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# Kriya Yoga Journal

# Mystery and beauty of Babaji's Kriya Yoga

By M. G. Satchidananda

We are celebrating this year the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Quebec Ashram, August 15, 1992, the 20th anniversary of the founding of Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas, May 31, 1997, and the 20th anniversary of the first initiations offered in Brazil. We are celebrating these with a large gathering of Acharyas and sadhaks at the Quebec ashram June 28 to July 3, 2018, and another in Cunha Brazil, November 15-20, 2018. Each of us can celebrate how the Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga

has helped us to pierce the mystery of our own lives.

Life is full of mystery. Scientists and philosophers attempt to solve some of life's mysteries but fail when they reach the limitations of reason and the gathering and measurement of empirical evidence. As we have discussed in the last Journal, scientists cannot even determine what is consciousness, because it is not an object. Seekers gain insight however, by following in the footsteps of mystics.

Mystery is sometimes referred to as "obscuration" in the poems of the Yoga Siddhas, such as the Tirumandiram. In these, and in the philosophical literature of Kashmir Shaivism, obscuration is one of the five actions of Shiva. The five actions are creation, preservation or stability, dissolution, obscuration and grace. From the cosmic or metaphysical perspective, the Lord creates a physical body in which every soul can experience the consequences of its karma, good and bad. The Lord preserves the body for a time and preserves some intimate relationships with others including familv and friends so that the soul may grow in wisdom through life's lessons. The Lord dissolves the physical body, relationships, and situations, when new ones are needed for the soul to grow or the soul's karma requires it. The Lord creates obscuration so that the soul must seek truth diligently beyond life's ephemeral pleasures and pains, and so gain wisdom, Self-realization and the awakening to the unity within the diversity. The Lord's grace, the fifth action, permeates all of the other four actions, and supports the soul as it brings the soul into its embrace in the realization of oneness or non-duality. As Tirumular, the au-

thor of the Tirumandiram says: "They

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## Love is God continued

are not two", with reference to Shiva, the Lord, and the individual jivas, or souls.

What is often not understood or fully appreciated by voga sadhaks is that the five actions of Shiva also occur within each of us in every moment. Furthermore, Shiva witnesses the play of his creative force, known as Shakti in everything, including ourselves. You may share this cosmic perspective of Shiva when standing back from the chatter of your mind, as the Witness. When you identify with pure consciousness, or Shiva, and not the movements of your mind, you may witness thoughts, emotions and sensations being created, remaining for awhile, and dissolving. The wise appreciate how thoughts, emotions and sensations obscure the light of consciousness and our essential oneness with everything when one identifies with them. This obscurity and false identification, is born of egoism, the principle of nature, by which consciousness becomes individuated and consequently contracted and identified not only with a particular physical body, but also the individual movements of the mind. When there is attachment or aversion, desire or fear, their movement through our mental and vital bodies become caught in obsessive repetitive loops until or unless they are digested by witnessing and letting them go. Consequently, they form even more obscurity as fears and desires become habitual, and memories, pleasant or painful, are dwelled upon.

Grace operates whenever we see clearly through the veils of these mental movements, from the perspective of the soul, or Witness, and let go of them. The "chitta vritti, (Yoga Sutras 1.2) keeps us in a state of obscurity, absorbed by the agents of maya, referred to as time, desire, limited power, limited knowledge and karma. Grace, operating through the practice of meditation, allows us to witness these, to metabolize them, and to bring them to completion. The study and contemplation of sacred literature also gracefully reveals wisdom, which helps us to remember what we may have forgotten to overcome suffering. Grace allows us to see clearly, to quiet the mind, to have pure awareness, and to pierce the veil of obscurity of false identification with mental and emotional movements. It may come as a peak experience, in which we "see the light," or afterwards say "It blew my mind," or "It took my breath away," or "I felt the presence of the Lord." "It was so beautiful." It is usually a fleeting experience. The goal of Yoga and Tantra is to maintain this state of Grace, by crossing the bridge of the other four actions, by ceasing to identify with their movement, in other words, egoism. Yogananda defined God as "ever new joy."

