great challenges of *Karam Pad* are sensory enrichment, accumulation of experience in many contexts, redefinition of the nature and expectations around the tasks, and the development of concentration in complex situations.

As the student gains experience, there are many sensory elements of the skill or task that emerge and redefine the student's concept of the task. The task may have been defined in only one sense as a novice. Ongoing experience presents many sensory cues to the student. Teaching techniques that enhance sensory openness are great catalysts at this stage. Usually the student prefers one sensory organ over the other. It is a matter of habit, training, and disposition of temperament. Sensory flexibility is essential to move past this stage of learning.

Another skill central to this stage is the ability to concentrate as the number of cues increase. This skill is partly a function of experience over a great range of situations. The ability to notice similarities-with-exceptions is a cognitive style that creates excellence in this stage of learning. In each new circumstance the ability to notice small deviations from the original rules and task formulation direct the concentration to what needs to be learned.

An apprentice does not encounter a situation without a history. An apprentice has experiences and a past to compare with the current situation. Practice makes it easy and quick to notice similarities to the past. So attention gradually shifts to the differences in similar circumstances.

Regular practice gives the apprentice the ability to establish a perspective regardless of how the conditions around the practice changes.

A student of yoga excels at this stage of learning if he or she practices regularly. The yoga *sadhana* of exercise and meditation needs to be done day after day, under mood after mood, during social situation after situation. This gives the apprentice the ability to establish a perspective regardless of how the conditions around the practice changes. It gives the student resilience and hardiness.

A great catalyst for this stage of learning is to read the history of good models of the skill being studied, to listen to the experiences of peers who have trained in different contexts, and to have a mentor provide opportunities that challenge and extend previous learning. To prepare for the next stage of learning, the contexts that are experienced as an apprentice should be as varied as possible.

SHAKTI PAD: THE STAGE OF THE PRACTITIONER

The third stage of the practitioner is the most crucial, transitional, and challenging of all the stages. The choices made in this stage and the transformation of the student's capacities that occur determine whether the practitioner will progress toward mastery, stay at apprentice levels, or quit the study altogether. It is a stage at which either transformation or discontinuity occurs. In the spiritual disciplines, *Shakti Pad* is known as the test of ego, or the test of power.

At this stage the student has accumulated a lot of experience. He has tested the rules, stored up conscious and unconscious abilities and habits, and he is overwhelmed and inspired by possibilities. What is required of the practitioner at this stage is the ability to choose a goal, fix on a motivation, and consciously commit to a set of values. The practitioner must also develop the ability to establish a hierarchy of choices. The practitioner must have a faculty to prioritize complex sets of tasks and decisions and to notice what is significant to the goal and what is not.

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A practitioner must choose a strategy and must assume responsibility to choose between all the trails along the journey. The driver may have 50 ways to drive into Boston. Putting all those choices in mind without a method to restrict and direct a decision would be confusing, overwhelming, and time-consuming. The practitioner instead chooses the way to Boston based on a particular goal or value for the trip.

Each route satisfies a different value. Route 1 is the "quickest" and "saves time." Route 2 is the "most beautiful." Route 3 is the most "social." since it goes by friends' houses. Route 4 is the most "historical" as it goes by monuments. Route 5 is the most "challenging" due to the varied landscapes and driving conditions. The choice of value and route must occur before leaving for the trip.

As an apprentice, each journey was assigned by the mentor. The choice is now the practitioners. An apprentice learned that there are many rules for different situations. The practitioner must now formulate the rules.

The novice is like the newborn. The apprentice is like the young child. The practitioner is like the adolescent who is ready to challenge the rules, to risk new combinations, and to act in patterns that are unlike the past. It is a creative and dangerous stage. Just as an adolescent wants the power of choice without the dangers of responsibility, the practitioner wants to make a choice without commitment. The practitioner who learns to command commitment, to overcome doubt, and to discern the proper values, conquers this stage of learning.

This is the leap of faith, the moment where you choose to follow your own desires and limited perspectives, or the higher values of the path or teaching you began to study.

In *Shakti Pad* is the test of power. The practitioner looks at the whole situation, at the panorama of facts and choices. He must then consciously act from the whole or from a part of the whole. This is a critical ability. The cognitive ability needed at this time is the capacity to perceive the implications of the whole collection of choices and information. To act unconsciously or incorrectly from a small piece of the whole is a fatal error. A practitioner fails if he chooses the value or goal which he enjoys or which he finds most interesting or stimulating, rather than the values that continue to serve the larger project, task, or study that he entered training to attain.

The experience of this type of decision-making is often unpleasant and frightful. It is beset with uncertainty and often fills the practitioner with doubt. It is a perilous and existential moment. It is an agonizing decision—a question of identity and commitment. The decision is made through deliberate effort to reach the correct perspective of the whole, and to discern the true significance of the decision.

The goal or attachment of the student becomes the biggest block at this stage. Imagine the driver who so loves the feeling of the car as it moves that he refuses to study maps or make plans. The sensations of driving are so enthralling that the next capacity cannot develop. This attachment is equivalent to denying the guidance of the mentor who tells the practitioner to keep going and not to stop if she wants to reach the end. A practitioner who does not pass the test of *Shakti Pad* denies the teacher or mentor. She is filled with doubt about the value of what the teacher did before, and she doubts his wisdom .

The real test at this stage is the test of overcoming doubt; i.e., to create an action where all the parts of the mind are behind the original chosen path. This stage requires commitment. It requires involvement in the sense that the practitioner is responsible for the choice. Success and failure become portentous and filled with consequence. It is similar to adolescence, when the smallest rejection or acceptance by others is met with enormous reactions of grief or ecstasy. This choice of values is always a personal choice. It is not possible at this stage to take a cosmic perspective of detachment. The choice cannot be avoided without halting learning and growth, because the choice must be made first, before moving ahead.

In spiritual disciplines, this choice is the leap of faith. This is the moment where the practitioner chooses to follow his own desires and limited perspectives, or choose the higher values established by the path or teaching that he began to study. Up to this point the student is detached from the choice. As a novice, you just follow the rules. The apprentice is busy learning new perceptions. He is competent to do most tasks related to the skills he is learning. He must choose where to use those skills and to what end.

On the path of yoga, many students leave the path at the stage of *Shakti Pad*, because they feel that some part of themselves has been neglected or rejected by their own earlier efforts. Others gain spiritual ego and fancy themselves complete even though the teacher and teachings warn them against such a position. Others fade away slowly because they decide they are the exception to the rules, and they need not follow the original disciplines anymore.

Those students who can act with faith and wholeness do well at this stage. Students who can search for differences from the main goal and correct their direction, pass through this stage the most easily. It is easy to forget yourself at this stage and become hypnotized by the satisfaction and power of the skills you have

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gained so far. If you surrender to the path and goal you began your study to fulfill, you will emerge with strength and empowered with an unshakable direction.

SAHEJ PAD: THE STAGE OF THE EXPERT

The fourth stage of the expert is a joy. It is a complete shift from the perilous stage of *Shakti Pad*. *Sahej Pad* means the stage of ease and elegance. At this stage the student is experienced, focused on the goal, and every new challenge increases the student's skill.

What changes is the concern with one's self. At this stage the expert begins to merge into the task itself. He flips between complete merger with the task or subject and the assessment of the pattern of his performance. There is never a question about what one does or why one does it, there is only the intense teaming of pattern after pattern. The whole is not subdivided and analyzed component by component. The expert responds to the total entity or personality at once.

The student learns to sense the big picture and the differences between many big pictures of the same situation, task, or person. This sensing opens intuition.

This capacity is called intuition. It has been ignored and underplayed by psychologists and by the business world. Yet this capacity is especially useful in situations of high complexity and quick change that require immediate decisions and leadership.

The expert uses intuition to act and analyze, to assess the impact of the decision. The athlete in this stage acquires a flowing, prescient quality to his movements. The salesperson will sense a new market for the product and then gather data to back up what he already knows. A consultant will use all the senses to notice exactly what a company needs in order to grow. Intuition makes some factor that will lead to a solution, suddenly leap into awareness. The expert then follows this intuition with data-gathering, coalition-building, and other skills in order to effect the change.

The expert searches for differences with exceptions. He looks for significant elements, and then he matches them to patterns from the past that are similar and that work as a solution. The expert does not change behavior if everything is working well. "If it isn't broken, don't fix it," is a familiar motto. Instead, he goes directly to what needs a change. Where no change is needed, he simply does with elegance what he already knows.

In most disciplines, such as the arts, chemistry, mathematics, music, and teaching, it takes seven to ten years to build the experiential base to move through the expert stage of learning and to have the chance to become a master.

This stage is similar to *Karam Pad* in one way—the increase of sensory openness to cues. The difference is that the cues are about the whole project, the entire staff, the whole person, the whole chess board, the entire yoga *kriya*. The expert learns to assess the whole not on management statistics or a set of measures, but with all the senses available to him both consciously and unconsciously. Instead of paying attention to small details, the student learns to sense the big picture and the differences between many big pictures of the same situation, task, or person. This sensing opens intuition.

The expert learns by teaching. To truly master something you must teach it. This stage requires communication and sharing what has been studied with others. In business it means mentoring a younger or less experienced person. This is a powerful action that helps the student cultivate non-attachment to the task or skill. It becomes something to give away, to implant in others. It awakens the inner parent and teacher. This helps the student formulate the skills and information.

Compassion is always present in a true expert. The expert is not threatened by personal gain or loss. The expert plays the games powerfully and skillfully, always focused on the goal. The feelings of fear and defensiveness are absent. This gives the expert the advantage of openness to all emotions and sensations. The expert is there more for the goal and the task than for himself.

SAT PAD: THE STAGE OF THE MASTER

The fifth and last stage is that of the master. It is rare and is not attained by everyone. In spiritual discipline it is called *Sat Pad*, the stage of Truth or Reality.

The concern of the master is the actual reality of the task and the situation. There is no distortion by the ego needs of the student. There is no separation between the master and the action of the tasks. The master driver merges with the car, the road, and the journey. That awareness is not split, but focused everywhere at once. The master yogi merges with the real Self and finds it immanent and present in every part of the journey of life. The master businessman merges into the unique nature of the specific business and finds the universal principles of organization and prosperity in every part of the business.

The position of the master is an embodied, fully present position whose focus is on the impact and context of the skill, task, or game. Novice airline pilots feel they fly a plane and are besieged by complications and hazards. The master pilot feels he actually flies—the sensations are of himself flying.

If there is a miscalculation or an unforeseen incident, and even on the master level there always is, the master quickly tests many alternatives and forms a new move. It is all done in a fluid and instinctual way. It carries with it a quality of involved neu-

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trality. The master learner uses a neutral mind. The intuitive capacity is not only a perception of wholes, but a merger into the immediate situation, task, object, or person.

We lack a good English word for this special intuitive capacity. Yogi Bhajan has called it comprehensive, comparative, intelligent, intuitive consciousness. Perhaps we can call it simply the use of Will! "Will" has many old connotations that we must drop to use it. Will in this context means the intuitive action that emanates from the whole person in response to the total situation. It is not forced. It is spontaneous but not impulsive. It is creative, playful, and completely real. To act from the Will is to use our essence, the soul, and not just a part of mind or emotion.

When we communicate from our Will, we discharge our honest complete self. The purpose of communication is to represent our totality regardless of the subject. Similarly, when we use Will to perform an action, we are totally present and the action is performed with effortless effort since there is no internal resistance or any split of attention. This effort is referred to in the famous Zen story where the master explains that as a novice he carried water and chopped wood. After many years he received enlightenment. Now he "carries water and chops wood!"

The yogi who is a master feels he acts in the direct command of the Will of God or dharma. There is no separation between the duty of the world and the choice of his own will. There is a sense of equality and transcendence in the Infinity of Being, enacted in the simplest of actions and in each conscious spoken word.

A master yogi can raise the kundalini and entertain socially at the same time. To a novice it may seem as if the master does not pay attention or is distracted. The reality is that the novice must commit all his resources of attention to the tasks, whereas the master has focused and decided or acted before the novice has even formulated the real problem!

A master will be very concrete in the application of abstract concepts. The novice will have only abstract ideas about the real experiences. The transformation from novice to master is accompanied by the capacity for metaphor instead of symbol, concrete specific action rather than abstract rules, spontaneity rather than impulsiveness, and intuition rather than rationalization.

Fallacies on the Path of Wisdom

The following are the most common mistakes students make when they do not understand the nature of the five stages:

ONE-LEVEL FALLACY. The student acts as if there is only one level. This action can come from a need for certainty or from simple ignorance. For this student the map is the territory. There are no alternatives. The world exists without gradation. The spectrum becomes a single color. The student stops the effort to learn more and represents the tasks poorly with a lack of depth and detail.
Remember that there is always more to learn. If he finds himself at the top with no more to learn, he needs to shake himself awake!

SHORT-CUT FALLACY. The student believes he can skip to a later stage because he can perceive that stage. Certain things cannot be learned without traversing the challenges of each stage. Students who settle for this fallacy merely imitate the real levels of expertise. They do not hold steady when the real pressure of life tests them.
It is best to pay attention to the stage he or she is in, and let the next stage emerge.

CROSS-DOMAIN FALLACY. This is the most frequent mistake. A student gains expertise and even mastery in one area, and assumes this expertise can be transferred to other areas.
It is important to keep the beginner's mind, open and ready for instruction in undeveloped areas.

BOOTSTRAP FALLACY. This mistake comes from the assumption that the student can declare himself complete. Many students decide they no longer need a teacher—they are the perfect master. The ego believes it is powerful and great. The lesson is to cultivate a teacher or mentor at every stage.
Continue to be challenged and to learn.

Yogi Bhajan on Shakti Pad

In Kundalini Yoga you must go through this peculiar state of doubt. It is called a "self-doubt status." It is a giant pain in the path of progress, but it is also a sign that graduation is near. Your inner struggle will be: "I am, I am not. They are, they are not. It is, it is not. We are, we are not. It is true, it is not true." In that storm of doubt, if you just become humble enough and let it go, you will not have to raise a pinkie or even the slightest battle. That is the greatest miracle, that there is no miracle to remember, and that the Doer does everything anyway as you enjoy, laugh, cry, and be happy. We are all part of that flow. We are not separate.

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Yogi Bhajan on Spiritual Awakening Through Group Consciousness

Individual consciousness will refine you,
group consciousness will expand you, and
Universal Consciousness will redeem you to Infinity.

HAPPINESS AND MASTERY OF THE SPIRITUAL FACET OF HUMAN LIFE is a simple and direct practice. The problem is that we have never trained our minds to know our origin as Infinity. Instead we run and hide under rituals. All places of worship were meant to create group consciousness. Spiritual awakening starts with individual consciousness, then progresses to group consciousness. When group consciousness is established, where you care for others, then you can progress to Universal Consciousness. Religious places were designed so that all the people who believe in some way could join together to praise the Lord and to feel elevated. In most places, this original purpose and practice to gather and experience the elevation of group consciousness is forgotten, diluted, or simply gone. With that factor of our life neglected and undeveloped, we have become confused.

Take care of the spiritual factor of your life by joining with others to experience and elevate your self, the group, and the universe. When a person does not have and develop the strength of the individual consciousness toward group consciousness, he cannot attain the final experience of the Universal Consciousness. Barriers will always exist. Lack of knowledge, lack of a teacher, ego, fear, and karma are all barriers. These barriers keep a person limited. The development of group consciousness into the experience of Infinity is the bridge to Universal Consciousness. It releases the unlimited self and fulfills the spiritual longing.

Different Teachers & Techniques Are Needed for each of the Five Stages

STAGE	TYPE OF TEACHER	TRAINING TECHNIQUES
1 SARAM PAD—Novice	GUR. An instructor translates basic formulas—descriptive, sensory-based. Instructor is rigid and inculcates rules.	Simple clear instruction that uses obvious features and absolute rules.
2 KARAM PAD—Apprentice	GURU. A tutor who awakens your senses, gives you tasks and proscriptive advice.	Many tasks. Varied environments and context to repeat tasks. High level of tutorial feedback to learn precision and criteria. Basic self-empowerment skills.
3 SHAKTI PAD—Practitioner	SAT GURU. A teacher who will confront the student and prescribe rules and patterns of learning. Counsels and advises.	Systems awareness training. Ranked choices from real life cases. Peer group feedback with people at different stages of expertise. Models knowledge in training technique.
4 SAHEJ PAD—Expert	SIRI GURU. A mentor who teaches by injunction and demonstration.	Self-empowerment training, situational problem solving, presentation of challenges that seem paradoxical without an expert hierarchy of values. Value awareness: refined ability with cognitive maps of self.
5 SAT PAD—Master	WAHE GURU. A model who is busy with the tasks and who uses intuition, creativity, and spontaneity to respond uniquely to each expert student.	Social contact with the model. Large task responsibility with feedback from top group. Models about Self, mastery and world. Self-mastery commitment.

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PART 6

Humanology & Yogic Lifestyle

Take just one understanding upon yourself: ***I am a human being****. The day you remember that you are a human, that day you will become Divine, and duality will leave you. You will be prosperous. Opportunity will come to you. You will not try to get anything—all things will come to you. And your spirit will be high. As a human being you are very vast. And that vastness can give you all the happiness you need. That is your fulfillment. That is your completion.*

—YOGI BHAJAN

"If in subtlety you become very refined, and in activity you become very subtle–very subtle–you are very near to your Soul. The Spirit and the Subtle body are very much related. There's a direct relationship between the Subtle body and the Soul body. They never leave each other. So, anything you do which is refined–refined art, refined acts, refined speech, anything which is not gross–will put you nearer to the Soul. That's rather a simple way of reaching your God-consciousness."

- YOGI BHAJAN

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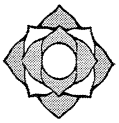
CHAPTER 19



Humanology

The basic purpose of life is just to be human and to deal with life as a human being. Don't become so bitter that somebody will throw you away or so sweet that someone can eat you up.

–YOGI BHAJAN

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What is Humanology?

HUMANOLOGY IS THE APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY OF THE HUMAN BEING from the perspective of Kundalini Yoga. *Hu* means "ray" or "the radiance;" *man* means "the mind." *Hu-man* means the radiance of mind. Humanology presents practical lifestyle guidelines for the full spectrum of human energies and capacities: physical, mental and spiritual, Kundalini Yoga brings awareness. When we apply that awareness to our lives, it can support us to live healthy, happy, holy lives, regardless of our circumstances.

We are not humans born for a spiritual experience, we are spiritual beings born for a human experience. When we live our lives with this awareness, we live with dignity and grace, royalty and purity in all situations.

The Cycles of Life

(The Three Rings of Success)

As humans we are designed with mechanisms which allow us to be engaged in the process of change, both consciously, through our cultivated and directed efforts, and unconsciously by the structure and flow of life and mind. We are a complex system of experiential bodies which interact for our vitality and awareness. For example, we can consciously control or change the patterns of the breath, thus creating change in our physical and mental states. Or, in reverse, our emotional state influences our breath in an unconscious manner.

We recognize that the mind releases about one thousand thoughts per blink of the eye. We are constantly processing these thoughts and the accompanying impulses and feelings. The thoughts which are not processed get stored or delayed in the subconscious. However, the subconscious buffer is limited, and it can overfill. Then the thoughts and feelings are put into the unconscious. Once in the unconscious, we lose control of the outcomes and the timing of the reactions to those thoughts. This phenomenon increases during times of rapid or intense change. Meditation techniques, especially White Tantric Yoga, are effective for keeping the subconscious clear and ready to thrive under change and stress.

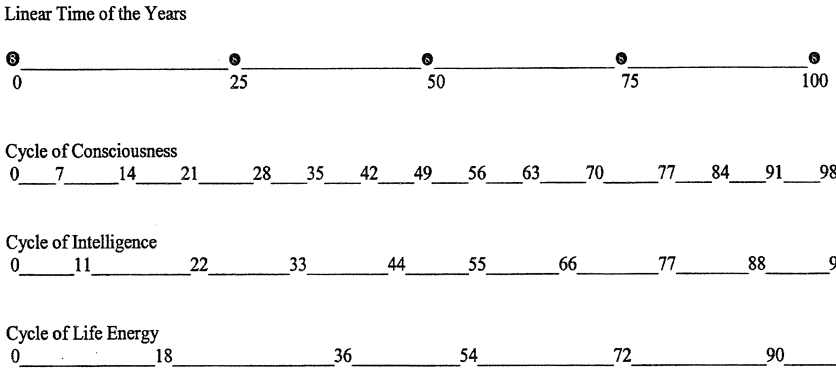
The secret to fulfilling ourselves as human beings with this complex system of experiential bodies is to master the balance, maintenance and development of the Cycles of Life. These are cycles of development which are opportunities for us to review our life, our intelligence, and our consciousness. These cycles guide the balance between our awareness, our applied intelligence, and our physical structure. The three cycles function like tides of energy that pace the development of these three aspects of our self. Their natural, optimal ratio is affected only by extreme environmental, psychological or health factors. In Humanology we are aware of these cycles and we welcome their challenge as a part of cultivating our maturity.

- The 18-year *Cycle of Life Energy* reviews the physical health and vitality plus the overall life quality.
- The 11-year *Cycle of Intelligence* reviews the applied intelligence; how our intelligence affects our actions.
- The 7-year *Cycle of Consciousness* reviews the basic level and style of consciousness. How do we understand things? What are our priorities?

We may also utilize the ratio of these cycles to one another to evaluate our balance. For instance, for every 18-year Cycle of Life, we should have evolved 2.57 cycles in consciousness.

Our entire life is a cycle, a destiny cycle, to express who we are as a human being.

THE CYCLES OF LIFE
(The Three Rings of Success)



Notice certain "clusters," or major phase transitions, where all the cycles converge for a few years. A phase transition means awareness, values, intelligence, means of action, energy levels and relationships all shift to form a new world. Change is continuous through life. These clusters are peaks of change and require special efforts to cross with integrity and balance. Each has developmental challenges and lessons that can be incorporated for healthy growth. The main clusters are:

Birth	33-35-36	63-66
11-14	42-44	72-77
18-21-22	54-55-56	Death

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Shakti & Bhakti

Shakti is the power of the universe. In this consciousness, we experience our power and strength, as manifested in the mantra: "God and me, me and God are one." *Bhakti* is devotion, surrender, humility and reverence to the Universe: "God, I am your devotee." These two polarities challenge us to be clear, direct, and powerful while remembering that we are the servants of the Universe.

Fate or Destiny–Karma or Dharma

Fate and destiny–karma and dharma–exist together. At every moment we can choose to act in our fate or in our destiny. In fate, we create karma–actions we must complete or resolve. Acting in destiny we are in flow with the universe, with our spirit, and with our basic nature. These actions are beyond karma. They are in dharma or living within our destiny cycle.

Yet, it is karma which causes us to incarnate. Rather than seeing karma as a punishment, one can view it as the gateway into the human experience through which we can shift into dharma. It is said that even the angels envy this opportunity for incarnation.

The Soul & the Subtle Body

Our soul, not the limited ego, chooses to be born. Our infinite soul, in harmony with the Universal Soul, chooses to be incarnated. The parents are chosen, plus the longitude, latitude, and time.

The Universal Mind records and holds the patterns of the psyche. The subtle body carries some of these patterns. When we incarnate, we come to Earth as a soul encapsulated by the subtle body. Our soul is our True Self. The subtle body capsule carries and surrounds the soul. If the soul did not have the enclosure of a subtle body, it would melt into the Universal Being. The subtle body not only encapsulates the soul, it also provides each individual with a unique manifestation. Each soul has been granted by the Universal Self a specific and unique purpose in the universal plan.

Our developed and undeveloped unique abilities or patterns, are carried on the subtle body. When the subtle body contains many limiting patterns, our soul cannot radiate brightly and direct the self. The soul returns again and again, remembering a little, forgetting, then remembering, until the destiny task is manifested. Each being has a very unique destiny to fulfill which no one else can complete.

Imagine a concert with 40 musicians. Each musician plays specific music, with unique melodies and with a unique tempo. Together all musicians create a beautiful symphony, containing harmony, rhythm, life and feeling. It is similar to our earthly "concert." Each person is playing an instrument and is destined to play a specific melody with a unique tempo. We reincarnate again and again until we "tune in" and create harmony in the "concert." And the concert is love and service.

Guilt vs. Responsibility

The way that we classify an action determines the success of how the action is processed. We are soul. We are never separated from the Universal Being or God because we come from the same essence: "God and me, me and God are one." There is no separation, even though we may "feel" that we are separated.

Separation begins when we *forget* that our true identity is God. Guilt or sin is based on the thought that we are separated from God. We believe that we are separated, and then act against harmony. We blame our self and also God for our own actions. Feelings of guilt close us down and drive us deeper into dark patterns, making it very difficult to discover the reality of a situation.

We are always soul. When we begin to have feelings of guilt, we have forgotten that we are soul. Guilt contracts us and makes it impossible for us to respond with our true heart and essence. Guilt originates from a self-image of being "bad" and separate from God.

True responsibility (response-ability), the recognition of our interdependence, is the opposite of guilt. This is real caring, not out of fear, but out of love and interdependence. Fear vs. Love. It is from this perspective that we act in integrity.

Yogi Bhajan on Righteous Living

Though there can be many kinds of trips, there is only one way to reach higher consciousness: the way of righteous living. Every other way will be hanky-panky. But the moment you decide, "Come what may, I am going to give myself to the way of righteousness within me," you will be surprised to see that everything else in this whole world will fall into place for you. Because when the psyche, the nucleus of the psyche, creates the magnetic field of the opposite energy in relevance to all relationship of the universal energy, then the entire magnetic field rotates in that rhythmic self.

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The Power of the Mother

The mother is the vessel through which one enters planet Earth. In the yogic tradition, the woman is called *Adi Shakti* which is the primal energy or force. Each woman carries this blessing, and with this blessing comes the very important responsibility of being a mother. She has the power to conceive and create through the power of her surrender, her love, her clarity and purity, whether it be creating children of her body, ideas, or environments.

THE 120TH DAY

From the yogic point of view, a subtle connection between the cells of the embryo and the soul to be incarnated occurs at conception. However, even though the soul does not actually inhabit the body until 120 days after conception, the soul can influence and communicate with the mother. Often the woman will have a vision of the child or feel a drastic pull to change her lifestyle. These experiences are triggered by hormonal changes which not only affect the woman's metabolism but also her intuition and mind. She may encounter a range of new experiences, such as sensitivity, awareness, or emotional turbulence. During pregnancy, the doors of the subconscious mind become more open, and the mother-to-be experiences new feelings and thoughts.

The soul of the child also challenges the mother and plays an active part in her changes before the 120th day of pregnancy. During this time the soul has not entered the fetus, and it is not influenced by the electromagnetic field of the Earth or by the mental state of the mother-to-be. It is still a "free-agent".

MOTHER AND CHILD AFTER THE 120th DAY

From the 120th day of pregancy until the navel cord is cut, the experiences of the women become the foundation of the subconscious mind of the child. When a woman changes her mind patterns and habits, this change is automatically passed onto the child. The child does not have to make a conscious decision to change the pattern: the energies are adjusted by the mother. Actually this specific karmic imprint on the child's subtle body is erased.

So, the mother and the child have an interlocked relationship.
1) The soul decides to incarnate through a certain woman;
2) The mother accepts or rejects responsibility to bear the child.

In the yogic tradition, the family and community have a celebration on the 120th day of pregnancy. The woman receives presents, good wishes, and support from her family, friends, and community. Her loved ones commit themselves to protect and support her surroundings with uplifting and meditative energies in order that she may nurture the child growing in her. In this way, she can relax and feel secure.

THE EFFECT OF MEDITATION ON PREGNANCY

It is recommended that a woman meditates often and lives in uplifting environments when she is pregnant. Meditation will assist her to create harmony within her changing self and her environments. It is also helpful that she is often in the company of inspiring women, to share, to receive support and to meditate with them. When she meditates before the 120th day and creates harmony within herself, it is even possible that a more developed soul can be incarnated. And when she meditates after the 120th day, she affects the karmic state of the child.

The child is also influenced when the conception occurs in a higher state of consciousness. For a couple who has decided to have a child, it is recommended that they maintain a meditation practice together, particularly before intercourse. A special uplifting and loving feeling is created, merging their energy fields and preparing them for a conscious conception.

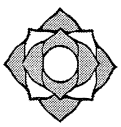
BIRTH

Yogic technology says that at birth we are allocated a certain amount of *prana*. This is regulated by our Pranic Body.

AFTER BIRTH

When the umbilical cord is cut, the physical and auric separation between the mother and the child begins. It will take the child and mother about three years to rebuild independent auras.

Yogi Bhajan has focused many of the teachings into the development of the grace of woman, because it is through the advancement and spiritual harmony of woman that the human race can be uplifted.



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Living this Incarnation as a Man or as a Woman

The soul itself is without gender. We incarnate between earth and the ethers for particular experiences. Sometimes we incarnate as a man and sometimes as a woman, in order to learn specific lessons. Each incarnation is comprised of different experiences that allow us to make decisions to ultimately fulfill our destiny. It is said that the human incarnation is envied even by angels, because of the unique opportunity to make a conscious choice to be free from of the cycle of birth and death.

THE ACID BATH

When the child in the mother's womb is a boy, a chemical is secreted which is said to cause the amniotic fluid to become acid. This diminishes the full functioning of the boy's right brain hemisphere. This acidity, called acid bath, causes males to be more left brain oriented. If it is a girl, the acid bath does not occur. It is said that in ancient times, it was necessary for the function of the male's right hemisphere of the brain to be diminished. This allowed men to venture into unknown territories, endure horrible fighting with other tribes or with Nature, protect their families, and be the protective psyche for their wives. Today the male is challenged to use and create harmony between both hemispheres of his brain and expand his reality.

THE BIRTH TRAUMA FOR A MALE

When the umbilical cord is cut, the aura of the mother and the child begin to separate. The male child experiences the polarity between himself, as male, and his mother, as female. The first experience of this polarity is separation. After the feeling of separation comes longing.

A very young male may idolize his mother. When he becomes a little older, his mother says to him: "You are my son; I am not your wife. This is my husband. You are the son." He must confront and resolve that he has been separated from his mother. He must resolve that he is an identity within his own self and learn how to function in that relationship.

THE BOY'S IMAGE OF THE IDEAL WOMAN

During the challenge of resolving his identity, the boy creates an image of his ideal woman. This ideal woman is either a mirror of his mother or the exact opposite. For example, if his mother is a business woman and always traveling, he might create an ideal woman who is very domestic.

It can be difficult for the young male if his mother is not aware of his process, or if there is no father in the family, or if his father has a poor self-image. In that case, the boy does not have a defined and stable role-model. When the male image is poor, the young boy will need to create this image on his own, from his fantasy, from movies or books, or from images of a variety of males in his community. This causes a fragmented self-image based in fantasy.

THE BIRTH OF A GIRL

When a girl is born and the umbilical cord has been cut, the female child experiences less polarity and separation from her mother than does a male child. Both the mother and the female child have heart arclines which bring compassion and connection. The male nature requires the experience of challenge just as much as the feminine nature needs connection.

The connection between mother and female child is weaker if the mother has difficulties with her self-esteem or does not accept the female child. This programming is rooted in the idea predominant in many cultures that a woman must birth a boy in order to satisfy her husband or for her own security in the future. When a woman gives birth to a female child and rejects

HOW TO DIMINISH THE EFFECT OF THE ACID BATH

There are three ways that a male's brain can be balanced:

1) *During pregnancy*

The mother can do the Adi Shakti Meditation for 11 minutes daily during pregnancy. *(See Meditation chapter.)* She can practice this meditation whether the child is a boy or a girl. When the child is a boy, it will reduce the diminishing effect of the acid bath on the boy's right hemisphere of the brain. When the child is a girl, meditation assists to develop her awareness.

2) *Child raising*

During the boy's early years, the parents and community can inspire and guide him to dharmic living, and encourage his sensitivity, compassion and values. His mother can educate him about the female and the subtleties of life. His father can educate him about being a male, and about his interaction with the female and the family. And he can learn from both his parents how the two energies of female and male can harmonize with each other. Activities such as art and music are helpful.

3) *Decision of the male himself*

A male can apply himself to a spiritual path. Kundalini Yoga has a large collection of meditations which create harmony between the two hemispheres of the brain.

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her, this female child will be confronted with a multitude of problems concerning her self-esteem.

At birth the female child has ovaries and ovum. They are not mature at this time, however, each ovum which she will ovulate is present, carrying genetic information. The female child in the depths of herself has the feeling of being a creative being.

ESTABLISHING IDENTITY

From the yogic point of view, the brain, the body functions, the subconscious mind, and the identity of a male child and a female child are not the same at birth. These differences are not to be judged as good or bad. These differences are to be recognized and accepted, that each child needs his or her own developmental support.

It is easier for a male or female child to establish their own identity: 1) when the mother is stable in her identity as woman and mother, 2) when the father is stable in his identity as man and father, 3) when the parents are stable in their relationship and are secure within their own community.

WAYS TO FULFILL DESTINY FOR A MAN AND FOR A WOMAN

A male has one option to liberate himself from his fate and fulfill his destiny:

- Become one with the universal consciousness.

A woman has four options to liberate herself from her fate and fulfill her destiny:

- Become one with the universal consciousness.
- Give birth to a saint, hero or giver.
- Serve her husband.
- Serve her spiritual teacher.

The three additional options, which a man does not have, all focus on serving. A woman can serve without her consciousness being totally connected with the universal consciousness, because of her nurturing mother nature. A man has worked hard to establish his identity when he was a male child. Therefore, it is more challenging for him to serve and relinquish his developed identity. However, it is very essential for a man to also develop the ability to serve.

THE ARCLINE AND THE AURA OF A WOMAN

A woman has two arc lines:
1) one located over her hair line, from one ear to the other ear,
2) one located across her chest, from one breast to the other. The aura of a woman is in general 16 times more radiant than the aura of a man.

PRIMAL NATURE OF MALE AND FEMALE

We all have a basic or elementary nature on which we impose our personality and other influences. To understand our core, ponder the sexual analogy of the male nature being like the sperm and the female like the ovum. The differences are instructive.

THE SPERM-NATURE OF A MALE

A sperm does not move in a straight line. It zig-zags. This zig-zag nature limits the male from being nailed down by time and space. The sperm knows the target but approaches it in an indirect way. When a man speaks, usually he begins by talking around the subject, rarely beginning with the real subject at hand.

For instance, when a woman asks her husband what time he will return, he will say: "After work". She wants to know what time he will be home. He will answer, "About five or five-thirty." Then she'll want to know exactly what time, 5.00 or 5.30. It is very difficult for a man to commit to time because it limits his possible defensive moves, which seems to weaken his power to direct any challenge and achieve victory. To the woman, defining time is just a plan, a communication, and it satisfies her need for security.

FROM A BOY TO A MAN

In former times the transformation of a boy to manhood was a conscious process which was guided by the elderly wise men of the community. The male was not suddenly a man when he turned 21 or when he slept with a woman. Often the transformation process included lifestyle and value education, individual counseling, special ceremonies and even physically challenging events.

The transition to manhood is not so well defined today. One day the male is classified as a boy and the next day he is expected to be a man. Even when the boy becomes a man, a part of him always remains a boy. The boy is under the facade of the man, and this cannot be changed. Actually the boy part is necessary to balance the "one-pointed" power of the man. The real question is, "What is the base identity of the man?"

Men define themselves through their egos. Women find it difficult to accept or understand that men define themselves in this way. Actually it is the challenge of the male incarnation to deal directly with the ego. It is important for a man's ego that he calls himself a man. Even when a man feels that he is not being a "real" man, he will at least pretend that he is a man. The male's quest for identity and the struggle to establish his ego has its root at birth.

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MALE CONTROL

A boy wants to control or be controlled. An immature boy will either want to show his power or want to be directed how to do everything. When the man is mature, he does not look for control over other people, and he does not want to be controlled by others. As a man, he accepts responsibility and can carry it well.

MALE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

During his developmental stage, a boy needs acknowledgment from others. He wants to be praised. A boy always compares himself with others and he blames others, when something goes wrong. He uses emotions to manipulate and get what he wants. He also thinks that everything will just be given to him with no effort because he exists.

A mature man acknowledges himself. Acknowledgment from others can be helpful, though it is not a pressing need. A man knows what he knows and does what he has to do. When someone praises him, that is wonderful. When someone criticizes him, he evaluates his position. A man accepts responsibility for his actions as well as his mistakes.

HANDLING FEMALE-MALE DIFFERENCES

Study the nature of the male and female without judgment. Differences exist; they make life interesting and challenging. The male and female psyche each function in a very unique way which causes each to perceive feelings, experiences, words, and even life very differently.

When the male and the female do not recognize each other's unique gifts and challenges, misunderstandings and difficulties will occur. Together, we can balance our energies and assist each other to create a wholeness of harmony in our homes, community, and the world.

THE POLARITY OF THE FEMALE

A female swings between two polarities: the woman and the mother. (Let's call it the nurturer.) When she is in the polarity of the woman, she is very direct, alert, and calculating. The shadow side of this can manifest as her being vindictive, without pity, and as sharp as a knife. In the polarity of the mother, she will forgive everything, she will serve and give endlessly. Even if a female is without children, she holds the mother aspect within her.

When a female operates only from her woman aspect with minimum input from her mother energies, her reproductive organs are pressured. In extreme situations, she can develop cysts on her ovaries.

On the other hand, if a female is totally focused on nurturing others and denies her own needs, her reproductive organs can be negatively effected, and it can stress her glandular and nervous systems. It is essential that the female consciously uses both polarities within herself, and also creates harmony between both.

During her life stages, she will call upon the strengths of these two polarities to help balance herself and her life. Sometimes the female swings more to the mother side, sometimes more to the woman side. But in the end, she decides from where to function depending on her situation, her intuition, and her negative, positive and neutral mind.

THE POLARITY OF THE MALE

A male is also confronted with two polarities: man and father. When he is in the polarity of the man, he is the "seeder" with no commitments. Give him his backpack, no responsibilities, and he is happy. The other polarity of the father wants a comfortable home, where he's loved, and life is very cozy.

A male also needs to find a harmony between these two polarities. Perhaps it may mean that the man participates in a sports activity once a week with his friends. Or perhaps he could have a room for himself where he can enjoy his hobbies and create his own environment.

The father aspect wants to build and enjoy a comfortable home with the nurturing aspects of warm meals, sweet communication, and enduring fun. He dreams of this luxury.

It is not always easy for men to speak about these two polarities within themselves. When a woman acknowledges and respects both his male and father needs, he is very grateful.

A FEMALE HAS SIX "TRACKS"

The female primal nature of the egg gives her a very flowing attitude. However, she also is challenged by the fact that her mind has six tracks. Nature has given her this gift so that she would be able to serve, nurture and care for her children, husband and home. This ability can backfire on her: she cannot turn off her nurturing nature.

This aspect of a six-track mind has pros and cons. On the pro side, she can handle many things at once: talk on the phone,

BALANCING THE FEMALE POLARITY IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Be a mother and remain a woman. A woman will feel more balanced, be happier and have more energy if she arranges to take time for herself. Adequate exercise balanced with nurturing, relaxing activities can work wonders.

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cook pasta, chop vegetables for a sauce, feed the baby, watch another child do his homework, plus direct another child to set the table. What a production! On the con side, this over extension can heavily tax her nervous system and eventually force her to close down her sensitivity.

A MALE HAS ONE TRACK

Even though the male's primal nature is zig-zag, his mind uniquely has only one "track." He enjoys remaining on that one track. It is usually not difficult for him to concentrate on one thing. The aspect of the one track also has pros and cons. On the pro side, he can tune everything out and concentrate very deeply on the project at hand. This can be very useful in his work or profession and especially for his spiritual practices.

The cons emerge when it is difficult for him to come out of "his world" and change gears to interact with the outer world.

A WOMAN THINKS IN IDEAS, A MAN THINKS IN PROBLEMS

Because a woman can think on many tracks, she is more capable of handling many ideas and thoughts at once. She can also integrate feelings, fantasies and elaborations. Some of her ideas are serious and others are fantasies. The man tends to select one thought after zigging and zagging, then leap into an action.

Imagine a couple sitting together in the living room. The woman might say: "We should paint the living room this summer." The woman is sorting her priorities verbally. She perceives the action as an idea. The man, on the other hand, would begin to calculate how to achieve the project, how to manifest the idea into a reality. For example: What weekend am I free? Where can I borrow a ladder? What color should we paint it? Could my brother help me? etc. The woman is communicating ideas or suggestions. The man perceives the idea as a "problem to be solved."

MISUNDERSTANDING

Conflicts, which are caused by misunderstanding, can be eliminated by defining and clearly expressing one's own framing, understanding the needs of the other person, and finally creating together the game-rules for discussion.

For idea generating and planning, define the level of the discussion: 1) necessary and essential, 2) review, slight possibility of action, 3) is only for an enjoyable fantasy, not for action.

WOMAN S BIGGEST CHALLENGE

A woman is automatically intuitive when she is relaxed. When she is centered within her own self, she is relaxed. When she is fragmented from the pressures of her own multi-tracked mind or the outer world, she is not. Women can intuitively tune into the absolute Truth. However, when she does not consciously communicate at the proper time, with accurate words, in appropriate tone, the recipient *cannot* receive the communication.

WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT from a yogic point of view about homosexual partnerships, Yogi Bhajan said, "These tendencies are controlled by the personal life of a human. In God's kingdom, all who meditate on the Creator as creatures, can reach God. Those who do not, remain wandering."

—YOGI BHAJAN 1-30-2003

Relationships

FALLING IN LOVE & THE PRANIC EXCHANGE

A man and a woman meet each other and the atmosphere between them is very pleasant. They feel comfortable with each other. When a person is very aware, he or she will be able to evaluate the *prana* and "scent" for caliber, values, virtues and strength. This awareness between male and female is called pranic exchange.

The yogis advise that this pranic exchange between the male and the female is not a small event. This pranic exchange creates an imprint in the psyche of each person. The imprint in the female can last years or an entire life; it can also act as a subconscious filter for future relationships. The imprint is less robust for the male. It usually lasts one cycle of the moon.

The process of the pranic exchange is regulated by the female. The first stage is when passion is triggered by the female projection into the pituitary of the male. The second stage happens when the "male scent" is stimulated. The third stage is when the scent is evaluated by the female.

Full reaction for the two of them depends on the chakra level projection of the female, not the male. As this exchange of pranic energy occurs, it stimulates a "rush" or a chemical reaction in the individuals which varies depending on the chakras which are activated.

The feeling of "being in love" is fulfilling and enticing. However, people can be addicted to feeling this experience. They search for one relationship after another, to get the rush of "being in love." They never move into the more mature stages of love.

It is vital that a female be aware of her power and use it with responsibility and grace. If she acts from her insecurity, she creates disrespectful situations for herself and others.

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BLINDNESS OF LOVE

It takes a person of high caliber to be able to evaluate the "beloved" while one is 'in love." Love does make us blind, which has its pros and cons. The pros allow us to accept our beloved for what he or she is. The cons prevent us from being realistic about the character, the mental, financial and spiritual limitations. For generations, individuals would request the evaluation of family, friends and community before continuing into a binding relationship.

When we truly accept someone, we honestly know their individual habits, patterns, and personality. However, we overlook their limits. We decide to see only the positive attributes of our beloved.

COMMITMENT

The real goal of a relationship is to deepen this love. With commitment, it evolves into a deeper love, built on a life together and living for each other. Love + Passion + Intimacy is based on a deep spiritual connection, understanding, and acceptance. This love grows with conscious effort by both partners.

There is a clear distinction between passion, intimacy and love. They are independent modes of the relationship.

Love + Intimacy = companion, true friends
Love + Passion = romance, fantasy, idealization
Passion + Intimacy = "being in love"
Love + Passion + Intimacy = ecstasy of merger

A MAN LOVES A WOMAN BECAUSE SHE INSPIRES HIM

A man who really loves his wife wants her to develop herself. When a man doesn't want his wife to develop her capacities, he only wants her to be there for him. Sometimes it is difficult for him to believe that a woman has low energy or even has self-focused needs since Mother is the unlimited provider.

A man does not really love a woman because of sex. He does not love her because she is a good cook. And he does not love her because she is a good mother. He loves her because she can take him out of the mundane. He wants her to put him into a state of "being" or in a trance that can remove the conflict of his brain and bring him to relaxation.

He loves her because she can take him to the experience of his expanded infinite self. This is the main foundation for a long-term love. A man knows that he is limited, and he feels attracted to a woman who can give him what he is missing, or help him to develop different aspects of himself. He feels attracted to a woman because she can take him to a different level and experience, remove the conflict of his brain, give him relaxation.

When a man really loves his wife, he will want her to develop herself and express her infinity, because then she can inspire him to realms beyond his own dreams.

EXPECTATIONS IN A RELATIONSHIP

A great cosmic irony: the woman wants her husband to give her security. The man wants his wife to give him support. The woman feels that she can only give her husband support if he gives her security. And the man is determined that he can only give his wife security if she gives him support. Both are waiting for the other one to begin the process.

These programs have been ingrained in the subconscious mind of the male and female. However, in reality no man actually can give a woman total security. In her mind, there is no man who can actually fulfill all of her projections. A woman has to find her security within her own self and soul.

And to complete this irony: There is no woman who can praise and support a man enough to completely heal his wounds plus manifest his "ideal woman." There is no woman who can give a man as much support as he would like. He, too, has to find his security within his own self and soul.

ONE SOUL IN TWO BODIES

When a man and a woman are truly merged in a relationship, a new element emerges. The goal is to become two bodies and one soul.

The man and the woman play different roles in the relationship. The woman plays the role of the subconscious, the constant spirit in the relationship. She holds the spirituality and depth. She carries the relationship through the storms and battles of time and space. When her conscious and subconscious minds are stable, a stability for the couple is created. The woman manifests the "We are." When a woman feels: "We are positive, happy and in harmony", then the relationship feels good. But as soon as she feels that something is wrong, nothing is right anymore.

The man, on the other hand, manifests the projection: "Where are we going?" He manifests the movement, protection and the direction of the relationship and the family.

A WOMAN REGULATES THE RELATIONSHIP

A man never starts a relationship or ends it of his own accord. Both are regulated by the woman. Studies have shown that women initiate contact with men over 85 per cent of the time by non-verbal or verbal cues. The woman regulates the entire relationship. On the other hand, even her quiet doubting of the relationship can create unrest.

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THE MAN AS THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FIELD OF THE FAMILY

A mother protects her child, and the mother also needs protection. Protection is not only physical but also subtle. The man is called "the electromagnetic field of the family" in yogic teachings. When his electromagnetic field is strong, the woman will feel protected, and the child will feel secure.

TALKING ABOUT NEEDS

It is very important to talk about our needs in a relationship. The need of the female is to be clear and confident plus nurtured and nurturing. The need of the male is to be casual and challenged plus comfortable and cozy.

There are three basic frequencies of relationships: 1) live against each other, 2) live with each other, 3) live for each other. Each couple decides how they will relate.

UNSPOKEN EXPECTATIONS

Often discontentment arises out of unspoken expectations which could be easily accommodated. An example:

A man comes home from work totally exhausted. At his parent's house, when he said "I'm exhausted! What a day!" he would be nurtured. Someone would bring him a cup of tea, talk to him, and console him. His programming expects nurturing from his wife in a similar way.

However, his wife had a totally different experience in her parent's home. When her father came home tense and tired, everyone would disappear because the father would raise his voice aggressively. Now in order to stay out of her husband's way and maintain her own dignity, the wife would retire to another part of the house, as her mother did.

Alone in the bedroom the husband feels that nobody cares or loves him. Nobody gives him a hug or offers him a cup of tea. He cannot understand why no one notices that he is in the bedroom alone! He cannot even relax because he knows the rest of the family is in the other part of the house having fun. Neither partner planned to confuse or hurt the other but each brought different life patterns to the relationship.

Often misunderstandings and conflicts occur when we do not express ourselves. How is our partner able to understand and read our minds? Do not wait until there is a whole mountain of misunderstandings and then explode about twenty different things. Our partner may feel threatened, and start defending his or herself. Most likely a fight will begin. Perhaps our partner was not intentionally inconsiderate.

BEING AWARE OF OUR OWN NEEDS

It is essential to be clear about our own needs. Do not wait for the other person to know what to do. Try asking, "What do I need?" When we ourselves know what we need, it is easier to communicate it. When we do not know what we need or how to communicate it, how can the other person know our need?

Communicate clearly and exactly, "Could you please massage my feet or shoulders?" or "Could you please bring me a cup of tea?" The statement, "You never do anything for me when I'm feeling tense," will not inspire anyone to help. It is not a direct request, it is an accusation. Even when we say, "I need your support," it is not clear what that means. When and what kind of support is needed? When we tell someone that we need support, they will probably answer: "You have my support." Fights commonly begin at this point.

MARRIAGE

Every marriage has three: me, we, *thee*. The third partner is *thee* that is found in each person and to which each person is elevated. So when there is a tie vote, the *thee* is the principle resolution.

In a spiritual wedding, one receives support on the physical, mental and spiritual realms from one's community. There can be hard times ahead, and it is wonderful to have support and inspiration from others. It is a challenge to go through life's demands alone. Yogi Bhajan says that marriage is the hardest yoga of all, because you really have to relax, keep up, let go and breathe!

NEUTRAL SPACE IN A RELATIONSHIP

Conflict in a relationship can be an opportunity for growth if both people are open and willing to communicate honestly and with respect. We can quarrel about many things, but the sacred space needs to be held and respected. The *we* is the essential sacred element and is the starting place or origin of any relationship. Occasionally the *we* needs to be redefined. The *we* needs to be always held sacred and not abused or ignored.

In the sacred space we would say: "*We* are having a very rough time in our relationship, however, there are still certain things *we* will never say to each other." Words can hurt, and an unkind word can be sharper than a knife.

The keys to keeping the sacred space open are to: 1) remember the larger picture or destiny; 2) do not assume anything, no matter how things appear. For example, he acts unkindly. You say, "I know that you are always kind in efforts and intention. Help me understand what you were feeling or thinking because it did

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not feel kind to me." In Humanology one of the reality bridges we use is: "The Infinite is known to you." So no matter how well I may know someone, there is an unknown to be seen and respected.

THE MOON POINTS

The moon is the "emotional flow of energy, hormones and imagination." The energy of the moon is interactive within the micro- and macro-cosmos, our body and universe. We recognize how lunar cycles interact with Mother Earth: ocean tides, plant and hair growth, animal rhythms, and a woman's hormonal cycle. Lunar energies also influence our emotional equilibrium. Moon points are physical areas located on the human body, sensitive to lunar energies.

A male has one moon point: at the chin. Hair grows on his moon point, absorbs solar energy, thus neutralizing the lunar effect. By nature, a male is primarily influenced by the solar energy.

A woman has eleven moon points which affect her emotional state. (*Kirtan Kriya* done while lying on the stomach, can balance these moon points.)

MEDITATIONS FOR WOMEN

Some important 40 to 90 day meditations for women are:
Grace of God Meditation
Meditation on the Divine Mother, Adi Shakti
Kirtan Kriya (Sa Ta Na Ma)
(See the Meditation section.)

MALE RELATIONSHIPS WITH WOMEN

Besides building his own identity, another challenge to men is the establishment of relationships with women. A male needs to confront his vision of the "perfect woman" which he formed during his childhood, and he needs to create a realistic relationship with the polarity of the female.

A man exercises his ability to handle conflicts in the world through his capacity to deal with conflicts in his relationships. When a male says: "I take this woman. I make this promise to take on the marriage responsibilities and commitments," he gives his word and organizes his activities to fulfill his promise. This commitment matures a man and helps him to grow from a boy to a man.

The difference between a boy and a man is that a boy is dependent on his relationship to others; identity comes from the outside. The man is independent which means, "I know who I am, I define myself in my relationship to the universe and to God."

MALE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Many men have had few positive male role models. It is not easy for them to speak with other men about their own selves, their challenges and their growth. However, it is essential that men develop honest male relationships where they can speak about themselves and express doubts, dreams, and sensitivity.

Yogi Bhajan recommends that this is a man's affair. He says it is dangerous for a man to discuss these "deep soul-searching, insecure" topics with women, especially his own woman. When a man enters into this kind of discussion with his woman, she will either move into the role of the mother, or it will make her insecure. A woman is willing to comfort her man, take him into her arms in a motherly way, *occasionally*. It has to remain an exception. It is not dishonest. It is a conscious protection of one's territory.

THE SPIRITUAL MAN

A man who desires to develop his own potential, works on his arcline. The arcline reflects the interaction of the subtle body and the pranic body, hence the alignment of the life force and the destiny. When the arcline is strong, a man experiences that his identity is in harmony with the universe. He is highly intuitive and he attracts opportunities which he can successfully develop. He can absorb the challenges of daily life and the intense pressures of his work or profession while maintaining his higher consciousness.

When the arc line is weak, a male identifies that his ego is his identity. Often he is defensive, controlling and unsure of himself.

The arc line is his universal defense or security system. Because the arcline has a direct connection with the positive, negative, and neutral minds, all meditation which expands the radiance of the arcline should be practiced. Meditations and yoga positions which activate the pituitary, balance the hemispheres of the brain or strengthen the nervous system are also beneficial. All *Wahe Guru* meditations will strengthen the arcline and the pituitary relationship. Archer Pose, which builds the nervous system, improves endurance and projection, is also recommended for the arcline.

THE BASE OF A SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

Yogi Bhajan teaches, "Sex is everything. Sex is nothing." When a couple wants to have a good sexual relationship, a good day-to-day relationship with effective, clear communication is essential. The heart-to-heart basics cannot be missing. Sex cannot solve problems or create trust or replace open communication. Sex does not just happen in bed. It starts in the day-to-day

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life: how we are, how we speak, how we hear, and how we live for each other. Sex is the greatest treat which we can share.

A woman has to trust and feel that the relationship is secure in order to thoroughly relax. In her subconscious are the questions: "Will this man stay with me? Will he support the family if I get pregnant?" She needs even more trust, if she already has a child and has experienced pregnancy and birth. A woman must be sure that this man is there for her and her family.

She also tests him to find out if he will be able to maintain the male one-pointedness when she swings into her fluctuating female moon-energy.

Kundalini Yoga, a yoga discipline of the householder, supports the transformation of sexual energy so the body may be adequately regenerated. When sexual energy is abused, the nervous system is weakened, and the body's aging process is accelerated.

TUNING IN FOR 72 HOURS

Because a woman functions on a multitude of tracks, she may find it difficult to relax during sex. She may have to turn off her "nurturing-mother program" before she can feel the subtleties of sensuality. As the sperm swims around the ovum eight times before penetrating, it is a male's innate nature "to court" when he wants to engage in a relationship with a woman. Yogis say that a woman needs 72 hours to tune into sex. Some women might not need that long, but a man should realize that his woman might need these 72 hours to be courted.

The "mind" is the biggest sexual organ. It stimulates the body by using fantasy, projection, and remembrance. A woman needs to be tuned into her sensitive feelings before intercourse so that she can be fully present with her whole being and be open to her man when she is making love. She needs time to change her mental and emotional gears.

In this courting phase, a man needs to focus more energy into the relationship. He could take her out to dinner or take care of the baby while offering her the chance to take a relaxing bath. Share more quality time together: go for walks, listen to music together, practice Venus Kriyas, and just take the time to talk from the heart. That does not mean that he should make a fuss over her. He can support her so that she can relax and allow her sexual energies to move her consciousness.

A conscious man knows that a relaxed woman is more creative, happier, and more receptive. Occasionally she is in conflict. A clever man will be able to recognize these conflicts in a woman.

THE AURIC IMPRINT

The positive aspect of the auric imprint is that it helps to strengthen the energetic bond between the couple. The female carries the subtle essence of the male her whole life. Nature arranged this so that when she becomes pregnant and her partner is absent, the woman would have a feeling of him, a sensation of his energy to share with the child. She carries his memory as an imprint on the arcline in her aura.

There is a disadvantage to this situation. When a woman has slept with many men, her aura has been imprinted by different energies. She carries this information with her. Try to look at this situation without a value judgment of good or bad. It does influence a woman. These imprints can impact her aura which in turn can inhibit her search to connect with her own identity. These imprints disturb her projection as an individual.

To weaken the influence of the male's auric imprint, a woman can practice certain meditations such as Kirtan Kriya consistently for 90 days, one hour a day, and Sodarshan Chakra Kriya. *(See Meditation section.)*

The interaction of the auras and the energy imprint are very influential. Therefore, it is not recommended to continuously change sexual partners. Sexual activity is recommended for people who have made a solid commitment to each other, and are willing and capable of carrying any possible consequences of their sexual exchange. In the yogic lifestyle, it it is recommended that marriage be a requirement before the sexual relationship.

DIVORCE

Many marriages are dissolved when partners are between the ages of 36 and 45. Marriage seems a bore, and the partners want to look to new values or new directions. Yogi Bhajan teaches that actually no one looks to new values, and there is no such thing as boredom. There is something else which is confronting the individuals. This is their own subconscious minds.

Marriage is an institution which cannot get boring, because it is a continuous hassle against Time and Space. Now the relationship needs more sacrifice, more cohesiveness and more understanding. This period of life is known as the renewal of values. And, if in renewing values we establish different values but do not discard our basic object–that we are married to keep things going–then divorce will hardly be possible.

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Death

JIWAN MUKT

The goal is to be liberated while alive and not wait until death. This is the path of *jiwan mukt*. *Jiwan* means life. *Mukt* means liberated.

Jiwan mukt is a way of living. One is not waiting for death or calling death to liberate oneself. One is also *not* doing specific things to achieve specific points to be tallied after death. Rather, one is living with the deep-seated understanding of the Reality of life and death, the soul, and one's purpose.

DEATH

The Earth is like a hotel; it is not our true home. We are here for a visit. When we die, we take two of our ten bodies with us, the soul and the subtle body. At the time of death, the first thing that leaves is the Pranic Body.

THE MENTAL BODY AT DEATH

After the pranic body collapses, we have three seconds to review our life-video with our Negative Mind, Positive Mind, and Neutral Mind. In these three seconds you are confronted with three challenges:

1. Why did you come to Earth, and why did you have this particular life?
2. What did you do here? You watch your entire life.
3. Did you fulfill your purpose–why you came to Earth? You decide or judge your own self.

During those three seconds, the life-video is reviewed by your own mind. It is not possible to avoid the answers, be clever or lie. You can only answer with the truth when you judge your own life.

PRAN SUTRA

It is vital when we are confronted in those three seconds, that our mind connects with the majesty of the Undying Self, and the Reality of existence. Yogi Bhajan says this can be done with a *pran sutra*, a mantra that gives us this experience. When we can keep such a mantra in the mind during these three seconds, the connection with the Neutral Mind will be constant, and we will not react. We will not condemn ourselves, even when we "experience" the weaknesses or errors of our own life.

Yogi Bhajan says that every individual has an individual *pran sutra*. Yet certain mantras can be "master keys." One such mantra is:

Naanak too(n) lehnaa too(n) hai, gur amar too(n) veechaariaa
Dhan dhan ram das gur, jin sirriaa tinai savaariaa

(from the Sawayas in praise of Guru Ram Das, Siri Guru Granth Sahib, p.968)

You are Nanak, Guru Angad, and Guru Amar Das.
Honored and praised is Ram Das the Guru.
The One who created you, has embellished and adorned you!

CROSSING THE ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELD

After these three seconds the soul enters into the subtle body. The subtle body and the soul leave as a unit, experiencing a travel through a spiral. This usually happens 3 to 4 days after death.

After one moves through the spiral, one is confronted with the test of crossing the electro-magnetic field of the Earth during the next 13 to 17 days. There are two choices: 1) stay in the electromagnetic field of the Earth, 2) cross over the electromagnetic field of the Earth and enter the blue ethers. Many souls are not able to cross because they are afraid to leave, or they are very attached to the Earth.

THE MANTRA AKAL

Yogi Bhajan instructs that chanting *Akal* for 3-17 days for the soul who has physically died assists them to cross over the electromagnetic field. Chant *Akal* several times. Eleven minutes is recommended. Optimum is at least 5 people chanting *Akal* for 31 minutes a day for 17 days starting at the day of death. *Akal* means "that which never dies." With this mantra, we encourage the soul, "You did not die. Continue and go on. I let you go." This can encourage the soul to go to it's True Home and to the next lesson.

BLUE ETHERS

The yogis say that there are five blue ethers. The first blue ether is the first stage that we experience after we cross over the electromagnetic field of planet Earth. Here we are usually accompanied by a guide. In this dimension, all the information of the universe is kept, including the life histories of all beings. It is called the Akashic Records or Cosmic Library. When we pass through the first blue ether, we leave our subtle body with the Akashic Records. The subtle body, the capsule which carries our experiences, will be downloaded onto our "cosmic" file.

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Exactly what lessons we will receive in the second and third ethers are decided by what happened during the three-second test of the mind. In the second blue ether we learn to perceive harmony of the Self. We receive lessons, usually from other more evolved beings.

In the third blue ether we learn how to maintain the lessons throughout the test of Time and Space. We have learned the lesson in the second blue ether and now we need to be constant in its practice and perhaps even teach it to others.

SUICIDE

Usually the Pranic Body leaves the physical body because prana has been used up. However when someone commits suicide, the sequence in which the Ten Bodies leave gets altered. The person has decided himself, to cut the flow of his pranic body. Then the soul usually hangs around in the electromagnetic field of the Earth, unable to cross into the blue ethers.

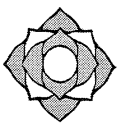
Even when life is incredibly challenging, there is always support available, though things seem very dark and lonely. There is no escape through suicide; one still has to return to continue the process. Actually, the situation becomes more complicated, because when one finally reincarnates, all the original patterns need to be faced plus the additional challenges.

DEATH IN ACCIDENTS

When someone dies instantaneously in an accidental death, that soul may incarnate immediately into another body without going to the blue ether.

Yogi Bhajan on The Art of Being

All my life I prepare for one thing: the day I meet God, I'll meet Him as part and parcel of Him, never as an individual. Therefore, never meet any individual as an individual to an individual. Meet that person always as a part and parcel of them, as if you are one. Because there is one God, and every creation of that one God is one. Learn that art of being one. And remember, one and one makes eleven, never two.



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Prosperity

Resources to Fulfill your Destiny

"A prosperous person has certain characteristics. For that person richness itself is not the basic aim. It happens anyway. A prosperous person does not gather wealth but the wealth of wealths. No matter what the circumstance, a prosperous person creates, delivers, and fulfills. They act with a constant equilibrium through all pressures and all shortcomings. That person will not barter the values of their character or identity for any temporary benefit. They always remember the presence and possibilities of the Infinite within each person. They cultivate endurance, dedication, and awareness. To such a person, prosperity is as natural as the breath, as unlimited as the mind and as immediate as this moment."

- YOGI BHAJAN

PROSPERITY IS ALL AROUND US AND WITHIN US. It is the ability to find, organize, and use the resources we need to fulfill our highest destiny and identity. Most people take one of three attitudes: scarcity, abundance, or prosperity. Scarcity is the attitude of the Negative Mind: "There is not enough," "How will it hurt me?" "What will I lose?" People ruled by scarcity thinking are averse to risk-taking, live with a fear of loss, or become hyper-vigilant about being misused.

Abundance is the province of the Positive Mind. People ruled by abundance-thinking believe they can do almost anything with enough effort, intelligence, or luck. They take risks. They are optimists against all evidence. They often accumulate possessions, money, or accomplishments. But there is also a risk of absorption in the things they create, so they may lose their sense of purpose, after a time. Acquisition itself becomes a purpose until a certain emptiness questions the many successes they are focused on.

Prosperity is the special gift of the Neutral Mind. People who rule with the Neutral Mind use the sum of both the Negative and Positive Minds, then divide the total input by the Neutral Mind. They take the down sides and the up sides and calculate how to use them based on their real purpose, identity, meaning, or destiny. The Neutral Mind uses intuition and keeps a sense of meaning and purpose at the center of one's life efforts. The result is a sensitivity to what to do next, what not to do, and who to connect with in order to let inner destiny blossom.

Prosperity is not about wealth or poverty. It is about fulfillment of your destiny. It is about clarity amidst distractions and diversions. It is about relationships that are mutually satisfying. It is a gift that comes with every soul.

We already have prosperity as the Heavens have the Sun. If we turn toward the light we will be warmed and filled with energy. If we know the art to sense the whispers of our inner direction we can ask the world for what we need with confidence and complete success!

Giving Your 1/10th

"Infinity has everything. When you relate to Infinity, Infinity gives you everything. One-tenth belongs to Infinity. Why? Because there has to be an "x" amount of time, money, personality, self, projection, thinking and planning, which must be one-tenth of your totality, to guide you to the realm of yourself, and that is your soul.

–YOGI BHAJAN

Practically every spiritual path encourages giving in order to do good, but also to develop a prosperous mind. That special giving of 1/10th is the Neutral Mind giving to the source or to an organization where you let go control of the gift. In Sikh Dharma it is called *dasvandh*, in most Christian traditions it is called tithing.

Sadhana is the tithe of 10% of your time, which you give to Infinity. By giving time to *sadhana*, you are opening yourself up to union with the infinite. Giving 10% of your earnings to Infinity is what gives you the freedom and the opportunity to break through whatever issues of financial scarcity, abundance, wealth and prosperity may exist in your subconscious. Giving to specific charities is something we should all do, no matter how small the amount. However, tithing is unique because it comes from all your activities in life and it secures your own Infinity to fulfill your destiny. What greater prosperity is there than that? Tithing enhances the internal State of Being and nurtures the absolute Attitude of Gratitude. *Gurudakshina* (the 11% we give as yoga teachers) comes from the specific activity of teaching, and completes prosperity and the Neutral Mind in that special relationship.

Prosperity is a blessing you can experience more deeply by using the tools and technology passed on from Yogi Bhajan, some of which can be found in the Sets & Meditations section.

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Communication

The purpose of all communication is to uplift. Yogi Bhajan identifies a style of communication called: "Poke. Provoke. Confront. Elevate." (Don't forget the last step!)

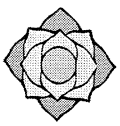
Poke: Bring your heart-mind to focus on the person. Ask probing questions to investigate.

Provoke: Stir what you have found by circumstance and the results of the poking. Ask questions that incite a deeper response about what is the depth of the situation. Understand and map it out.

Confront: Take charge of the chakra and aura. Speak directly without letting the person slip from the focus. Challenge directly the habit, not the person.

Elevate: Uplift the person by raising the energy, projecting your radiance, and commanding the higher centers. Transformation is based on inspiration and support, and the giving of hope.

Awareness of your own chakras and the style of communication that is associated with each can be very helpful in effective communication. *(See the Yogic Anatomy chapter.)*



TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
FROM A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN

Harmonious Communication

A student asked Yogi Bhajan about harmonious communication.

STUDENT: Sir, are there rules for harmonious communication that are universal and get one beyond the rational mind?

YOGI BHAJAN: Here are the rules of communication to memorize:

Rule One
You are communicating for a better tomorrow, not to spoil today.

Rule Two
Whatever you are going to say is going to live forever. And you have to live through it. Therefore, take care you don't have to live through the mud of your own communication.

Rule Three
One wrong word said can do much more wrong than you can even imagine or even estimate.

Rule Four
Words spoken are a chance for communication. Don't turn them into a war.

Rule Five
When you communicate, you have to communicate again.
Don't make the road rough.

These are the rules.

Harmonious communication is the base of all that you need on this planet and hereafter. Even if you praise God in an unharmonious way, not only will your friends hate you, but the angels will not come to your rescue.

Therefore, if you ever find you have this defect there are ways to correct it:

1) I have learned that the best way to improve your communication is to stand before a mirror and talk to your image. Then you respond back on behalf of the image as if it were a separate personality.

2) The other way is to have a tape recorder with you, and record everything you say during the day. (Be sure to get permission from any others you are talking to!) In the evening, sit down and listen to that tape. Then just understand how offensive, neurotic and inhuman you are. Listen to it very loud. Create a harmonious communication out of your own tape. It's called "hypnotic commication of self-correction."

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Ten Sacred Secrets to Success

TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
FROM A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN

1. LEARNING IS NOT A WEAKNESS.
Time and space and breath of life are the living triangle of life. Every process is a moment; every moment is a process. Learning is to gain wisdom–it gives a grip on our discipline, and discipline becomes the Master, Master creates the legacy; legacy lives forever; the mortal becomes immortal.
O Yogi, life is a living chance forever.

2. IF SOMEBODY IS AVOIDING REACHING YOU, YOU REACH OUT (KNOWING IS THE KNOWLEDGE.)
If the head has gone cold, heart has gone frozen. If hatred in somebody has eaten up the heart of life; if there is no warmth coming to you but still the body is vibrating and the breath of life is keeping it warm, reach out and melt away all the coldness through your humor and boldness, so that the flower of friendship can blossom and you can enjoy the fragrance.
O Yogi, that is knowingness.

3. BE THE ALTAR NOT THE ALTERNATIVE.
Between time and space there is a place which is the altar of human legacy. Each individual must identify this altar and worship it. It will give personality, purpose, and prosperity. Any alternative to this is to lose the gratefulness, the grace, and the glow of life.
O Yogi, this is the sacred secret of prosperity.

4. LET YOUR MANNERS SPEAK FOR YOU, LET YOUR DEEDS PROVE YOU, AND LET YOUR DELIVERANCE IMPRESS YOU.
Every man has a mission; every mission has a magnitude. To fulfill and deliver the essence of magnitude, one requires manners and attitude. When one does it with devotion and conviction, success comes from all sides.
O Yogi, that is the sacred secret of success.

5. WORK NEVER WAITS. THOSE WHO WAIT, HAVE NOT YET STARTED.
Nobody can stop Time. Time creates space. We move between longitude and latitude. It is the attitude which works out and completes every work for us.
O Yogi, this is the sacred secret of deliverance.

6. EXCUSES, AVOIDANCE, DELAYS WILL NOT STOP THE CONSEQUENCES.
Every sequence will have consequences; every action will have reaction; every start will have finish; every beginning will have end. Our insecurity delays our achievement; our excuses show our weakness, and delay lays the foundation of frustration. The Perfect One God Almighty made us perfect to face every challenge and be a victor. As every artist wants to see his art at its best, so our divinity wants us to conquer our duality.
O Yogi, this is the sacred secret of victory.

7. PROS AND CONS: CHECK PROPERLY. IT WILL SAVE YOU FROM CON GAMES.
Play no games; get straight to the strategy and establish the state and status with your statesmanship. Reach out to everyone with a diplomatic art and loving communication.
O Yogi, this is the sacred secret of winning friends.

8. BE A STATESMAN AND A DIPLOMAT.
If you have a longing to belong, love and reverence are your handy tools to build leadership to sail through the stormy ocean, to enter the port of peace and tranquility.
O Yogi, this is the sacred secret of leadership.

9. YOUR INDIVIDUALITY, YOUR ATTIRE, AND YOUR ATTITUDE – ALL COUNT ABOVE ALL.
You must have vitality to create virtues; you must have values to honor virtues; your honorable performance will give people trust; your reverence and love will give people belief in you, and your honesty and character will give people faith in you.
O Yogi, this is the sacred secret in creating lasting memory of self or memorial in the heart of others.

10. ACT THREE WAYS: ACTION, SUPPORT, COVER. MUST INCLUDE SAFE PLACE FOR RETREAT.
Every action has reaction equal and opposite; what comes, goes; what is born must die. But the wisdom is to create a legacy which is perpetual, everlasting, and a guidance for all. Every action force in strategy must have a cover force, a support force, and a place of retreat to take care of the casualties. With that planning one can reach his fulfillment.
O Yogi, that is the sacred secret of joy and happiness in life.

Blessed is Guru Nanak, the great source of wisdom.
Blessed is Guru Gobind Singh, the great example of courage.
Blessed is Guru Ram Das, the great Lord of miracles.
And blessed is the Khalsa Panth, the great avenue of purity, piety, and power.
Blessed are all, O yogi, who follow this path of wisdom.

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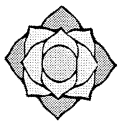
CHAPTER 20



Yogic Lifestyle

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Make Your Life a Victory

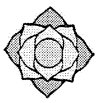
THE MAIN RULE FOR A GOOD YOGIC LIFESTYLE IS TO BE CONSCIOUS, to cultivate moderation and to commit to presenting ourselves before our highest awareness through meditation and study. This will lead us to a vital, expressive, victorious lifestyle of love, service, self-esteem and happiness.

Kundalini Yoga gives us access to the storehouse of resources built into our body and mind. The body is the instrument through which we receive our tangible experiences. If we treat it with respect and care, we are that much more able to experience and direct our life effectively.

Imagine the body as a high performance automobile. You would give it only premium gasoline to make it run smoothly. You would bring it to the service station frequently for oil changes and preventative maintenance. You would love it and take good care of it.

We must treat our body at least as well as we would treat that car. It is the only vehicle we will get and it is, in fact, designed for high performance. These teachings are the owners' manual that may have been misplaced. Our awareness, training, and commitment are often deficient, so we act and experience the body and mind as less sensitive than they are. We eat erratically and often poorly. We stay up late and sleep late. We pretend our bodies are a low cost car! We clog our valves and forget about our high-performance ranges. Our occasional self-mistreatment develops into chronic bad habits. We become ill, out of balance, unpredictable and untrustworthy even to ourselves.

Regular practice of Kundalini Yoga puts us in touch with our "high performance" abilities. It becomes easier to treat ourselves well. We eat in moderation, sleep in moderation, exercise in moderation: we create balance and well-being.



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Relaxing to Sleep

The following routine can help you fall asleep more quickly, sleep more soundly, and ensure a more revujenating sleep.

1. ***Exercise***. Do some yoga and meditation to help relax the body and process the stresses of the day.

2. ***No big meals***. It is easier on the liver and digestion if you have not eaten a heavy meal for at least two hours. Neither is it is good idea to go to bed too hungry, since this might wake you up in the middle of the night.

3. ***Comb your hair*** down with a wooden comb.

4. ***Do your bathroom routine.*** Void the urine. Brush your teeth and clean the mucus from the throat until the eyes begin to water.

5. ***Drink a glass of water***.

6. ***Wash your feet*** with cold water, rub them with a coarse towel, and massage them with almond oil. While doing this process, separate yourself from the world and tune yourself into the One Creative Cosmic Power.

7. ***Your bed***. It is best for your back and for proper sleep to use a firm bed, and bedding of natural fabric. Have your bed facing East-West, so that you are not aligned with the Earth's magnetic field.

8. ***Lie down on your back*** and start ***long deep breathing***, consciously relaxing and letting go.

9. ***Turn onto your right side*** as you relax into sleep, so that you are breathing through your left nostril, which brings a calming and cooling effect on the body and brain. It also relaxes the heart and lets the stomach and small intestine drain as you sleep.

As soon as the breath becomes regular and slow, you will go quickly through the preliminary stages of sleep and almost immediately reach the deep dreamless sleep state, avoiding the energy draining dream stage altogether. Plus you'll be able to come back out of deep sleep more easily and gracefully when it's time to wake up.

Waking Up to the Day

The following routine can help adjust the body upon awakening. It will adjust your spine, navel point and nervous sytem, so that you will feel more alert and ready for the day.

While still in bed...

1. Turn onto your back. With the eyes still closed, bring the hands to the face and begin stroking the face with your hands.

2. Open your eyes into the hands. Slowly lift the hands away from the face, keeping the eyes open so you can adjust your eyes to the light in the room. Massage the face.

3. Stretch the arms overhead, point the toes, and do a Cat Stretch.

4. Do Stretch Pose to set the navel point.

5. Turn onto the right side and pull the knees to the chest for a moment. This will strengthen the heart.

6. Return onto the back, and pull the knees to the chest with the nose up between the knees. Lock hands around the legs. Do Breath of Fire for about one minute, then roll up into Rock Pose. Bring the forehead down to the bed for a moment and relax, breathing normally. This helps eliminate gas.

7. Lie back down on your back, and rub the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet rapidly together. This breaks up crystals that build up in the nerve endings and allows the energy to flow through the body.

Now you are ready to get out of bed, and head for the bathroom.

CLEARING THE "MONKEY GLANDS"

Brush the teeth and gums with a powder of:

1 part salt
2 parts potassium alum

Clear the throat. Massage the back of the tongue, making yourself gag, and bring up the mucus to be spit out. There are two pockets in the throat called "monkey glands," which contain a mucus which collects in the throat at night and gathers toxins from the body. This must be expelled. The gagging reflex also causes the eyes to water, and helps maintain good vision. Potassium alum mixture is effective for preventing gum disease. Also brush the tongue to remove toxins.

MASSAGING THE BODY

Massage the body from head to toe with almond oil. This brings toxins out through the open pores, and nourishes the skin.

Now you are ready for your cold shower, your *ishnaan*, or hydrotherapy.

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TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
FROM A LECTURE BY YOGI BHAJAN

Ishnaan–
The Science of Hydrotherapy

I'd like to share the technology and science of hydrotherapeutic massage. As I'm sitting before you my first qualification and field of expertise is in hydrotherapy. I carry the lineage of those who now are very unknown, but who once were worshipped. They worked on the bones, adjusted the body, and did massage to recreate healthy organs.

Since ancient times, people have prayed for the blessing of *ishnaan*. What is *ishnaan*? *Ishnaan* is the total sum of hydrotherapy. The word is *ishnaan*. We don't say, "we are going to take a bath." We never say "bath." *Ishnaan* is when the body by its own virtue creates the temperature that it can beat off the coldness of the water. Ishnaan is not just wetting your body. There is a whole respect to it. There is a whole grace to it.

The power of water is sixty percent of the power of the human. In hydrotherapy we believe that the sixty percent internal water of the body can be totally exchanged in sixty minutes with the use of external water.

When we do ice-cold water massage, not only do we open up the capillaries, but then when they return to normal, that blood goes back to the organs. The heart, kidneys, lungs, liver – each organ has its own blood supply. In this way the organs get flushed. When the organs get a flushing, then immediately the glands have to change their secretion. It is a law. And when the glands, which are the guardians of the health and life, change, youth returns. What is youth? Young glands. If your glandular system secretes correctly, the blood chemistry is a young chemistry. All this neurotic neurosis and angriness will be over.

Why take a cold shower?

- ***Keeps your skin radiant.***
- ***Opens up the capillaries.***
- ***Flushes the organs.***
- ***Keeps the blood chemistry young and healthy.***
- ***Stimulates the healthy secretion of the glandular system.***

Precautions: Start with the outer extremities–feet, hands, arms. The thighs shouldn't go under the water first, so as not to disturb the calcium-magnesium balance. The same for the genitals and the head. Do not take a cold shower during pregnancy or menstruation or when you have a fever, rheumatism or heart disease. If there are problems with the sciatic nerve or high blood pressure, start slowly! Wear cotton shorts to buffer the thighs and sexual organs.

A PRECISE SCIENCE

The Science of Hydrotherapy is very precise and sophisticated, and very simple. Here are the effects on different parts of the body:

- If you let the cold water fall just ***below the lower lip*** for ten or fifteen minutes, you will be bright and your mind will be very clear.
- If you put the water between the ***eyebrows and the upper lip***, you will be very energetic.
- If you put the water on the ***forehead***, you will be so sleepy that you can't match it.
- If you massage the ***upper arm***, you are totally curing your stomach.
- From your ***elbow to about two inches (5 cm) above your wrist*** corresponds to your digestive tract.
- ***Two inches above the wrist*** to the wrist corresponds to your heart.
- The ***wrist*** corresponds to your liver, and the ***fingertips*** correspond to your brain.
- If you put the water on the ***front of your neck*** and let the water run down your entire body and hands, you will totally change all your cells.
- If you let the water hit your ***chest*** and go all the way down to your ***genitals*** and you stay under it for a while, you are totally changing the chemistry of the blood from unhealthy to healthy.
- If you let the water hit your ***feet*** and massage the right foot with the left foot, and the left foot with the right foot, you are actually massaging your entire body. Stand before a cold shower and massage your feet and your calves by yourself. Use your feet to massage. Don't use your hands.
- Then stand away from the water and using both hands, ***massage your entire body*** and let the body get hot. Then take a cold shower again and massage your body again. Do that for about twelve to fifteen minutes. You should have a friend handy to pull you out. You will be in a totally different space.

REBUILDING THE ORGANS & THE CIRCULATION

Each organ of your body will be totally rebuilt. How? When you take a cold shower your blood rushes out to meet the challenge by its own circulatory power and doesn't feel cold. This means all the capillaries open up and all deposits have to go. Everything is cleansed. During hydrotherapy, the body is challenged by the cold water and by massaging the body. Do you understand this? When you are under the cold shower, your body will feel cold, right? But when the blood and the capillaries are totally opened up to the

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maximum, the body *will not feel cold*. Then you come out and totally towel yourself, put on warm clothes, and put a blanket around you. Or if the weather is hot, use a big bath towel. Then your body will become wild hot. All the blood that is in the capillaries will go back to the organs: the kidneys, the liver, the spleen, the lungs – because each part of your body lives on its own blood supply which is regulated by the beat of the heart. So the organs will get a rich supply of blood like a crop getting a beautiful rain, and then that crop grows up. This is how you can balance your health.

By doing any exercise for hours, you cannot stimulate your cell psyche to the extent that you can with cold water. And the procedure is very simple. Take your hands, let the cold water fall, and rub them until they become hot under the ice-cold water. Do this with every part of the body; let it go, let it be, and stimulate yourself. And this stimulation may look to you like a fanatic, painful attitude. Some people do deep muscle massage, some people go to spas. There are one million methods and nothing even comes close to this one. There's nothing like standing under ice-cold water and making your body become hot. Can you believe a guy standing under a shower doing this for two hours? But that's how they do it. Everywhere that the cold water hits, the blood will come. Everywhere you massage, rebuilding will occur and the psyche of each cell of the body will be reconstructed.

THE TOOLS FOR HYDROTHERAPY IN EVERY HOUSE

They didn't know how to make a shower when they first did hydrotherapy. You are very lucky you have modern showers. In ancient times there was nothing. They had to fill a tub that was about thirty to forty feet above the ground. It was huge and men had to fill it with water. It required about five hundred men to create enough water pressure for the hydrotherapy.