Herein lies the beauty of Babaji's Kriya Yoga and our cause of celebration of the Grace which it has brought into each of our lives. Through continuous detachment, or vairagya, we cease to identify with, to grasp, the movements of the mind (YS 1.12). Through the practice of Kriya Kundalini Pranayama and the bija mantras, our potential power and consciousness, kundalini, a sonic needle pierces the blockages in the nodal points, the chakras,

in the central channel, the sushumna. As these blockages are removed through the practice of Babaji's five-fold path of Kriva Yoga, we see and act within the world from the perspective of the higher chakras. As mystics we realize anbu sivam, love is God, and experience our oneness within everything.

#### Our evolution as sadhaks

As human beings, our evolution has given to us a nervous and hormonal system which is designed to assure our survival. We have a default network, including the ego, the mind with its memory and the five senses, which enables us to meet life's challenges and which orders our physical and emotional reactions, such as fear and desire. It is programmed through habits to react quickly, automatically, efficiently. It contracts awareness around what we need to do now. Meditation takes us into a different part of our brain, a present centered network, where we defocus, and where we can recognize negative thoughts and emotions and seek a positive response. It recognizes "there is something wrong," when we feel bad, not "there is something wrong with me," which is the ego talking. At the beginning, during meditation, we hear "I'm resentful," or "I'm afraid," as the memories of negative emotions arise. But as we become calm, we can see these emotions as and the memories associated with them as messengers. pointing to a deeper level of vulnerability, where our need for separation or survival is no longer threatened. We can ask ourselves, "What is the most appropriate action I can take in response to this emotion from a ground of well being that would allow me to remain in balance?" When we witness emotions both as personal events and impersonal messengers we digest them, complete their cycle quickly, and they reveal their truth.

Each of us have accumulated habits of emotional reaction. We can see them as survival mechanisms. But we do not have to be limited by them. We can dissolve and heal them. They obscure the light of consciousness within, like tissue paper covering a light bulb. Meditation is like removing the tissue paper so that we can see the light of equanimity continuously and effortlessly.

The Buddha said: "It's not the first arrow that causes the damage. It's the second and third arrows." He was referring to the first emotion, and the reaction to it as the second arrow, and the reaction to the reaction, that creates the samskaras (emotional habit) and vasanas (tendency to dwell on painful or pleasant memories).

The ego and the five senses maintain a sense of separation. There really is no separation. There is a harmonious unity within everything. At a social level we can be separate. But in meditation each of us can feel the underlying connection, harmony and unity with others. This is the mystery which meditation gracefully reveals. Meditation awakens a seventh sense of unity. Life becomes an unending display of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful. We can celebrate not only our anniversaries this year, but with wonder and awe all of life's moments, no longer as seekers, but as mystic seers and yogis.



# Absolute freedom in the post-humanist world

By M. G. Satchidananda

Artificial Intelligence could bring about the end of the human race.

- Stephen Hawkins, renowned physicist.

Artificial Intelligence represents a fundamental threat to humanity.

- Elon Musk, founder of Tesla

Whoever masters Artificial Intelligence will become ruler of the world.

- Vladimir Putin

China will dominate AI by 2030. – Eric Schmidt, Chairman of Alphabet, parent company of Google

As mentioned at the beginning of Part 1, although the most pressing issues for many humans include climate change, growing economic inequality, disruption in the employment market, and the threat of war, if we take a wider view, some will argue that all human problems are overshadowed by three interlinked processes:

- "1. Science is converging on an all-encompassing dogma, which says that organisms are algorithms and life is data processing.
  - "2. Intelligence is decoupling from consciousness.
- "3. Non-conscious but highly intelligent algorithms may soon know us better than we know ourselves."
  - Yuval Noah Harari, Homo Deus, p. 402

The assertions at the top of this article are made by leading scientists in the fields of biotechnology, genetics, artificial intelligence, and computer science. They are at the heart of developments being made by the world's largest technology companies, including Google, Facebook, Amazon, and others. Currently, these companies are developing applications that use Big Data, genetic coding, nanorobotics, and bio-engineering to upgrade Homo sapiens, essentially creating a new species, with godlike powers, even immortality. This evolutionary leap in humanity may produce a new elite caste, who will be as different from modern Homo sapiens as Homo sapiens is from Neanderthals.

To understand why, we must first examine how humanism has developed and brought us to the threshold of what may be an Orwellian world, in which our personal freedoms can be lost – or preserved by those who embrace a spiritual path.

#### The three sects of humanism

Following its origins in the 18th century with the writings of Rousseau, Locke, Hume, Mill, Voltaire, Montaigne, and Jefferson, humanism split into three main sects. The original, orthodox form emphasizes individual liberty, and is therefore known as liberal humanism or simply liberalism. It holds that every human being is a unique individual, endowed with a distinctive inner voice and a

unique series of experiences. Every human being adds value to the world and therefore must be given as much freedom as possible to experience the world, to follow their inner voices and express their inner truths, and to find their own meaning or purpose. In politics, economics, and art, individual free will is far more important than the interests of the state and religious institutions or doctrines. The more liberty individuals enjoy, the more beautiful and richer the world becomes. The individual voter, the individual customer, the individual thinker or seeker, and the artist know best.

When Nietzsche declared "God is dead," he was referring to the perception that, at least in the West, God had become an abstract idea that individuals were free to accept or reject, with few consequences. God was no longer the source of authority for political, ethical, aesthetic, and economic choices. Individual experience assumed that authority. Even belief in God became an individual choice.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, as humanism gained acceptance, two very different forms of humanism emerged, socialist humanism and evolutionary humanism. Socialist humanism appeared with the writings of Karl Marx and other reformers in response to growing social inequality, and gave rise to a range of socialist and communist movements. Evolutionary humanism emerged under the influence of Darwinism and gave rise to many pseudo-scientific and racist theories known as eugenics, whose most famous advocates were the Nazis. Both socialist humanism and evolutionary humanism agreed that human experience rather religious dogma was the ultimate source of meaning and authority.

For example, according to socialist humanism, the oppression of workers is bad not because the Bible says so, but because it causes human misery. On the other hand, liberal humanism does address the contradictions and conflicts that individual experiences and desires inevitably generate. Democratic elections, championed by liberal humanism, are usually only effective for those populations bound by a common agreement on basic principles, such as shared religious beliefs, history, or values. Consequently, liberalism merged with nationalism during the 19th century to emphasize the uniqueness or greatness of individual nations. Unfortunately, liberalism tended to ignore the needs of populations outside a particular nation and was often complicit in wars between nations.

Socialist humanism criticizes liberals for focusing on their own feelings instead of the experiences of others. Although liberalism emphasizes individual uniqueness and turns attention inwards, socialism requires that individuals stop obsessing about themselves, their feelings, and their needs, and instead pay attention to the needs and feelings of others, as well as the effect that their actions have on other people's experience.



## Absolute freedom continued

Instead of emphasizing the uniqueness of each nation, socialism tells us that global peace and prosperity will result from unifying the workers of the world and prioritizing the needs of others over individual desires. Socialism tells me that, instead of working with a therapist to overcome my inner sources of suffering. I will only truly understand my feelings by questioning and understanding the prevailing capitalist economic system. And only when people participate in collective action with others, through unions or political parties and in the course of following the leadership, will the system's ills be remedied.

Evolutionary humanism provides a different solution to the problem of resolving the differences in human experience. Based on Charles Darwin's theories of evolution, it argues that humanity evolves through a process of conflict and natural selection, in which some superior humans are mandated to oppress inferior humans. In so doing, humanity will become stronger and even superhuman. Evolution has not ceased in Homo sapiens, but it could cease if human rights mandated equal treatment for all humans.

The experience and contribution of a genius is superior to that of a moron or a drunk. Similarly, the nations that have contributed the most to human progress are superior to those that have contributed little. War pushes humanity to new achievements and allows the operation of natural selection - survival of the fittest. As Nietzsche said, "what does not kill me makes me stronger."

Hitler's experience on the front lines during World War I transformed him. It taught him to conquer his fear and master his willpower. It showed him that the world is a jungle ruled by the laws of natural selection. People voted for him because they identified with him, his ordinary origins, and his wartime experience. Nazism, however, was the result of the pairing of evolutionary humanism with racial theories and ultra-nationalist emotions. Not all evolutionary humanists are racists. Not all socialists are communists. A belief in humanity's evolutionary potential does not require war, concentration camps, or dictatorships.