Now we have showers in every house, but the art of hydrotherapy is lost. Now a little pill can help you. That is fine, but the difference between people today and people then is that today people want to be healthy, but they are not afraid of being sick. In those days, people were afraid of being sick. Allopathic medicine is very effective. The chemical goes right to the spot, and it takes care of you. But unfortunately it has its side effects.

CONQUERING THE CHILLINESS OF LIFE

Body cells recuperate themselves in seventy-two hours. Sometimes they get delayed. Recuperation becomes slower as you become older. But in hydrotherapy we believe youth is permanent, because we know how to be young.

Sometimes you do not value your life. And then you cannot value it, because you are old. So play no such games with yourself; death will come, don't bother. Richness will come, poverty will come, disease will come, no bother. Bother for nothing. But, if you have strong-built mind, body, and soul, all adversity will come, but it won't touch you. Therefore, the saying in hydrotherapy is, "shield yourself." Hydrotherapy is based on water being a fatherly shield, *paanee pitaa*, and that anybody who can produce this shield that conquers the coldness of the water can conquer death. It's a very simple thing. If I with my body can conquer the chilliness of the water, I can take away the chilliness of my life.

Hair: A Yogic Viewpoint

OUR CROWNING GLORY

Long hair is a great gift of Nature for energy management. The hair is best kept uncut and tied on top of the head in a *rishi* knot at the solar centres, to concentrate the solar energy at the pineal gland. It encourages the raising of the kundalini.

Phosphorus along with Vitamin D is gathered from the sun through the hair. Together they pass through the hair into the *ojas*, the spinal fluid in which the brain floats.

Hair is composed of protein. A tremendous amount of vital energy rises into the scalp to push those strands of protein into the environment outside the body. If the hair is allowed to grow to its full length, it will bring great energy to the brain. Also, that energy used to keep the hair growing because of continual cutting will be saved and diverted to other functions of the body.

Nature has placed an abundance of hair at the locations on the body where major glands function. There is a vital relationship between the hair and hormones and the entire electromagnetic functioning of the body. The hair under arms, on legs, as well as eyebrows is there for a reason. It helps to maintain the body's electromagnetic health–like a subtle antennae for the aura–increasing the sensitivity to the subtlety of life. This increases self-confidence, adding grace and radiance.

BEARD

The beard of a man covers the pranic nerve in the chin controlled by the moon. The female nervous system can handle the effect of the moon, but not the male nervous system.

HAIR CARE

To keep the hair supplied with oils so that it may function properly and avoid dandruff, brush the hair with a natural bristle brush or a wooden comb twice a day for five minutes.

BANGS

The bones of the forehead are porous and function to transmit light to the pineal gland in the brain. Cutting the hair into bangs covering the forehead impedes this process. When Ghenghis Khan conquered China, he issued orders that all women must cut their hair and wear bangs over their forehead. He knew this would keep them timid and subjugated.

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Yogi Bhajan Talks about Drugs

DRUGS HAVE RUINED NATIONS

Drugs have not only done damage to human bodies, drugs have ruined nations. Drugs have ruined generations. I don't pay the bills for your alcohol, your two or three martinis, so I don't care what you do. But it will ruin you. Drugs, in some shape or form will ruin you. The Chinese were very intelligent before they started doing opium. They were totally ruined. The Indian culture was great. It was a land of diamonds, milk and honey. It became enslaved. They were virtually taken and sold. Marijuana. The Egyptians were perfect. So perfect were they that through these pyramids they changed the weather of that land area. But what became of that strength? Peyote got them. You all know about the Roman Empire—you don't need to hear it from me. Alcohol took it to the ground. And you have all four of them!

When you smoke marijuana, it stimulates the brain cells and it constricts the spinal fluid, creating a draught condition in the skull.

When you drink or you take drugs, you are a living drag.

Drugs are not being taken for any other reason than that people cannot face their reality, yet drugs take them to non-reality. At that moment give them survival, that's all. Every stimulant, every drug, every love, every relationship is based on affirmation of non-reality.

You are at an advantage if you are intelligent, and you are not living on heroin and cocaine, or any drugs. You are coming with a clean consciousness, with a unique personality, and from a tremendous strength. I don't think any drug can make a person super.

Drugs & Kundalini Yoga (Don't Mix!)

Use of recreational drugs is not recommended for anyone, but especially not for students of Kundalini Yoga, and most especially not before practicing yoga. With a drug high, the powerful energies we excite may get out of control with unpredictable and possibly dangerous effects. You are a beautiful soul, why cover that beauty in a drug fog? Why dull your sensitivity and ability to experience the subtleties of life.

Kundalini Yoga students should be told to consult with their doctors about doing Kundalini Yoga if they have medical conditions and if they are taking prescription drugs.

Student: How about the smoking of marijuana?

Answer: Marijuana is the outcome of insanity. Marijuana has ruined one of the greatest civilizations of humanity—India. Marijuana grows in that country like a wild flower grows in the jungle. Smoking marijuana is the sickest thing on this planet. When you smoke it, it stimulates the brain cells and it constricts the spinal fluid, creating a drought condition in the skull.

The only positive use of this marijuana is that it can be used as a remedy for severe digestive problems, and for pain. A juice is made from the green leaves mixed with almonds and milk. It takes away the pain. If you are a terminal cancer patient, and normal drugs cannot help you, you can get high on marijuana—you are dying anyway. If there is no cure, this is the only thing that takes away the pain.

CLEARING THE EFFECTS OF DRUGS WITH SADHANA

I know you may have taken LSD, you may have taken PCP, but you can get rid of the after-effects of these drugs if you are honest with *sadhana*. This is how it works. All of these drugs, stimulants, uppers, downers, (including sleeping pills), control the opening and closing capacity of the working of the brain's metabolism. It is permissible to take a drug only under medical emergency. Otherwise, in any normal functioning brain, when you take drugs, you make it function abnormally. Many people who stick to *sadhana* have been found to be totally clear of the effects and abnormalities created by the use of drugs. An abnormality includes any physical, mental or spiritual abnormality. That is why *sadhana* has been designed to cover three areas: physical, mental, and spiritual. We want to dispense this every morning with the idealistic thought that the person may gradually benefit from it.

You can get rid of the after-effects of these drugs if you are honest with *sadhana*.

You are not a miracle; you are the product of *sadhana*.

Drugs increase stress on the nervous system in many ways:

- They energetically interrupt the natural balanced flow of the chakras and aura, forcing the nervous system to adjust.
- The toxic overload also increases the stress.
- The psyche creates the mistaken thought that we require the drug to feel God, that we are incomplete or helpless without it.

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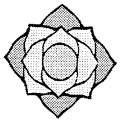
CHAPTER 21



Yogic Diet

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Yogic Diet–You Are What You Eat

IN ANCIENT TIMES, BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT of modern science, food was considered medicine. The principles of healthful eating were commonly known, and the hidden properties of common foods and herbs were used to purify, correct imbalances and heal. There is a trend back to understanding of these principles. Today, the term "you are what you eat," is becoming more accepted. Today we understand that each time we eat food, we are creating our future selves.

DIET ACCORDING TO AYURVEDA

Ayurveda is a vast science of life which recognizes that health is a state of balance between the body, mind, and consciousness, as well as a state of inner balance between *vata, pitta*, and *kapha*. (*See Tridoshas below.*) It recognizes that food is medicine, and uses this principle as one of the many ways of restoring health.

TRIDOSHAS

According to ayurvedic thought, the *tridoshas* are three factors or forces whose balance is crucial to health. They are intuitively formulated symbols of the actual primal forces generating and maintaining the physical and mental bodies. The continuous production and balance of the *tridoshas* is partially determined by the food.

Vata (air) sustains the body and originates every kind of physical movement in the body. It controls the mind and senses and causes elimination of wastes.

Pitta (bile) is responsible for digestion, heat, the digestive fire, and the formation of blood.

Kapha (phlegm) nourishes and lubricates the body, maintains sexual potency, and lends mental balance to the individual.

THREE TYPES OF FOOD

Sun foods grow more than three feet above the ground. They absorb the maximum energy from the sun and the least from the earth. These are etheric foods that elevate consciousness, and have a quickening, lightening effect on the body and nervous system.

Examples: fruits, nuts, avocados, dates, coconuts.

Ground foods grow within three feet above the ground. They have more energy from the earth, less from the sun, and are high in nutrients and are a great cleanser.

Examples: beans, rice, breads, and green vegetables.

Earth foods grow below the ground. They have great energy from the earth, and sun energy indirectly. They have healing properties, and great energy for worldly business or hard work.

Examples: root foods: potatoes, turnips, beets, garlic, ginger, onions

QUALITIES OF FOODS

According to Ayurveda, yogic theory of the gunas can be applied to the foods we eat.

Sattvic: pure essence, etheric quality. Examples: most fruit and vegetables, especially sun foods and ground foods.

Rajasic: energy to accomplish, achieve or create.
Examples: stimulating herbs and spices; many earth foods.

Tamasic: regressive property of inertia and decay; gluttony, indulgence and sloth. Examples: meat, fish, poultry, eggs, alcohol, intoxicating drugs.

Since you create your future self with every bite, you can judge which types of foods are most appropriate to your aims. For those who are free to live a quiet, contemplative life, a *sattvic* diet is perfect. For those who wish to maintain a meditative mind, but also must live and work in the world, as a householder, a diet consisting of *sattvic* foods with some *rajasic* foods is best. For those who practice heavy disciplines which transmute sexual energy into spiritual energy, like Kundalini Yoga or martial arts, a certain amount of *rajasic* food in the diet is required. *Tamasic* food is best avoided.

NUTRITIOUS AND SUSTAINING FOODS

Foods can be categorized as nutritious foods and sustaining foods. Nutritious foods give you energy and strength. Whole, fresh and natural foods possess nutrients that are more easily assimilated by your body than canned, frozen or processed equivalents.

Sustaining foods are those that heal the body and keep it well. Yogic tradition emphasizes on sustaining foods. The sustaining value of a food is based on a combination of its nutritional content, texture, taste, aroma, preparation, and the specific effect on the body.

If your diet consists of foods which are both nutritious and sustaining, and you are careful to eat only what you can digest, then you have laid the groundwork for a healthy and happy life.

RAW AND COOKED FOOD

Eating raw food is essential because of the powerful effect of roughage on the intestines, as well as the retention of vitamins and minerals, However, some of the minerals and metals in vegetables, though plentiful in raw form, are locked into large molecules so that they are unavailable for our nourishment unless

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cooked. Therefore, yogic dietary theory proposes a sensible approach to eating a balance between raw and cooked foods.

TASTE

In the yogic tradition, taste is not merely seen as a pleasant or unpleasant attribute of food, but as an important factor affecting your health and disposition. Just as there are primary colors, there are pimary tastes:

Sweet foods strengthen, please, and nourish. In excess, sweet foods can cause mucus, indigestion, frequent colds and obesity.

Sour foods stimulate the appetite and digestive secretions, excite the mind, and strengthen the energy flow to organs. In excess, sour foods contribute to fevers, inflammations, burning sensations, looseness in the body, and impurities of the blood.

Salty foods dilute mucus, increase appetite, and aid in digestion. In excess, salty foods cause debility, excess fluid, impotency, wrinkling of skin, hyperacidity, and inflammation.

Pungent foods aid in the assimilation of food, excite the organs, dry up excess fluids, heal ulcers, sooth itching, and combat obesity. In excess, the pungent foods destroy semen, and cause fatigue, loss of strength, thirst, and pain in the body.

Bitter foods appetize, clear the throat, sharpen the intellect, and help the skin. In excess, bitter foods may give rise to headaches and loss of strength.

Astringent foods are soothing and cooling, decrease mucus and purify blood. In excess, astringent foods may cause gas, constipation, pains in the chest, emaciation, and thirst.

ALKALINE VS. ACIDIC

In the yogic tradition, for maximum health and mental balance, the blood should be slightly alkaline. Optimum is 75% alkaline to 25% acid.

Alkaline foods build and tone organs, nerves and glands. They keep us calm and reflective.

Examples: sweet and sour fruit, green vegetables, pulses and legumes, milk, yogurt, curd, buttermilk, lemons.

Acidic foods give a burst of energy. But too much can make the body vulnerable to illnesses, chronic ailments and premature aging. *Examples*: meat, eggs, starches, sweets, butter products.

WHAT ABOUT PROTEIN?

Most North Americans have a protein fixation. In fact, the body does not require a great deal of protein. The World Health Organization has determined that the average adult requires 35-40 grams of protein per day. The average Western diet includes 120 grams per day! Simple dairy products, and a wide variety of vegetables, especially greens, and legumes will produce ample protein. The problem is that of all the food groups protein is the most difficult to digest.

Yogic dietary theory recommends a smaller daily intake of protein, and that the intake of protein be more easily digested than meat. Dairy products, yogurt, legumes and rice, undergo less putrefaction. *(See below.)*

WHAT ABOUT EATING MEAT?

Aside from the moral implications of eating meat, (Yogi Bhajan playfully states: "Vegetarians don't eat anything that had a mother."), let's consider meat-eating strictly from a health point of view. Meats are a concentrated animal protein. When an animal dies, its proteins coagulate within a few hours. They undergo a process called *autoputrefaction* in which the original substance begins to break down and decay, releasing various toxins. When you eat meat, it cannot be completely broken down in the upper digestive tract, and so the process of decay and release of toxins continues in the colon. These toxins can initially be absorbed by the liver, but eventually even the liver can't handle them, and the body becomes polluted. Vegetable proteins, by comparison, do not undergo *autoputrefaction*. Their main residue is cellulose, which is inert.

Meat is among the most acid-producing foods. It leaves a residue of uric acid in the bloodstream. Acidic blood is an ideal environment for the development of cancer. Uric acid is a toxin that makes it harder to reach the higher, clearer meditative states because it is an irritant in the bloodstream.

Meat is also among the greatest sources of cholesterol, which contributes to heart disease, hardening of the arteries, and senility. Most animals which are raised for their meat today are fed a variety of chemicals and hormones to make them grow faster and bigger.

Meat takes three days to pass through the human system. For optimum health, men need to digest food within 24 hours; women 18 hours.

DAIRY PRODUCTS

Mucus keeps the breathing passages lubricated and protects the membranes. When you practice Kundalini Yoga with Breath of Fire, it tends to eliminate mucus. Therefore, you want to replenish the system with a certain amount of mucus which dairy products can stimulate. If you are allergic to cow products, try soy or goat substitutes. Everyone is unique. Find out what works for you.

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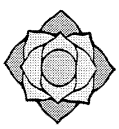
GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING FOOD

1. Prepare your food with love and care.
2. Eat only in a pleasant, relaxing environment.
3. Serve the food gracefully.
4. Take a minute to reflect upon your gratitude for the gift of the food.
5. Take the time to eat consciously.

GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHFUL DIGESTION & ELIMINATION

1. Eat to live, don't live to eat.
2. Avoid snacking between meals, and eat fewer meals.
3. Eat only when hungry.
4. Chew well; your stomach has no teeth.
5. Stop eating when you're three-fourths full.
6. Rest after every meal.
7. Don't eat after sunset.
8. Eat only what you can eliminate within 18-24 hours.
9. Once a week, give your digestive system a rest.
10. If you can't digest it and eliminate it, don't eat it.



Foods for Health & Healing

Trinity Roots: *onions, garlic, & ginger*

When asked about a potent life, Yogi Bhajan said: "The three roots–***garlic, onion and ginger***–will maintain you through the times and through the age." These fascinating, mystical and tasty roots are essential to a healthy diet for cleansing, sustaining and producing energy in the body. The great qualities of these roots have been known since ancient times. Even today, these foods are the subject of extensive research. For anyone who is interested in healthy, potent living, these roots are a must in the diet.

It has long been recorded that ***garlic*** is a sacred and powerful herb. Egyptians used to swear by it when they were taking a solemn vow. Roman physicians claimed that it cured 61 ailments. Modern science is revealing its marvelous healing properties. Since the turn of the century, garlic and garlic extracts have been used against gastrointestinal disorders, septic poisoning, typhus, cholera, bacterial infections and even cancer. Investigations by Russian scientists have made garlic oil so popular in their country that it is referred to as "Russian penicillin." Garlic increases and stimulates the production of semen, essential for sexual potency and healthy nerves.

The ***onion*** was considered by the Egyptians to be a symbol of the universe. The word onion is derived from the Latin word *unus*–one. Through the centuries, onions and onion juice were recommended to cure earache, colds, fever, laryngitis, warts and cancer. Onions are said to stimulate the production of blood, to purify the blood and to help keep blood sugar balanced.

Ginger has been used since before the days of Rome. It was said that it cured the troubles of love and prolonged life. King Henry VIII recommended it as a prevention against the plague. A medicine as well as a spice, today it is widely used as a digestive stimulant. Ginger is especially helpful to women, providing energy and relieving tensions associated with menstrual cramps. Ginger root nourishes the nerves of the body and allows them to carry more energy. It keeps the spine and cerebrospinal fluid healthy.

Foods to Avoid

White Sugar: Robs body of Vitamin B. Affects nerves; may cause heart trouble; creates stress.

Salt: Prevents assimilation of calcium, overstimulates adrenals–chronic fatigue, hypertension; creates retention of fluids-pressure on heart, and stomach hyperacidity.

Nicotine: Robs body of Vitamin C, iron.

White Bread: Stripped of nutrition, particularly Vitamin B.

Alcohol: Poisons and puts stress on body since the liver must eliminate. Addictive.

Caffeine: Affects co-ordination, memory, perception; places stress on heart; raises cholesterol levels; irritates stomach; impedes digestion; disturbs sleep patterns.

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Foods for Health & Healing

Apple. Body cleanser, blood purifier, Vitamin B & C, minerals. AM: strength. PM: digestion.

Almond. Vitamins B, Cu, Fe, P, Ca, K, high protein. Excellent oil (internal & external.) Almond milk good first food for babies.

Banana. Vitamins C, Fe, Ca, K, Cu, Mg. Natural sweetness. Soothes mucus membrances. Eat white strings. For diarrhea: 1 every 3 hrs. For constipation: 3 every hour.

Beets. Cleanses liver, intestines, regulates body's sugar balance.

Black Pepper. When freshly ground, purifies blood. Aids digestion. Prevents intestinal gas. As tea: for arthritis and asthma.

Celery. Soothes nervous system. Juice: calms nerves; internal cleanser.

Chiles. Capsicum (cayenne, jalapeno too). Vitamin C, A. For circulatory & digestive systems.

Coconut. Vitamin B, C, minerals. Builds body. Helps weight gain. Easy to assimilate. Is a complete protein.

Dates. Laxative. Quick energy. Datemilk: nourishing, youth-maintaining.

Garlic. (*See Trinity Roots.*) Natural antibiotic, digestive aid, stimulant to sexual system. Promotes production of semen.

Ghee (clarified butter.) Low in cholesterol. A nutrient and preservative.

Ginger. (*See Trinity Roots.*) Nourishes nervous system.

Grapes. Vitamin C, Mn, P. Blood purifier and builder; laxative; source of energy; for complexion.

Greens. Vitamin A,C,B complex, P, Ca, Mg, iron, Cu, chlorophyll.

Honey & Bee Pollen (in moderation.) Improves assimilation and elimination. For asthma, hay fever, allergies, digestion. Increases calcium retention.

Lecithin. Helps conductivity of nerve impulses. Helps overall mental functioning.

Legumes (beans, peas, lentils.) Combined with grains create easy-to-digest complete protein, as foundation for vegetarian diet.

Lemons. Vitamin C, Ca. Purifies blood. Alkaline. For sore throat, fever, cleansing mucus.

Mangoes. Help liver and menstrual disorders. Drink milk to balance acidity.

Mustard Greens. Very high in vitamin C, A, Ca, chlorophyll. One of the healthiest vegetables.

Onion. (*See Trinity Roots.*) Most healing food. Purifies blood. Attacks bacteria.

Parsley. "After dinner mint" to counteract smell of garlic and onions. Blood builder.

Rice (Basmati: natural white, unpolished.) Vitamin B, Iodine, high-quality protein. Easily assimilated. Stimulates the kidneys.

Sesame Seeds. Increase virility. Rejuvenate mental and physical capacity and endurance. Good for the brain and nerves. Source of lecithin.

Sunflower Seeds. Vitamin E, B (especially B12.)

Turmeric. Lubricant for the joints. Good for skin and mucus membranes. Always cook before eating, or mix it thoroughly into yogurt. Add honey to taste.

Watermelon. Cleanses liver and intestines, gives energy, relief of intestinal gas (when served with ground black pepper.)

Wheatberries. When boiled until tender, whole wheatberries clean intestinal tract, build strong teeth, and gums. Beautifies skin.

Yogi Tea. Acts as mild stimulant. Helps to correct damage to nervous system from drugs. Nerve tonic. Cleanses liver.

Yogurt. Vitamin B12. Good for skin, intestinal flora. Natural cleanser of stomach and intestines.

Foods For Men

Banyan Tree Milk. Corrects imbalances in sexual system.

Figs. For sexual or nervous disorders.

Ghee, **Garlic, Onions**. Semen production.

Nutmeg. Lowers blood pressure. For impotency, premature ejaculation.

"P" Fruits. Peaches, plums, pineapples, pears, papayas, persimmons.

Pistachios, Health and vigor.

Saffron. Skin problems, hair problems, old age and senility. Health and vigor.

Foods for Women

Ginger. Treats menstrual cramps.

Sesame Oil. Helps menstruation.

Mangoes. Corrects cycle irregularities. Pickled mango is a powerful sexual food.

Eggplant. Energizes entire system. For irregular menstrual flow—eggplant pakoras.

Rice Bran Syrup. B vitamins.

Raw Almond Oil. After age of 28, lowers cholesterol, reduces body fat, cleanses toxins, makes skin healthy and lustrous. Source of protein.

Green Chiles. Vitamin C. Cleanses mouth odor from menstruation. Prevents constipation.

Wheatberries. Cleanses intestinal tract. Nourishing.

Turmeric. Heals internal organs.

Yogurt. Heals digestive system. Can also be used as a douche.

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Fasting & Fasts

Preparation, Moderation, Supervision

Fasting is a powerful tool for healing and strengthening the body. However, you should never go on a fast indiscriminately, because you can do more harm than good. It is always best to be supervised by a health practitioner.

It is safer and more effective to go on a mono diet of those foods that possess the healing properties which the body needs, than to eliminate all food or just fast on water.

PREPARATION

You need to prepare yourself and make sure you have the capacity and state of health to fast. Preparing for a fast begins with modifying the diet. Eliminate junk food and begin eating lighter meals composed of mostly vegetables or fruits. Then try fasting for a meal or two, then for an entire day. When you feel comfortable with light eating and occasional one-day fasting, then you may be ready to try a fast of three to five days.

CLEANSING

Sticking to the diet is only half the challenge of fasting. Often the physical cleansing of a fast is accompanied by a mental and emotional cleansing as well. Anger and negativity can be released, particularly if the person has used food to quell emotions. Use your meditative mind to face this challenge.

BREAKING THE FAST

Always break a fast slowly. Fasting cleanses the body, but also makes it very sensitive. If you eat nothing but steamed greens for a month and then break your fast with a pizza, you will feel it!

If you have been eating junk food for a long time, don't expect to entirely cleanse your system overnight. Go slowly and steadily, making modest changes at first. You will see gradual improvements. But don't expect to be able to go back on junk foods after you have cleansed your system! Your body will let you know.

MUNG BEANS & RICE DIET

- A good cleansing diet that gives plenty of nourishment.
- Good for the kidneys, colon, and digestive organs, or when food is not being digested thoroughly by the intestines.
- Good winter diet.
- Eat only mung beans and rice for 30 days. Include lots of fresh vegetables cooked into it.
- May eat fruit in between meals as snack. Yogi Tea may also be taken.

FRUIT FAST

- Good for springtime.
- Eat only fruit for one month.

(Recommended to have three bowls of fruit a day. A small amount of yogurt may be added. Do not overdo the eating of fruit.)

- Eat only one kind of fruit at a time.
- No fruit juices (too concentrated.)

GREEN DIET

- A rebuilding diet, alkalinizes the body, for losing weight, clearing the skin, cleanses the liver, relieves toxic mucus conditions.
- 40 days of green foods: salads, steamed greens, avocados, sprouts, mung beans, green fruit. (Yogi Tea okay.)
- To end the fast, add fruit, then grains, then dairy.

REJUVENATING DIET

- Cleanses and revitalizes.
- Best when weather is warm and fruits and vegetables plentiful.
- Eat only fruits, nuts and vegetables (cooked and raw) for 30 days.
- To end fast, add dairy products.

MELON DIET

Only for people who have experience with fasting.

- Cleans liver, kidneys, intestines.
- Good when the weather is hot.

DAYS 1-3 Cantaloupes (warming and laxative)
DAYS 4-6 Watermelons (cooling. liver & kidneys)
DAYS 7-9 Papayas (intestines and digestion)
DAYS 10-12 Honey lemon water
DAYS 13-15 Plain water (not cold)
DAYS 16-18 Honey lemon water
DAYS 19-21 Papayas
DAYS 22-24 Watermelons
DAYS 25-27 Cantaloupes

- Massage the body with almond oil frequently.
- Breaking the fast: Add more types of fruit, then add yogurt, then vegetables.
- Modifying: Reduce each of the three central stages (10-12, 13-15, 16-18) to one day. Total 21 days instaed of 27.

BANANA FAST

Only for people who have experience with fasting.

- Rebuilds worn tissue; removes drug deposits from the medulla.
- Once a year in spring, when new blood is being produced. Begin on New Moon.
- 9 bananas a day (inc. strings) for 15 days:

Breakfast: 1 cup fresh orange juice sweetened with honey. One hour later: 3 bananas, cardamom.
Lunch: 3 bananas, cardamom.
Dinner: 3 bananas, cardamom.
Yogi Tea is okay with this diet.

- Breaking the fast: lemon juice in warm water with honey. To rebuild the body, follow up with 28 days of mung beans and rice, fruit and yogi tea. No dairy (except a little bit of milk in your Yogi Tea.)
- The honey lemon water is taken for a day between the bananas and the mung beans and rice.

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Yogi Tea

Everybody's favorite! Good for the blood, colon, nervous system, and bones. Good for colds, flu, and physical weakness.

10 ounces (315 ml) water
2 slices fresh ginger root (optional, but excellent!)
3 cloves
4 green cardamon pods, cracked
4 black peppercorns
1/2 stick cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon black tea (a teabag)
1/2 cup (125 ml) milk or equivalent
Honey, to taste (optional)

Bring the water to a boil and add the spices. Cover and continue boiling for 10-15 minutes.

Remove from heat, add black tea, and let steep for 1-2 minutes.

Add honey and milk, bring to a boil, and remove from heat. Strain and serve.

Makes one cup.

Golden Milk

This delicious hot drink is very good for the spine. It lubricates the joints and helps to break up calcium deposits.

1/8 teaspoon turmeric
1/4 cup (65 ml) water
8 ounces (250 ml) milk
2 Tablespoons (40 ml) raw almond oil
honey to taste

Boil turmeric in water for about 8 minutes until it forms a thick paste. If too much water boils away, add a little more water. Meanwhile, bring milk to a boil with the almond oil. As soon as it boils, remove from heat. Combine the two mixtures and add honey to taste.

If you like, prepare a larger quantity of the turmeric paste. It will last up to 40 days if refrigerated.

Date Milk

This is a very nourishing, youth-maintaining beverage. It gives energy and is good for people of all ages, especially when they are recovering from fevers or other diseases.

8 ounces (250 ml) milk
6 dates

Slice dates in half. Remove pits and mash. Simmer in milk on a very low heat for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Strain and serve.

Ginger Tea

Gives you energy! Also good for colds, flu, sore throats, and menstrual cramps.

1-2 inch (2.5-5 cm) stick fresh ginger, washed & chopped
10 ounces (350 ml) water
1/2 cup (125 ml) milk
honey to taste

Boil ginger for 10-15 minutes. Add milk and bring to boil. Strain and serve. Add honey to taste.

Ghee

Ghee is clarified butter. The milk solids and impurities are removed. It is a healthful, pure protein. Use as you would butter or cooking oil.

To make *ghee*, simmer unsalted butter over the lowest heat for approximately 30 minutes. (Keep an eye on it, since it tends to burn easily. If it starts to turn brown, it is burning.) A white foam separates from the yellow *ghee*. Skim off all the white foam. Clear yellow *ghee* will be left. Pour into a clean, wide-mouthed container, through cheesecloth held onto the jar with rubber bands, or through a fine metal strainer, not allowing any white sediment to slide in. Store at room temperature with jar covered.

Ghee keeps. Without refrigeration for 3-4 months when stored in a closed container; up to one year in the refrigerator; and indefinitely when frozen. Therefore, it is a good idea to make large quantities at a time.

Yogi Mush

This food, when eaten regularly, will cleanse the intestines, clear the skin, and help you lose weight. When taken as a mono diet, eat as much as you like, but only three meals per day. You can drink Yogi tea with this diet.

4 celery stalks
1 bunch parsley
4-5 medium zucchinis
1 sprig mint
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 cup (250 ml) cottage cheese

Steam celery, parsley, zucchinis, and mint for about 15 minutes until soft. Purée with black pepper. Serve with cottage cheese. Makes about 2 servings.

"Ms. Whiz"

A perfect breakfast drink for women. She can get her daily dose of sesame or almond oil.

1 ripe banana
8 ounces (250 ml) orange juice
1 Tablespoon (20 ml) liquid chlorophyl
2 teaspoons Rice Bran Syrup
2 teaspoons cold-pressed almond or sesame oil

Blend until frothy.

Baked Tofu

Tofu is an excellent source of protein.

Slice and drain tofu. Soak in lemon juice and soy sauce or Bragg's. Garnish with your choice of red chiles, garlic, herbs or spices. Bake at 350°F (180°C).

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Mung Beans & Rice with Vegetables

A perfectly balanced protein dish, easy to digest, and very satisfying. Good any time of the year, but makes a particularly good winter diet.

4-1/2 cups (1.25 L) water
1/2 cup (250 ml) mung beans
1/2 cup (250 ml) basmati rice
1/4 cup (125 ml) ginger root, finely minced
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 cups chopped vegetables
2 Tablespoons (40 ml) ghee or vegetable oil
3/4 teaspoon turmeric
1/4 teaspoon crushed red chilies
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
1/2 teaspoon ground garam masala
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon. cardamom seeds (2 pods)
1 bay leaf

Rinse mung beans and rice. Add mung beans to boiling water and cook until beans begin to split. Add rice and cook another 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Now add the vegetables. (Alternatively, one could add the vegetables along with the rice.) As the mixture cooks, it will start to thicken.

Heat the ghee or vegetable oil in a frying pan. Add onions, ginger, and garlic and sauté until clear. Add spices and cook 5 more minutes, stirring constantly. Add a little water if necessary. Add this to the rice and beans. The final consistency should be like a thick soup. Total cooking time is about 1-1/2 hours. Add salt or soy sauce to taste. Serve plain or with yogurt. Makes 4 servings.

Potent Potatoes

This recipe has its roots in the tradition of yogic cooking. The spices help to purify the blood, stimulate digestion, and increase energy. You may decrease the amounts of pepper and cayenne to suit your taste.

4 large baking potatoes
1/4-1/2 cup (65-125 ml) ghee or vegetable oil
2-3 onions, chopped
1/4-1/2 cup (65-125 ml) ginger root, minced
1/4 tsp. caraway seeds
1-2 Tablespoons (20-40 ml) garlic, minced
1 tsp. black pepper
3/4-1 tsp. turmeric
1 teaspoon cayenne or crushed red chilies
8 whole cloves
1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2-4 Tablespoons (40-80 ml) soy sauce or salt to taste
1/2 pint (500 ml) cottage cheese
Optional:
1/2 pound (225 gr) cheese, grated
1 red or green bell pepper, diced
1/2 cup (125 ml) chopped pineapple, drained

Scrub potatoes, rub with small amount of oil and bake at 400° F (200° C), until well done. Heat ghee or oil in large skillet. Sauté onions and ginger until they begin to brown, then add garlic and spices and cook for 4-5 minutes longer. Add a little water if necessary. Add soy sauce (optional). Stir and remove from heat.

Cut baked potatoes in half, lengthwise. Scoop out the insides and combine with onion mixture. Add cottage cheese. Mix well and refill potato shells, covering each with grated cheese. Broil until cheese is melted and bubbly. For a nice touch, garnish with bell pepper and pineapple. Serve with yogurt. Makes 4 potent potatoes.

Beet & Carrot Casserole

This dish is cleansing to the liver and the digestive tract. To help your body do its own inner cleaning, eat as a mono diet for one week in the spring or fall.

1 bunch beets
1 pound (450 gr) carrots
2 bunches scallions, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
ghee or vegetable oil
soy sauce
ground black pepper
grated cheese

Scrub beets and carrots. Steam beets whole. (Don't cut off roots or stems.) After about 15-20 minutes, add carrots. Steam until tender but firm. Then remove outer peels from beets and carrots. (These should slip off easily.) Grate using a coarse grater. Keep beets and carrots separate to preserve their distinct colors. Sauté scallions and garlic in oil or ghee until tender. Toss with beets, carrots and black pepper. Place in casserole dish. Sprinkle with soy sauce. Cover with grated cheese and broil until cheese is melted and golden.
Serves 4-6.

Trinity Rice

A real treat! Cleansing for the blood.

2 onions, chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced
1 inch (2.5 cm) ginger root, peeled & grated
1 cup basmati rice
1/2-3/4 cup (250 ml) ghee
1 tomato, peeled
4-5 cups (1-1.25 L) assorted chopped vegetables

Rinse rice thoroughly. Saute spices in ghee until golden brown. Add onion, garlic, and ginger. Stir slowly until onions begin falling apart. Then add tomato, vegetables and rice, along with 4 cups water. Cover and let simmer on low heat, checking often. Add water as necessary. Cook until vegetables are soft and rice is done. Makes 4 servings.

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Solstice Hot Sauce

Each year at Summer Solstice, people come from all over the world to purify their minds, souls, and bodies. A cleansing diet is eaten. As part of the diet, this special hot sauce made with native New Mexican chilies is always served.

3 large onions, chopped
1/4 cup (60 ml) dry crushed red chiles
8 ounces (250 ml) tamarind concentrate
16 ounces (500 ml) hot water
1-1/2 cup (375 ml) sesame oil
1 Tablespoon (20 ml) turmeric
10 whole small dry red chiles
2 cups (500 ml) apple cider vinegar

Put onions in a large bowl. Sprinkle with crushed chiles. Melt tamarind concentrate in hot water. Add oil and diluted tamarind to onions. Sprinkle with turmeric. Add whole chiles and vinegar. Stir and cover. Let sit overnight or several days for the fullest flavor. Store in refrigerator. It will keep a long time, and get better and better. Yields 2 quarts.

Solstice Soup

This soup is also on the menu for the special diet served at Summer Solstice Sadhana. It makes the blood slightly alkaline, which promotes mental balance.

Slice:
1 quart potatoes
1 quart celery
1 quart onions

Layer in bottom of pot with potatoes on the bottom. Fill pot with water and add salt. Bring to a boil and cook until vegetables are tender. Sauté in 1/8 cup of oil:
2 Tablespoons chile powder
pinch of cayenne pepper
1 Tablespoon (20 ml) turmeric
1 Tablespoon (20 ml) cumin powder
1 Tablespoon (20 ml) coriander powder

Add to the soup. Add 1/8 cup (30 ml) minced garlic before serving.
(All amounts are approximate.)

Eggplant Pakoras

Eggplant is a vital food for women. These tasty pakoras make a delicious meal and help to regulate a woman's menstrual flow.

1 eggplant
2 cups garbanzo flour
1 Tablespoon (20 ml) caraway seeds
1 teaspoon oregano seeds
1 teaspoon cardamon seeds
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
2 teaspoons turmeric
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 cup (125 ml) milk
3/4 cup (185 ml) onion juice or puree
1/3 cup (80 ml) water
1/4 cup (60 ml) honey

Slice eggplant to about 3/8 inch (1 cm) thick and set aside. Mix seeds and spices with the garbanzo flour. Add onion juice and milk and stir into smooth paste. Mix with fork until there are no lumps. Dip the eggplant slices in the batter, then fry in vegetable oil or ghee until golden brown. Set on a paper towel to drain. Serve with catsup or chutney. Makes 4-6 servings.

Garlic Toast

Here is a tasty way to eat your "two cloves of garlic a day." Makes a great breakfast food.

2 slices whole grain bread
2-4 medium cloves garlic (or more!)
ghee

Peel and thinly slice garlic. Lightly toast bread in toaster. Spread liberally with ghee. Top with garlic slices. Place in broiler or toaster oven for no more than 5 minutes. Serve.
Variation: Top with grated cheese before broiling.

Yogurt Curry

To soothe and strengthen the nervous system, and to please the palate, try this delicious curry.

1 cup (250 ml) basmati rice
3 cups (750 ml) chopped mixed vegetables
1/4 cup (60 ml) minced ginger
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 small onions, finely chopped
1/2 cup (125 ml) ghee
1-1/2 teaspoon crushed yogi tea spices
1 Tablespoon (20 ml) turmeric
1/4 teaspoon oregano seeds
1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon garam masala
1 cup (250 ml) homemade yogurt
1/4 cup (60 ml) garbanzo flour

Rinse the rice and add 3 cups water and bring to a boil. Simmer for approximately 45 minutes. Steam chopped mixed vegetables until firm but tender. Blend yogurt and garbanzo flour with 1 cup (250 ml) water until smooth. Sauté spices in ghee until golden brown. Add chopped onion, garlic, and ginger. Cook slowly until onions are almost falling apart. Stir in yogurt-flour mixture. Simmer until sauce thickens.

Serve over rice and steamed vegetables. Serves 4.

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Solstice Diet

This diet, given by Yogi Bhajan, is enjoyed at the 3HO Summer and Winter Solstice Celebrations.

BREAKFAST
2 oranges
2 bananas
Solstice Soup

DINNER
Mung beans and rice (with masala, but no extra vegetables)
Solstice Hot Sauce
Steamed carrots (and beets, if desired)
1/2 head of iceberg lettuce

It is important to drink as much purified water as possible.

This diet alkalinizes the blood and is excellent for cleansing. It is high fiber, contains no dairy, wheat, sugar or processed foods, and the soup and hot sauce are both very spicy. This diet can be enjoyed at any time of year, but is specifically indicated for the Solstice periods, when the angle of the sun provides a unique opportunity for a more profound meditative experience.

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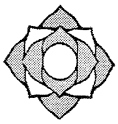
PART SEVEN

The Role of a Kundalini Yoga Teacher

CHAPTER 22



The Identity of a Kundalini Yoga Teacher

A Teacher is the one whom the pair of opposites does not affect. To the ugliest and to the most bountiful, he or she only gives blessings.

- YOGI BHAJAN

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Two Laws for the Kundalini Yoga Teacher

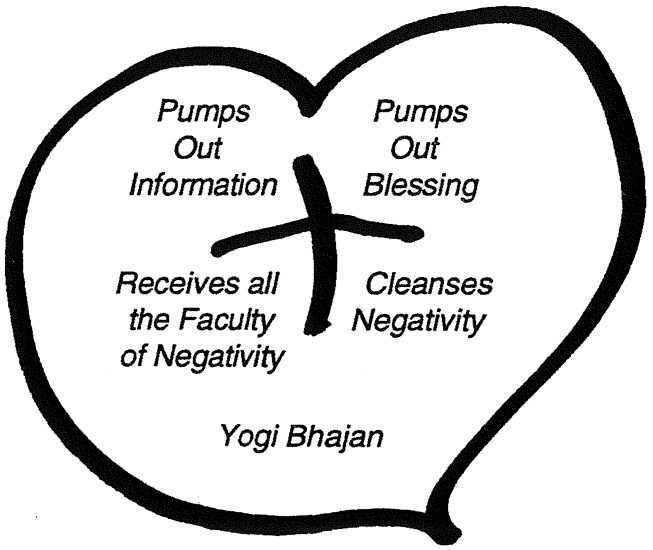
Law of Deliverance

Deliver the student to the Infinite, not to you. Elevate the student to the awareness of the Infinite within them. Connect the student to the flow of the teachings in Kundalini Yoga. That will always stay with them and support them.

Law of Sustenance

KEEP UP! Once you are the representative of a student's higher consciousness, never betray that projection. If you do, it is equivalent to a self-limiting karma that will give you a teacher who shall mislead you. Be like the Spirit: steady, timeless, graceful, and trustworthy.

"The Chambers of a Teachers Heart"



A Teacher Gives You Experience.
A Preacher Gives You Philosophy.

A Teacher's Identity

- A teacher gives you experience. A preacher gives you philosophy.
- A teacher is the personal honor of God Himself.
- A teacher is an institution for help, service, and raising people's consciousness, not an individual.
- A teacher must go through calamity with a radiant smile.
- A teacher deals with another person with a humble imperial majesty.
- A teacher appears in utmost grace. She or he doesn't try to appeal to the Earth.
- A teacher is straight, talks straight, and lives straight.
- A teacher has a width of heart and deep understanding.
- A teacher answers the call of duty with grace and compassion.
- As a teacher you must look smart, be smart, talk straight; never be right or wrong; always be neutral. Speak through your neutral mind.
- You can learn from a teacher by questioning, or you can learn from a teacher by blessing.
- Serve all, and all shall serve you.
- When confronted by negativity, take altitude, then change attitude.