Throughout the 20th century, these three sects of humanism fought one another in two world wars and subsequently during the Cold War. At the beginning of the 21st century, there is no serious alternative to liberal humanism's prescription of free markets, democracy, individualism, and human rights. Despite the fact that China is neither a democracy nor truly a free market economy, in practice, it is no longer a communist country. Actually, an ideological vacuum exists in China, which makes it the most likely place for the development of the new techno-religions that are emerging from Silicon Valley. These will be discussed below.

#### The conflicting goals of science, religionand spirituality

Spirituality is an uncompromising quest for truth. Neither religion nor science care much about truth. Religion cares mostly about the maintenance of social order. It is

legalistic, with laws promising judgment, and subsequent reward and punishment. Science cares mostly about power. It seeks to gain the power to heal disease, prevent famine, and develop more effective weapons to conquer or deter enemies. Individually religionists and scientists may value truth highly, but collectively, in their institutions, they seek social order and power more than truth. They are therefore able to coexist, compromise, and even form alliances. The spiritual search for truth can rarely survive within the restrictions of religious or scientific institutions. The debate over the source of consciousness, discussed in the first part above, exemplifies the institutional limitations of scientific research.

Modern history is a process of negotiating a deal between science and humanism. Today, few scientists question humanism. Instead, society uses science to implement the liberal humanist creed. Modernity requires growth. The modern pursuit of power is fueled by the alliance between scientific progress and economic growth. The assertion that growth can solve every problem has become the mantra of politicians, economists, and technocrats, not to mention individual consumers. This mantra is cheered on by religionists who see growth as a means to avoid the problems of poverty, famine, and war. But the mantra of "more stuff" impels individuals, firms, and governments to disregard anything that might restrict economic growth, including traditional familial bonds and negative effects on the environment.

In a capitalist world, it is believed that the lives of the poor improve only when the economy grows. Despite the fact that the poor suffer most from environmental destruction, in capitalism the need for economic growth trumps protection of the environment. Capitalism, as a belief that borders on religion, has replaced "pie in the sky," with miracles here on earth, and it prophets - venture capitalists - extol as a first commandment: invest your profits! Even as individuals, modernity impels each of us to strive for more income and a higher standard of living, and has dismantled the longstanding disciplines that curbed greed. But growth is now reaching its limits. with the threat of economic collapse and the destruction of the environment. The rat race of modernity takes its toll on us individually and collectively. As Karl Marx wrote in the Communist Manifesto, modernity requires uncertainty and disturbance. Every generation replaces the old world with a new one. Governing structures quickly become outdated. So do humans.

#### Humans are becoming outdated

In the past, there were many things that only humans could do. But today, computers, artificial intelligence, and robotics are quickly surpassing human performance. Although computer intelligence has grown enormously during the past 60 years, there has been zero growth in computer consciousness. Nevertheless, humans are in danger of losing their economic value because intelli-



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gence is decoupling from consciousness. This is the first great practical threat to liberal humanism.

Using pattern recognition and non-conscious algorithms, artificial intelligence is beginning to outperform humans in such jobs as diagnosing disease, identifying terrorists, driving cars, flying planes, and manufacturing a whole range of products using robots and 3D printers. At least for armies and many corporations, intelligence is required, but consciousness is optional.

If we forbid humans to drive cars, we can connect all vehicles in a single network with far fewer accidents, far less congestion, and far more free time for drivers to read instead of watching the road. Bank clerks, travel agents, stockbrokers, and even lawyers are being replaced by automation. Digital teachers are being developed to monitor every answer I give and how long it took me to give it. They will discern my weaknesses and strengths, and identify my interests. It may prove easier to replace doctors, even specialists, with digital doctors. In a recent experiment, a computer algorithm correctly diagnosed 90% of lung cancer patients, whereas doctors succeeded only 50% of the time. Eventually, humans will lose their value as individual economic entities. What will happen to persons who are not employable in the emerging economy?

The second great threat to liberal humanism is that individuals will lose their individual authority by being managed by external algorithms. Individuals will continue to compose music, invest their money, care for others, and teach chemistry, but algorithms will understand humans better than they understand themselves, and will make an increasing number of their most important decisions.