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Serving the Consciousness of the Student

Teaching does not mean to direct or control a person. It is to serve his consciousness. You are not a teacher if you discriminate for any reason. Just stand by your right teaching, and allow the student to stand by his wrong, and communicate.

–YOGI BHAJAN

COMMENTARY: This describes the key to good teaching. If you are fortunate to have come to the feet of a true teaching, there is something that prevents you from becoming pompous, rigid, and self-righteous: *seva*! Seva is your selfless service to the students and the world. The key word here is selfless. Instead of holding your high ground, reach out and offer your hand. Speak and connect at the frequency of the student.

People are in pain, and they need the pain alleviated. They need to know that you can see that pain. If a person is hungry, first feed them. To a starving person food is God. Once they are satisfied and a little secure they can consider the possibility that God is food!

The ability to apply consciousness will make you a good teacher.

The Problem with Perfect Teachers

Some people say it is wrong to teach when you are not perfect. But history has recorded again and again "perfect" teachers who have fallen. They begin to think they are great. Their ego grows and breaks the link to the Golden Chain. The reason you teach is to be an instrument of the cosmic flow. Anyone who teaches to be a teacher rather than to serve, will fall. To be a teacher is the ultimate human end.

Before we teach, we all say "Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo." It means "O Lord Creator, Infinite Teacher, who is transparent and unseen, I bow to you." That sets the link. As it says in the scripture: "Teaching through the golden ray."

The problem is that Truth is infinite and cannot be captured in any mental or emotional imagination. Teaching is infinity. It is a flow of the same energy and reality. Therefore, no finite man can teach the truth. Through God's Grace, you may meet someone whom you will love beyond emotion, beyond dedication, whom you love for the sake of love. You are inspired to obey him, and this opens true selflessness in you.

–YOGI BHAJAN

COMMENTARY: Yogi Bhajan is a great teacher and channel for the awakening of truth in our consciousness. He reaches to the heart of the teachings. In this quote, he points out the main block and challenge to being a teacher. We identify "being a teacher" as a finite task, when it is infinite in its very nature.

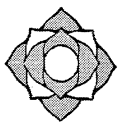
Anything that touches God and the sense of the unlimited becomes unlimited. If the role of a teacher is understood only as a professional trade, you will train good preachers but no teachers. A preacher can induce guilt and then talk about God and absolve you. But a teacher serves the God in you and will reveal your true self through the test and challenge of the discipline.

In this sense, we are training to play the finite role of a "professional" teacher as well as embodying the authentic reality of the "infinite" teacher. The professional must hone the skills of presentation and know the written teachings and philosophy. This is a legitimate part of being a teacher. It will vary greatly depending on circumstances, opportunities, and abilities.

The essential connection with the Guru (the Infinite Teacher) and the Golden Chain is the authentic part of being a teacher. It does not vary at all regardless of circumstance, personality, or ability.

If you are very nervous and concerned about being perfect and all-knowing before you can teach, that is your ego trying to take control. The teaching that you teach is infinite by nature. You cannot control it. You can only obey it or not. This habit of inner obedience to your higher consciousness is the fundamental art of technology of a teacher. The Guru is the concrete manifested path to encounter that consciousness and to develop a sensitivity to it.

Learn to sense the infinite in your finite role. Let go of your identification with your own success or failure.



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CODE OF ETHICS

of the **3HO International Kundalini Yoga Teachers Association & Kundalini Research Institute (KRI) • www.kundaliniyoga.com**

3 Guru Ram Das Place, Espanola, New Mexico 87532 • (505) 753-0423 • (505) 753-5982 (Fax) • ikyta@3ho.org

THE CODE OF EXCELLENCE OF A KUNDALINI YOGA TEACHER

We recognize that as teachers we are committed to the realization of our higher consciousness, and we wish to conduct our lives in a spirit of integrity. In *The Teachers Oath, The Definition of a Yogi, and The 16 Facets of Perfection of a Kundalini Yoga Teacher,* Yogi Bhajan gives us the guidelines for this journey of consciousness, the daily practice of which will support us as Kundalini Yoga Teachers.

The Teachers Oath

"I am not a woman." (Mercury finger down)

"I am not a man." (Sun finger down)

"I am not a person." (Saturn finger down)

"I am not myself." (Jupiter finger down)

"I am a teacher." (Thumb stays up)

The Definition of a Yogi

The Yogi is not affected by the opposite polarities of life–
neither by praise nor by slander, neither by riches nor by poverty,
neither by health nor by illness, neither by life nor by death.
The Will of God is the will of the Yogi. He or she surrenders
his or her personal will to the Will of God.
When Kundalini, the primal force of the Prana (life energy),
penetrates and prevails throughout the chakras,
the Yogi remains stable to the odds of Karma and
walks the even path of Dharma.
The Raj Yogi is a sage and a king in the face of all temptations,
situations, events, and environments.
Those who meditate on Guru Ram Das are blessed through
miracles to be royal sages throughout the ages.

Yogi Bhajan, September 1995

The 16 Facets of Perfection of a Kundalini Yoga Teacher

Sola Kalyan Sumpuran *Yogi Bhajan, September 1995*

1. A Teacher will never alter the teachings because of personal opinion. You will teach by example.

2. The higher you grow as a Teacher, the more humble you have to be.

3. The Teacher always serves the students, so they can become ten times stronger than you, because every student is a Teacher for tomorrow.

4. A Teacher has to be extremely kind, caring, compassionate, and forgiving.

5. As a Teacher you should always poke, provoke, confront, and elevate your students to excellence.

6. As a Teacher you have to continuously imagine, visualize, believe, expand in all directions, connect to everything, meditate, practice, and project that you are *Ang Sang Wahe Guru* ("With every limb, every part of me, I belong to the Divine."), and that the energy of Guru Ram Das is flowing through you.

7. As a Teacher you will always be in *Chardi Kala* (elevated spirits) and connected to your higher self, never caught in emotional turmoil. Count your blessings, not your curses. Always be graceful. Glow and grow.

8. As a Teacher you will continuously graduate towards the Divinity and Infinity that is the essence of your existence. You are not a human born for a spiritual search, you are a spirit, an Atma (soul), born for an experience as a human. Your purity and piety as an Atma is always maintained, protected, exalted, projected, as a priority over everything and kept in sight mentally, physically, and spiritually.

9. As a Teacher listen to, and obey all righteous teachings. If you read something, you will know it; if you write something, you will understand it; if you teach something, you will perfect it.

It is perfection of your deliverance that gives you grace as a Teacher. Your success as a Teacher lies not in what you know, but in what your student receives.

A Teacher is measured by the growth, dignity, and excellence of the student. If you find any talent, nurture it, teach it, exalt it to the best of your ability and divinity.

10. As a Teacher do not relate to ego or politics. Always relate to the spirit, soul, and essence of a person. Always relate to the intelligence, talent, and consciousness of a person. Always relate to the manners, methods, and mentality of a person. Pure thoughts are the way to universal knowledge and will make you bountiful, blissful, and beautiful.

11. God and Guru have blessed you with Karma (the law of cause and effect). As a Teacher you must offer yourself in Dharma (lifestyle of righteousness) to honor the gift of God of life. Never create a drift or rift between you and your Atma.

12. A Teacher wears white cotton clothing while teaching. White clothing makes you as a Teacher look divine and represent light. The color white represents the seven colors. Cotton is the flower of the Earth. It is good for your psyche, for your energy, and for your nervous system. Your way of dressing should be saintly and make you glow with grace. You should look like a sage and a prince or princess of peace and divinity. A Teacher is a Ph.D.–Prince or Princess of High Divinity.

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13. Just as a seed has to wither to become a tree and bear fruit, Teachers who do not become perfect students do not become perfect Masters.

14. The Universal Spirit that rotates the Earth can take care of all your problems. As a Teacher you have to learn trust and faith. Regard every breath of life as a gift. Strive for conscious breathing, breathing one breath a minute.

15. The banner of a Teacher is: "In God I dwell." The standard of arms of a Teacher is: "God within me I trust."

The honor of a Teacher is: "In the Name of God I serve."

The motto of a Teacher is: "Peace of mind and peace within the material world."

16. A Teacher needs to commit to Nam, the God-given identity.

Without Nam, you cannot have the purity of self and the divine projected grace to master all the elements.

Without commitment there is no character.

Without character there is no dignity.

Without dignity there is no divinity.

Without divinity there is no grace.

Without grace you cannot sacrifice or serve others. Your compassion and presence will not work, and you cannot be happy.

Remember once and for all, happiness is your birthright, and it is always right to be happy. So be happy, be healthy, and be holy.

We are all holy, because we all have nine holes. Adding two arms and two legs makes thirteen. You are born with thirteen, you will live with thirteen, you will die with thirteen. Thirteen (three and one) makes four–Cup of Prayer. Prayer is your power, your protector, and your provider. *Sat Nam*

THE CODE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF A KUNDALINI YOGA TEACHER

TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

It is the responsibility of the Teacher to maintain a professional relationship with students. This also applies to anyone assisting the Teacher or engaged in any related activities.

1. A Teacher recognizes the trust placed in, and unique power of the student-teacher relationship. A Teacher avoids any relationship with a student that could impair his or her professional judgment. He or she does not use the relationship for personal gain.

2. All forms of sexual involvement with students are unethical, even when a student invites or consents to such behavior. Sexual behavior includes, but is not limited to, all forms of overt and covert seductive speech, gestures, and behavior.

3. A Teacher does not engage in harassment, abusive words or actions, or coercion of students or former students.

4. A Teacher shows sensitive regard for the moral, social, and religious standards of students, and avoids imposing his or her personal beliefs on others.

5. A Teacher realizes that he or she is a vehicle for these teachings, never their source.

6. A Teacher strives to build the students' connection to the teachings and to their own souls, rather than to a personality. The teacher never considers him or herself a "guru," nor initiates anyone as a disciple.

7. A Teacher does not abandon or neglect students. If unable to continue a professional relationship, every reasonable effort is made to arrange continued instruction with another teacher.

8. A Teacher makes only realistic statements regarding the benefits of yoga.

9. A Teacher recognizes that the student-teacher relationship may involve a power imbalance, even with a student no longer studying with the teacher. Therefore, the teacher will use caution when entering into a personal relationship with a current or former student.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. A Teacher treats all communications with students with professional confidentiality.

CLASS STRUCTURE

1. A Teacher teaches a class as it was taught by Yogi Bhajan, with the exception of reducing the timing of postures, or providing variations of postures when necessary to accommodate limitations of students.

2. A Teacher does not create or invent postures or incorporate other teachings into a Kundalini Yoga class.

3. Acknowledging that we are part of the Golden Chain of Teachers, a Teacher begins each class by chanting *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo* at least three times, and ends with the Sunshine Sun song.

4. In class, a Teacher wears appropriate, modest, clean, white clothing.

5. Yogi Bhajan strongly encourages Teachers to wear a white head covering of natural fabric while teaching class, for his or her personal protection and upliftment when handling the powerful energies involved with teaching a Kundalini Yoga class.

6. A Teacher will always arrive prepared to teach the class and avoid being late.

7. A Teacher recognizes the tradition respecting the sacredness of yogic teachings, and encourages students to make an offering for each class.

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

The following guidelines uphold the quality of the Teachings and how they are represented, as well as protect against legal allegations arising from our actions, comments, or printed material:

1. A Teacher does not misrepresent his or her professional qualifications, affiliations, or falsely imply sponsorship or certification by any organization.

2. Announcements and brochures promoting our services describe them with accuracy and dignity. These promotional materials should not include exaggerated claims about the effects of yoga.

3. A Teacher does not make public statements which contain any false, fraudulent, misleading, deceptive, or unfair statements, or any statements intended or likely to exploit a student's fears, anxieties, or emotions.

4. A Teacher will represent him or herself, IKYTA, KRI, 3HO, and Yogi Bhajan, truthfully and accurately in all public relations, following the guidelines set from time to time by IKYTA, KRI, 3HO, or Yogi Bhajan for advertising that will correctly reflect the organization's mission.

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

1. A Teacher recognizes his or her individual boundaries of competence and is forthcoming about professional experience, qualifications, and credentials.

2. A Teacher is committed to the improvement of his or her professional knowledge and skills in order that his or her performance will better serve others. A teacher continues to actively practice Kundalini Yoga and update his or her skills, particularly as recommended or required from time to time by IKYTA.

3. A Teacher is committed to his or her personal spiritual development, and so will have a regular, daily spiritual practice.

4. A Teacher abstains from taking alcohol, tobacco, or drugs (except for medical purposes).

5. A Teacher practices the yogic tradition of eating a vegetarian diet.

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TEACHINGS OF THE MASTER
FROM LECTURES BY YOGI BHAJAN
Given to Teachers During Lectures in 1990

The Basic Personality of a Teacher

I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ALL WANT TO BECOME TEACHERS. Is that true? My job is to let you know what a Teacher is. I'll define it for you, and you can understand what kind of Teacher you want to become.

THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF A TEACHER

In the spiritual world, a Teacher is a guide and a water bearer, a carrier of the nectar of life. Did you know that as Teachers of Kundalini Yoga we tune in and take a mental oath before we teach? I never shared this with you before. ***"I am not a woman, I am not a man. I am not a person, I am not myself, I am a Teacher."*** *[As he demonstrated the oath, Yogi Bhajan raised the left hand and sequentially touched the little, ring, middle, and index finger tips. He extended the thumb on "I am a Teacher."]* Can you believe that? Your mental status has to fit with your oath. I don't think as Westerners you can even imagine taking that oath. At that time you act as a Teacher. Your earthly attachments and obligations, and the identity from which you normally act and react, are put aside. And you become a pure, undistracted channel to bring the Heavens through you. You act to serve the Heavens and your Infinite identity.

Then, close your eyes, roll them up slightly, concentrate at the Third Eye, the Sixth Chakra or *agia chakra*, and chant the Adi Mantra three times: *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo*. This is called Nadi Sodhana Kriya. *Kriya* means an action, *sodhana* means "to make something perfect," and *nadi* means all the channels of energy in the body and mind. This is a *kriya* whose action is to purify and perfect the channels of the body and mind so you can become a clear channel of the teachings, and not of your own ego trip.

Actually, all teachings are there to tell you to be yourself. But in this case, I am *not* myself. Then who are you? You are the vehicle. That's why the opening mantra of the class is *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo*. We don't say *Om Namo*. The difference between *Om* and *Ong* is that *Om* cannot be chanted, cannot be spoken. That's why Guru Nanak put *Ik* before it. *Ik Ong Kar*. It's the total permutation and combination to create that sound. We say, *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo*. "Oh, Creative Total Self, Oh Transparent (*Guru Dev*)." The One who is Transparent make me the transparent. *Guru* means: "The one who brings light into darkness." *Namo*: "I bow to you."

As a Teacher, when you decide or deal with anything, remember that you are a Teacher. Whenever you make a decision as a person, man or woman, you must remember that you are a Teacher. Whatever you say should be true. Your interest in another person should be to uplift him or her. When acting as a Teacher, it will be a deadly thing if any personal interest of your own is served, through any communication, direct, indirect, with any body signal, or any way. Do you understand? It should be totally for uplifting the other person who has given you the trust as a student. And if you care not, then remember: when you betray your student, whether he is dumb or wise, your next incarnation is as a cockroach.

You can satisfy your feelings, your dramas, your traumas, your missions, your dreams in many other ways. That's not a Kundalini Yoga Teacher. A Teacher is one who purifies a person to help the person gain the experience of *their* own purity, identity, infinity, reality, totality, strength, and piety. Once you serve and touch a student in a very pure manner with integrity and innocence, you elevate and give them their own inner experience—not yours. They will sustain that upliftment and they will be grateful to you forever. They will enjoy life in depth because their perception and capacity becomes greater with Kundalini Yoga.

You can satisfy your feelings, your dramas, your traumas, your missions, your dreams in many other ways. That's not a Kundalini Yoga Teacher. A teacher is one who purifies a person to help the person gain the experience of his or her own purity, identity, infinity, reality, totality, strength, and piety.

So it is a very, very difficult job to even call yourself a Teacher, and then cheat on yourself, and not act to its fundamental rule and law.

I know in the Western world you don't even understand what I am saying. You think cheating is what suits your emotions and feelings. But remember, as a Teacher, anything and everything which you do, must upgrade the other person.

You can live your life; you can have many relationships. You may be husband and wife, but not Teacher and student. You can be father and son, not Teacher and student. You can be brother and brother, not Teacher and student. You can be brother and sister, not Teacher and student. I'm not going into the philosophy of it; I'm going into the reality of it. It is a very realistic, simple thing.

In the oath, 'woman' comes first, because the entire creativity of the universe depends on the female. The Teacher is a creator of a creativity in the other person. You have to create, nurture, mature, deliver, and grace it. It's a long procedure. So you embrace a process in which you grow the Truth, capacity and Infinity in another person, up to the Infinite.

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SELF-INITIATION

As a Teacher you are not responsible to a student just here and now, tomorrow or yesterday. It's a relationship, from now unto Infinity and beyond. Nobody becomes the student of anybody without the direct Will of God. Period. Especially in Kundalini Yoga, we do not even initiate a student. Never have, never will. And whosoever shall do it, will have the wrath of God. You never initiate. Never, ever. If a person is that dumb, that much of an idiot, that he or she cannot initiate themselves, they are not worth initiating. That's the process. The student has to come to you.

NOTHING HAPPENS WITHOUT A TEACHER

You think a Teacher does nothing. Actually nothing happens without a Teacher. A person who doesn't have a Teacher has no life. Period. Whatever is the frequency, scope, and ultimately the standard of your Teacher shall be yours. Otherwise, there is a permanent Teacher called Mr. Time.

The psychology of a Teacher is that he or she is a vehicle, a person who has totally dissolved himself or herself to let the nectar of life flow, in order to nurture another human being, so that being can understand the love and the realization of Infinity without any reference to fear.

Sometimes Teachers become show pieces, like in a business. "How many students have you got? How much money is there? How many ashrams are there?" That is not how a Teacher is judged or understood. You have the right to meet your Teacher, to quiz him, answer his questions, and get your doubts cleared at that time. You have one chance in life.

The psychology of a Teacher is that he or she is a vehicle, a person who has totally dissolved himself or herself to let the nectar of life flow, in order to nurture another human being, so that being can understand the love and the realization of Infinity without any reference to fear.

God promised you two things. When the soul was asked to go to the Earth and take a body, the soul cried and asked God, "In this separation, suppose I leave my attachment to You and get into the cycle of life and birth? I don't want to. This is my final trip. Why do I have to lose my sight of that?" At that moment God gave the Mind. The human mind is absolutely impulsive, and very, very intuitive.

You have been given the sense of intuition for your protection. Animals have a sense of impulse. You don't have that. You are impulsive for actions only, not for strategy. You have intuition for strategy. Therefore your mind is intuitive and impulsive both. Whereas an animal's mind is impulsively intuitive and intuitively impulsive, that is a combination you don't have. You are two separate areas. So you intuitively can think and guide your life. That's your personality. But without intuition, you are just in a rut like a herd of sheep going in the wrong direction. You cannot separate yourself. You have no hooves, no claws, no horns, no skin, no kicking power—nothing. You cannot defend yourself. The human skin is a very sensitive, breathing, and vulnerable. It has no protection. That's why we always have to protect ourselves. Throughout history we have worn armor and that sort of thing.

Even today we require different kinds of suits to protect ourselves, and different types of clothing to show our sensuality and sexuality, or to impress. *Perawa*, they call it. You can absolutely project yourself by what you wear. *Perawa* is very important to a human; it is ingrained in us. What you wear as a behavior, what you wear as clothing, what you wear as a habit. You can make yourself disciplined in any way you like.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A TEACHER

The personality of a Teacher is above Time and Space. Never say something which only suits or pleases "now." Sometimes you have to say things which are hurtful and very, very painful. The only thing you can do is say them with a smile. A Teacher is responsible for the growth of the student. All a student can do is to accept you as a Teacher. That's it. You are stuck. Thereafter he has no obligation except obedience. If you see your student doing wrong, and you don't have the guts or the courage to say, "You are doing a dirty job, you idiot. You are going to end up in hell," you have goofed—he has not.

Sometimes you don't know your responsibilities. You think a Teacher comes to a yoga class, puts his legs up, or head down. No my dear, that is just a moment in the exercise. You have two options. When a student accepts you as a Teacher, you have an obligation to see that his morals, his ethics, and his understanding become Infinite, not universal. It is only under the Infinite circumstances that the person will be kind and compassionate, courageous and noble, gracious and giving. You can only achieve that by being direct. In other words, whatever you have to say psychologically, say it simple, straight, and with a smile—no matter how ugly it is.

You are in a business, but you are not in show business, where you have to act like somebody else. You have to act as you, and from the very soul of you, with a definite honest grip. You cannot say, "This is a rich student, this is a poor student, this is an ugly student, this is a beautiful student." You are not dating or marrying somebody. You are teaching. For you, you are a

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Teacher, and everybody's a student, irrespective of their class, creed, color, money, status, or anything. You shall not differentiate or diffuse. If you don't know the destiny of a person, just help him to find it himself or herself. If you know it, say so and stick with it.

But people come and go. You must understand they come by the Will of God, and they go by the Will of God. This is how it happens. God has promised every soul that they shall meet their Spritiual Teacher once in their lifetime. He didn't promise that Teacher will accept him. He didn't promise that he will recognize him. There were only two promises: The soul got the mind, and it will meet its guide. Period. Until you meet your guide, you cannot graduate in this lifetime. That's the law—just how people might go to school, and sell drugs, or stay in their dormitory, and never show up for school or attend a single class. So on Earth, we do the same things. Sometimes we go AWOL, or like in school, become truants, or drop-outs.

BECOMING A FORKLIFT

Students have the right to goof, to do whatever they do. You shall not respond, except with what is in the best interest of the student. You will never deal with a student at his same level. You will never react to a student. If a student abuses you, if for two hours the student calls you names, you shall answer as if nothing has happened. You have no right of vindictiveness, and you have no right of revenge. Nor can you throw a student away, because you are debarred from any reaction whatsoever.

Just look at your oath: *"I'm not a woman, I'm not a man, I'm not a person, I'm not myself."* So what are you? *"I'm a Teacher."* Can you believe this? So you give up all your known and unknown rights as a human to begin with. The forklift fits my definition of what I understand is a Teacher. The guy goes to ground-level with his prongs, picks up the thing, puts it on the line, gets hold of it, burns his own gas, keeps his things moving, oils his pulleys, levers, and chains, and gets the job done.

It's a very unique relationship. It is what love actually means. These sexual, sensual, personal gains and losses are beautiful. I appreciate you can have them all. But they are on this Earth. They don't go with you as a Teacher.

SHINING THE SOUL OF THE STUDENT

The question is very simple—you are the shoeshine man, and you have to shine the soul of the person. I have seen in the airport, how all the person does is sit in that chair and put his shoes out. Right? The man doesn't even ask, "What do you want?" He knows what to do. That is the status of the Teacher. He doesn't care if a black person sits down; he doesn't care if a white person sits; he doesn't care if you have dirty shoes; he doesn't care if you have ordinary shoes. If you simply have sneakers, he knows that he is not going to polish sneakers. He knows it. He'll just dust them and let the guy go.

If somebody's full of shit, and you see it, you can't say it. Let me tell you in American language. It's not your job to find out a person's mistake and tell him, "You are dirty, you are ugly, you are low down, you are a whore, you are a pimp." All those abusive languages you can use as a human; but you cannot tell any such defect, no matter how truthful it may be, to your student. No way! You are supposed to correct it! By saying it, you are bringing it to somebody's notice. It's a responsible talk. Otherwise you are causing a confrontation. And you shall not be in confrontation with your students, doesn't matter what it costs you.

The forklift fits my definition of what I understand is a Teacher. The guy goes to ground-level with his prongs, picks up the thing, puts it on the line, gets hold of it, burns his own gas. keeps his things moving, oils his pulleys, levers, and chains, and gets the job done.

THE PRAYER OF THE TEACHER

Anything said in confidence between you and your student should not be revealed, even at the point of your death. You shall carry a certain nobility. Whatever a student gives you, you shall not use it for personal purposes, but for prayer purposes. Everything that comes to you as a Teacher, comes to God directly. You are the custodian. And whatever defects you see in a student, it is your job to correct it —not confront it, not to lay it out. You cannot curse your student, it doesn't matter how deadly wrong they are to you.

This is your prayer, so please write it down:

"Those who I was supposed to teach and am unable to, for my faults or for their faults, I ask Thee, Oh Lord, to forgive me, and serve them in my place. Protect them and grace them by Thy visit. Help them and elevate them by Thy spirit. And make them prosperous and happy so they can recognize Thee."

That is your prayer. This you say every day. You may pray for yourself or not; you may pray for your student or not. That has nothing to do with this prayer. This prayer is a part of you, because you are nothing but a human being, used for the well-being of a person who calls himself "student."

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ITARASHTAM TITHAR KUSHTAM

"If You Come Empty-Handed, You Shall Go Empty-Handed"

There is a toll road in Kundalini Yoga. You pay first, then you enter. *Itarashtam tithar kashtam*. If you ever come empty handed, you shall go empty handed. It's a law which should never be broken. You should share freely, but never receive the student empty handed–that's the law. A student must not come to you empty handed. He may bring a leaf, or he may bring a million dollars. But he must not come to a Teacher without an offering.

You should share freely, but never receive the student empty handed—that's the law. A student must not come to you empty handed.

If a person shall come empty-handed, he may sit there for six hours and do all kinds of yoga, but the moment he goes out of that door, he'll go empty-handed. That's the only condition, and it's not up to you or me.

And that offering is not for you. That offering must go on the altar, and you must pray. It means for the sake of that gift you are hired. It is not your personal property. Never was, never is, never shall be. It'll be always used for noble causes. Do you understand? It is called *gurudakshina*. At the sight of the Teacher, before uttering a word, you give, you offer a present.

Why? I have figured it out. It is the most seflish thing a student can do. When you bring him a present, he has to receive it. It's obligatory. He has to see it. That is *darshanee*. He has to speak something. That is *baykaree*. And that can only be a blessing: "Bless you, thank you." So you meet him under a very elevated state. And that gift does it.

When I first started teaching in Los Angeles, there used to be the kind of students who didn't believe in money and never had any. I used to have some rich students, also. The rich were very rich, and the poor were very poor. That's the kind of class I used to have. So how did I fulfill the law? I used to take money from our account, cash it into coins, and throw them around in the parking lot. So when those students came to the door, they would say, "Hey man, I can't pay. I don't believe in this. What is this? He is spiritual. How can he ask for money? Why should we pay?" They were angry and abusive. But the man at the door would say, "Why don't you go out and find some money?" They would say, "Where am I going find it?" And the man at the door would say, "No, no, no. Just look around. Try to find it." They would go out, they would find about two, three dollars. It was $1.50 for the class. They'd put that money in the basket, and the rest of the money they would keep in their pockets.

So this is how we stuck with that principle. You must understand, fifteen such people out of fifty would be in the class, would use the filthiest language, abusive connotations and insults, and still it used to be a privilege to stand at the door. But we kept our rule, calmly, quietly, and without reaction.

One man took hold of me after class, and said, "I understand, man, you are a big macho dude." I said, "What is the problem?" He said, "You throw the money on the ground and make us pick it up and pay you. What is going on?" I said, "It is not for my sake. It is so that you can have a grace that you earned the teachings."

DIP-LOW ON THE MAT

You have to be very diplomatic. Dip-low on the mat. Don't break your bones. Be nice to these people. The student has the right to be angry, to be nasty, to be abusive, to be treacherous, to betray, to be violent. He has all the rights, and you have no rights, except one. Write it down and remember it forever:

"The Rule of the Teacher is: You shall elevate the students' consciousness. You shall not protect yourself—let the Hand of God protect you."

That's it. The student can accuse you, abuse you, tell you what he wants, do whatever he wants. If you ever raise your hand, you will raise it to bless him–that's the obligation. That's the first standard rule of a Teacher. You shall not protect yourself; you let the Hand of God protect you. If you don't believe in that, forget it. Is that clearly understood? And you shall cause no harm and injury indirectly or directly. You shall not reveal any secret given to you in confidence by the student, and you shall always uplift the spirit, the surroundings, and the environments of your student, without any cause of injury to his and her future, present, or past.

It will be very foolish on the part of a Teacher if he expects anything from the student. You have the right to expect from God, whose servant you are. Ask God. Let the Hand of God protect you. If you protect yourself, if you interfere with that Hand, you protect at *your* level, *your* capacity, *your* frequency, and *your* power, which is too meager. It's not worthwhile. This needs faith. It needs trust. It needs a will to sacrifice, no matter what. It happens. You shall not fail if you understand this principle.

Just remember: every noble cause has its own power to solve itself. You are just a vehicle. Your touch is required. Don't worry, it's all pre-destined. Goodness does not need recommendation. Remember this: Good behavior, good personality, good manners, good methods, good speaking; all that is good contains God in it. G-O-D. God. G-O-O-D. Good. It's just God plus "o." You simply have to organize on the Earth so it can be just nice.

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KUNDALINI YOGA: LIVING AS A SAINT, A SOLDIER, *AND* SUCCESSFUL

So very briefly, I am just giving you the A-B-C's of a Kundalini Yoga Teacher. Kundalini Yoga is a source of life and happiness, prosperity, nobility, and courage. It's effective; it's practical; it does change a person. But there's a little trouble. It widens your scope; it makes you big. It's as simple as that. It makes the dormant active; that's what kundalini does. It uncoils your watch of time to tick right. It's the ultimate science. There's no discipline in it that you have to be celibate the rest of your life or you cannot marry, or not have children. Actually it is a yoga for a householder who wants to be a saint and a soldier, *and* prosperous and successful at the same time, taking care of everything. It has created miracles in the last twenty years in the United States. This is what I see is true: *Dhan Dhan Ram Das Gur, Jin Siriaa Tinai Savaariaa, Pooree Hoee Karaamaat Aap Sirajanaa Haaray Dhaariaa.* "Great, great is Guru Ram Das." *Jin Siriaa Tinai Savaariaa.* "Whosoever has heard him, has become perfect." *Pooree Hoee Karaamaat.* "The miracles have perfected themselves." *Aap Sirajanaa Haaray Dhaariaa.* "God Himself has come in and prevailed through this manifestation."

This is not gossip. This is not to inspire you. It's not to butter you up. It's not to cheer you up. This is the truth.

KEEPING THE STUDENT AWAKE!

So please remember, no matter how beautiful you look in your mirror, either to boyfriends or girlfriends, to husbands and relatives, or to your state and environment, that's all you. But as a Teacher, you have to only look to one commitment: you are a forklift for that space, for that time, for that person who is before you. There's nothing wrong with becoming emotional, commotional, a little angry sometimes, yell and scream in order to do one thing—your job is to keep the person awake. That's it. It's a yoga of awareness. Keep him awake.

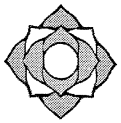
You control nothing, and you claim nothing. Whenever you will control or claim, you'll be blamed and disreputed.

Like what they do in the hospital. They start slapping the patient's cheeks. "Hey John, look at me! John, look, please, open your eyes! Do you hear me?" A Teacher is nothing more than that. They know if for another ten minutes this guy does not close his eyes and doesn't sink in, he's going to make it. This moment confronts a Teacher all the time. You know those emergency paramedics? You are the paramedics of the soul to deliver it to its own glory. It's *own* Glory! You control nothing, and you claim nothing. Whenever you will control or claim, you'll be blamed and disreputed. All the doctor wants is for somebody to go home to his family and say, "Hello." The patient may then do whatever he may have to; he may go and dance and drink and party, all of which is anti-medical advice. But all the doctor wants is for his patient to go home. He doesn't want a person to remain in the hospital for the rest of his life and die with bedsores. Do you follow?

MESSENGER OF THE TEACHINGS

And there should be no ego. "I am a Teacher!" No. You are just a messenger of the teachings, whatever they are. Has the postman always delivered letters and come into the living room and had intercourse with your wife and slapped your kids, eaten your food, and stolen your things? Why do you think you have the right? You have absolutely no right. You have one privilege, that you will deliver the message as the postman delivers it. There is already a stamp on it. It is none of your business. God is sending it to you. And also remember, it is not only for the student; it is your test, too. Don't feel superior. Superior is the student who has come to you. Superior you are when you deliver him. So baby, you have a long journey to go. Take the honest responsibility.

Have you seen me teaching? I just see when the arcline becomes gold and blue, and the crystal clear white comes through. It doesn't matter where I am—I just stop it. That's enough. But I must deliver a person to that point. And I have done it when I am very, very sick myself, and all I wanted was to go home and sleep. "Thou shalt answer the call of duty." You have not said, "I shall..." That's one place where you are God. "Thou shalt answer the call of duty," and you'll do it beautifully.



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NOW AFTER THIS INTRODUCTION, how many of you want to be Teachers? *[Laughter.]* I just want to be very sure that you understand what is involved in being a Teacher. And I want to assure you, that once you develop this personality, there is nothing you will not enjoy. Your life shall be fulfilled, and you shall enjoy every bit of it. That is the real life. The rest is a hassle.

If the Hand of God has guided you to become a Teacher, take this privilege and carry it on to the hilt. And don't stop for any other temptation. A human has his mission, his manners, and magnitude, and that has to be complete.

Normally as human beings, we become very personal in things. We involve ourselves, over-involve ourselves, under-involve ourselves. We have judgement, hatred, love, affection. All those human weaknesses are in us. But that you can only use as human. Just keep that out of your role as a Teacher. It's just like when you wear the gown and wig of a judge, and you sit and listen, listen, listen. You let everybody have a fair trial, a fair chance, and then you deliver the judgment.

So it is very important that a student can run away and come back, run away and come back. Say and not do, do and not say. It's all admissible. But for you, you have only three things. As they say in real estate: location, location, location. For you the three things are: be consistent, be consistent, be consistent. You have absolutely no option to vary yourself.

Questions & Answers with the Master on the Identity of a Teacher

Now you may ask any questions you have, so that I can answer you. Please feel free.

Question: Is there a difference between a Master and a Teacher?

Answer: Some people become Masters in one second. Some do not become Masters for many, many lifetimes. So the difference is simply when your attitude becomes ultimate, that you are just to uplift, and uplift, and uplift–that's what the Master does. And it is done with a Master's touch. But when you start teaching with a low key hustle, and an inverted "conness," and promote yourself–that kind of stuff, you are trying to promote the teachings as a Teacher, but you are not very sure that you are who you are.

Actually, the difference between a Teacher and a Master is self-assurance–how much you trust yourself. If you trust yourself ultimately, you are the Master. If you don't, you'll have some little doubt here and there, then you will be variable. Am I clear?

BE SURE OF YOUR IDENTITY AS THE TEACHER

Question: What is the best answer to a student who asks me something after a class which I am not sure about?

Answer: You are the Teacher. You are not a person. You are not debating the question and answer as a person with a personal and private opinion. If you are not sure, don't be sure. If you don't feel like answering the question, then just say, "I don't want to answer that." You are the Teacher. There is no gun to your head. You can ask for an extension of time and come back with the answer after you discover it.

People fill themselves with doubts of all kinds. That is the beauty of Kundalini Yoga. It doesn't ask about your class, creed, status, time, and personality. If you press the right buttons and use the right sequences, there shall be the right experience. It is certain. It comes from the pure vitality of Infinity which is the nature of the inner status of the kundalini as timeless, selfless, and beingless.

As you grow and become projective in your psyche, you will also become attractive. You may think this will not happen, but it will. You will attract many things to you. You may not always like it, and it may challenge you, but you asked for it in your projection.

HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE GOLDEN CHAIN

Question: Sometimes I am not sure if the lesson I am teaching is accurate.

Answer: Who wants you to be sure or unsure? That is a stupid thing. You have seated yourself on the stage, tuned in hypnotically to your role as a Teacher, and linked with the Golden Chain. The first thing you did was to chant *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo*. Then let the Will of God and Guru come through. Don't worry. You are serving in the name of Infinity. If the Heavens do not come through you, then they are stupid Heavens. Your doubts are only personal. Somebody is going to come through and serve. That's why God is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. Do you understand that the sun gives sunshine to the deserving and the undeserving alike? Just remember one thing: whether you are deserving or not, if you sit on the seat of a Teacher; you cannot sit there unless God has decided to bestow that honor. Do not teach your personality. Teach through it. Be a vehicle and let it flow. You don't need certainty or a registered letter.

If you sit on the seat of a teacher, God has decided to bestow that honor. Do not teach your personality. Teach through it. Be a vehicle and let it flow.

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TRUST YOUR EXPERIENCE

Question: What if I teach a set I have not specifically mastered and practiced? Does the same attitude apply to something I haven't personally experienced?

Answer: You will experience it! If you are a Teacher with a concentrated mind, you'll experience it in seconds. You started with the purity, piety, and impact of the Adi Mantra. You used that to bring past, present, and future into an elevated status in Time and Space. You may not understand the beauty of what you are doing, but over time you will realize how incredible it is. That initial link gives you insurance. I have seen someone take a yoga manual and teach in class a set they haven't practiced. They got so high they forgot what to teach next in the sequence. The yoga works. The margin for performance is about 11 percent. The insurance from the Golden Link is about 33 percent. There is no problem.

MONEY IS A MEDIA

Question: Does charging money somehow lose the purity of the Teachings?

Answer: No, no, no, no. Money doesn't make it lose the purity. If you are too greedy, and not within the balance, that is different. But money is not the problem. People give you money for your job. People give money for many things. Money is a media. Money is not something that if you go and teach a class, there will be money. You teach; money will come. Everything will come. Money? What are you talking about? Things beyond money come.

When you become a professional Teacher, kings come and bow and take a privilege to kiss your feet. I'll tell you the definition of a Teacher. A Teacher is one person to whom God comes Himself and bows. I'm not exaggerating the definition. You are talking of money or privileges or chances. Who prevails through a Teacher? God. The Teacher is a vehicle. It's not the pipe; it's the water running through it, which nurtures life. So if you have a waterline in the house, won't you protect it?

A Teacher is not a lonely personality. It is the elementary identity. It shall be provided all atmopshere and hemispheres.

A Teacher is not a lonely personality. It is the elementary identity. It shall be provided all atmosphere and hemispheres. That's a law which God shall serve. No human can serve a Teacher because they are His agents. They are not humans. They have taken an oath, "I'm not a woman, I'm not a man, I'm not a person, I'm not myself." What are you? "I'm a Teacher." Do you understand? After that, if God doesn't come through, shame on Him. It's not your job. We have taken an infinite oath; let the infinite come through. Where's the duality? Duality is in our own fear. Set your sail and let it go. Check it out. Make it your lifestyle. See what comes.

On the other hand, be careful. Keep accounts correctly. That's sometimes the trouble with a Teacher. So many things come, so many people come, so many temptations, so many gifts, so much! Ooooh! It's load after load after load after load. Be careful that you do not get under it. Keep above it! Teacher and opportunity, that's the test of maya. Just a little polite, little up, you'll be fine. Trust me. I went through it.

I had absolutely no idea to become a Teacher. I was a Teacher, so I did not want to become a Teacher in the West. And your dollars did not bring me here. I am very poor here. Nothing attracted me. I had all the money and all the authority in the world. I had no problem with my life before I came.

Nobody tells a Teacher, "You can't teach," if one is a Teacher.

A TEACHER IS A TEACHER

Question: So if I have a desire to teach...

Answer: No, desire is a different thing. Desire is to desire. Teacher is a Teacher. Teacher has no desire.

Question: So it's a destiny? So if you have a calling, and you feel some kind of destiny...

Answer: No, you don't feel. You don't have a calling. It happens! Don't you understand? There's a blueprint, a mold you get in.

I'll tell you my own story. I never had any idea that I'd come to the West—never. I knew the West very well. When you work in Customs, you get to know people and cultures so well, because everybody comes to you. So why to go to anybody? But it was in my horoscope that one day I would go to the West, that I would do this, this, and I'd become this, and blah, blah, blah. I used to joke about it. Sometimes I would tell my wife, "The day is coming when I have to lecture to Westerners." She would say, "How will that happen?" I'd say, "I'll go to Palim Airport, and all planes will get tied in. So all these people will be in the transit lounge. I'll sit on the bar, and I'll give them some lecture to calm them down. Isn't that what it means?" And she would say, "It looks like." I would say, "That's the only way I can sit on a hot plate and teach these Westerners. What else am I going to teach? They're not going to come to the Himalayas to learn yoga from me. And I'm not going to go to some academy to lecture. I am a uniformed officer."

So that's how we used to talk. Believe me or not, it came

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exactly true. In a canyon in New Mexico they made a big mound of earth and stones, put a blanket on it, made a seat for me to sit, and I taught my first class. It was exactly on that day, exactly 12 hours difference. Not one second off. It happened.

One day I was asking some students to do cat-cow. One man went over to a girl and did a full intercourse, before I could get up from my seat. I went to him and I said, "What are you doing?" He said, "She didn't mind. Why are you minding?" I never knew who I was teaching. That was my first experience. And Shakti was witness another time. I was in a teepee. I went at 3:00 a.m. to take a bath in a cold river. I came back, and there were two or three couples doing something in my teepee. I said, "Shakti, hell is happening inside." We were who we were. I went through all this.

It doesn't matter. I used to walk in West Hollywood. They used to shout at me, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ?" I said, "Yes, I do." "No! I know you don't!" I said, "How do you know I don't?" "Well, who was he?" I said, "He was the son who sat on the right side of the Father."

Ultimately the end is to sacrifice for others and go on the cross. In the end, you always burn at the stake. There's no other way. You just do it for others. The choice is yours, but that's the highest choice. If you accept in the name of God to be for others, that's all. In my experience, that makes you a Teacher. But if you have your own personal damn thing in it, then you are in trouble. That's all. No big deal.

And for me, there was only one thing. Either go and teach the Russians parapsychology, endurance, intuition, and all that. So I called a Canadian friend, and said, "I am in trouble. Government is going to do this to me, and I don't want to go." He said, "Resign and go to Canada." So we made all the arrangements and I came to Canada to become a very good professor. Nothing happened. I was left with nothing. I didn't even have shoes. I glued paper together and put string around it to wear in the 45 minus Centrigrade temperature. It was Toronto, cold like death. But I didn't have any trouble. I used to sing, "One day the day shall come when all the glory shall be Thine. People shall say, 'It is yours,' I shall deny, 'not mine.'"

When you are a Teacher, you just sit there, you become the hub, and everything comes.

A lot of people have tried to become Teachers. I didn't see them going anywhere. Let God try it for you, and you just deliver. Honey, when labor pains come, delivery is not far away. That's the law, and nobody can deny it, and that's the way the world happens. Then that's the way delivery happens, and that's the way we are all born, and when that itch comes to become a Teacher, you become a Teacher.

When the itch is there to become a Teacher, just don't goof. Just become. That's it. Don't look left, don't look right, don't look up, don't look down. Just become so.

Question: As a Teacher, how do you know who your students are?

Answer: You never have to know. Students always know where the Teacher is. The Teacher doesn't know where students are. They come. Do you want to know what it is? Put honey somewhere. See how many flies come and where they come; mark their tracks. You'll spend a lifetime doing it. When a Teacher will appear, students shall come.

BEING IMPERSONALLY PERSONAL

Question: Can you discuss some of the ways to uplift people.

Answer: Uplift? Keep up and uplift. What more than that do you want to know? When you do impersonal things personally, it's very uplifting. You must understand, *Beej mantra sarb ko giaan.* "In the very seed everybody has the knowledge." A student always knows whether you are talking personally, or talking personally for that person's purpose. If that is a personal purpose, if you are talking to him personally, you will be talking impersonally. Talk personal things impersonally—and you'll serve the purpose. But when you talk personal things personally, that's where you mess up. Then you are at the same level of the student. Then who's the Teacher?

When you talk as a Teacher, you are talking personally, impersonal stuff. Because you have it; the other person doesn't have it. You are going to give it. So, till the other person experiences it, it is very foreign to that person.

Those files are in the akashic record, who is Teacher and who is student. That office is not on the planet Earth or in its vicinity.

Question: Can you explain the difference between instructors and practitioners?

Answer: Instructors are those who are trying to find the experience. Practitioners are those who have experience and are instructing. The Masters are those who know all and do very little. You must understand, a Master will become personally involved very little, and in very rare promises which are done in the Heavens and to be executed on Earth. He normally doesn't get involved. And you'll find him very ambiguous and talking in parables, because he cannot interfere directly.

Because, you must understand, for a Master there is fate and destiny standing side by side on which the life of a student runs.

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The Master's job is to keep the student on the side of his destiny, and avoid the fate. But the Master cannot eliminate the fate. If he eliminates the fate, the student has to die, because he's liberated. Liberated means to drop the body. It's a one-second job. The Master does not have to kill anybody; he does not have to curse anybody; he does not have to kiss anybody. All he has to say is, "Fate, fall apart," and the person is liberated. Two words are very easy to say. But that drama is not over. So you have to carry the responsibility between the destiny and the fate. The distance has to be travelled. That's why suicide, killing, or murder is considered wrong. They say it is a sin, of a sin, of a sin—multiple sin. It is not a good thing. Because "x" amount of life is given as a pranic gift which has to be consumed.

JUST KEEP UP AND CARRY THE BASKET

As a Teacher you can't have consequences. Therefore don't start the sequence. You carry the basket and keep the bottom intact. That's a law in life. You don't cross that line of the law.

As a Teacher just imagine you are taking a big basket filled with frogs, loaded from the bottom, one under, one over. If somebody jumps out, it is up to them. You carry the basket and the frogs. How many can you carry to their destination? Just be careful. Don't even estimate. Those who stick to that basket, will get beyond there. Those who jump out, it's their privilege. You owe no obligation there.

One day I got very mad. I said, "People have destiny. They have to go to the destiny. Destiny, where are you?" Destiny stood up and said, "What?" And alongside him stood the fate. Fate said, "What is it, Yogi ji? What is wrong with me? You don't like me? Me and Destiny are sisters. We are Siamese twins, you can't separate us. Don't even try. What she loses, I gain. Please let us play the game."

So don't worry about those who "leave." You always think students are your investment. Absolutely not. It's your karma. It's a privilege to teach. It's not a right. It's the highest honor. You teach, irrespective of who knows you are a Teacher or not, who pays you respect or not. It doesn't matter. It's none of your business. Does the Sun ask, "How much income tax did you pay last year? That much heat I'll give you." No, sunshine shines on the poor and rich, on the bad and good, all equal. That's the law.

BECOMING THE MASTER

When I became a Master, I was not expecting it. I just came out and said, "I am the Teacher," because my Master told me so. It can happen that way, too. One day I was asked to see my Teacher at a certain hour. I said, "What kind of meeting is this?" He said, "It is an audience." I said, "Uh oh, it must be something terrible," because you were only granted an audience after 12 years and I had mine just a few years ago. I said, "Oh, God's Will will prevail." He said, "What do you expect?" I said, "Something really unbelievably heavy."

So the next day I went and bowed and sat before my Teacher. I sat and sat. Finally, he opened his eyes and he said, "Bhajan, so far, the Heavens have told me truth, shall always tell me the truth, and Heavens shall know the truth." I knew he said those phrases when he wanted you to do something unbearable. So in my mind I was saying, "*Wahe Guru, Wahe Guru, Wahe Guru.*" I said to myself, "Today, Mr. Yogi Baba, it's trouble direct and complete." But I just kept my mouth shut. All I said was, "Yes, my Sir. Yes my Sir, Yes my Sir."

Finally he said, "Well, you are the Master now, with one condition." I said, "Uh oh, what is that condition?" He said, "You shall not live in this land, but in another land. You shall not come to see me because I shall live a very sinful, ugly and dirty life to which you shall not be a part. You will not come and see me for my blessings or for my audience. Clear?" I said, "Yes, Sir." I was in the habit of saying "Yes, Sir," to everything.

So I came out and everyone who was standing there asked, "What happened?" I said, "He declared me as a Master." They said, "What does that mean?" I said, "Don't you hear me? Bow!" Everybody knelt down and bowed. I said, "I am the Master. That's it! He said so. You all hear it. That's it. Nothing else happened."

OBEY, SERVE, LOVE, EXCEL

There was a habit to obey. That's what the law is: obey, serve, love, and excel. I didn't make up that law. It's a law from Infinity to Infinity. And all virtues are in those who obey. *Manai kee gat kahee naa jaa-eh, jai ko kahai pichhai pachhutaa-eh.* "Those who obey, their grace cannot even be written. If somebody even tries it, he fails." These are the words of Nanak, not mine. You can read them right in his *Japji*. After seeing that, I don't think there is any question. It's true.

For Easterners, obeying the impossible is the test of our wisdom, our endurance, our grit, our virtue, our accomplishment, our achievement —a chance of grace.

For Westerners, obedience is a kind of slavery, a kind of hassle, kind of out of your chartered commission, out of your planned day. For Easterners, obeying the impossible is the test of our wisdom, our endurance, our grit, our virtue, our accomplishment, our achievement—a chance of grace. It's just to prove to myself that I have done something. It's an elevating

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experience. Do you understand that I was the son of a great man, and I was a great man myself, yet when my Teacher told me, "How fast can you go up that tree?" I went up there. And he said, "When I come back, you will come down," and he came back three days later. Now, just understand what you can do and what you can't do for three days and three nights straight up in a tree. When he came back, he laughed and said, "Hey, you have survived. Come down, let's go." He never even cared how it was, how I did it, and what happened to me. He never said, "You must have been miserable, I'm sorry I did it, I didn't come," and there were no apologies, nothing. He said, "Oh, you survived, come down, let's go." So I came down, and went.

But I learned in those three days more than I would have learned in three hundred years. First it was horrible, then it was terrible, then it was miserable, then it became fun.

Question: Do you have to obey if your Teacher asks you to do something?

Answer: No, you don't. Nobody is after your blood. But just understand—a thing asked shall never be repeated. Nobody is lucky enough to be asked to do the thing a second time. That's my experience. Normally, the circumstance occurs as an interaction between you and your Teacher. He'll demand something of you, which, in his judgment, is for your benefit at that time. So you are standing before a judgment at that time. It shall never be repeated. Either you can accept it or you can deny it. That's your choice.

Question: I know, but my question is, can I still be a Kundalini Yoga Teacher and...

Answer: Nobody has questioned you, why are you questioning yourself? Are you Catholic? Why you are playing this guilt? Nobody will ask you, either. You must understand, we have no right to invoke, provoke, nor the privilege to ask or demand. You have to initiate yourself. If I ask you to take a name and then become a Teacher, then it is initiation. It will never happen in your lifetime. It's not the rule, it's not the law, it's not the privilege.

When you are ready, you will ask yourself. You took an earthly name, that is it. When you will be ready, you will take a spiritual name.

THE SPIRITUAL NAME: YOUR HEAVENLY IDENTITY

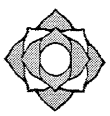
What is a spiritual name? Your spiritual name is your designated destiny, your heavenly identity. That's all it is. You may or may not live to it, but it is your guiding force. And it's a prayer. When somebody calls me "Yogiji," it means "One who is united with the greater soul. When somebody calls me "Bhajan" it means "A Divine Song." And if somebody calls me "Harbhajan Singh," it means "The Lion who sings the Divine Song." It's a prayer in the other man's word. It's a calling. What is a prayer? It is a calling. That's it. And you answer the calling. You get uplifted. It's a plus. It's a way to get other people's blessings. That's all. No big deal. *(See Resources section for information on receiving a spiritual name.)*

The Art and Science of Improving Yourself

Nobody will tell you to wear clothes, too. Nobody will tell you, "Do this." Nobody will tell you, "Do that." Why do we wear white? Our projection is white. Our life is white. It's a help. It doesn't make any difference. Other colors are not bad. But white has all the seven colors in it, so big deal. It's a science and art for improving yourself. We always tie our hair up. That's for the energy. It's a very selfish act. You can tie them up, put them down, you can shave them off, who cares? There's nothing you cannot do in your life. If you don't want to do something, don't do it. What you want to do, go ahead. It all comes down to one thing: a saint has a profile, and it will be proven by the saint himself. Nobody can make anybody a saint. You can't canonize a saint. A saint is a saint, and everybody can become a saint.

I'm not asking you to become total saints overnight and grow wings in your armpits. To be saintly is not advisable. But less than that is not enjoyable, either. The question is, on what level do you want to enjoy life? An angel is nothing but a highly elevated transparent equilibrium. A human is nothing but a high level transparent experience.

Everybody has nine holes. All you need is a consciousness to watch what comes in, what goes out, and take care of the holes—and you are holy. If you say nothing but God's words, you are a saint. And what are God's words? The scriptures? No. God's words in the scriptures are also meant to uplift a person. Yet maybe you will be most irritated. But when you want to put your furniture on the trailer, you don't mind the "gurr gurr" of the forklift. It's doing much more good than the little bit of noise it creates. Your cars are not absolutely silent, but they make you go sixty miles an hour. You tolerate it. That's how life is.



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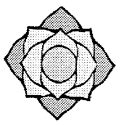
CHAPTER 23



Roles & Responsibilities in the Class Setting

"Wisdom is when you honor your profession or status."

- YOGI BHAJAN

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Yoga Class Structure & Goals

KUNDALINI YOGA IS THE SCIENCE OF HOW TO FULFILL ourselves in the experience of being human and how to serve others. It is designed to give us the experience of connection, to respond to the command of the soul and the Infinite. Students are attracted to Kundalini Yoga for these reasons. Initially, beginning yoga students often think of yoga in practical terms: to increase strength; to overcome stress; to become more flexible; to learn to relax; to work on their breathing. Many also come to class to deal with health problems—some referred by health practitioners. However, Kundalini Yoga was never illness-based. It was never designed as a curative system. When students come to your class, it is not your role to diagnose or assign individual techniques for healing. *[See Cautions & Medical Conditions this chapter.]*

The Teacher's Projection

The voice of a yoga teacher should be expressive and personal in the introduction, clear and audible in all corners of the room while explaining the exercises and leading the mantras, and soothing and steady during the relaxation.

Speaking in class. Yoga really does all the work! As a beginning instructor, trust the *kriyas* and meditations. It is alright to keep comments short. With experience, you will develop the ability to speak confidently about the deeper topics and philosophy of yoga. Eventually, you will want to communicate the goals of Kundalini Yoga, as well as the uniqueness of a particular class. The class may have a particular theme, like stress reduction, or the heart center. It is best to not be dry or intellectual, and rather to speak from the heart.

The questions and expectations many students have often change radically as they alter their state of consciousness. So, many questions that are present before class become superfluous after class. You can use this knowledge to time your remarks for when the students are in a receptive state.

Teaching & Class Structure

The beginner comes in innocence, curiosity, and sometimes in pain. Treat each student as a treasure. Inspire, challenge, and guide.

Bring direction and energy to the class to address and serve the students. Be attentive and flexible to the needs of each participant, and lead them through an experience of the kundalini energy. You might survey expectations in certain types of classes, but ultimately you lead the energy. So:

- Tune in with the Adi Mantra
  (See Sound & Mantra chapter.)
- Pranayam and/or appropriate warm-up *kriya* if needed
  (See Warm-up Exercises, next page.)
- *Kriya*
- Relaxation
- Meditation
  (The order of meditation and relaxation may be reversed. Follow instructions of the *kriya* and meditation chosen.)
- Ending prayer and *Long Sat Naams.*
- If possible, create the opportunity for the students to socialize and ask questions. You could serve Yogi Tea.

The Adi Mantra

Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo

"Whenever you chant *Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo*, through the grace and blessing of Guru Ram Das, *Bhagvati*, the creative power of the universe, God, the Ultimate, the Infinite, dwells in you as a yogi, and that is what you teach. Concentrate on the Heavens when you chant it. See what a difference it makes."
—YOGI BHAJAN, *Kundalini Rising! Spring 1994*

To center ourselves before Kundalini Yoga we chant the Adi Mantra in Pranam Mudra (Prayer Pose) 3-5 times, or as long as it takes for the class to come into receptivity. *[See the Sound & Mantra Chapter.]* You can practice at home before class, in order to find your comfort level and perfect the pitch.

The Adi Mantra connects us to the Golden Chain, the inner spark of kundalini that links us to the masters and saints who have preceded us on this path. *[See The Golden Chain chapter.]* The Adi Mantra centers us into the higher self and reminds our lower minds that it is not our ego that will practice or teach Kundalini Yoga. If the limited individual ego in which we normally live is a small pond, then *Ong Namo* releases us into a vast and endless ocean. *Guru Dev Namo* gives us the experience of the wisest sailor and all of the charts, to guide us to the many ports we are to serve and experience.

The Mangala Charn Mantra

Ad Guray Nameh, Jugad Guray Nameh, Sat Guray Namey, Siri Guru Devay Nameh

You may choose to chant the Mangala Charn mantra 3 times after the Adi Mantra.

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NOW WHAT DO YOU DO? You have prepared, tuned-in, and introduced the goal of yoga. Where do you begin? Kundalini Yoga has thousands of techniques and many levels of ideas. Do you start with a strenuous set to give an experience they won't forget? Do you give a survey of all the chakras and subtle bodies? Do you share a spiritual discussion of potential?

How to Begin?

A wonderful book called Toolkit for Beginners *is a good place to get tips for teaching beginners. It is available through Ancient Healing Ways.*

Our task is to help the students cultivate and use their awareness: body awareness, mental awareness. spiritual awareness, social awareness. Start with the breath, an easy yoga set or *kriya*, and some comments on aspects of the eight limbs of yoga practice. After tuning in, a good place to start a beginner's class is with breath awareness–*pranayam*–particulary, Long Deep Breathing.

Pranayam

A Kundalini Yoga class is not just a series of exercises that stretch or stimulate the body. Kundalini Yoga moves energy, and *pranayam* is the most vital tool in this process. Breath awareness requires concentration. It brings attention to the breath as the vital link to life. The breath regulates the energy of life, the quality of emotions, and the ability to direct the mind. Most people have not developed a relationship with the breath. Share your awareness. Consistently and frequently draw attention to the flow of breath and to the subtle nature and effects of the breath.

In every class, it is a good idea to include *pranayam*. A single class is not enough to instill the idea of the power of the breath's potential. The first step in preparing for a successful effort in yoga is to be sure that our internal energy wires are properly connected and in good condition. If these channels of pranic energy flow and the meridians are not open and coordinated, maximum impact cannot be realized. The yogic name for those channels is *nadis*. Gradual, steady practice is required. Yogi Bhajan called this "channel cleansing." All the exercises and meditations that follow a balanced *pranayam* will be effective. So you may use a *pranayam* to energize the body and quiet the mind before beginning a yoga set or *kriya*.

Especially in an on-going class where new people are coming in on a regular basis, remind students to relax their shoulders, and inhale and exhale only through the nose–unless otherwise indicated. Make sure that they do not switch from true Long Deep Breathing or Breath of Fire to paradoxical breathing–where they pull the abdomen in on the inhale and relax it on the exhale.

In these exercises the breath will regulate itself, and in doing so, create important breathing patterns. Many exercises are ended with one to three long deep breaths to consolidate the benefits of the exercise.

Warm-up Exercises

Yogi Bhajan never taught warm-up exercises himself when leading Kundalini Yoga *kriyas*, but acknowledges that in some instances warm-ups can be useful. Here are the options to choose from if you determine it is necessary to include a warm-up before teaching a Kundalini Yoga *kriya*:

- You may choose any short Kundalini Yoga *kriya*. Some examples of good Kundalini Yoga *kriyas* for warm-up purposes are listed at the end of the Sets chapter.
- Pranayam sequences are especially good for waking up the body and opening the lungs.
- Do a few repetitions of the short version of Sun Salutations (*Surya Namaskar*) included in this Manual. (Yogi Bhajan taught this in the seventies, so we include it in the Kundalini Yoga archives!)
- You may also lead Spinal Flex, Cat-Cow, and Life Nerve Stretches, all of which can stand alone, or which can be used as a warm-up series.
- You can also recommend that students do their own stretching exercises before coming to class, or before the class begins.

When leading warm-ups, always identify when you begin the *kriya*. In this way, the students are clear about the sequence of the *kriya*, and understand that we maintain the integrity of sets as they were taught by Yogi Bhajan.

Yogi Bhajan on the Purity of the Teachings

I am asked a very funny question: "Can we have a little deviation from what is there in the Teachings, and make up our own thing?" Do you know what this tells me? This man cannot accept the teachings, and if he cannot do this, he will never be a Teacher.

My personal weaknesses are my personal weaknesses. My personal strength is my personal strength. So long as the Lord has given me the breath of life, I'll carry the Teachings and deliver them as they are. I shall never add or subtract anything.

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Yogi Bhajan on Using Music in Class

Yogi Bhajan has remarked that music can be used in class, but only Kundalini Yoga music (songs or mantras that Yogi Bhajan has given in his classes.) As beautiful and relaxing as some New Age or other type of music may be, it is not for use in Kundalini Yoga classes.

"Kundalini Yoga is to create inner energy, not provoke outer energy. Music must be within a certain rhythm. Music that is more physical or mental than spiritual can stop the rhythm. Ours should be more spiritual. Commitment to self is not a joke. Commotional music is not required. If the music is not soothing, if it creates commotion, it is not allowed. A yoga class needs elevation, projection of the proper combination and permutation of words which push you through. You need a rocket for taking this space shuttle, right? Now what are you going to do? Use a few fans and think it is going up? That's wrong. Kundalini Yoga is not a pop festival, nor is it a rock and roll concert. It has those subtle projections through which the person can go inward. When you are teaching, be with the purity of the essence as you have been taught."

—YOGI BHAJAN

It is acceptable to play Kundalini Yoga music during meditations that do not have a specific mantra or breath rhythm indicated. If you find yourself in a teaching situation where there is no Kundalini Yoga music available, Yogi Bhajan has said that Indian classical music (instrumental only), and particularly Rag Asa, is acceptable.

Kriya or Set of Yoga Exercises

Choose the *kriya* or yoga set that suits the students' ability and interests. *(See Class Preparation.)*

- Study the exercises before the class, or do the *kriya* yourself, so you can formulate your thoughts about how to teach the *kriya* beforehand.
- Explain the exercises clearly and demonstrate as needed, but do not do the yoga set with the class. Your job is to watch, guide, inspire and time the exercises. Verbally correct students' postures as needed.
- Remind students that their experience is enhanced when keeping their eyes closed. (Unless indicated otherwise.)
- Remind students to relax any muscles not needed. Students often put unnecessary tension in their face, neck and shoulders while doing Sat Kriya and Breath of Fire.
- Emphasize that students respect their body's limits, as each person is unique. Poses with extreme angles should be attained very gradually.

Supervising the Class & Offering Correction

The teacher guides the pace, often getting the class moving in a gentle steady rhythm.

- Pay attention to the students and use various methods for demonstrating, reminding, and correcting. Students can easily overwork or overstretch the body, so watch them to see if they are performing the exercises correctly.
- Demonstrate the exercises, but do not go deeply into an exercise. In a yoga set or *kriya* for beginners, older people, and people with health problems, you may reduce the given time.
- Do encourage students to try the exercises for the full time. Some students will need to build up strength. If they feel that they must stop doing the exercise, have them concentrate on their breath. Direct them to start again as they feel able, whether it be for the same exercise or the next one. When Yogi Bhajan originally taught beginners in 1969, he would give one to eight exercises. They would rest 30 seconds to 3 minutes between exercises. The length of rest depended on how strenuous the exercise was. The rest period often included concentration on the flow of the breath. The mantra *Sat Naam* was spoken silently: *Sat* on the inhale, and *Naam* on the exhale.
- To stay in the present, students can also be encouraged to focus at the Third Eye Point. Reminders can be made throughout the class.

Yogi Bhajan on Doing Yoga with the Class

You want to do the exercises with them? Who is going to look after the students when you are into your own exercises, and they are doing something else? Your job is to watch. You are the supervisor, you are not the exerciser. That's why as a teacher you sit higher, so that you can look at what is going on. It's your responsibility. You are responsible for the clock.

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Deep Relaxation

The ability to relax is a divine quality. We are more centered and become more sensitive to the energy patterns of life. The state of consciousness we experience in this deep relaxation will not just be sleep. Deep relaxation alters the glandular balance in the blood and alters the functioning of the brain. Students may have out-of-body experiences; they may have vivid dreams; they may remember nothing at all after closing their eyes. Usually they will not go into a regular shallow sleep unless they continue relaxing for an extended time. As a teacher, never participate in the relaxation. Your role is to hold the space, to make it secure for everyone.

The best position for deep relaxation is Corpse Pose: students lie on the back with arms at the sides, palms up, ankles uncrossed, and eyes closed. Suggest that students may want to cover themselves with a blanket or shawl. You can develop routines to guide students through relaxing the different parts of the body. You can use visualization. If you use music make it quiet and restful–3HO has a variety of tapes that are peaceful and spiritually uplifting. Playing the gong is another option, if you have received training from 3HO to do so. The period of deep relaxation depends on the strenuousness of the yoga set and the experience of the students. Eight to eleven minutes is a normal amount of relaxation. At the end of the relaxation, use the stretching routine to come out of deep relaxation, as described in Chapter 10 on Relaxation.

The relaxation can occur after the yoga set or *kriya* or at the end of the class after the meditation. The effects of the *kriyas* and chanting are cumulative. They build for a long time after students have done them. Allow time for the energies they have released in the body and mind to circulate and come to equilibrium without involving the ego as a "director of the show." The body knows how to naturally balance itself. It is automatic.

Meditation

Meditation is a necessary complement to physical yoga exercises. Sometimes the meditation is already included in the yoga set. You may choose a meditation that fits with the yoga set you have chosen. Or you may choose to enhance the experience of one meditation over a series of classes.

Have a few moments or minutes of silent reflection after the meditation. Then have the class vigorously shake their hands over the head for grounding. And then rub the palms together before singing the 3HO ending prayer.

Ending a Kundalini Yoga Class

Sitting in Easy Pose with the hands together in Pranam Mudra, eyes closed, conclude the class by singing the Sunshine Song, in the same heart-centered neutrality that we used for tuning in.

Then, chant *Long Sat Naams* one to three times. In this chant the sound *Saaaaaaat* is seven times as long as *Naam*. *Naam* is sung at a minor third lower than *Sat*. This chant allows students to experience the harmony created by the class. If you feel moved to do so, you may also offer a few more words as a a non-denominational prayer for peace, asking blessings for those present in the class. The teacher may want to express gratitude for our teacher, Yogi Bhajan, and pray for his health and well-being. Then students and teacher may bow together in a sign of respect and gratitude to the infinite kundalini energy and the universal consciousness. Bowing is an exercise that brings circulation to the brain and therefore stimulates the process of absorbing what was taught. It also brings the head lower than the heart, symbolizing the process of going beyond the mere mental acceptance of the teachings to opening the heart to receive them. Especially in countries where bowing is not customary, you can explain the science behind the yogic tradition of bowing.

Yoga Community

Another purpose of a yoga class is to provide information and encouragement about your local and worldwide yoga community. It is a wonderful thing to associate with a group of people who appreciate and practice your discipline. You realize you are not alone. You can compare experiences and receive inspiration. Take the time to inform your students about the Aquarian Teacher Training program as an excellent way to learn Kundalini Yoga in depth. Let them know that this path creates teachers, not just students. Also you'll find that inspired yoga students enjoy the chance to serve and volunteer for activities, so let them know of such opportunities as they arise. You'll build a strong yoga community the more your students become involved.

Evaluating the Class Afterward

Most importantly, was it an inspiring yoga class? Did it come from your heart, and did it really touch your students? You can ask for verbal feedback, or you can create an evaluation form for students to use at the end of a class series. This should be done in the spirit of better serving the students' needs, and learning how you can improve your presentation of the teachings.

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Explaining Some of the Benefits of Kundalini Yoga

Kundalini Yoga is a process that takes us beyond the mind to where we can follow our hearts. So the mind can never fully comprehend or explain yoga. We can teach with little explanation or a lot—depending on our personal style. Before or after class or at certain stages in class, any of the following explanations can be useful. You may also want to produce your own handout.

Angles & triangles

Yogi Bhajan says: "Kundalini Yoga is the science of angles and triangles." Every angle we hold our body in has a corresponding energetic effect because the muscles are putting pressure on specific parts of the body. For example, lifting the legs 30 degrees works on the Navel Point; lifting the arms 60 degrees works on the heart and lungs. The effect also has to do with the ability of different shapes and forms to concentrate the life force.

Strengthening the nervous system

We know that nerves constantly grow and change both in their density of connection and the sophistication of the patterns with which they interconnect. Yoga engages the nerves and makes them function better.

Stretching and building muscles

Any muscle that is not used regularly, even if it is only over a period of a few days, starts to atrophy. Muscle atrophy is visible in the stooped and narrow shoulders of older people who have stopped exercising. Kundalini Yoga is an incredibly complete form of exercise for the muscles to maintain the strength and flexibility of the body.

Stimulating circulation

Due to increased heart rate and the internal massage of tissues and organs, Kundalini Yoga increases the circulation of blood, lymph, and other body fluids.

Endocrine glands, the guardians of your health, have no muscles to get their products into the blood. Yoga massages them, empties them, keeps them vital, and helps them to communicate with each other. Many of the yoga exercises adjust the functioning of the endocrine glands by stimulating the primary base of the brain (the hypothalamus), through rhythmical breathing and through the effect of sound and mantra.

Kundalini Yoga as biofeedback

Kundalini Yoga gives increased awareness of the body's internal processes.

Muscles as energy catalysts

There is a connection between the muscles and the meridians or *nadis*. If a muscle is strong, the meridian connected to it will be healthy energetically and vice versa. That's why specific meridians and organs are influenced by training specific muscles.

Cleansing the tissues

No matter how good the diet is, we tend to exceed the self-cleansing capacity of our bodies. Uric acid, calcium crystals, and many other wastes and poisons get stored in tissues and joints. They make us stiff and may cause many diseases. In Kundalini Yoga muscle stretching and internal massage bring wastes back into circulation so that the lungs, intestines, kidneys, and skin are able to remove them.

Kundalini Yoga as lifestyle

Yoga is not just exercises. We can find opportunties to recommend daily healthy practices—rising early, taking a cold shower, wearing light-colored clothing, and trying other aspects of yogic lifestyle. A vegetarian diet alone reduces the risk of chronic diseases. A yogic lifestyle offers support to refrain from toxic habits such as smoking, drinking, and taking drugs. And it also supports withdrawal from caffeine and non-prescription drugs.

The Chakras

An understanding of the eight chakras of the body, and how the practice of *kriyas*, *pranayam*, and meditation effects them, is perhaps the most encompassing explanation of the effects of Kundalini Yoga.

The Ten Bodies

Kundalini Yoga directly activates and balances each of our Ten Bodies. These changes echo and reverberate throughout the dimensions of our being, and have a powerful effect on our spiritual growth.

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Teaching Guidelines: Cautions & Approaches

See also "Common Questions from Students"

Hands-Off Teaching

In a Kundalini Yoga class, we never adjust students' postures by physical touch. Yogi Bhajan has specifically told us to verbally correct students or have someone in the class who is doing the posture correctly model for the class.

Do Not Vary From the Kriya

During a Kundalini Yoga class, we do not teach variations of the exercises in a *kriya*. Variations of many postures exist in Kundalini Yoga, (i.e. there are many ways to stretch the life nerve: one leg at a time; both legs together; with the legs stretched wide apart,) but we teach them only when instructed in specific *kriyas*, and we do not tell students that they can choose a variation of a posture as they wish. That is changing the *kriya*. When asked about this specifically, Yogi Bhajan told us: *"Variations are not anything but going down a muddy road. You'll have to take a very long route and use a lot more energy, so why go away from the original path, when it is straight and simple? Teachers have not to show their ego, they have to show their discipline."*

Shakti Parwha Kaur, author of *Kundalini Yoga: The Flow of Eternal Power*, whom Yogi Bhajan calls the 'Mother of 3HO,' always tells her students to do their best, and that even by leaning in the right direction they will benefit. Yogi Bhajan agrees with this approach. He has said that if someone feels they cannot safely do a particular exercise, it is best to skip the exercise (and just do the breathing or mantra), and allow the energy of the class to carry them. *"It is accurate to sit in a yoga class of students who are generating the energy. If you cannot do a pose, their energy will empower you equally. And if you have any medical problems, listen to your doctor first, because he is guardian of your body and health."*

Yogi Bhajan has approved shortening the times of postures during a *kriya* to adjust to the level of the students in the class. However, teachers should never make the exercises or meditations longer than indicated by Yogi Bhajan. As the Master of Kundalini Yoga, he has given us the maximum times needed for the desired effect.

Yogi Bhajan has given us these general guidelines to follow and although Yogi Bhajan himself never taught what we might call 'substitutions' or 'modifications,' when asked, he did say it was fine for someone who absolutely cannot sit in Rock Pose to do Sat Kriya lying on the back, using the same mudra with the hands straight pointing to the ceiling, and the knees bent, feet flat on the floor. He said that it is acceptable for a student who cannot lift both legs at once, to lift one a time–and that only if and when their doctor indicates they are strong enough, should they lift both legs at once.

The type of instruction given in the Posture and Form and Alignment chapters of this Manual, enable students to gradually improve Kundalini Yoga postures, and overcome or compensate for physical weaknesses. The use of simple props as taught by Guru Prem Singh, the Posture Master, as Yogi Bhajan calls him, can also help students improve. However, Yogi Bhajan is very clear that the use of props should not be taught during Kundalini Yoga *kriyas*. *"Many times our bodies get 'out of posture.' Guru Prem Singh is doing his best telling people how to bring the body back to the posture, and how to learn the art of breathing, which is not common in Westerners. So, it is very important, but it should not be done during the kriya."*

In other words, when it is deemed essential, the teacher may assist a student with props, but not during the *kriya*. Ideally, this would be done before or after the class starts, or in a special workshop for this purpose.

Medical Conditions

As teachers, we are not responsible for helping students with their medical problems. If a student requests help for any physical or psychological problem, it is important to refer them to a health or healing professional.

For the students' safety and for your own protection, it is a good idea to have students sign a disclaimer explaining how they should approach their yoga practice.

Yogi Bhajan with all his vast ability and knowledge as a healer, makes a distinction that he is offering his experience and sharing it with others, which they may or may not choose to apply. Kundalini Yoga teachers are not diagnosticians. Even if you have the capacity in another role, that is not your role when you teach Kundalini Yoga. Make it clear to the students that they are responsible for their own health. They should consult with their doctors if they have medical conditions and if they are taking prescription drugs.

We have a wealth of valuable information, such as drinking Yogi Tea™ and taking specific herbs, but in our role as Kundalini Yoga teachers we only offer general information; we do not prescribe anything for individual conditions.

Kundalini Yoga is not Illness-based

Kundalini Yoga as a system was never illness based. It wasn't started as a system to cure anything. As a system, it is not inherently a therapeutic model, even though it has enormous

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therapeutic benefits. Rather, it was based in excellence and exaltation. It is the science of how to excel and fulfill oneself in the experience of being human.We do not teach Kundalini Yoga to heal a disease. We teach yoga to the person who has the disease. Kundalini Yoga is a sacred science. The sacredness of the student is awakened through it. It is designed to give us the experience of connection, to respond to the command of the soul and the Infinite.

There are no Kundalini Yoga *kriyas* specifically for the kinds of diseases that are encountered in today's world. Even when Yogi Bhajan says that, "This is for such and such," he is most often speaking of prevention.

It is written that, in 40 days, a practitioner using Kundalini Yoga as an experience, creates uplift and liberation. It might take twenty years using many other techniques. But that was assuming the person who engages in this should first be mentally stable, have strong habits, have a clear mind, and a pure body. Most people don't fit those qualifications, and it takes a little longer to use the same practices to clear the subconscious and to organize the mind toward the soul and the Infinite, instead of toward our finiteness and neurosis.

Approaching Yoga Practice

Keep in mind that as a teacher, you have no idea what condition, history or shape a person is in when they come to practice yoga. Many people are coming from very sedentary lifestyles, with contracted muscles and spines. Many middle-aged people are now embracing yoga, increasing the need for care. It is wise to offer the idea that yoga is not a competitive sport, that slow, consistency is more valuable than pushing in achieving their goals. Always err on the side of caution.

Sample Disclaimer

We invite you to enthusiastically approach your yoga practice. However, we encourage you to use care when determining your own ability to do the exercises offered in these classes. Do not aggravate an existing injury. If you have a doubt as to whether yoga would be recommended if you have a particular injury or condition, please consult your health care professional.

The instruction and advice presented at this Kundalini Yoga class is not meant to be used in lieu of professional medical or psychological care for the treatment of any condition.

There are certain limitations to the practice of yoga for pregnant and menstruating women. Please read the handout about this or ask the instructor.

"Good" Pain and "Bad" Pain

Just as in any form of physical activity, there are two forms of pain that may occur during the practice of yoga postures. The first is the normal distress that comes from fatigue or effort when extending a muscle or stimulating a nerve. Just as holding your arm out parallel to the ground can feel heavy and uncomfortable after a few minutes. This pain is not harmful and will go away with concentration, a slow controlled breath, and a welcome flood of endorphins. This type of pain reflex is often a signal about the condition and balance of the glandular and nervous systems. It is a commonly experienced phenomenon in athletics and Kundalini Yoga, even with small efforts, as we are working on nerves and glands, not just muscles.

The second type of pain comes from structural problems, bruises, inner organ difficulties, and referred pain from a variety of injuries and illnesses. It will not pass, nor should it be ignored or "worked through." Stop the posture and check with your medical advisor. Examples of this are disk problems, infections, swollen glands, or sprained ligaments. When there is pain, numbness, or lack of muscle control in the arms or legs, or difficulty controlling urination or defecation, it is evidence of a significant neurologic problem. In each of these cases, seek professional advice.

No Drugs

Students are cautioned never to practice Kundalini Yoga while under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription, recreational drugs. Students must obtain and follow the advice of their physician concerning the practice of yoga while taking prescription drugs.

Yoga While Pregnant or Menstruating

Inform the pregnant woman that she should get permission from her doctor to take yoga classes. Refer the pregnant woman to prenatal yoga classes, if available. During pregnancy, all physical exercise should be calm and quiet. She should be encouraged to listen to her body and to rest when necessary, even if the exercise is not finished.

The following exercises should not be done during pregnancy after the 120th day, or if a woman has any medical complications:

- Exercises which apply pressure to the abdominal area. (i.e., Bow Pose, etc.), or which are over-stimulating.

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▸ Breath of Fire. Yogi Bhajan has stated that *light* Breath of Fire in the first 3 months is permissable if health permits. She should check with her doctor.

▸ *Mulbandh*

▸ Leg lifts (except while lying on the side.)

▸ Exercising to the point of exhaustion

▸ Exercises which raise the pulse above 140 beats per minute

▸ All inverted postures (i.e. shoulder stand)

▸ Sat Kriya

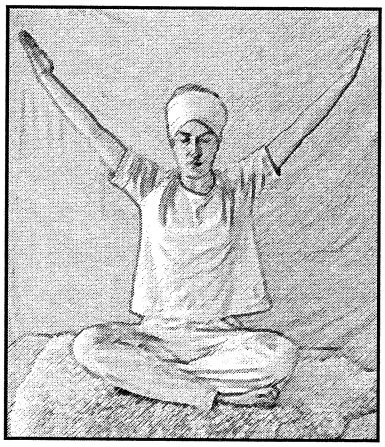
▸ Lying on the back (or front, of course) after the fourth to sixth month, as it can be uncomfortable and even dangerous for the mother as the weight of the baby unfavorably stresses the mother's blood pressure. Suggest she relax lying on her side and avoid any postures that involve lying on the back.

▸ Women should not do Venus Kriyas at all during pregnancy.

Walking Meditation during pregnancy: Yogi Bhajan recommends that pregnant women spend a lot of time meditating and chanting during pregnancy. He also suggests that pregnant couples walk 5 miles a day together, at a flow, steady pace, to prepare the woman for childbirth. A walking meditation called *Charn Jap* is suggested, where the couple walks hand in hand, chanting *Sat Naam* with the left step, *Wahe Guru* with the right step.

For tips on teaching Pre- and Post-Natal Yoga, see chapter 25.

Menstruating: This in general applies to women on the first day of the menstrual cycle and the next if the flow is heavy. However, a light Breath of Fire *is* permissable. Women are encouraged to increase awareness of their bodies limitations and capacity during menstruation. A light Breath of Fire can actually adjust the menstruation, especially if the student has a regular practice of Breath of Fire in *kriyas*.



Preparing to Teach

YOU ARE A CHANNEL OF A GREAT TRADITION OF TEACHING. You are a member of a growing profession of consciousness educators. To the student you represent higher consciousness. The student does not come to you for your personal identity, they come to you for the experience of their own identity.

The energy that flows through us when we teach flows through the Golden Chain. It is passed from consciousness to consciousness. The student who surrenders to the discipline is not surrendering to the personality of the teacher, but to the light that is present in the teaching. You are a golden conduit to all who come. Preparing to teach involves working on that flame–your consciousness, so you can uphold a yogic lifestyle. Morning *sadhana* of some kind, 40-day meditations, White Tantric Yoga, reading from the Siri Guru Granth Sahib are all ways to maintain your elevated projection. Maintaining a conscious diet, and occasionally doing cleansing diets can help you feel light, inspiring, and energetic.

What do I do to prepare myself before class?

The effect you create in class is proportional to your ability to set your own ego aside and let the energy and purity of the teachings flow through you. Before class, make sure you are represented with your expanded aura, openness, and neutrality. Wear dignified white or ivory, cotton, silk, or wool clothing. For energy, Yogi Bhajan recommends that you take a bath or shower before teaching. Also if you have short hair, run your fingers under cold water, then run them through your hair and over your scalp, and comb your hair back and forth. Then cover your whole head with white natural fabric in order to command your sixth chakra. And if you use a turban you will automatically get a cranial self-adjustment as well. You can also comb your hair forward and backward a few times about 4 p.m. every day to renew your energy. (Use a wooden comb.)