A recent study claimed that a Facebook algorithm is a better judge of personality than people's friends, parents, and spouses. It asked more than 86,000 volunteers with Facebook accounts 100 questions about their personality. The algorithm was able to predict their answers based on their history of clicking the Like button, indicating which websites, photos, and postings they liked. The algorithm needed only a set of 10 Likes to outperform the predictions of work colleagues, 70 Likes to outperform friends, 150 Likes to outperform family members, and 300 Likes to outperform spouses. If you have clicked Like at least 300 times, the algorithm can predict your opinions and desires better than the persons closest to you can. About some fields, such as consumption, the algorithm was more accurate than the answers provided by the persons themselves.

The researchers concluded that people may abandon their own psychological judgment and rely on computers to make life decisions, for example, about careers, activities, and partners. The same study was able to identify what political candidates needed to say in order to sway swing voters their way in certain closely fought voting districts.

Google is now building a huge database on human health, part of its "Baseline Study." It identifies trends in the outbreak and incidence of various diseases by detecting the words used most often in searches and private emails. It can predict epidemics. It also receives biometric data from the users of wearable devices such as Google Fit. It intends to obtain DNA data from persons who submit a sample of their saliva for analysis to a private company, 23andMe, founded by Ann Wojcicki, the former wife of Google co-founder, Sergey Brin. In return, you receive a list of the potential health hazards you are likely to encounter and your genetic predisposition to more than 90 traits and conditions including baldness and blindness. As the database grows, so will the accuracy of its predictions.

Coupled with the other sources of data mentioned above, it will be able to shield us from an array of medical problems, including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and Alzheimer's. Coupled with the personality data from Facebook, it will know you better than you know yourself. It will not be fooled by the stories we tell ourselves, the self-deceptions that lead people into harmful habits, difficult relationships, and unsatisfying careers, because Google will remember everything we did.

As such a database grows, people will begin to trust it more than their own narrating self to make important decisions. To the extent that people do, they will cease to exist as individuals, self directing but integral parts of a global network. They will gradually give up free will, and cease to decide what's good, who to vote for, what's the meaning of life, and what's beautiful.

Democratic elections will become obsolete, because Google will be able to analyze and present my political opinions better than I can myself. Currently, voters do not remember everything they thought or felt since the last election, and they are mostly subject to the most recent propaganda or events, which may distort their opinions. Studies have demonstrated that these are skewed towards the most recent events.

As Google, Facebook, and other algorithms gain access to more and more data about you, they may become your agent, even your ruler. There are already applications that can direct you in traffic. Microsoft is developing a personal assistant known as Cortana, which has access to all of your files and can offer advice and even act as a virtual agent in a variety of areas of your life. For example, interrupting you to remind you of an appointment or prompting you to take your medicine. Or when you are about to enter a business meeting, warning you that your blood pressure is too high, your dopamine too low and, based on prior statistics, that you tend to make serious mistakes under such conditions. So, postpone the signing of any contracts. Eventually, your Cortana may communicate with the Cortana of others to decide where and when a meeting will occur. Or instead of submitting your resume for a job, allowing the employer's Cortana to communicate with your Cortana. Or completely unknown to their owners, my Cortana may be approached by the Cortana of a potential romantic partner. The two



# Understanding and managing anger with meditation

By M. G. Satchidananda

Anger is both a cause and manifestation of suffering. It is experienced first in the vital body as an unpleasant feeling of displeasure accompanied by antagonism and negative thoughts in the mental body. It is usually related to one of our attachments, for example, to possessions, reputation, need to be right or superior. It is always born of egoism. Its sources include feelings of fear, irritation, impatience, frustration, defensiveness, feeling hurt or insulted.

For example, someone makes a disparaging remark about you in person or on social media. You react with anger and defensiveness. You are filled with negative thoughts not only about the person who has judged you unfairly, but also thoughts of why their remarks or so inaccurate and inconsistent with the view you hold of yourself.

What to do with feelings of anger usually depends upon the culture in which one lives. In some cultures, manifesting anger is strongly discouraged. Suppression of anger is required. But this often leads to depression and despair. We feel better when we express it. Western psychology therefore encourages its expression, and there is a whole industry of therapists paid to listen to others express their anger. However, expressing it may

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will compare notes and decide if there is a good potential pairing of their owners. If they are given more authority in our lives, the degree of sophistication of the Cortana may determine our degree of success in the job or marriage markets. Those with the most up-to-date model may have an advantage over those with older models.

Devices such as the Cortana will not be able to be overridden as easily as turning off an alarm clock. It will have far more power over you, because it will know you better than you know yourself, and it will know exactly which inner buttons to push to make you follow its advice. Google Now and Apple's Siri are also being developing along the lines of the Cortana.

Amazon's algorithms study you now and recommend which books to read and which movies to purchase, based on the choices of people with tastes similar to yours, all recorded in its database. Digital books are now more popular than printed ones in the U.S. If digital readers, such as Amazon's Kindle, are equipped with facial recognition and biometric sensors, it will know how each sentence you read influences your heart rate and blood pressure, where you laughed, and where you reacted negatively. Books will read you! Amazon will remember all this. Amazon will choose what you need to read, and it will know how to turn you on and turn you off.

Decades from now, you may not be able to disconnect from the network. Medical technologists hope that humans will have inserted into their bodies many biometric devices, bionic organs, and nanobots, which will monitor our health, scan for threats, and defend us from disease. They will operate 24 hours a day and require regular updating to prevent hackers from interfering with them. Humanism, which gives authority to the individual, may disappear, as authority is given to non-human algorithms. The merging of the organic and the inorganic is happening all around us now. Millions of us embrace it, conducting much of our lives online, sharing our intimate thoughts and feelings, and sacrificing our privacy.

The danger is that an Orwellian world may develop, in which the state can monitor and control not only our actions but what occurs inside our bodies and brains. The

individual is likely to disintegrate not as the result of the brutal actions of authoritarian regimes, but gradually from within, as corporations and governments deconstruct us into biochemical subsystems monitored with sensors that are everywhere - in our homes, in the articles that we use and wear, and even embedded in our bodies, analyzed by networked algorithms over which we have no control.

The third great threat to humanism is that a small privileged and indispensable class of elites of upgraded humans will rule the external algorithms, possessing superhuman abilities and creativity. They will make most of the important decisions in the world, particularly those pertaining to the crucial services performed by systems. But most humans will not be upgraded and will belong to inferior castes, dominated by both these superhumans and the computer algorithms. In the 20th century, medical science sought to heal the sick. In the 21st century, medical science will increasingly aim to upgrade the healthy. Therefore, 50 years from now, while the poor may enjoy much better healthcare, the gap between them and the rich will be much greater. The rich will be able to afford the most advanced medical treatments. But the rich may not be willing to pay for the healthcare of the poor, particularly if the poor are unemployable.

This small group of superhuman elites will use their immense wealth and privileged position to pursue life extension, even immortality, unlimited happiness, and godlike powers, with the help of the coming bonanza in genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and mood-altering drugs, all integrated with brain-computer interfaces. They will possess upgraded physical and mental abilities, which will allow them to compete with sophisticated non-conscious algorithms. Everyone else will rely on the latter to make their most important decisions. This is not science fiction. The first stages of it are happening now.

In the next part, we will discuss the emergence of techno-humanism, as well as an alternate vision, the reform and renewal of liberal humanism, which will be informed by the wisdom and practice of Yoga.

(to be continued)



# Managing anger continued

reinforce it as an habitual negative reaction. While we may feel better after shouting in anger at our loved ones, or swearing, there are negative consequences. We disturb others. We also usually regret the words spoken in a fit of anger. We cannot take them back. We have to face the consequences of their effect on others. They have a corrosive effect on our own physiology and our psychological disposition. The habit of expressing anger grows stronger whenever we express it. Nor does expressing anger remove its root cause.

If you are angry with yourself for some mistake, and continue to hold onto it, you may also develop other forms of emotional illness, including guilt, lack of confidence, anxiety and depression.

The yogic approach to anger begins with observing it, rather than suppressing or expressing it. This is based upon the recognition that feeling anger is not the same as manifesting it. There are two steps. First, acknowledge its presence, with non-judgmental awareness, when you first feel it, by noticing how your breathing changes, where there is tension in your body, how your heart rate may have accelerated, and how your thinking may now be muddled. Scan your body and correlate such sensations with the emotion of anger. Be attentive and observe it. The more familiar you become with anger the less fear or aversion to it you will experience. Recognize the distinction between pain and suffering. As the Buddha said, it is not the first arrow which causes damage, but the second and third arrows, referring to how we react to an emotion such as anger, and how we react to our reaction.