Arrive early. Take time to reflect on the Laws of Sustenance and Deliverance and the Golden Chain. Prepare for a few minutes in personal silence by repeating the Teacher's Oath and the Adi Mantra. The effect you create is intensified by speaking from the Heart Center. Yogi Bhajan cautions you to remember that teaching is not a personal popularity contest. You don't have to be popular, you have to have impact.

Is it permissible to chant Ong Namo Guru Dev Namo silently before teaching, instead of aloud?

Yogi Bhajan answered this question: "No. Sound purifies the inner and outer environments. This mantra is for tuning the

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flow of personal energy with universal energy. That's a fact. Do it with the group to tune them in, too."

In a lecturing environment, since it is not a formal Kundalini Yoga class, the teacher may chant silently to link to guidance.

How do I prepare material for class?

You must know the material so that you are not distracted by a book or pages of notes. It looks unprofessional to read from a book. Instead you might make a brief summary on a page or file card to discreetly jog your memory. When beginning to teach, a good way to learn the material is to teach the class to yourself every day for a week, perhaps as part of your daily *sadhana*. Take advantage of your personal gifts in teaching. If you are musical, or literary, or humorous, or analytical, use these gifts. You can prepare written material for students as well, such as tips for practicing at home or the words and pronunciation of mantras.

Preparing the Environment

Kundalini Yoga can be taught under any circumstances and in all environments. It is strong enough to create an energy field everywhere. However, this is easier when we are in a:

- quiet, well-aired room
- with moderate temperature
- with ample space per student
- with a carpet or other padding such as yoga mats available
- with indirect lighting which can be dimmed
- with a raised platform for the teacher to sit on
  (Optional. This is more important with large classes.)

Many classes will take place under less than ideal circumstances, especially in community centers, fitness centers, church basements, corporate meeting rooms, and schools and universities. If you have the opportunity, it is a good idea to visit the location ahead of time. You will see what adjustments have to be made for the new class and will have time to make them. Will the room be physically clean? Is it musty? Can you open the windows? Can you adjust thermostats, air conditioning, and lighting? Are there yoga mats? Try out the sound system. Often simple things will improve the environment dramatically–a table lamp and candles will replace fluourescent lights. A table cloth and vase of flowers help, so does soothing 3HO music. You can never go wrong serving yogi tea after class.

Pay attention to what goes on in adjacent rooms or outdoors. When you teach your class: will there be soccer, basketball, figure skating, or choir practice next door? Will there be an aerobics class with heavy rhythms? Is there rush-hour traffic? If it will be noisy, try to change the situation–try another location or adjust the class time.

Relationship with Students

Remember that it is a privilege to teach. It is an honor to sit in front of a class, to have their attention and trust. You represent the students' higher consciousness. So teach from a neutral place within yourself–that place that is neither man nor woman, nor personal self. That place is the teacher, and you pledge to teach from that place. You teach to give others an experience of their identity, purity, and infinity. As Yogi Bhajan demonstrates, we are "personally impersonal" with students.

At the same time, in order to give others an experience of who they are, you teach from who *you* are, give examples from your own stories. Share your humanity. How has this technique or exercise helped you? What were your experiences during this meditation? What challenges have you overcome through your practice?

On the other hand, we don't promote ourselves. You are not all-knowing. Make it easy for students to ask questions, humbly admit to what you don't know, and make every attempt to find out the answer. You are not trying to be popular, only to serve. Does the mail carrier take credit for the content of the letter?

You serve all your students equally without discrimination. You cannot tell from outward appearance or action anything about the destiny of your students. Your job is to help them to discover that destiny for themselves.

You should not become attached to your students–they are not yours. No matter what you do, students will come and go according to their destinies.

Maintain professional standards and strict confidentiality. Do not become romanticly involved with a student, or have even a hint of sexuality in the relationship. Maintain the same standards as a doctor or counselor.

Also, remember that you are not a mountain-top ascetic. Kundalini Yoga is an exercise in group consciousness. You can go deeper into the whole idea behind Kundalini Yoga and help students to share the changes that yoga brings. Be encouraged to discuss the 3HO lifestyle. Assign innovative homework–such as saying nothing negative for a week, or trying a prosperity meditation for 40 days, or taping yourself for a day and listening to what you have spoken. Sing 3HO songs before or after class, dance to *bangara** rhythms. Give your students the touch of coziness and connection that brought you to this path.

* *bangara* is a dance form popular in Northern India.

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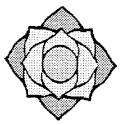
CHAPTER 24



Roles & Responsibilities Outside of the Class Setting

"Not only do you have the potential to do everything, but you must recognize this potential."

–YOGI BHAJAN,
THE TEACHINGS OF YOGI BHAJAN

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Your out-of-class role includes:

- course preparation
- class administration—location, costs, and income
- staying in touch with and inspiring your students
- publicity
- Giving *Gurudakshina*
- doing a *sadhana*

Course Preparation

The main thing to realize is that course preparation initially takes more time, but in the end you save time because you can use the material again by teaching the same course or a related one. And you have a course that you can show other teachers how to teach—you can share your spirit and passion for the course.

First, consider what you want to teach—what is the topic or theme? If our courses have a distinctive theme or level, the students are more inclined to keep coming, because they feel they are progressing instead of just taking ongoing classes. There are a variety of themes to teach, and the IKYTA directory lists many teachers and their specialties whom you can contact for information. Some specialities include:

- seniors
- children
- pre- and post-natal
- stress management
- addiction recovery

Next, select a target population for the course. For example, a course on stress management for executives will be somewhat different than one for schoolteachers. So personalize the course for the particular audience. Think also about the optimum course length and amount of time for each class. Then gather resource material, study, and research what other teachers have taught, and share information with them.

Organize materials by setting out what you want to accomplish. Then create a plan for each class meeting—

- yoga set or kriya
- relaxation
- meditation
- homework, tasks for students, and reading assignments
- Think about providing support materials for students—yoga books, manuals, texts for mantras and songs, tapes and videos, food, natural health products, and Yogi Tea.

Example of a Beginning Series for Adults

What makes a *kriya* a beginner's set? It is not only which exercises or how many exercises, it is the pace and level of awareness that is brought to the set. There are many ways to create a beginner's series—this is *only one example.* *(All of these sets and meditations can be found in this Manual in Chapters 29-31.)* The time for this series is about one hour and a half per class.

Class 1: Long Deep Breathing
Basic Spinal Energy Series *(includes Sat Kriya)*
Meditation: Meditation for a Calm Heart

Class 2 Long Deep Breathing
Kriya for Disease Resistance; Sat Kriya
Meditation: Mahan Gyan Mudra
Meditation: Long *Sat Nams*

Class 3 Long Deep Breathing; Breath of Fire & Ego Eradicator
Surya Kriya *(includes Sat Kriya & a silent meditation)*
Meditation: *Long Sat Naams*

Class 4 Pranayam #1 *[from Sadhana Guidelines]*
Awakening the Ten Bodies
Meditation for Projection & Protection from the Heart.

Class 5 Basic Breath Series
Kriya for Elevation *(includes Sat Kriya)*
Meditation: Siri Gaitri Mantra

Class 6 Alternate Nostril Breath
Nabhi Kriya
Meditation: Long Chant

Class 7 Nadi Cleansing Pranayam (U-breath)
Flexibility & the Spine
Meditation: Guru Guru Wahe Guru, Guru Ram Das Guru

Class 8 One-minute Breath
Basic Spinal Energy Series
Stress Set for Adrenals & Kidneys
Meditation: Kirtan Kriya

The difficulty increases slowly, allowing us to spend time on Long Deep Breathing and other *pranayam*, and to explain basic exercises. Because of its importance, Sat Kriya is repeated several times. In Class 8 notice that the Basic Spinal Energy Series has been done before and acts as a warm-up. When teaching it this way the rests are shorter and the time is average. Note that Breath of Fire is not introduced until the third class so that students can more easily establish Long Deep Breathing first. In a beginner's series it is often useful to repeat a kriya or meditation several times to develop both confidence and expertise. It also gives students a chance to notice how they progress in a steady practice.

(See the section on Form & Alignment for tips on teaching beginners.)

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Next, consider, what class length, time of day, and day of the week suits your target audience:

- Classes of an hour or less are better suited to the pre-work-day, noon-hour, and after-work groups.
- Classes of an hour and a half or longer are better suited to mid-morning or afternoon, later evening and weekends.

The target audience influences the time of day you select:

- Stress-management for business might work well at noon on weekdays, or right after work.
- Pre-and post-natal yoga might be better placed in mid-morning or mid-afternoon.
- Yoga for seniors would be best during daylight hours.

But class times also depend on where you teach and what community group you like to teach. Some teachers specialize in teaching high school or university students; others work with health professionals or corporations; others like to teach in fitness clubs or community centers. Some work with the film industry or professional athletes. Some only teach private classes at home.

Handouts for New Students

Information on what to expect will let students participate more fully. You could include what we do in class, what to bring, something about our physical state before class, ways to help focus during class, the words and definition of the Adi Mantra (and Mangala Charn), and cautions about health and medical conditions. You can also mention local and IKYTA activities. A separate handout could be made for women about menstruation and pregnancy.

You could design a questionnaire or registration form to find out about your students—what they expect to learn; their history of yoga practice; their current wellness efforts; how much time they could devote to daily practice; how they found out about the class. The more you find out, the more you can match their expectations. You can talk about their expectations as the course proceeds.

Administration

You can develop a list of possible teaching locations through friends; local teachers of yoga and other disciplines; local newspapers (the local community calendar section); other publications listing current workshops and classes; parks and recreation programs; community college and adult education programs; health & fitness clubs and dance studios; and alternative health centers and practitioners. Contact them to find out if: they have existing yoga programs and if they are interested in a new program. What are the salary arrangements and schedules? Do you subcontract—renting the space and advertising on your own, or are you on salary and part of their advertised programs? Would the rent or salary be a flat hourly rate, or would it be a percentage of the class income?

The prices and systems of registration and collection will vary from place to place. If you are renting the space or teaching at home, it is up to you how much you charge. You can create class cards for drop-in classes or sell guest passes for students to give to their friends and relatives. You can schedule six to eight week courses and offer discounts for pre-registration. Students could still come on a drop-in basis but would pay a higher fee per class.

Paying for Kundalini Yoga Classes

Yogi Bhajan has always told us that it is our responsibility as teachers to educate students about paying for Kundalini Yoga classes. In fact, he has mentioned it at almost every Teachers' Conference lecture he has given. This principle of *Itarashtam tithar kashtam* cannot be sacrificed or the student leaves the class without having received any benefit.

"Itarashtam tithar kashtam"

"Empty handed you come, empty handed you go. It is a law which should never be broken."

Often teachers out of their kindness and compassion, wish to offer free Kundalini Yoga classes, especially to economically deprived groups, those coming for their first class, or as a community service. We asked Yogi Bhajan specifically if there were times when it is okay to offer free classes. He again told us that the principle always holds true: there must be some exchange when receiving the teachings of Kundalini Yoga. If you want to offer classes to those who do not have the economic means to pay regular class prices, we suggest you change from "free" classes, to classes "by donation," or use a sliding-fee scale so you do not prevent the students from receiving the blessings of the teachings. Maybe you could follow the example of our Teacher, and provide something for the students to give. Kundalini Yoga is a sacred science with guiding principles. Let us honor them.

In the beginning, when Yogi Bhajan had just started to teach in Los Angeles, it was the high point of the hippy sixties. Money was scarce—some of his students lived in a barter economy. So to insure that his students would have the possibility to pay something for their yoga class, Yogi Bhajan would scatter coins purposefully outside for the students to pick up to pay for class.

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Promotion

You never know from where a referral to one of your classes will come. The greatest way to advertise is through word of mouth, through your students' recommendation.

There are many "free" ways to get attention:

- You can become an authority—write articles in local papers, magazines, and specialized newsletters.
- Be available for lectures and interviews. Then you will become the person the media calls when they want quotes or information about yoga and meditation.
- You can talk to your friends, colleagues, business associates, and other healing professionals in your area.
- Some newspapers will place free class announcements on a space available basis in their community calendar section.
- Put up your own web page and schedule and link it to like minded sites.

Your choices in advertising depend on cost, target group, and response. Describe the class as "Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan" out of respect for the Teacher of teachers and the Golden Chain. If one advertising method doesn't work, try something different. You can begin by establishing a mailing, e-mail, and phone list and by distributing a unique business card at your classes. Be sure to collect the business cards of others.

Create a Flyer

A consistent advertising method is to post or give out class-information flyers. Use local bulletin boards, especially where there are no competing ads. Try natural food stores, coffee shops, restaurants, bookstores, health-care providers, community organizations, and schools of all levels. Carry class flyers around since opportunities frequently arise to share class information.

Tips on Flyers and Posters

- Use uniquely colored paper—avoid the standard pastels.
- Avoid the standard paper size 8-1/2 x 11" (22 x 28 cm). Try a large postcard size or a long 4-1/4 x 11" (11 x 28 cm) format. These fit well on bulletin boards where larger pieces will not, and they more easily bring attention.
- Keep information interesting and brief—avoid worn-out phrases.
- Use a striking illustration.
- Print only the number that you need.

Postcards, e-mail & websites

Use postcards to mail out class schedules about a month before new classes begin. You can send the same information by e-mail or use a web page.

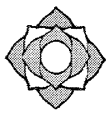
Newspaper Advertising

Try local newspapers, student newspapers at colleges, and community recreation magazines. New Age publications are where most yoga and metaphysical groups advertise, making this venue over-saturated. It might be more advisable to write articles for these publications (and other media). Articles are more productive and cheaper than ads.

Continuing to Reach Out

Once you are established, you can consider:

- Sending out a newsletter with class schedules, special events, 3HO events, and common student questions. You can also include an explanation of mantras, meditation, or *pranayam*; and recipes.
- You might consider a listing in the yellow pages and get Kundalini Yoga into other local directories.
- At holistic health fairs you can give away 3HO tapes or videos in a draw and keep the names for your mailing list. The expenses from these efforts could be pooled by several teachers based on a percentage of monthly earnings.



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Inspiring Students

Truly the most inspiring aspect of teaching is seeing the growth of spiritual community around you, and the miracle of lives transforming. You can be a catalyst for this.

- You can encourage your students to do a daily practice. A worthy goal is to offer a group *sadhana* for all. You can create a space where everyone can start the day with inspiration, and begin to build community.
- Through a flyer or newsletter you can let people know about local events and events of the wider 3HO and IKYTA communities.
- You can hold regular monthly workshops for your students and others. They can be taught by teachers in your area on a rotating basis.
- You can create evenings for meditation using Yogi Bhajan's videos, so students have the opportunity to experience the Master's Touch.
- You can host pot-lucks dinners.
- You can let students know you are interested in developing teachers, as well as teaching students about how to improve their lives, and that teacher training is available as an excellent way to learn Kundalini Yoga in depth.

You can ask for help from students to do these things.

Gurudakshina

Gurudakshina is tithing 11 percent of your yoga class earnings without expense deductions, to the source of the Teachings.

"*Gurudakshina* is a way to prosperity, power of self-reliance, and confidence of every molecule of your being. It is not only very, very spiritual, it is God-like in giving. Though God gives us everything, when we give that much in his Name to our higher self, it is called *Gurudakshina*. It is a way of mega-multiplying yourself."

–YOGI BHAJAN

YOGI BHAJAN HAS TOLD US that the life of a Teacher is the last incarnation on this planet, and that by becoming a Teacher, we can be liberated. As Teachers our job is to present the science of Kundalini Yoga accurately, and convey the spirit of excellence and giving that our Teacher, the Siri Singh Sahib Yogi Bhajan, exemplifies. The very essence of his giving nature is what has inspired, uplifted, poked, provoked, confronted and elevated us!

Giving *Gurudakshina* is an expression of gratitude for our Teacher, for the technology we have been blessed with, and for the privilege we share of being teachers of Kundalini Yoga. We prosper by giving back a portion of our income from all classes based on the teachings of Yogi Bhajan. Give back to the source of the teachings and you will be blessed by linking into the Golden Chain of student and Teacher.

To quote Yogi Bhajan: "Gurudakshina is a seeding thing. Gurudakshina is not 'You give.' *Gurudakshina* is, 'You give to yourself.' It is called mega-multiplying yourself. Write down the English translation of *Gurudakshina*: 'Mega-multiplying yourself financially, socially, personally, respectfully, gracefully.' *Dakshina* will give you *drib drishtee*. You'll start seeing the Unseen. It's not the money. It's the attitude, it's the offering. If you give it, it will mega-multiply you. If you keep it, it will eat you up."

Gurudakshina contributions are used to spread the teachings of Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan. We encourage you to send in your contribution on a regular basis, whether you teach one class a week or twenty. The way to calculate Gurudakshina is simple—it is 11% of the gross receipts from yoga class income.

Many Sikh Kundalini Yoga teachers have asked if they are expected to contribute both Gurudakshina and Dasvandh on their teaching income. When asked for clarification, Yogi Bhajan said: "We will leave it to the individual."

Presently, *Gurudakshina* contributions are building the Library of the Teachings of Yogi Bhajan. Contributing regularly will seed the Library and open the flow of your prosperity.

Your *Gurudakshina* contributions are payable to:
3HO Gurudakshina. Mail to:
3HO Gurudakshina
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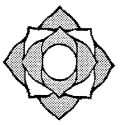
Those living in the United States can also contribute via EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer). Contact IKYTA for the appropriate form.

May you be blessed to bring many students to the experience of Kundalini Yoga and the 3HO lifestyle which Yogi Bhajan has shared with the West.



Keep Up!

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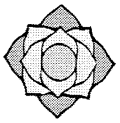
CHAPTER 25



Meeting the Challenges of Teaching Kundalini Yoga

"You must as a teacher concentrate on your mission."

–YOGI BHAJAN

This chapter includes . . .

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- Teaching the Adult Population–Community & Fitness Centers
- Academic Institutions • Pre-Natal & Post-Natal Yoga • Teaching Children
- Teachings Seniors • Teaching People with Physical & Mental Health Problems
- Addiction Recovery Programs • Stress Management & Relaxation • Corporate

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THERE ARE CHALLENGES IN TEACHING KUNDALINI YOGA, and we know how to prepare for them through daily *sadhana* and lifestyle choices. There are also many practical challenges in finding a teaching niche, creating or adapting the environment in which we teach, and in handling unusual problems in classes.

Teaching in Specialized Settings

Finding Our Teaching Niche

How can we tailor a class for different groups of people? The IKYTA directory lists specialties of many teachers—contact them for information about teaching materials that may have already been created, or specialty courses that may be offered. You can search the online KRI Certified List of Kundalini Yoga Teachers to find out who is teaching in any specialty at *www.kundaliniyoga.org*. You can put in the word "seniors," or "women's" or "pre-natal" or "childrens," etc. to find out who is teaching what.

People with specialties can also form study groups to exchange experiences and develop teaching materials. There is much material from Humanology as taught by Yogi Bhajan that fits into yoga classes for special interest groups such as addiction recovery groups, corporate groups, and healthcare groups. Following are some examples and general tips for approaching teaching in these specialized areas.

Teaching the Adult Population—Community & Fitness Centers, and Academic Institutions

These are great places to begin teaching. Many people will go to an institution they know and trust, but they might not go to a course advertised in New Age magazines or health journals. Also you will meet a great variety of people with interesting backgrounds and fitness levels. And you can begin to create a mailing list for future use.

- There are many recreation places in cities, and the staff are always looking for new and innovative programs. At the same time, they are looking for trends that will be popular, that will fill up the spaces in their facilities all day and evening most days of the week.
- Yoga classes do well on Monday to Thursday evenings. Other forms of yoga may be occupying these evenings, but situations change quickly, and after you have started teaching, you may be able to switch to a more favorable time. Depending on location, it may take a while to establish a class at other times of the day, unless you teach where there is daycare or a seniors population.
- These institutions generally look for six to ten week sessions of an hour to an hour and a half. You can also try one day or half-day workshops on the weekends.
- It is best to link your sessions closely to the advertising they do in the community—often a recreation guide is mailed out three or four times a year.
- Methods of payment vary.

Suggestions:

- Visit several facilities and to assess if they suit your needs.
- Check out the classrooms and see if the environment will work.
- Approach management in places that are a good fit. You can make contact by phone, letter, fax, e-mail, or cold call. Approach with a cover letter addressed specifically to one contact person, a proposal, and a resume. A business card and brochure can be helpful but are not essential.
- Beginning Kundalini Yoga and Meditation are excellent courses to propose initially.
- Yoga for Seniors works well in some centers, though they may be looking for volunteers. If you stay with one institution, you can build up more advanced or specialized series later.

Pre-natal Yoga

The energy of a pregnancy yoga class is different from the energy in other Kundalini Yoga classes. The pregnant woman has a Navel Center that is very open, and she is extremely sensitive. Generally the classes are more supportive and gentler, so as to provide a support system for the pregnant woman who is undergoing constant changes. Women are encouraged to be easy on themselves during pregnancy. Remember that even the limitations for doing yoga while pregnant are written for yogis! You may make adjustments if the pregnant woman has never done any exercise. Make sure she gets permission from her doctor.

- It is very appropriate to teach techniques of relaxation, breathing, meditation, and gentle yoga.
- Always remind the pregnant student to listen to her body and to rest when necessary, even if the exercise is not finished. She should not exercise to the point of exhaustion.

The following exercises should not be done during pregnancy after the 120th day, or if a woman has any medical complications:

- Refrain from exercises which apply pressure to the abdominal area. (i.e. Bow Pose, etc.)
- Refrain from exercises and *pranayam* that over-stimulate.
- No Breath of Fire. Yogi Bhajan has stated that light Breath of Fire in the first 3 months is permissable if health permits. She should check with her doctor.

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- No *mulbandh*.
- No leg lifts (except while lying on the side).
- The pulse should not go above 140 beats per minute.
- No inverted postures (i.e. shoulder stand).
- No Sat Kriya.
- Caution the pregnant student about lying on the back after approximately the fourth to sixth month. After that, lying on the back is uncomfortable and can be dangerous for the mother since the weight of the baby unfavorably stresses the mother's blood pressure. Let the mother decide what feels good for her. Suggest she relax on her side and avoid postures on the back after this time.
- This is not a time to be told to keep up or exercise harder.
- Pregnant women should not take cold showers.
- Women should not do Venus Kriyas at all during pregnancy.

In a Pregnancy Yoga class, a Kundalini Yoga teacher can explain that each woman has the power to bring a child into the world who is a saint, a hero, or a giver. It is your role to help mothers-to-be understand the strength of their projection in instilling values in their children, which can help change the destiny of the Earth.

- Meditations that help to strengthen the woman's ability to instill values are often incorporated into each class.
- Discuss pregnancy, and the importance of meditation, especially after the 120th day when the soul arrives.
- Give special attention to the adverse effects of smoking, alcohol and drugs and the importance of good diet and nutrition.

Walking Meditation during pregnancy: It is best to limit physical exercise during pregnancy. Instead, emphasize meditation and chanting, and regular walking or breathwalking with a slow, steady breath pattern.

Yogi Bhajan also recommends *charn japa*, a walking meditation, for couples. The couple walks with hands held, chanting *Sat Nam* with the left step, *Wahe Guru* with the right step.

Post-Natal Yoga

- Exercises include gradual strengthening of abdominals, Kegel muscle exercises (especially if she had a C-section), and Kundalini Yoga *kriyas* done less intensely than in a regular yoga class.
- Teach the importance of restoring the Navel Point using common sense. This strengthening of her identity allows the mother to help the child develop his or her identity.
- Teach how to breathe diaphragmatically, since many mothers have never taken yoga before their pre- or post-natal classes.
- In post-natal yoga talk about the child being within the aura of the mother for the first 40 days.
- Emphasize how the family revolves around the mother, and that self-care and support are essential.
- Mention the significance of the baby's first three years and when to begin yoga for the mother and the baby.

Teaching Children

- Yoga for children is age-specific—very young children can start doing yoga in classes designed for Moms and tots. Even 2- and 3-year olds can be taught yoga. Classes can be designed for pre-school (ages 4-6), primary (ages 6-8), junior (ages 9-11), intermediate (ages 12-14). All have varying developmental issues such as: attention span; ability to be quiet; need for snacks (watch for food allergies); and tendency to go to the bathroom. So extra class assistance may be required.
- Invoke the child's imagination through stories, songs, poems, activities, and games. Create an imaginary environment—they can pretend they are animals or imaginary creatures in some exercises.
- Don't be concerned about following a fixed routine (a *kriya*, or set).
- The length of class time spent in actual yoga varies (15-30 minutes), also the length of: warm-ups (3-5 breaths per pose or exercise), yogic exercises (20-90 seconds), and rest in between. Times should be dependent on attention span.
- Sometimes special games are helpful such as doing yoga in pairs, or having an animal puppet wake them up after relaxation.
- Children can begin a light Breath of Fire at age 5.
- Reduce the time in *pranayam* and be creative to keep the child's interest.
- Creativity and visualization help during relaxation (1-5 minutes). Meditation is also short, especially at first (1-5 minutes).
- Be firm when you need to be, and in disciplining, focus on the behavior and not the child.
- Yoga for children can take place in scouts or guides, preschools, public or private elementary schools, during church Sunday school, community centers, in the home or just about anyplace that children gather.

Resources: Shakta Kaur Khalsa, *Fly Like a Butterfly.* Baba Hari Dass, *A Child's Garden Yoga.*

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Teaching Private Classes

Among the challenges of teaching private classes are:

- Teaching one-on-one can be more difficult since you will not have the group energy to draw from.
- It can be more difficult to maintain a clear, professional teacher-student relationship.
- Depending where the class is being taught, you may have less control over the environment.

Suggestions:

- Before taking on one-to-one private classes, it is a good idea to have considerable experience teaching regular classes, so that you can hold the space for the individual.
- Create as much as possible a suitable environment free from interruption from family members, phones, and other noise.
- Maintain a clear relationship. As the teacher, do not become drawn into the student's emotional problems.

Teaching Seniors

Seniors vary greatly in terms of fitness and mental and physical flexibility. You have to be extra aware of medical problems with seniors. Someone who is 80 might be in better physical and mental condition than someone who is 55. All seniors should contact their doctors for advice about joining a yoga class—you might consider getting written permission, because some may have medical conditions perhaps not easily observable that preclude some kinds of breathwork or exercise. And they may not tell you about them.

Be creative and use common sense. Some seniors may need chairs for support, or they may need to sit with their backs to a wall or on cushions or folded blankets. Others may appear mobile, but will not be able to lie down. Some will be in wheelchairs. Adjust the times for yoga exercises to suit greatly reduced stamina and flexibility, and encourage seniors to attempt only postures they can comfortably manage. Naturally, your choice of set would be guided by these factors. Use mostly sitting positions with some standing. *Pranayam* and meditation are most effective. Chanting helps—especially those who are apt to fall asleep in class.

Use common sense in allowing seniors with poor hearing into class. If you have to shout just so that one or two people can hear, it will be disruptive. Instead, you might attempt to teach a class for those hard of hearing, so that shouting is the norm. Or suggest to them that they follow by example, observing those around them.

Seniors in nursing homes are even more challenging in terms of range of ability. Unless you are a seniors healthcare professional, it may be best to have a class for the staffs of several care homes so that they can develop knowledge and rapport with the students and be able to easily screen those who should not be participating. They are also able to best sense when their clients are about to get into difficulty. If you teach seniors, make sure everyone is cleared medically—having a nursing aide in attendance is a good idea for the seniors and for your protection.

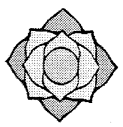
Teaching People with Physical & Mental Health Problems

What applies to senior's classes applies also to people with serious health problems. If the group all have a common condition it will be easier to decide what to teach. Caution and medical help are essential.

Addiction Recovery Programs

Drug abuse is a huge problem. Many never overcome the addiction. The time is ripe for Kundalini Yoga Teachers to take Yogi Bhajan's teachings into this area, because yoga can help drug addicts stay drug-free for a lifetime. Yogi Bhajan has presented many *kriyas* to cleanse the liver, re-balance the nervous system, and allow the glandular system to secrete properly. Today these techniques are more valuable than ever, and classes can be promoted to both the addiction counselors and their clients. People who suffer from eating disorders, smoking, and other addictions can also use these programs.

One way to begin is by teaching a class in a detox center to develop some understanding of addiction. In classes or workshops for counselors, teach exercises that they can do for themselves to relax from burn-out or stress. Then teach them simple and brief practices that they can teach their clients to do with ease, such as Sitali Pranayam.



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Stress Management and Relaxation

Stress is vital to life—we can't grow without it. The body knows how to handle stress, but the problem is prolonged stress or trauma—where we are overwhelmed and cannot cope.

In stress management, you can focus on:

- Causes of stress in the lifestyle.
- Treating the symptoms of stress.
- Using Kundalini Yoga to strengthen the nervous system, the aura, and the meditative mind.
- The mind's awareness through meditation.
- Cycles of stimulation and depression, and use the many *kriyas* that unite body, mind, and spirit.
- The poisons in the normal diet and suggest changes, cleanses, and even fasts.
- The nature of addictions, and recommend a daily *sadhana*.

Corporate Yoga— Business, Government & Non-profit Organizations

Yoga is becoming more popular in the workplace, where too much stress is a common problem.

When teaching in a business setting:

- You can use a stress management and relaxation model.
- You may want to adapt corporate language to describe some of the effects of Kundalini Yoga and meditation.
- You can teach both managers and employees. Approach management with a covering letter, proposal, course syllabus, and a resume. A business card and a brochure are helpful.
- Classes will usually not be more than an hour long, and they can be several times a week. Lunchtime is a great fit, though before or after work might also be appropriate.
- Sometimes the company pays for the classes, sometimes the employees do, and sometimes there is a split. But your students should contribute, otherwise they will leave empty-handed.
- *Pranayam*, short yoga sets with relaxation, and meditations using sound current are effective.
- You may want to give a handout of quick techniques to alleviate stress that students can use at their desks during the day.

Resources:
Articles on Stress Management and Yoga in the Corporate World in Kundalini Rising! Newsletter.
Yoga Secrets for Business Success, by Darshan Singh Khalsa

Challenging Situations in Class

Preventing difficult situations is important. Caution students about medical problems before the first class, and encourage them to be self-aware.

What do you do when you think someone has been drinking alcohol or taking drugs before coming to class?

A Kundalini Yoga teacher does not allow someone who has been drinking alcohol or is high on drugs to attend class. Students should know from the start that alcohol and drugs do not mix with Kundalini Yoga. Advise students to seek professional counseling and to attend only when they are sober or clean.

Use of drugs is not recommended for anyone, but especially not for students of Kundalini Yoga—and most especially not before practicing yoga. With a drug high, the powerful energies stimulated may become out of control with unpredictable and possibly dangerous effects.

These days, many people are taking anti-depressants. If a person is taking prescription drugs, they should check with their doctor before proceeding with yoga practice.

How do you react as a yoga teacher if one of the students experiences pain during an exercise?

In class remind students that they are responsible for their body, and they should engage only in exercises that they and their doctor feel are proper for their particular body. Pain anywhere may be associated with a pre-existing injury. This is why self-awareness is so important. The students must carefully listen to what the body is saying in terms of its flexibility and ability to hold a posture.

In the normal practice of Kundalini Yoga, there are times when you feel pain that is not due to injury, but from fatigue, the nervous system adjusting; or the stretching of nerves and muscles. Pain will normally ease up during rest. It can be overcome by breathing slowly, holding the posture or the rhythm. Some pain is common in athletics, and may be found in Kundalini Yoga even with small efforts, because we are working on nerves and glands and not just muscles.

What do I do if a student starts crying in class?

Maintain the neutral space of the class. It is not a good idea to suddenly focus attention on that person. It is more likely that if they continue with the class—particularly through the deep relaxation and the meditation—they will process through whatever is causing this reaction. With your words and heart-centered projection, you can help them to feel safe.

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How do I handle slander?

Slander is used to create doubt where there is none, and where none is justified. We all carry fear and distrust in our minds - fear of foreigners, authority, the opposite sex, illness, death... Slander is used to magnify our fearful thoughts. The slanderer senses the opportunity to create doubt and gain power by striking the chords of insecurity deep in our unconscious fears. This magnifies the fear so that our mind reacts to feelings, not facts. A slanderer may include many facts in their discourse, but only for impact.

Our pain and suffering comes from doubt and a lack of merger with our Divine nature. Slanderers create doubt and live on the misery it evokes. They block the path of those who sincerely seek to live in consciousness and spirit. Every spiritual path is meant to elevate the self and provide a platform to serve others and practice fulfilling habits. Slanderers impede the progress of others and create karma. They curse themselves with their ill intent.

How should we respond to slander? The best response is not to react in turn. As a teacher, speak from your heart with the simple truth you know. Truth is elevating. Choose your words with kindness, not anger, in order to inspire others. Guide people to their own experience of what has been and is true in their lives. If you teach humbly, consistently and truthfully, slander is sure to come. Whatever response you make, focus on re-creating trust with the frequency of your psyche. Your best defense is being positive, cultivating conscious communication, serving and respecting all. When your focus is service and you have nothing to prove, you can relax and enjoy the play of life, and the reality of your soul.

Should I accept an invitation from one of my students to tea or dinner after class?

If you decide to socialize with students, remember that your role is first and foremost that of a Teacher. Maintain the integrity inherent in the role of a Teacher, and be conscious of the student/teacher dynamic when outside the classroom setting. Remember, students are looking to you with trust when they bring up personal concerns.

Generally speaking, it is a good idea to be available after class for the students to gather and speak to one another and to you.

Common Questions & Comments from Students

When a student asks you to clarify the correct performance of an exercise, respond appropriately. But to keep the flow and rhythm of the class and to avoid focusing on one person at the expense of the whole group, postpone most questions until after class. After class, if you don't know the answer to a question, feel free to say you don't know, and that you would be happy to look into it.

Why should yoga be done on an empty stomach?

A meal should not be eaten 2-3 hours before class, or the blood and energy will be tied up in the digestive process, instead of being available for yoga practice. (Light snacks are okay.) Also, doing yoga too soon after eating obstructs poses like Plow Pose and Shoulder Stand for some people. It is fine to drink water before and during class.

How can you support the cleansing processes that are stimulated through yoga exercises?

Go to bed early each night to aid the natural self-cleansing processes of the body. During the day, drink a lot of water, so the body can clean itself through sweat and urination. In addition drink yogi tea and other cleansing teas. Take cold showers on rising daily so that the circulation and cleaning processes of the skin get improved. Undertake occasional cleansing diets.

Why is yoga done barefoot?

On a subtle level, you are always trying to do things that allow your energies to flow most freely, to accompany the changes you induce by doing Kundalini Yoga. The feet have nerve endings that go to all parts of the body, and are the major exchange area for *prana* between you, the Sun energy, and the Earth energy. Bare feet maximize that flow of energy and help us to cleanse and revitalize. In the colder climates it may be difficult to get students to remove their socks. Do not force it–just inform and be an example.

If I do Kundalini Yoga, will I suddenly become enlightened and full of kundalini energy?

For the serious student, practising regularly, 40 days of Kundalini Yoga can create profound transformation. But "sudden enlightenment" is not the goal of Kundalini Yoga practice. You slowly develop through the different stages of spiritual growth: *saram pad, karam pad, shakti pad,* and *sahej pad* to *sat pad*. It is a gradual process of increasing your inner light and cleaning old fears and karmas.

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I read a book where the author claims he was almost burned by the kundalini energy, and nearly went crazy!

That person did not do Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan. He meditated on a golden flower above his head for two hours daily, for twenty years. He failed to prepare his body and nervous system. His experience is comparable with that of many people experiencing spontaneous kundalini awakenings. They can be extremely difficult to handle. Spontaneous awakenings have nothing to do with the gradual and balanced development of the kundalini in the practice of Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan. Kundalini Yoga by itself never causes these dangerous and extreme energy imbalances. However, we do help people that suffer from them–when they start Kundalini Yoga they become more grounded again, and it is possible for them to channel the energies.

I'm a Christian and I feel that mantras like "God and me, me and God are one" go against my beliefs. Do I have to do them?

Every tradition has both mystical and ritual based teachings. Some are inclusive and open, others exclusive and oriented at conversion. All of the techniques of Kundalini Yoga are aimed to elevate the individual capacity, so their own sensitivity and awareness can guide their spiritual choices and their choices about promoting and demoting habits. It is fundamental to yoga that we experience and master the polarities that are dynamic in our minds and in our lives We have many techniques and mantras that help us experience the relationship between our finite self and our infinite or expanded self. That is yoga. It is not a religion. It is spiritual in the sense that it always gives you the experience of connecting to the larger self, to the communty of others and to the greater realms you particpate in. People generally report a deepening of their spiritual experience in whatever tradition is their base as the mind clears, energy rises and emotions become more refined.

I feel strange about these mantras. How can they work for people in the West?

There are students who experience a feeling of alienation from their Western culture when confronted with the Indian influences in Kundalini Yoga. Culture, however, is a living entity. There have always been countless cultural exchanges between nations. In the Age of Aquarius there will be a many-faceted world culture using and mixing anything cultural that is available on this planet regardless of nationality and geography. In the future, it will be easier for people on the spiritual path to learn universal spiritual values prevalent in many cultures. Many cultural groups have access to treasures of universal spiritual techniques. There are many such groups in India.

Even in the Judeo-Christian tradition there exist many mantras, although they may not be recognized as such. For example, *Amen* (derived from the Sanskrit mantra *Om*), *Hallelujah*, and *Kyrie Eleison*.

After the class last week I had a headache all evening. Why?

This may be a part of the natural cleansing process stimulated by doing Kundalini Yoga. The toxins that are stored in the muscles are released into the circulation so they can be eliminated through the kidneys, lungs, intestines, and skin. However, before waste can leave the body it temporarily makes the blood slightly toxic in people who are sedentary. A headache after a class can be a normal symptom of this increase in the toxic level of the blood. It may also be caused by insufficient water, hydration, before exercise, especially in hot climates. If symptoms persist or seem extreme, certainly refer them to professional medical advice. It is best to drink a lot of water so the body can clean itself more efficiently, and then go to sleep. Gradually, with yoga practice, the student will be eating a less toxic diet.

Why is there no headstand in Kundalini Yoga?

In Kundalini Yoga we do not include the headstand because it can be dangerous for the sensitive structure of the neck, and it can create permanent damage that you may be unaware of. For example, long-term cumulative damage of the cervical discs, their nerves, and ligaments may go unnoticed for years. In addition headstand is not advised for many medical conditions: any problem with the spinal skeletal system, neck, and shoulders; high or low blood pressure; eye diseases; ear disorders; nasal congestion; tooth infections. Instead we use the shoulder stand, which gives similar benefits as the headstand but without the risk. We do not practice shoulder stand during menstruation or pregnancy.

I notice that teachers in my hatha yoga class spend a lot of time on the details of a posture compared to teachers in a kundalini yoga class. Why is that?

The emphasis in a Kundalini Yoga class is the flow and movement of the *kriya*, the sequence of exercises and meditations. Many teachers give precise descriptions of postures, and teachers are trained in detail. But postures are considered a foundation. Each posture gets part of its effect from how it is included in

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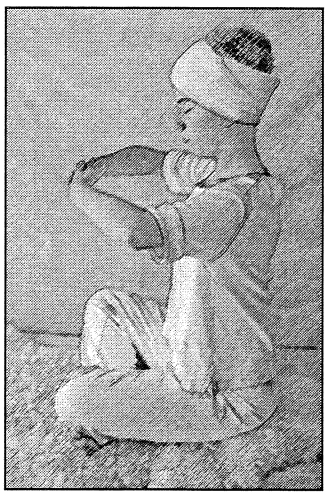
the *kriya*. There is a body intelligence we become sensitive to as awareness grows that guides us. So Kundalini Yoga teachers do pay attention to posture but they also focus on many more aspects of a *kriya* that create the profound effects of this practice.

Some poses seem different than in Hatha Yoga, like Archer. Why is that?

There are several differences in Kundalini Yoga since it was given for householders–non-ascetics. For example, Vatskar Kriya is done by sipping in air. In Hatha Yoga this same exercise is taken into the stomach and out the intestines. This is not required, since we use kriyas, nor is it appropriate for householders in a busy life. Archer Pose has many variations and we use the active form as well as the hero form. Also, there are some postures and mudras you will see in Kundalini Yoga and not in Hatha Yoga because of the vast legacy of advanced practices that used to be secret which are now shared with us all by Yogi Bhajan.



The caliber of this human body is such that it has the capacity to give you the experience of God. - YOGI BHAJAN

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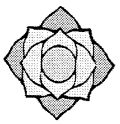

CHAPTER 26

Resources for the Kundalini Yoga Teacher

Individual consciousness will refine you, group consciousness will expand you, and universal consciousness will redeem you to Infinity.

–YOGI BHAJAN

This chapter includes . . .

Resource Organizations 304

Kundalini Research Institute (KRI) • 3HO (Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization) 3HO International Kundalini Yoga Teachers Association (IKYTA) 3HO Events • White Tantric Yoga • Spiritual Name Requests • Yogi Bhajan Yoga Alliance • Sikh Dharma

Resources for Products & Publications 306

Publications 306

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Resource Organizations

Kundalini Research Institute (KRI)

The Kundalini Research Institute exists to:

- Create global recognition and access to the Teachings of Yogi Bhajan through product development and the Library of teachings.
- Uphold the purity, integrity and accuracy of the Teachings of Yogi Bhajan through KRI Review and the KRI Seal of Approval.
- Offer support for authors to create and translate products based on the Teachings of Yogi Bhajan.
- Create the KRI International Kundalini Yoga Teacher Training certificaiton programs.

For a list of Kundalini Yoga products with the KRI Seal of Approval, please view the IKYTA website:
www.kundaliniyoga.com

Kundalini Research Institute

The KRI Seal of Approval is granted only to products that are approved through KRI review. Look for this seal to guarantee the accuracy and integrity of the science of Kundalini Yoga and 3HO Lifestyle as taught by Yogi Bhajan.

3HO Foundation (Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization)

3HO is an international non-profit organization dedicated to sharing a Healthy, Happy, Holy lifestyle and the science of Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan, Master of Kundalini Yoga, through education, service, and spirit.

Men and women of varying age, race, ethnicity, religion and cultural background consider themselves part of the worldwide 3HO community. 3HO believes that diversity is a key part of the organization's ability to serve humanity as a whole. What brings people together in association with 3HO is the desire to live a meaningful lifestyle and to be of service to the betterment of humankind.

3HO International
01-A Ram Das Guru Place, Espanola, New Mexico, 87532 USA
(505) 753-4988 FAX: (505) 753-1999
www.3HO.org

3HO International Kundalini Yoga Teachers Association (IKYTA)

Membership in IKYTA:

All participants enrolled in *The Aquarian Teacher* Level 1 Teacher Training program in the US and Canada automatically become Associate Members of IKYTA. Upon receipt of a KRI Level 1 Teaching Certificate, all newly certified teachers are upgraded to Professional Membership for the remainder of the calendar year. IKYTA membership must be renewed annually. Professional Members receive, in addition to Associate membership benefits, referrals from IKYTA, personalized listings in the annual Kundalini Yoga Teachers Directory online and in *Aquarian Times* magazine, and more! Please view the IKYTA membership form online at www.kundaliniyoga.com for current membership benefits.

The goals of IKYTA are:

1) To create unity among Kundalini Yoga Teachers.
2) To create communication among all 3HO Kundalini Yoga Teacher Associations worldwide.
3) To maintain an online directory of it's Professional Members, who are KRI Certified Teachers, for referral and networking.
4) To ensure the excellence of all Kundalini Yoga Teachers, classes and Teacher Training systems.
5) To train successful teachers who are knowledgeable about Kundalini Yoga, meditation and 3HO lifestyle, and skillful at marketing to reach the maximum number of people.
6) To promote IKYTA members, and Teacher Training programs worldwide.
7) To gain public recognition for 3HO and Kundalini Yoga among the general public and the yoga community.

3HO International Kundalini Yoga Teachers Association (IKYTA)
3 Ram Das Guru Place, Espanola, NM, 87532 USA
(505) 753-0423 FAX: (505) 753-5982
ikyta@3HO.org www.kundaliniyoga.com

Nam Kaur Khalsa, Executive Director
Guruka Kaur Khalsa, Association Director
Hari Charn Kaur Khalsa, Program Director, Teacher Training
Gurumandir Kaur Smith, Contract Manager, Teacher Training

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3HO Events

3HO Camps & Events

3HO sponsors international yoga-based camps and festivals throughout the year and around the globe. Some of these include:

Summer Solstice in New Mexico and Winter Solstice in Florida
Yoga Festivals throughout Europe, and South America
Ladies Camp
The Master's Touch
Khalsa Youth Camps

These camps are designed to give people the opportunity to experience and practice Kundalini Yoga, meditation, vegetarian diet, and conscious living. They also serve to create a community of people on the path of self-discovery and spiritual consciousness.

3HO Events Information
01-A Ram Das Guru Place, Espanola, NM, 87532 USA
toll free (888) 346-2420
(505) 753-4988 FAX: (505) 753-1999
yogainfo@3HO.org
www.3HO.org

International Peace Prayer Day

Each June people from all walks of life including spiritual leaders, musicians, humanitarians, and politicians of all faiths gather in the Jemez Mountains of northern New Mexico for this day-long 3HO event. This special event includes the awarding of grants to organizations working for peace and honors a Man and Woman of Peace for the year. The day also includes a Sacred Healing Walk, an old Hopi Indian custom which was handed down to us as caretakers of this sacred land.
www.peaceprayerday.com
1-877-70-Peace (1-877-606-3223)

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"The beauty of White Tantric Yoga is that it is subtle, it is exalting, and it works to give you the mastery of life."
—Yogi Bhajan

(310) 552-3416 x109 FAX: 310-557-8414
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Spiritual Name Requests

To request a spiritual name from Yogi Bhajan, please write to:
Yogi Bhajan
Spiritual Name Request
01-A Ram Das Guru Place, Espanola, NM 87532 USA
Include your full name, birthdate, and time of birth–if you know it–and mailing address. It is customary to include a donation, made payable to Yogi Bhajan.

To contact Yogi Bhajan:
Siri Hari Kaur Khalsa
(505) 747-7017
01-A Ram Das Guru Place, Espanola, NM 87532
yogibhajan@3ho.org

To find out more about Yogi Bhajan go to:
www.yogibhajan.com

Yoga Alliance

IKYTA is a founding member of the Yoga Alliance, a national alliance of diverse yoga organizations. It's purpose is to provide support services to yoga professionals, and to establish standards for the field. It provides a registry of teachers who meet the national standards created for Yoga Teacher Training in the United States. Once you become a KRI certified teacher, you will be eligible to join the Yoga Alliance, and become part of the registry with rights to use the YA logo on promotional materials.
(877) 964-2255
info@yogaalliance.org www.yogaalliance.org

Sikh Dharma

For more information on the Sikh way of life, including music, Yogi Bhajan's lectures, and Prosperity yoga sets and meditations, visit:
www.sikhnet.com, www.dasvandh.org

Sikh Dharma International
(505) 753-8928 FAX: (505) 753-5982
satkirpal@sikhdharma.org

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Resources for Products & Publications

To order Kundalini Yoga books, manuals, audio and videotapes and CDs, we recommend the following resources:

▸ ANCIENT HEALING WAYS
Distributors of Kundalini Yoga products, including books, videos, tapes, CDs, Yogi Bhajan live lectures.
International Contact info:
www.a-healing.com
(505) 747-2860 FAX: (505)-747-2868
PO Box 130, Espanola, NM 87532
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IKYTA members receive a 10% discount on all retail orders. Wholesale discounts available.

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info@spiritvoyage.com
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Discounts from 30% up to 40% depending on quantity.

Publications

Aquarian Times Magazine

Phone (orders only): **1-800-359-2940**
To subscribe: **AT@kiit.com**
www.aquariantimesmagazine.com

Kundalini Rising!

The quarterly newsletter of 3HO's International Kundalini Yoga Teachers Association (IKYTA)
Participants enrolled in KRI's Level 1 Teacher Training in the USA and Canada receive a subscription. Others may join IKYTA at www.kundaliniyoga.com to receive the teachers newsletters.

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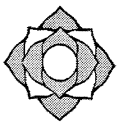
PART EIGHT

Posture

CHAPTER 27



Postures

There are eighty-four postures of yoga, but all people, whether Westerner or Easterner, have done them in the womb of the mother. So you are yogis anyway.

- YOGI BHAJAN

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Some of the Basic Postures Used in Kundalini Yoga

The practice of Kundalini Yoga is done in *kriyas* and sets, and the effect of a particular exercise is determined by its placement within that set, its relationship to the other exercises in the set, the breath, mantra, mudras, and locks used.

The purpose of this section is to help with some of the basic, most commonly used postures in Kundalini Yoga. They are presented in this way:

- **Instruction**. Describing how to do the posture.

- **Checkpoints**. Tips for getting the most of out a posture, bringing attention to common mistakes, and correcting form and alignment. Remember Yogi Bhajan has said that if a student is not comfortable doing any of the postures, they may skip them, and still receive the benefit of the *kriya* from the group energy generated by the class.

- **Variation.** Some postures appear in different *kriyas* in different variations, as taught by Yogi Bhajan. Do not interchange one variation of a posture for another, as we do not substitute postures in Kundalini Yoga *kriyas*. Follow the instructions as given by the Master.

In general, with most Kundalini Yoga postures:.

- **Neck Lock.** Check that the neck is in the proper alignment appropriate to the posture. In general, when sitting erect, Neck Lock should be applied, unless other instruction is given.
- **To end an exercise**. In general, inhale deeply and briefly hold, exhale deeply and briefly hold. You may apply *mulbandh*, unless other instruction is given.

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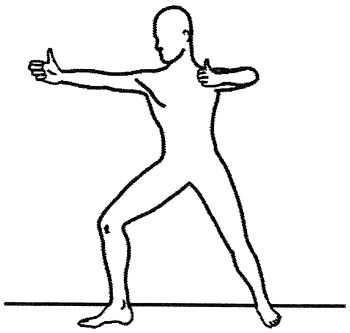


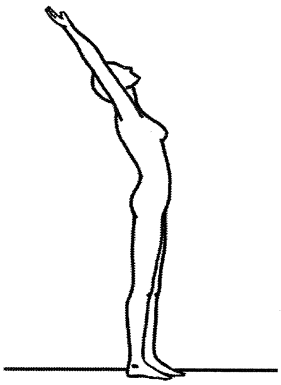
ARCHER POSE
Virabhadrasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin in a standing postion.
- Spread the feet approximately 2-3 feet apart, depending on your size.
- Place the right foot forward. Place the left foot at right angles to the right foot. Push forward, so that the right knee is over the right toes.
- Stretch the left leg behind, with the knee straight. Tuck the tailbone under using the internal muscles.
- Curl the fingers of both hands onto the palms, thumbs pulled back. As if pulling back a bow and arrow, lift the right arm up, extended forward parallel to the ground, over the right knee. The left arm, bent at the elbow, will be "pulling" back.
- Pull Neck Lock. Chin in, chest out.
- Do the same posture on the opposite side.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Feel the stretch across the hips, just under the hipbones.
- Avoid over-arching, so that there is no sway in the back.
- Balance the weight on both legs.
- Keep the back elbow parallel to the ground.

BABY POSE
Garbhasana

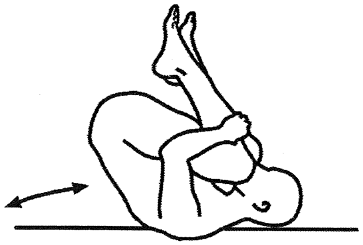
INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by sitting on the heels.
- Bend forward and place the forehead on the ground, putting pressure on the Third Eye.
- Arms are at the sides, with palms facing up.



STRETCHING BACKWARDS

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin in a standing position.
- Stand with the feel parallel, sitting bones width apart.
- Inhale and draw the tailbone under, engaging the navel.
- Stretch the arms above the head.
- Lenghten the space between the vertebrae as you lean backwards. Legs should be actively working, drawing the kneecaps up towards the hips.
- Use *mulbandh* for support and balance.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Do not collapse the lower back.



BACK ROLLS

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by lying on the back.
- Bend the knees up into the chest, pressing them with the arms.
- Roll on the spine, inhaling forward, exhaling back.

CHECKPOINT:
- If the lower spine is not making contact with the ground, try holding the back of the upper thighs, and press the knees into the chest.

BOAT POSE
Dvipada

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by lying on the stomach.
- With palms together, stretch the arms out in front.
- Then lift the arms up.
- Draw the backs of the upper thighs together, then lift the legs up.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Only the navel stays on the ground.
- Lengthen out. Imagine someone pulling you from the toes elongating your lower back.

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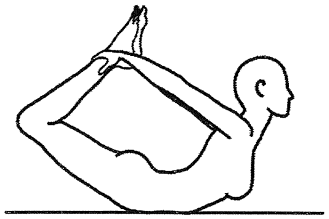
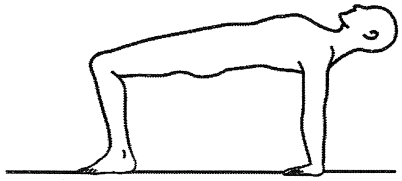


BOW POSE
Dhanurasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by lying on the stomach.
- Grab the ankles, and use the thigh muscles to pull the upper body off the ground.
- Then lift the legs off the ground.
- As the chest lifts, let the head follow.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Ideally try to get the toe joints together.
- The knees are a little bit apart.
- Do not compress the lower back. Try to engage the *mulbandh* first, then stretch up, so that the back doesn't compress.
- Use the legs to pull the arms and to lift the chest up.

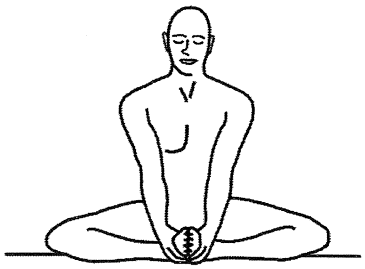


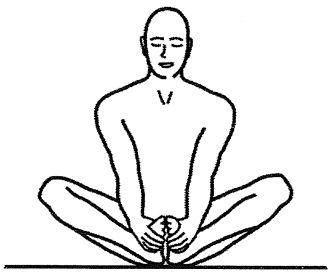
BRIDGE POSE
Setuasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin in a sitting position, with the legs out in front.
- Bend the knees, feet flat on the ground, about two fists apart.
- The arms are behind the body, palms flat on the ground, with the fingertips facing the feet.
- Lift the hips up.
- Keep the head up, with Neck Lock.

(Note: in some *kriyas*, it calls for the head to fall back.)

CHECKPOINTS:
- There should be a straight line from the collar bone to the knees.

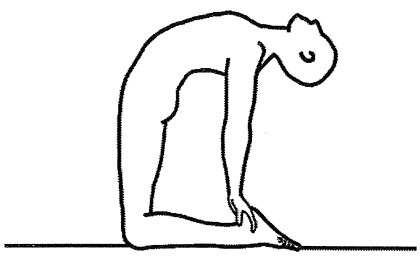




BUTTERFLY POSE
Baddha Konasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin in Easy Pose.
- Grab underneath the feet, and hold the soles of the feet together.
- Pull the spine up.
- Apply neck lock.
- Bounce the knees, coordinated with the breath.

VARIATION:
- In some *kriyas*, it calls for bending forward, lengthening the spine. As with all forward bends, do not lead with the head, initiate with the navel. As you exhale, draw the navel in and up.



CAMEL POSE
Ustrasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by sitting on the heels, and rising up onto the knees.
- Root yourself with the knees, pressing firmly into the earth.
- Bring the pelvis forward, tilt the tailbone under, lift the heart center, and exhale as you lean back.
- Lift the hips as high as you can.
- Grab the heels or ankles.
- Drop the head back.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Do not have the knees too far apart. It is best approximately two fists apart.

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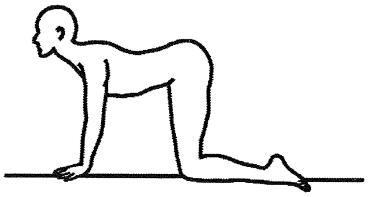


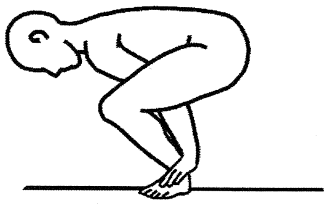
CAT-COW
Marjariasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin on the hands and knees.
- The hands are shoulder-width apart, with fingers facing forward.
- The knees are directly under the hips.
- *Inhale* and tilt the pelvis forward, arching the spine down (cow position), with head and neck stretched back. Do not scrunch the neck. Open the heart and raise the chin as far back as you can without collapsing the neck.
- *Exhale* and tilt the pelvis the opposite way, arching the spine up (cat position), pressing the chin into the chest.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Keep the motion smooth, moving from the bottom to the top. *The head moves last.*
- Start off slowly, then when the movement is established, you can speed up. You can go as fast as you want, *as long as your head moves last.*
- Inhale into the extended position, and hold a little bit of tension at the navel point. This allows for more widening of the ribs.

CAT STRETCH

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by lying on the back.
- Stretch the arms above the head on the ground.
- Keeping the shoulders on the ground, pull up one knee and bend it over to the opposite side of the body on the ground. Do the same with the other leg.



CHAIR POSE

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin in a standing position.
- Feet are shoulder-width apart.
- Squat down to the point where the thighs are parallel to the ground.
- Bring the hands through the inside of the legs, and grab towards the toes, placing the palms on top of the feet.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Keep the back straight.
- *Only lift the head and look forward if the heart center is very flexible. Otherwise, apply Neck Lock.*

COBRA POSE
Bhujangasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by lying on the stomach. There are two ways to move into Cobra Pose:
1) The classic way, which is ideal:
- Start out lying on the stomach, hands under the shoulders, palms flat on the ground.
- Lif the chest and heart up first, and let the head follow as you lean back.
- Straighten the arms.

2) The real. Try one or more of these tips if you have trouble with the ideal version:
- Start out in Front Platform Pose, and carefully drop down into Cobra.
- If you can't keep your feet together, keep the back of the upper thighs together.
- If it is difficult to keep your arms straight, bend your elbows, or put your forearms on the ground.
- Try Cobra Pose with your pelvis off the ground.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Do not let the back overarch.
- Stretch up across the abdomen and chest, and away from the lower back.
- It is good to do a counter pose after this, such as Baby Pose or Guru Pranam.

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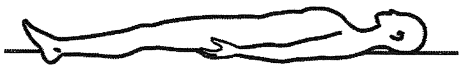


CORPSE POSE
Savasana

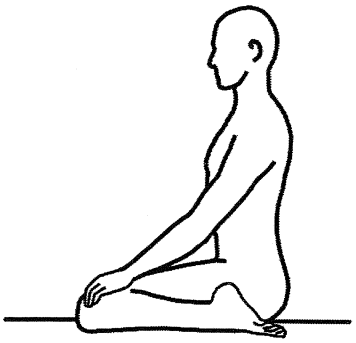
INSTRUCTIONS:

Lie on the back.

- Arms are at the sides, with palms facing up.
- This posture facilitates deep relaxation.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Never cross the ankles.
- The legs are not wide apart. Feet should either be a little bit apart, or heels slightly touching.
- Do not try to breath mechanically. Just let the breath come naturally, letting the abdomen rise and fall.



CELIBATE POSE

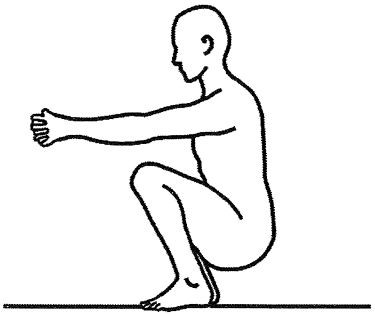
INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin by sitting on the heels.

- Spread the feet far enough apart so that your hips will fit between them. Move slowly, bending your knees, come sitting down with your feet on either side of your hips.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Try to maintain a straight spine.
- The flexibility should come from the hips, not the knees.
- This should not hurt the knees. If there is too much pressure on the knees, do not lower the buttocks all the way to the ground. Instead use a block or pillow under the buttocks.



CROW POSE

INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin in a standing position.

- Squat down. Knees and feet are wide apart, with heels flat on the ground.
- Apply Neck Lock.

CHECKPOINTS:

- The back should be perpendicular to the ground.
- If you are having difficulty getting down, or keeping your balance, try widening the feet and knees more.
- If you can't get the heels down, you may use something underneath your feet.

GURU PRANAM
Supta Parvatasana

INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin by sitting on the heels.

- Bring the forehead to the ground, bending forward by lengthening the core of the spine.
- Bring the arms out in front, with the palms together.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Lengthen yourself away from the hips.

EGO ERADICATOR

INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin by sitting on the heels, or in Easy Pose.

- Apply neck lock.
- Lift the arms up to 60 degrees. Then draw the shoulder blades down over the back of the ribs, so the shoulders are away from the ears.
- Curl the fingertips onto the pads of the palms, with the thumbs stretched back. Thumbs aim at each other above the head.
- To end, touch the thumbs above the head, and open fingers.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Do not bend the elbows.
- Stretch up from the shoulders.
- Do not arch the spine.
- Check the angle of the arms. It is a common mistake to have the arms lower than 60 degrees.

VARIATION:

- Some kriyas call for the palms open, parallel to the ceiling, with wrists pulled back.
- When doing Ego Eradicator while standing, the angle is thirty degrees, for balance.

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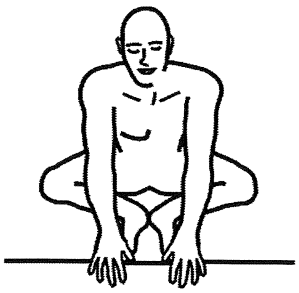
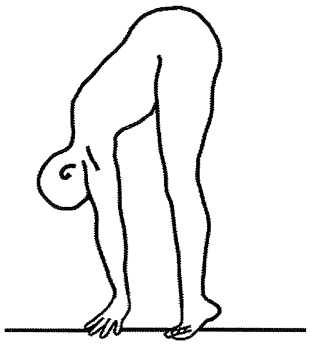




FROG POSE

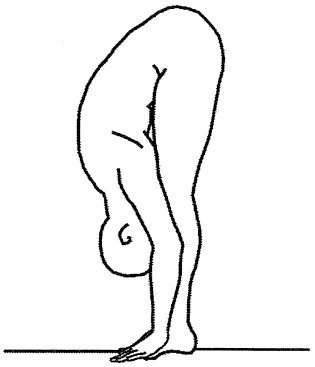
INSTRUCTIONS:

Squat down on the toes.

- The heels are touching, and raised up.
- Place the fingertips on the ground between the legs.
- The face is forward.
- *Inhale* as you raise the hips up, keeping the fingertips on the ground, heels up, knees locked.
- *Exhale* down; face is forward, knees outside of arms.

CHECKPOINTS:

- The movement is rapid.



FRONT BENDS

Uttanasana

INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin in a standing position.

- *Inhale*. Lift the spine up.
- *Exhale*, bend forward from the navel, continuing to lift and lengthen forward.
- Lastly, bring the head in towards the legs.
- Reverse to come up: push the feet into the ground, use the back of the legs to pull yourself up; head comes up last.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Never lead with the head.
- The navel is drawn in and up with the exhale in order to initiate the forward bend.

FISH POSE

Supta Virasana

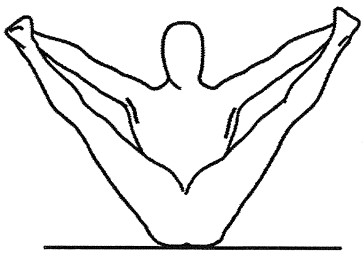
INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin by sitting on the heels.

- Lean back using first the hands as support, then the elbows, then resting the shoulders on the ground.

CHECKPOINTS FOR BEGINNERS:

- Remain supported by the elbows or hands.
- Sit in Easy Pose instead of sitting on the heels.



KUNDALINI LOTUS

Urdhvamukha Prasarita Padottanasana

INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin in a sitting position, with the legs out in front.

- Grab hold of the big toes.
- Holding onto the toes, lift the legs up and spread them wide, as you straighten the legs. Engage the navel for balance.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Keep the back straight. Do not collapse the spine.
- Lift the heart center up. Then straighten the legs as much as possible.
- If you can't quite achieve the full stretch, it's better to bend the knees than to collapse the spine.

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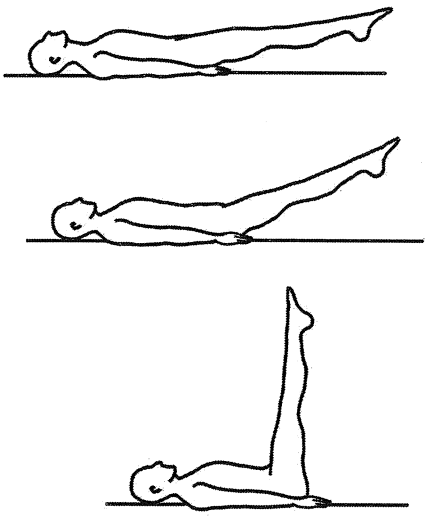


LEG LIFTS (30, 60, 90 degress)

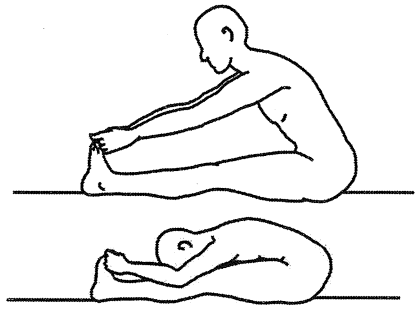
INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin by lying on the back.

- *Inhale*, press the lower back into the floor using a pelvic tilt, and lift the leg(s) up to the desired angle, using the muscles of the navel and *mulbandh*.
- *Exhale* as you lower the leg(s) down.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Use the power of the inhale to lift the legs up; use the strength of the abdominals on the exhale.
- Do not let the lower back arch up.
- Do not let the legs drop down.
- If you don't have the abdominal strength to keep the legs straight, it is better to bend the knees.
- Or use the hands under the small of the back as leverage, to avoid arching the back.



LIFE NERVE STRETCH (Front Stretch)

Paschimottanasana

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the same principle as Front Bends.

Begin by sitting down, with the legs stretched out in front.

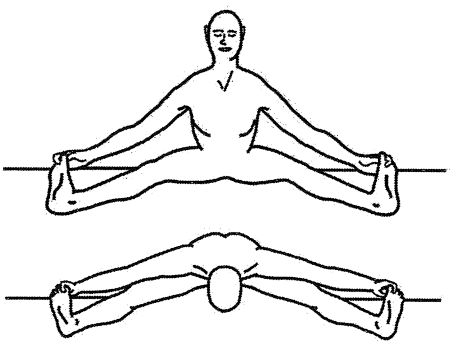
- Grab the big toes in finger lock. (Index finger and middle finger pull the toe, and the thumb presses the nail of the toe.)
- *Exhale*, lengthening the spine, bending forward from the navel, continuing to lengthen the spine.
- *Inhale*, use the legs to push up.
- The head follows last. Don't lead with the head.
- Reverse to come up: head comes up last.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Lead with the Navel Point; never with the head.
- Do not compress the lower back.
- Try to get the belly to the thighs rather than the head to the knees.
- Tighten the thigh muscles and pull them away from the knees to hold the stretch.

VARIATION:

- Legs spread wide. Follow instruction in the *kriya*.



LIFE NERVE STRETCH (Left & Right)

Upavistha Konasana

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the same principle as Front Bends and Life Nerve Stretch.

Begin by sitting down, with the legs stretched out in front.

- Bend the left leg and bring the left heel close to the groin.
- Grab the right big toe in finger lock with the fingers of the right hand. (Index finger and middle finger pulling the toe, and the thumb pressing the nail of the toe.).
- The left hand grabs the sole of the right foot.
- *Inhale* up, turn to your right, lengthen the spine.
- *Exhale*, bend forward from the navel, continuing to lengthen the spine.
- The head follows, last.
- Reverse to come up: head comes up last.
- Do the same on the left side.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Lead with the navel; never with the head.
- Pull with the arms to help lengthen the spine on the exhale.
- Do not compress the lower back.
- If you can't quite achieve the full stretch, grab the ankle, or wherever you can reach.

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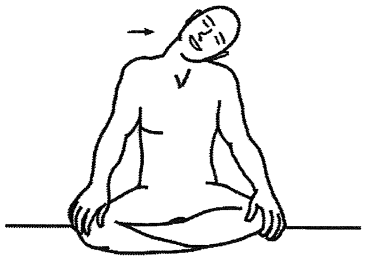
LOCUST POSE
Salabhasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by lying on the stomach.
- Have the feet together.
- Place the fists under the hips where the hips and thighs join. Use the fists to raise the legs up, and the back of the thighs to keep your legs together.
- Place the chin on the ground.
- Use the fists to raise the legs up, keeping the chin on the ground.

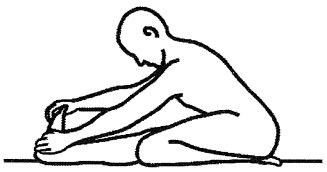
CHECKPOINTS:
- Lengthen away from the pelvis.
- It takes a lot of back strength to do this.
- The more open the psoas muscles, the higher the legs can come up.
- Lift one leg at at time to lessen pressure on lower back.



NECK ROLLS

INSTRUCTIONS:
Sit in Easy Pose or on the heels.
- Lengthen the neck with Neck Lock, and lift the heart center up.
- *Inhale* and stretch the head back, allowing the heart center to come up.
- *Exhale* as the head hangs forward.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Feel the roll rooted in the Heart Center.
- Be gentle with the neck.



MAHA MUDRA KRIYA
The Great Seal of Yoga

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by sitting up
- Sit on the left heel, placing the heel on the perinium.
- Stretch the right leg out in front of the body.
- Grab the right foot with both hands, keeping the spine straight.
- Apply Neck Lock.
- Apply *uddiyana bandh* and *mulbandh*.
- The eyes gaze at the toe, putting pressure on the Third Eye.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Neck Lock is very important.
- Spine stays straight. There should be a straight line from the top of the head to the base of the spine.
- Generally done only with the right leg stretched out, sitting on left heel.

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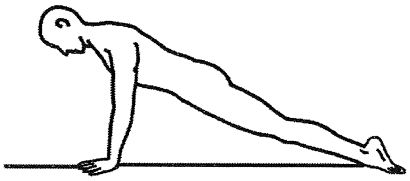
PELVIC LIFTS
(Kandharasana)

INSTRUCTIONS:
Lie on the back.
- Bend the knees.
- Feet are flat on the ground.
- Grab hold of the ankles.
- *Inhale*, engage the navel, and lift the hips up.
- *Exhale* down, sequentially lowering the vertebrae, using the thighs and buttocks.

CHECKPOINTS:
- As you inhale up, engage *mulbandh* and tuck the pelvis in (pelvic tilt), and tuck the tailbone in (pelvic tilt) so that the lower back doesn't overarch.
- The sacrum and hips are last to touch down.
- The abdomen is relaxed when coming down.
- Focus on opening the Heart Center.

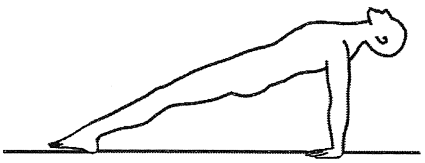


PLATFORM POSE (Front)

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by lying on the stomach.
- Place the palms flat on the ground.
- Push yourself up by straightening the elbows.
- Heels push the toes toward the ground.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Apply Neck Lock.
- There should be a straight line from the neck to the feet.

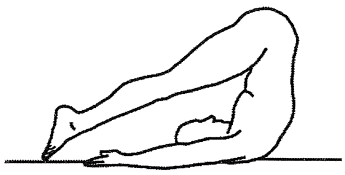
VARIATION:
- In some *kriyas*, it calls for the toes on the ground, instead of the top of the feet.

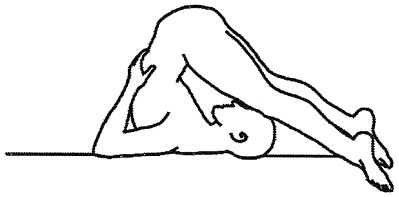


PLATFORM POSE (Back)
Purvottanasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Begin by sitting up, with the legs stretched out in front.
- Place the hands flat on the floor behind you, with the fingertips pointing towards the toes. Heels are on the ground.
- Lift the chest and hips up
- Allow the head to fall back, lifting the heart. Do not collapse the neck.
- Toes and heels stay on the ground.

CHECKPOINTS:
- Keep the body as straight as possible. Do not collapse the neck.
- It is best for those with any weakness in the neck, to keep the head up with Neck Lock applied.





PLOW POSE
Halasana

INSTRUCTIONS:
Start from Shoulder Stand.
- Drop the legs down and touch the pointed toes on the ground behind the head.
- Ideally the back is straight, perpendicular to the ground.
- Interlace the fingers with the arms on the floor, pointing away from the body.

VARIATION: (If students have lower back problems, suggest they try one or more of these pointers, or they may skip this exercise.)
- Hands point toward the toes.
- Have the arms supporting the sides.
- Drop the knees down toward the ears.
- Spread the legs.

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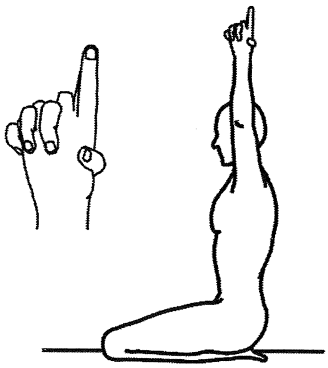


SAT KRIYA

(See the Kriya chapter for more detail.)

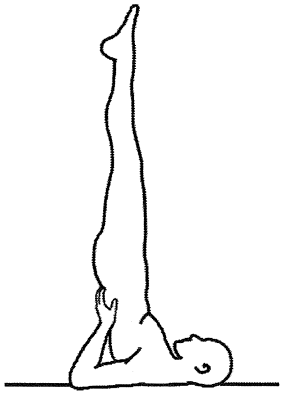
INSTRUCTIONS:

Sit on the heels.

- Clasp the hands above the head, with fingers interlaced except for the index fingers which point straight up. Men cross the right thumb over the left; women cross left thumb over right.
- The arms are straight, hugging the ears.
- Squeeze the Navel Point in and up as you say *"sat (sut)."* Do not snap the Navel point.
- Release on the sound *"naam"*.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Widen the shoulder blades.
- Roll the armpits towards each other.
- Do not make the squeezing of the navel a "snap."
- Do not move the pelvis like a Spinal Flex.



SHOULDER STAND

Salamba Sarvangasana

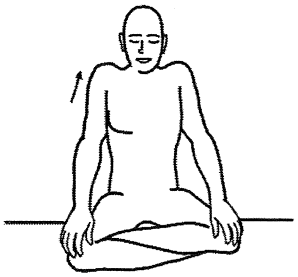
INSTRUCTIONS:

Before attempting shoulder stand, lie on the back and breathe in and out, tightening all the muscles.

- Place the hands on the hips, just below the waist.
- Bring the hips and legs up to vertical position, making spine and legs perpendicular to the ground.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Make sure the elbows are not too far apart.
- Make sure your weight is supported by the shoulders, not the neck.



SHOULDER SHRUGS

INSTRUCTIONS:

Sit in Easy Pose or on the heels.

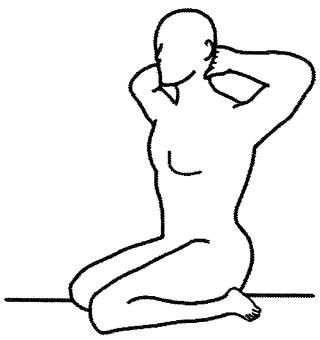
- Place the hands on the knees.
- *Inhale*, and bring the shoulders up to the ears.
- *Exhale*, and release them down.

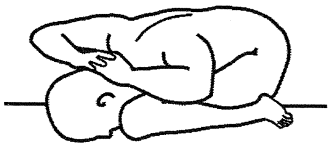
CHECKPOINTS:

- Breathe from the navel.
- Keep the arms very relaxed.
- Move rapidly.

VARIATION:

- Some *kriyas* call for raising alternate shoulders.





SITTING BENDS

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the same principles as with Front Bends.

Sit on the heels.

- Interlace the fingers behind the neck, pulling the elbows back.
- *Inhale* and stretch the spine up.
- *Exhale* forward, continuing to lengthen the spine, bringing the forehead to the ground.
- Use the legs to push up as you inhale.

VARIATION:

- In some *kriyas* you will find the same movement, sitting in Easy Pose.

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SUFI GRIND

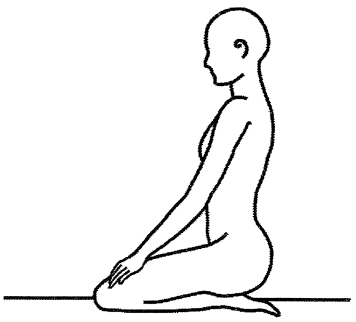
INSTRUCTIONS:

Sit in Easy Pose.

- Grab hold of the knees.
- Move the spine in a big circle.
- *Inhale* as the body rotates forward.
- *Exhale* as you rotate backwards.

CHECKPOINTS:

- The head stays relatively still.
- Keep the Heart Center open. Do not drop the head down.



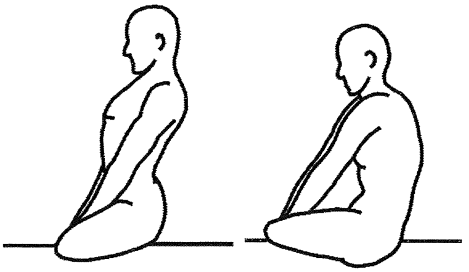
ROCK POSE
Vajrasana

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Sit on the heels.
- Pull a light neck lock.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Keep the spine straight.
- If the ankles hurt, place a blanket or pillow under the buttocks.



SPINAL FLEX (CAMEL RIDE)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Sit in Easy Pose.

- Grab the ankles.
- *Inhale* and rock the pelvis forward, pulling the chin into the throat to open up the spine. Push the chest forward and up. Root the sitting bones into the ground.
- *Exhale*, round the lower back, rocking the pelvis back.

CHECKPOINTS:

- The head does not move up and down. Rather, the chest rises.
- Pulling the chin into the throat opens up the spine.
- The pelvis must move.
- Use the hands to deepen the movement of the pelvis and spine.

VARIATIONS:

- Spinal Flex is sometimes done in Rock Pose.

SPINAL TWIST
(Torso Twist)

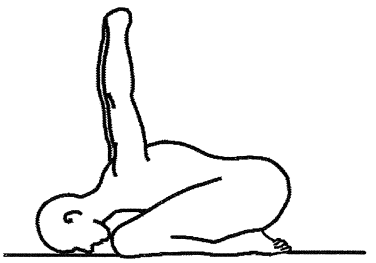
INSTRUCTIONS:

Sit in Easy Pose or on the heels.

- Grab the shoulders, with the thumbs in back, and other fingers in front.
- *Inhale*, twist to the left. (Left side is the initiating.)
- *Exhale*, twist to the right. (Right side represents the active.)

CHECKPOINTS:

- Rotate from the Navel Point.
- In Neck Lock the chin remains in line with the chest. (The head does not twist separately.)
- In Spinal Twist, Yogi Bhajan instructs that we only inhale twisting left, exhale twisting right. We don't reverse the breath.



YOGA MUDRA
Yogasana

INSTRUCTIONS:

Sit on the heels.

- Come into Baby Pose, bringing the forehead to the ground.
- Interlace the fingers, with the palms facing the head.
- Pull the arms up, making them perpendicular to the ground.

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STRETCH POSE

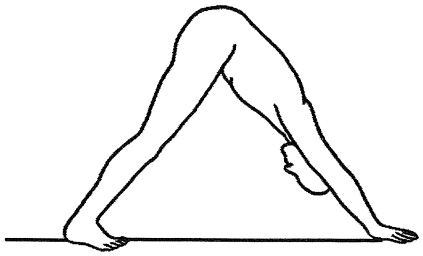
INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the same principles as with Leg Lifts. Lie on the back.

- Have the feet together.
- Flatten the lower back into the ground.
- Put the hands wherever it feels most natural, either palms facing the thighs alongside the body, or hands over the thighs, palms down.
- Lift the head up by lifting the heart up.
- Apply Neck Lock.
- Look at the toes.
- Lift the feet up 6 inches.
- Begin Breath of Fire.

CHECKPOINTS:

- You may use hands under the buttocks to support the lower back.
- You may use one leg at a time, and keep the Breath of Fire powerful.



TRIANGLE POSE

Adhomukha Svanasana

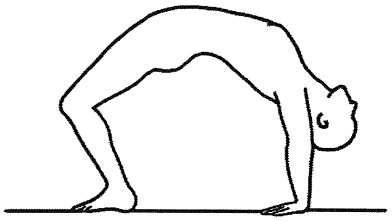
INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin in a standing position.

- Place the palms of the hands with the fingers spread wide and the soles of the feet on the ground.
- The feet are approximately hip-width apart.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Create a straight line between your wrists and your hips, and from your hips to your heels.
- The chin is pulled in, elongating the neck.
- Roll the armpits toward each other.
- Do not oversway the back.



WHEEL POSE

Urdhva Dhanurasana

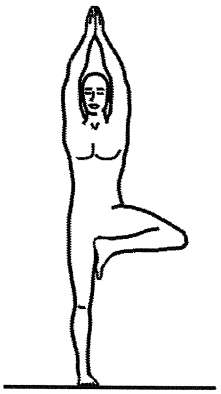
INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin lying on the back.

- Bend the knees, and place the feet flat on the floor.
- Have the palms flat on the ground, with the fingers pointing towards the feet.
- *Inhale* and do a pelvic tilt.
- *Exhale*, into a bent-arm wheel pose.
- *Inhale* lift the navel all the way up.

CHECKPOINTS:

- Try to get a perpendicular line from the heart to the wrists.
- Try to pull away from the lower back. Do not compress the lower back.
- Push heels down into the ground to bring more weight onto the hands.



TREE POSE

Vriksasana

INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin in a standing position.

- Bring the right heel up to the groin.
- Stretch the arms up with palms together, hugging the ears.
- Apply the Neck Lock.
- Reverse sides.

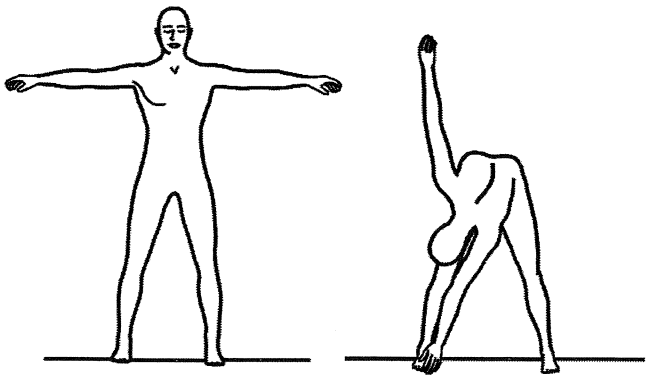
CHECKPOINTS:

- Use *mulbandh* to keep the pelvis turned under.

VARIATIONS:

- Tree Pose is sometimes done in certain *kriyas* with hands in Prayer Pose at the heart center.

WINDMILL



INSTRUCTIONS:

Begin in a standing position.

- Have the feet 2-3 feet (60-90 cm) apart.
- Have the arms out to the side, parallel to the ground, palms facing the floor.
- *Inhale*, turn to your right. Elongate.
- *Exhale*, bow down and touch the ground at your right with your left hand.
- *Inhale* up, turn to the left. Elongate.
- *Exhale*, bow down, continuing to elongate, and touch the ground at your left with your right hand.

CHECKPOINTS:

- As with any forward bend, bend from the hips, not the waist.

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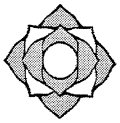
CHAPTER 28



Form & Alignment For Kundalini Yoga Kriyas

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Form & Alignment for Kundalini Yoga Kriyas

The Science of Majesty

We reclaim our innocence by using our bodies the way the Creator designed them to be used. When energy flows through us freely we feel naturally joyful. We are neutral, calm, and unattached, and we spontaneously experience our soverign identity which is one with God.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF POSTURE

Yoga postures are meant to be done with total conscious attention to breath and body mechanics. When we apply *pranayam* (breath), *bandhas (locks)*, and *dhristhi* (focus) with devotion and the proper physical geometry, energy flows naturally, and correct posture is spontaneous. As the energy flow becomes stronger through practice, the posture is confirmed.

We describe posture with a physical vocabulary–body and hand positions, breath, and focus–because that is our habitual way to communicate what is essentially a personal experience of one's own energy. As our physical body develops, relaxes and opens, our mental and spiritual understanding also opens. More and more, we become consciously conscious of our body-mind energies and of our own consciousness.

In Kundalini Yoga, we are working to release energy. In doing so, we have to avoid the mistake of focusing too much on the physical aspect of posture. If we become preoccupied by what our bodies can do, the flow of energy becomes restricted. Therefore we start by accepting and enjoying what we are able to do at each moment with joy and love. In Kundalini Yoga, we are always improving and refining ourselves. Just relax and enjoy the process rather than looking to the outcome.

Here are the basics of the practice of every Kundalini Yoga *kriya:*

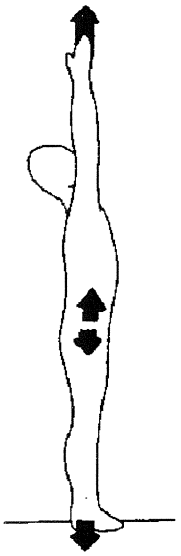
- learn how to locate the Navel Point and correctly connect it to the postures
- learn to stand correctly
- learn to sit correctly
- learn to breathe correctly
- learn Breath of Fire correctly
- learn to bow and bend correctly
- learn to use the bandhas correctly

Accept where you are now and enjoy yourself.
Love what you are doing at this very moment, you are always moving and improving. You are constantly refining.
Enjoy the process rather than looking to the outcome.

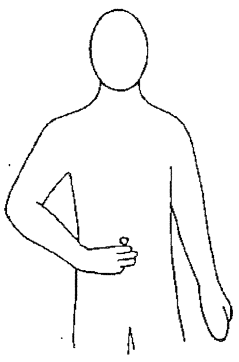
The Navel Point

It is fundamentally important to understand where the Navel Point is located. The Navel Point does not correspond exactly to the location of the belly button. The Navel Point is not the Nabhi or Navel Chakra, which is etheric. The Navel Point is located in the area of the transverse abdominal muscles. The Upanishads say, "Between the belly button and the last bone of the spinal column is the Navel Point. It is shaped like a bird's egg and encloses within itself the starting point of 72,000 *nadis*–the body's subtle channels of energy." *(see Yogic & Functional Western Anatomy chapter.)*

We anchor our posture through the Navel Point. Gravity always affects our posture. One part of the body yields to gravity and another pushes against the Earth, directing the resultant force through our Navel Point and out to the opposite part of the body which is reaching, stretching toward the Heavens. The yield to gravity balances the push against the Earth, and the push balances the reach. It is a constant dynamic relationship. If we push from one side of our body, we must reach from the opposite side to complete the movement. The Navel Point is the center from which we both push and reach. It is the connecting point for all postures.



Learn to bend, breathe, twist and communicate from the Navel Point. If you do, you can have an incredibly leveraged life. This is the fundamental secret of martial arts. It is the difference between a strong punch and a lethal punch. In martial arts you learn to connect the energy from the Navel Point through your arms and hands with an unbroken flow of power. If you let that same Navel Point energy flow into your hands for healing, it gives you tremendous healing energy. The Navel Point is the engine room of it all.



Locating the Navel Point

A good way to locate the Navel Point is to lock the Mercury finger down with the thumb, leaving the Jupiter, Saturn, and Sun fingers pointing straight. Place the three straight fingers against the stomach, right under the belly button. The Navel Point is just below the Sun (ring) Finger.

(See Kriya, Mudra, Bandha chapter.)

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The Geometry of Posture

As babies, one of our greatest physical achievements was learning to balance the various parts of our bodies so that we could stand upright and walk. Even now, if that delicate balance is upset, we fall down.

All yoga postures are balanced geometries done with devotion. Being able to do yoga comfortably is simply balancing your body so that gravity serves you.

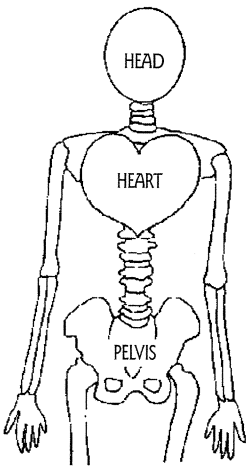
People who perform gymnastics are told: "There are two ways to do an exercise: the easy way and the wrong way." But the more we strain and try to conquer our body, the tighter we get. This is because we are fighting gravity. A large part of learning to do postures well is setting up a geometric balance that allows us to interact with gravity in a positive way.

The Following are the fundamentals of the geometry of five-basic positions:

1. Standing with majesty–Yogic stance
2. Stretching the upper back
3. Sitting
4. Walking in a way that supports your yogic practice
5. Lying still in *shavasana* (Corpse Pose)

STANDING WITH MAJESTY

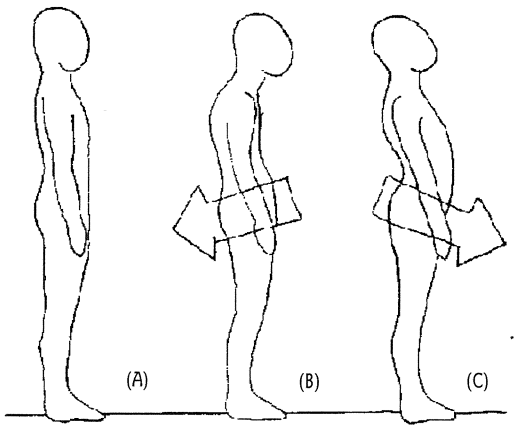
Whether it comes to doing simple or advanced yoga postures or to simply having better posture, it's all about letting gravity align you. Let's start off by looking at how to stand naturally, Stand with your feet the width of one fist apart between, so that your feet are in alignment with your pelvic bone. Consciously release unnecessary tension and comfortably stand this way. Relax your lower body, letting the weight of your lower body sink into the gravitational force of the Earth, while your upper body and spine naturally stretch up toward the heavens.



In this geometric balance, the spine is gently stretching upward, the heart is centered over the pelvis, and the head lines up with the heart. Symbolically, the heart is our center, balancing over the lower chakras, disciplining them with compassion while remaining connected to their fundamental vitality. The head orients itself in relationship to the heart.

The heart sits over the foundation of the pelvis. When we move the pelvis, the heart and head naturally move in alignment with it. We control the pelvis from the Navel Point. Our actions are organized from the Navel Point, but oriented from the heart.

When we lead with our head, we supress our heart. Our posture compresses the Heart Center. When our head leads, it tightens the body. The head should move last, following the heart. Remember, the head receives its inspiration, advice and direction from the heart center.



In drawing A, you can see that the pelvis, the heart, and the head are in natural alignment. In drawing B, the head is slumped forward so that the chest sinks in and the heart area is compressed. The pelvis moves forward to balance the head and the back is slightly rounded. In drawing C, the chin lifts, compressing the neck, while the pelvis is retracted, compressing the lower back.

YOGIC STANCE

Bring your feet together, pull in on the navel, apply the Neck Lock, and let your arms hang naturally by your sides. This is the yogic stance, Mountain Pose, the beginning and ending position for the *Surya Namaskar*. *(See Sets & Meditations chapter.)* In order to not collapse the lower back we must be aware of the tilt of the pelvic bone along with posture and breathing. When the Navel Point is pulled in, the pelvis rotates, the bones that sit upon it drop down, and the lower back elongates.

STRETCHING THE UPPER BACK

Generally the tightest area on the body is between the shoulder blades. This tension makes it difficult to stretch the upper back without lifting and tensing the shoulders. A good way to work on opening up this area is by using the resting position called Triangle Pose. In that position, roll your armpits forward, trying to get them to face each other. This stretches the shoulder blades apart and gives you a better sense of the stretch in the upper spine.

Holding your arms up over your head and hugging your ears with them relieves the tension between shoulder blades and offers more leverage to stretch the spine upward.

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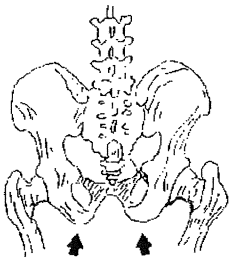
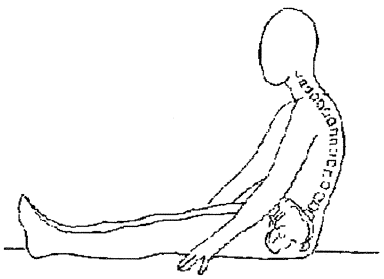
SITTING: CENTERING THE WEIGHT THROUGH THE PELVIS

The pelvis is your base of support. Sitting well requires the geometry of the pelvis to be in optimum relationship with gravity. To do this you must consciously use the Sitting Bones called the ischial tuberosities, located under the flesh of the buttocks.

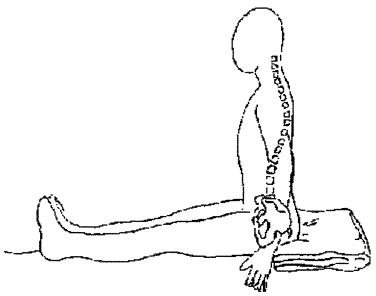

SITTING BONES

When you sit on the center of these Sitting Bones, you can yield your weight to gravity through them and stretch the spine upward, creating the correct flow of energy up the spinal column. These bones tap into a part of the brain that creates calming, grounding energy that also aids digestion. It takes no abdominal effort to sit this way and your heart is lined up with your pelvis allowing the head to be supported by the heart.



When the hamstring muscles are tight you tend to sit on the back of the Sitting Bones and on the sacrum. This rounds your back and puts pressure on the spinal discs, which impedes the flow of energy.

Have students sit down and put one hand on the lower back to feel whether the lumbar vertebrae are curving outwards or whether they are curving slightly inwards. If the back is rounding outwards, then they are sitting slumped on the back of their Sitting Bones. Suggest using a folded blanket under their buttocks until they feel their back become upright and feel themselves correctly balanced on the Sitting Bones. Have them center their weight between the two bones. You will see an immediate improvement in their posture. In this posture the pelvis maintains its tilt, and there is a slight natural compression of the Navel Point.



Lotus Pose

Sit with the legs extended forward. Spread the legs and bend the right leg so that the heel comes to the groin. Lift the left foot onto the upper right thigh. To avoid knee problems always turn the side of the foot up, rotating the ankle, then lift the foot with one hand and the knee with the other. (This creates less pressure at the knee.) Bend the right leg and place it so that the right foot goes over the left thigh as close to the abdomen as possible.

Small muscles and joints pay for the sins of the big ones. If you are in Full Lotus and your ankles or knees hurt, you can assume that your pelvis is the guilty party, unless you have had a local injury to ankle or knee, which is rarely the case.

Rock Pose (Vajrasana or Thunderbolt Pose)

Kneel on both legs with the tops of the feet on the ground. Sit back on the heels so that they are pressed squarely against the Sitting Bones. (There can be a little space between the knees.) Then center your weight on the Sitting Bones through the heels and into the ground. Completely releasing your weight to gravity through the Sitting Bones and the heels is challenging to the tops of the feet, but the legs will feel better and the spine will be in alignment. If your feet spread out to the sides of the buttocks, your legs will fall asleep.

Virasan (Hero or Warrior Pose)

Sit on the left heel and bend the right knee placing the sole of the right foot on the floor in front of the right buttock. The heel of the left foot is situated so that it puts pressure on the perineum, directly in front of the anus. (To become comfortable in this position, you may wrap your sheepskin or a wool blanket around your foot so that the top of the foot is padded on the floor, and the perinium is padded from the pressure of the heel). If you sit on the lateral side of the left foot with your foot turned out, your spine will be crooked.

WALKING

The way we walk is important because incorrect walking habits interfere with the structural re-alignments that our yoga practice is creating. Simple things that we do every day may conspire against us in subtle ways. *(For a thorough explanation of proper walking and breathing read the book Breathwalk by Yogi Bhajan and Gurucharan Singh Khalsa.)*

RELAXATION AND CORPSE POSE

There is usually a brief relaxation period between the exercises in a Kundalini Yoga set. This is a time that we can actively use our natural, relaxed breath to regulate our energy. We can also focus our attention in the breath in order to relax consciously, letting go of all unnecessary tension in the body. This allows us to approach the next exercise without carrying over any tension from the previous exercise. At the end of a Kundalini Yoga set, there is a layout in Corpse Pose *(shavasana)*. This is the time to completely relax by letting go of the breathing, the focus, and the body. Do not concentrate on anything. Just let go completely and surrender. *(See Relaxation chapter.)*

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Yogic Breathing & Its Effect on Postures

BREATHING CORRECTLY (NATURAL BREATHING)

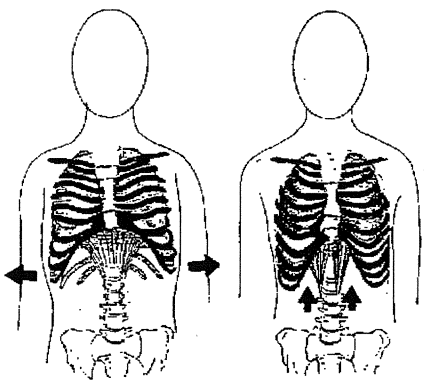
The amount of time that you can comfortably hold the breath out gives you the measure of your health. It can show you how much prana your tissues are retaining. Good health begins at being able to hold your breath out for 30 seconds. Being able to hold your breath out for one minute indicates very good health. It shows that you have retained prana in your tissues.

One purpose of yoga is to increase the store of *prana* in the tissues. Once stored, it is there for use. With correct breathing, you constantly replenish that stored prana. Then you can experience *Ang Sung Wahe Guru*, the dance of the light of life in the trillions of cells of the body.

TEACHING NATURAL BREATHING

▸ In natural breathing, the Navel Point moves out on the inhale and in and up on the exhale. We use the inhale to make ourselves wider, and the exhale to make ourselves longer. It is common not to have enough lateral motion of the rib cage when we inhale. Instead we tend to lift everything up and down. This can lead to congestion of the subtle flow of energy and may result in stuck emotions.

Breathing backwards is also a common mistake. A good method to use to teach beginners how to breathe correctly is to just use the natural calm breath. It could be the breath you do between postures when you are relaxing. *Inhale* and don't engage any locks. *Exhale*. Do not teach a beginner to engage the yogic locks. Let them first master breathing properly. It's only after they've been at it a while that using the locks will begin to make a difference.



YOGIC BREATH

▸ **Coordinating the breath to the movement of the posture.** All postures are simply different geometries done with devotion to serve the journey to the soul. When you are holding a posture, constantly use each exhale to lengthen the spine . Often flexibility doesn't develop as it might, because students are not exhaling correctly.

▸ The inhale is your fuel, and the exhale is how you manifest that energy. Our lives are greatly influenced by how we exhale. Our words travel on the exhale. Inhalation is the fuel for this journey. During inhalation, we want to get high-powered *prana* into every part of our lungs. How well we can do that depends on our previous exhale. Yogic postures require a high grade of fuel. Each inhalation is always going to be the fuel, and our exhalation will be the manifestation of how we use the energy. The quality of our exhale is important because it relates directly to how well we can do yoga postures, to our projection and to the words we speak. If we are not able to give properly we cannot receive properly. Through our exhale we exalt ourselves, through each inhale we receive inspiration.

▸ **Yoga practice starts with learning to exhale correctly.** Exhaling properly allows us to properly receive each inhale. If our breath is shallow, it inflates the core portion of the lungs, but not the huge volume in the peripheral areas. Our lungs move as if they are stuffy and they are not able to perform the miracle of enhancing our circulation, energy and health. If we do not exhale with a complete natural motion, we cannot completely refresh our lungs. With a complete exhale, each breath can flood the body with the *prana* we need for tremendous life, power, awareness and wisdom.

▸ Learn how to inhale up and out, expansively lifting the chest, and how to exhale smoothly and completely feeling each breath with devotion in our heart and soul.

PRACTICING THE YOGIC BREATH

Sitting in Easy Pose, put the tips of the fingers of both hands together at the Navel Point. Push it in without holding any tension there. Just push your fingers in a little bit and maintain a stillness. Place the thumbs at the lowest rib. *Inhale* and try to push the ribs out. Try to widen the rib cage as much as you can, and fill it up as high as you can. *Exhale* without letting the heart area collapse. Draw the rib tips into each other. Inhale again and try to imagine that your ribs are widening and widening more and more. Then exhale–this is the yogic exhale. Inhale, and try to imagine that the ribs are widening, widening, and then exhale and consciously lengthen the spine.

The Yogic Breath may be done with the Root Lock applied. When correctly done, the sound of the breath is spacious and has a rich, deep timbre instead of a thin, stressed sound. Even the relaxed breath is resonant and round.

▸ The key to proper technique in yogic breathing is allowing the ribs and back to open and expand. If you let the lowest part of the abdomen drop forward, the pelvis rotates forwards and compresses the lower spine. This keeps the ribs from expanding

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fully. Inhale and once the focus of the breath is fully at the navel, continue to inhale as the lower, more flexible ribs expand outwards.

Lying on your back, rest your hands on your ribs, and without using the fingertips, push the lower back down to the ground. Notice how much the ribcage expands out. On the exhale the ribs close back down. By holding some tension at the Navel Point we can force the ribs to really open up on the inhale as the diaphragm continues to move. *This is an important secret of gaining internal strength.*

Breathing in this manner allows us to make great strides in our yogic skills. It allows the postures that may have previously eluded us to become possible. It allows our bodies to transform themselves with greater flexibility and strength. With conscious awareness of proper breathing we can do this safely and quickly.

Breath of Fire

▸ The nature of Breath of Fire is that the exhale goes in and up naturally in the steady rhythm of the motion.

▸ Breath of Fire uses the action of the Navel Point. The diaphragm does not move horizontally. It moves up and down, With each exhale, think of the movement of the navel as moving naturally and softly inwards with a distinct movement upwards as well. With the inhale, think of a downward release of the Navel Point. Feel Breath of Fire as an up and down breath rather than an in and out breath.

▸ Holding the chin in and the chest up will help make the Breath of Fire strong and effective. We usually apply the Neck Lock lightly when doing Breath of Fire in basic sitting postures.

TEACHING BREATH OF FIRE TO BEGINNERS

▸ Begin Breath of Fire and put your fingers at your Navel Point. Use your fingers to feel whether or not your navel is going in and up on the exhale, and down and out on the inhale. Many beginners do this backwards. It's important to correct this early on.

▸ Breathe through the nose.

▸ Relax your shoulders.

▸ The abdomen is doing all the work. The Navel Point is naturally dynamic and most of this motion will happen automatically if you keep your lower abdomen relatively still. There is no need to pull the diaphragm up as we do in *uddiyana bandh*. If you are trying too hard, the lower back will feel tense. Breath of Fire is very relaxing, smooth and nearly effortless.

▸ Avoid slamming the navel towards the spine, as this creates a lot of pressure on the face. Ideally, you should have a soft face whenever you practice yoga—relaxed, with the natural hint of a smile. A common mistake beginners make when doing Breath of Fire is trying too hard and scrunching up the face. This indicates that the student is using the navel incorrectly.

When you do Breath of Fire, your face should stay as calm and serene as when you are doing Long Deep Breathing. Remember, your face is the mirror of your mind. If you want a good shortcut to peace of mind. consciously let your face stay soft, particularly while doing yoga.

Here's the formula: use your body to reorganize your brain so that your mind can have a creative and spontaneous interaction with the world.

When beginning your practice, the Breath of Fire should not be done quickly. When beginners try to do Breath of Fire too quickly they usually do it wrong. Always start off slowly and evenly. The inhale and exhale should sound about the same. The worst thing you can do to a beginner is ask them keep the rhythm of their Breath of Fire up with the rest of the class. They are going to get strong at breathing incorrectly. Tell students to do Breath of Fire at whatever speed feels natural, and then gradually increase the pace. A pace of 40-60 breaths per minute is a good pace to start with.

Bending & Bowing

Although it was common practice in the eighteenth century and earlier, we know little about bowing in our modern Western culture. We are not currently a bowing culture, nor are we a floor-sitting culture. When we greet each other, we shake hands or hug. In other parts of the world people bow, and there are many styles of bowing. Bowing is a physical act of humbling oneself to the *Ji* (the soul) of the other person. It is a graceful way of honoring the God in that person.

Bowing is one of the most basic movements in yoga. Many yogic movements have an element of bowing in them.

THE BASIC RULES OF YOGIC BOWING

1. Your head moves last because it always follows your heart.
2. While standing, always use your exhale consciously to lengthen your spine.

Exercise:

▸ Stand with your feet together one fist apart. Place your fingers on your Navel Point. Inhale into your fingertips, push in on the navel. Exhale, and bend forward at the navel crease. When your torso is parallel to the floor, let your pelvis revolve on its axis. This will bring the torso closer to the legs while keeping your heart and head in alignment. Your head will bend, but it is the last thing to do so.

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▸ Relax your thigh muscles and allow your feet to sink into the floor. Do not hyperextend your legs and lock them. As you bow, let the pelvis revolve on its axis bringing the torso parallel to the floor, with the head and heart in alignment. Keeping the Navel Point slightly tensed, reverse the bow at the Navel Point. Use the rebounding energy from the push against the floor to lift the torso up keeping the spine in alignment.

▸ Bowing forward, exhale and lengthen the spine. Inhale as you rise up, expanding your ribs laterally. Do not arch or collapse your lower back forward.

▸ Instruct beginners to imagine that they are coming up out of a bow one vertebra at a time. In order to come up with a straight back, we need to hold the lower belly in. Don't use the lower back to come out of a bow or you'll encounter the dark side of inhalation, i.e., collapsing the lower back. If your lower belly and your Navel Point are not in control, your lower spine will collapse. Use the pelvis as a lever to lift whole spine up. In this manner you can float up. Bowing is a floating exercise when you do it right.

Bending forward while sitting

Often in yoga we bend forward in a sitting position with our legs extended. This is much the same action as bowing except that we are sitting down.

▸ The pelvis initiates the action by revolving forward, lifting up the tailbone and tilting the torso forward. Then we bend at the Navel Point, keeping the head and heart in alignment until the very end of the forward bend when the head relaxes forward. As you bend forward, exhale and lengthen your spine, reach forward through your head and feel the stretch back and down through your tailbone.

▸ If you bend forward by rounding your back and tucking your head toward your chest, your breathing will be restricted, and your body will not open up and lengthen properly.

▸ It is better to bend forward correctly even if you don't bend very far. The energy flow is created by the correct geometry by using a full breath. Your flexibility will develop with practice.

▸ If the hamstrings are tight, the pelvis will remain fixed at the hips. This upsets the spinal alignment and puts too great a pressure on the spinal discs. A technique of physical therapy is to release the tightness gradually by using a folded blanket and a pool ring hooked over the feet to stretch the body forward. We move to the next level of release in steady easy steps, not by forcing the movment.

Refining the Bandhas

NECK LOCK JALANDHAR BANDH

▸ ***Jalandhar bandh*** is not about bringing the head down, it's about bringing the chest up. It is a matter of increasing mobility in the upper back. The beauty of *jalandhar bandh* is that it opens the energy of the medulla oblongata in the brain stem. This releases the occipital pump that moves the spinal fluid effectively and creates a focus in the central channel of the spine. Thus the energy to the pineal and pituitary opens. When the pituitary flips over, the cup of nectar drains back down to the heart. This is the goal of yoga. You have to awaken your heart to have the capacity to open that flow.

▸ Beginners tend to tighten the neck muscles up when doing *jalandhar bandh*, and pull up rather than keeping straight and relaxed, not tilting the head backwards or forwards.

REFINING ROOT LOCK (MULBANDH)

The trick, with time and practice, is to learn to refine this lock so that only the muscles necessary to hold the lock are contracted. The perineum is located between the anus and the genitals. Learning to isolate the perineum when doing *mulbandh* is important because of the nerve structure of the body. The perineum is like a crossroads for many nerves and when it is properly balanced and stimulated it can properly send impulses from the first chakra up through the spinal cord.

DIAPHRAGM LOCK (UDDIYANA BANDH)

▸ *Uddiyana bandh* forces us to breathe out not simply by pushing the stomach, but by expanding the sides and back of the rib cage. This protects the lower back from compression and strain.

Perform *Uddiyana Bandh Kriya* by fully exhaling and then drawing the lower belly inward and upward while simultaneously sucking up the diaphragm. The abdominal muscles are relaxed, not contracted. When you practice holding your breath out, it strengthens your inhalation. It opens the ribs up and makes them more elastic. In this way, the diaphragm can ascend more deeply. Often people pull in their abdominals. This is incorrect. To end this *kriya*, relax the tension before you inhale, then lower the diaphragm and take an inhale.

With the Yogic Breath we encourage the lower back and sides of the ribcage to expand as we inhale down to the Navel Point. Breathing like this causes the ribs to expand out even more and allows the back and chest to expand. This is actually applying the *uddiyana bandh*. In terms of the postures, *uddiyana bandh* is most important. A full exhale in the Yogic Breath prepares us to automatically begin the *uddiyana bandh*. When you exhale properly and apply *uddiyana bandh* with *mulbandh* you can feel an extra contraction occur naturally in the perineum. You will refine

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your awareness of this sensation as you keep practicing and train your muscles. When you use both neck lock and diaphragm lock together you will notice that it feels like a line being pulled up from the base engaging the muscles in the perineum–between the anus and the root of the sex organs.

Hold your fingertips on the rib cage, with the thumbs at the side, when you inhale you should feel the ribs move out. The dynamic use of *uddiyana bandh* is important. Many people, when first taught *mulbandh* are taught to squeeze everything – anus, sex organ, navel. This works as a beginner's practice. But if you want to develop more sophisticated yogic skills, you have to refine it. When you apply the *uddiyana bandh*, you will actually feel the perineum muscles engage as well. It is just like one line being pulled up, engaging the group of muscles right in front of the anus.

Tips for Teaching Postures

The following tips are especially important for teaching beginners.

IN GENERAL

Encourage students not to be competitive, or push the spine and neck aggressively. More progress is made when moving slowly and consistently.

If it is not devotional, it is not yoga, it is just exercise. In every posture you have a chance to experience devotion. That's what postures are really about. Worhip the God in you and marvel at the beautiful engineering of your own body.

SUN SALUTATION (*Surya Namaskar*) *(See Sets & Meditations)*

Sun Salutation is a great warm up, quickly creating much heat in the body. Yogi Bhajan said that this is how many yogis warmed up for *kriyas*.

- When done correctly, the navel and legs do a lot of the work, not the arms and back.
- Whether the knees are straight or not is not as important as letting the spine be moved by the navel, as opposed to being moved by the head and back. Moving in this way changes the way you think about everything, creating channels of devotional energy through awareness of body geometry.

SAT KRIYA

Yogi Bhajan taught Sat Kriya as a foundation of every Kundalini Yoga practice. He taught it in the following way as the core practice, but over time he has offered 12 variations of the *kriya* for different purposes. You will find this version–sitting on the heels–to be the most common. There are, however, other specific meditations where the same Sat Kriya motion is done sitting in Easy Pose or Lotus Pose.

- The hands are usually placed with the palms together, fingers interlaced and curled, with the Jupiter (index fingers) pressing against each other, extended straight up. Men cross the right thumb over the left; women cross the left thumb over the right. The arms are stretched overhead with the elbows straight, the arms hugging the ears, and the Jupiter fingers pointing straight up. This directs the energy and prevents "spaciness" from any previous drug use. The palms can be held flat if you are more advanced and have no drug history that may imbalance the nerves. If your palms are kept flat together, you must develop the ability to roll your armpits towards one another, so that you can hug your ears. If you are uncomfortable with the palms flat together or find yourself splaying the elbows out or rotating the armpits outward, then use the first mudra with your fingers interlaced.
- The sternum naturally rises as you chant SAT and releases as you chant NAAM. Consciously try to move the sternum towards the chin as you inhale with the pulse of SAT, and relax it on NAAM. Don't scrunch the shoulders; relax and drop them down.
- When you finish the sound *Sat*, you should be in complete *jalandhar bandh*. It will release as you relax on *Naam* and the energy rises to the face. Let the navel go out naturally as you relax the *bandh*.
- Pull the navel up, don't lift it. The heart is engaged upwards.
- To end the kriya, inhale deeply, keep the arms up, exhale completely and apply *uddiyana bandh*. Relax the *bandh* before inhaling again and relaxing with your arms down.

SPINAL FLEX (CAMEL RIDE)

- Do not let the head power the spine. Keep the head level and don't let it do 'flip-flops'. Just move the spine and shoulders. It's called Camel Ride because if the eyes stay on the horizon with the flex, there is a sense of your head floating. It looks as if you are riding a camel. This is true whether your eyes are open or closed.
- Yogi Bhajan has suggested that spinal flex may be slowed down for more thoracic movement.
- If you want to do Spinal Flexes with the yogic breath, then holding a little tension at the Navel Point as you *inhale* will allow the rib cage to widen. If you use your arms to help, you'll create more space as you exhale back. Try to get the ribs to open wider,

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and close more deeply. If you are going too fast, you can't accomplish that. A good rhythm will be one Spinal Flex forward and back every 3 seconds when slow, and 1.25 to 1.5 seconds when fast.

CAT-COW

- Move from the base of the spine to the top. The head moves last.
- Cat Cow can be done quickly, but be sure your head moves last even when you speed up.
- Start off slowly. Inhale into the extended position, but rather than just letting your lower belly hang there, hold a little bit of tension at the Navel Point to push the ribs out wider.
- Once you've got your rhythm and the complete awareness of the body's motion established, then you can speed up. A mistake that a lot of teachers make, is just letting the student go too fast right away. Then the head tends to lead and causes undue strain on the body.

STRETCHING BACKWARDS

- Hold some tension at the Navel Point so the pelvis engages and you can stretch backwards safely and more comfortably. Feel the stretch across the front of the body. When stretching backwards, there should be no pressure on the lower back. You should feel the stretch in your upper back and chest. Stretch consciously so you do not put your lower back at risk.

STRETCHING UP, BENDING DOWN

- The purpose of the inhale is to inspire your arms to come up, then the exhale naturally pulls the arms down.
- *Inhale* saying "*Sat*" silently and let the *Sat*, the fuel of Truth, push the arms up. Your hands come together over the top of your head. Your head will lift by itself when your arms elevate more than 60 degrees. The heart brings the head up. (Beginners should never hold the inhale in this position.)
- Now *Exhale*, drop the arms down and then lengthen out the spine, and let it drop down.

WARM-UP STRETCH

For a good warm-up, stand straight and place your hands right below your knees. *Inhale* and lengthen out the spine, lift your head at the end of the inhale, then *exhale* and hold. Push off on the inhale. An easy way to learn how to use the pelvis with Navel Point control, is to literally push off the knees with your arms.

Engage your navel. Create yogic attention and stillness.

FROG POSE

- There is a very different dynamic between when it is done slowly and when it is done rapidly. When you do slow Frog Pose, *inhale* and squat, then *exhale* and straighten the legs. With fast Frog Pose, the breathing is opposite.
- When you *Inhale*, chest and head are up. As you *Exhale* draw the Navel Point in. The head moves last. Let the heels drop down as you straighten the legs. Move slowly; use long slow breaths.
- Generally Frog Pose is done quickly, and the heels stay up off the ground. The heels may drop to the ground when you are doing slow Frog Poses.

COBRA POSE

In order to do Cobra Pose correctly it is necessary to keep the pelvis on the ground. But this may cause problems, especially with beginners who are less flexible. When the hips and back are not flexible enough, shoulders become hunched and the flow of energy is blocked. The best alternative for those who are not fully flexible is to let the pelvis come off the ground, let the knees touch the ground lightly, and keep the feet together. This makes it easier to lift in the chest. This is much safer for the average person. Keeping the hips on the ground becomes possible as flexibility is developed. An alternative is to keep the elbows and forearms on the ground instead of the palms.

LEG LIFTS

Lie on your back.

- As you *inhale* lying on your back, press your lower back into the floor point your toes and smoothly lift up your left leg up to an angle of 90 degrees.
- *Exhale* and lower it down. Keep your toes pointed.
- It is important to lift from navel and engage lower back into ground before you lift. Once the motion is balanced and smooth, you can go faster.

Now try it with both legs.

- *Inhale* and raise both legs up—they don't need to be straight at the beginnming of the motion. Use the power of the breath to raise the legs up.
- Straighten the legs as you *exhale* and lower them. Feel the strength of the abdominal muscles as you exhale.
- If you don't have abdominal strength to keep your legs straight, use your hands to provide leverage for your back. Place your hands on the floor under your buttocks. Don't let your back sway as you bring your legs up.

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STRETCH POSE

- Don't lift the head first. Lengthen the back of the neck so your chest lifts up. Then bring your head up and tuck your chin in. It is important to pull the chin into the throat in Neck Lock to lift the chest and bring the Heart Center up. *(continued)*
- Consciously engage the lower back with the ground. The abdominal muscles are engaged and the diaphragm is moving. It is not possible to do the typical Breath of Fire because the navel is solid. The Navel Point is drawn in to keep the lower back on the ground. Even though the muscles tighten, the abdominal wall still moves with the Breath of Fire.
- Place the arms wherever they feel most natural, either with the palms facing the thighs alongside the body (off the ground), or hands over the thighs, palms down, fingers pointing towards the toes. Before you bring your legs up, begin yogic breaths and experience how the inhale helps the lower back engage with the ground.
- Without doing Breath of Fire just yet, hold the lower spine with back on the ground and lift the legs 6 inches.

Some Common Mistakes:

- Bringing the head forward too much creating pressure on the heart. This makes it hard to keep the lower back down. To counteract this tendancy, consciously lengthen your neck.
- Most people are already curved. Saying "bring your head and feet up," may strengthen the distortion. Simply guide the motion step by step into the correct position as described above.

Teaching beginners:

Start them doing it for only 20 seconds at first. Point out not to sway the back by demonstrating the incorrect way, showing the space under the lower back.

- When the abdominals and navel are too weak: allow the student to bend the knees slightly, and lift one leg at a time, instead of raising both together.
- Those with lower back problems can do Stretch Pose sitting on the hands, with the knees slightly bent.
- If the back is bad, point the toes strongly and keep the legs on the ground. Just lift the upper body as usual in Stretch Pose.

BACK PLATFORM POSE

Sit up with the legs extended straight and the hands on the floor behind you, arms straight and fingers pointing towards the toes. Apply the Neck Lock. Lift the hips up and straighten the spine. Lengthen the neck letting the head relax back. Press the toes to the floor with the knees engaged. Don't turn the hands outwards. If you do this it is harder to get the chest up, because the shoulders are in the way. It takes more strength to keep the hands pointed forward and the toes to the floor, but the result is better.

SQUATS

Ideally we go all the way down. But many people have knee trouble and can go only 1/2 to 3/4 of the way down.

HEAD STAND

In Kundalini Yoga, we do not do head stands, and we never put pressure on the cervical vertebrae. Headstands are too dangerous for the sensitive structure of the neck. Shoulder stand gives you the same benefits without the risk. *(See Meeting the Challenges of Teaching.)*

NECK TURNS

Many people tense up when doing this exercise. The idea is to move the head "on frictionless bearings" keeping the shoulders totally relaxed. If the neck is aligned properly, very few muscles are needed to move it.

PLOW POSE

A wonderful pose, but not if you are overweight. It is best done after a basic spinal warm-up. Don't push it! Better to increase the mid-back stretch gradually before going fully into this posture.

TREE POSE

- Pull the heel up, and push the foot into the opposite thigh.
- Hands in Prayer Pose at the heart is one variation.
- Palms together with arms extended overhead is another
- The knee should be straight.
- Imagine you are inhaling through the sole of the foot.
- Focus your gaze on a single point and hold that focus.
- Hold the lower belly in a bit for more stability.
- The lower back cannot be collapsed or you'll fall.

SHOULDER STAND

Do this only after the spinal muscles are warmed up. Remind your students that the weight is shared by the both shoulders, the trapezius muscles and the hands—not the neck!

SPINAL TWISTS (TORSO TWIST)

Remind people to relax and open instead of tightening and pushing at the lateral extremes of the twisting motion.

STRETCHES

Generally, it is best to avoid bouncing stretches. This sends a signal to the muscle to tighten up. Gradual, consistent stretching is best. It is important to synchronize with the breath when stretching. The difference between a "bouncing or ballistic stretch" and a rhythmical breath-synchronized stretch is that in the latter you are in control of the entire motion without running the risk of collapsing the motion at the reversal point.

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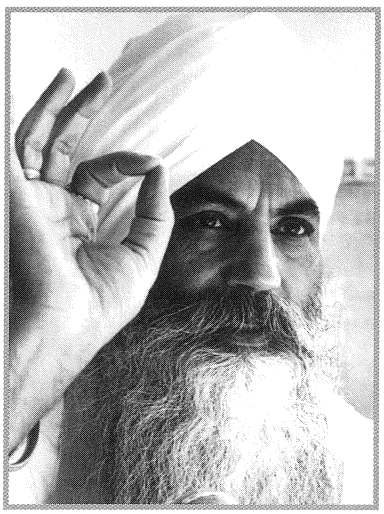

BY THE YEAR 2013, the world population will be seven billion. The change in technology, psychology, and sociology will be huge. The chaos of information in the computer age will make it difficult for people to cope with their day-to-day lives. The body, mind, and spirit will have to be organized to meet these natural human phenomena.

Every human, no matter to which religion they belong, will face a reality in the future where they will need a strong, healthy nervous system. They will need mental clarity and the back-up of spiritual strength to face this coming world. We can say with confidence, the only way to do this is through yogic techniques by which body, mind, and spirit can be enhanced.

To sustain themselves, tomorrow's individuals must have yogic training. It is a need of the times. By 2013, forty to sixty percent of the population will be practicing yoga. People will see that those who practice yoga are bright and beautiful, calm and blissful. They will recognize that the yogic community is sincere and dependable, serving and giving.

Yoga, with its every system, is going to prevail. We clearly see this trend, and it will lead to the end of human insanity and the prevalence of yogic glory. Yoga is a science for all humanity. It is the custodian of human grace and radiance. It holds a great future for every human being. It brings mental caliber for purpose and prosperity of life. The future of yoga is bright, bountiful, and blissful.

Yogi Bhajan, April, 1999

- Yogi Bhajan's mastery is multifaceted. He is a Master of Kundalini Yoga; the only living Mahan Tantric; and the Director of Spiritual Education for 3HO Foundation (the Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization).
- Yogi Bhajan has taught and inspired thousands of people in the West for over 34 years. He holds a Ph.D. in the Psychology of Communication, which he applies with consummate mastery to teaching and counseling.
- Yogi Bhajan established 3HO Foundation in 1969 to share the technology of Kundalini Yoga, and an International Teachers Association in 1994 to organize the thousands of certified Kundalini Yoga teachers worldwide.

KRI Seal of Approval

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