Secondly, accept its presence. By doing so, you will maintain your equanimity. Usually people do not accept its presence because they have an aversion to its unpleasantness, and they try to get rid of it by expressing or suppressing it. What generates suffering is resistance, which is wanting this moment to be other than it actually is now. The greater the resistance, whether it is felt as anger or fear, the more there is suffering, and the greater the likelihood of reacting in unskillful ways. Acceptance is a full and joyous consent to how everything is actually occurring in the present moment.

By being present with the feeling of anger, you create a wider mental space where you can choose how best to respond to whatever has provoked it, rather than simply reacting in an habitual manner. You can allow yourself some time for the anger to rise and fall away before you consciously choose to speak or act. Take a few breaths. Count to five. You will be less likely to react in an antagonistic manner or to swear or react in some other negative manner. Even if a situation requires that you restrain a child from an unwise action, or someone from physically hurting someone else, or you may do so without feeling anger. With more mental space you will respond wisely, skillfully and compassionately.

#### The process of letting go of false identities

In the example above where someone makes a disparaging remark about your person, realize that whatever

response you feel reflects your own sense of identity. Remember that in the process of becoming enlightened there is a "who" and a "what" that one actually is.

There are also many beingnesses with which you can and do become identified, but which are not in themselves who and what your really are. For example, there is being the person who is stressed and tired; there are the compulsive ideas such as "I have to..." or "poor me," or "I can't do that." The variation in them is vast. They are layer and layer upon each other. These layers of false identification make up what is called the mind. When the stress and fatigue are gone, you are now having other concerns, emotions or sensations. Many of these beingnesses are not bad, because they help you to survive. But any of them is a barrier to enlightenment when the true individual, upon hitting a layer of false identity, clings to being over-identified with it.

As Patanjali tells us in the Yoga Sutras:

Yoga is the cessation of identification with the fluctuations arising within consciousness. Then the Seer abides in his own true form. I.2-3.

By contant practice and with detachment one ceases to identify with the fluctuations with consciousness I.12

Detachment is the emblem of one who sees and hears an object without craving. I.15

The true individual is not any beingness; it is beyond beingness, even beyond "unbeing." It is that which can be anything, but which is not anything at all. If we were not ultimately existing, we would never be able to come into existence. If we were ultimately any quality, for example, angry or sad or afraid, then we would never be able to be happy nor anything else.

The process of de-identification is what accounts for the levels of enlightenment. Someone experiencing himself or herself as love will have touched onto a deeper aspect of his or her true nature than is normally experienced, but if one continues to de-identify more deeply, there will be more levels, including being "no thing," or being "everything, the entire universe itself." The whole process of meditation is to reveal the hidden beingnesses with which we are unconsciously identified, de-identify from them, and release them. Every time there is a moment of de-identification, there is also an instantaneous opportunity for direct experience to occur. Whenever you feel anger, ask yourself "Who is angry?"

#### Meditation and anger

Many people view meditation as merely an escape from reality, or at best, a means of managing stress. However, meditation can also be viewed as a means of nurturing a healthy mind which is slow to anger. It is a fact that our mental state is a determining factor in whether

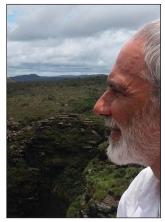


# Acharya Ganapati

Each human being is a singularity, a nontransferable affirmation, the invocation of a name that belongs to him/her alone. Destiny is to realize this name, which must preside over the life in time and the time of life, life after life. "It's about getting to be what we really are," said Foucault, quoting Nietzsche.

I recognize my destiny.

As a Jew, a Christian, or a Muslim, I believe I have been, in other lives, a spiritual aspirant, striving to seek



Acharya Ganapati

the Truth in the context of Semitic monotheism. I brought with me the ingrained notion of Oneness, the nostalgia of the Divine, and a deep wound.

This past inhabited my childhood. I was not yet five

when I first noticed its presence.

Atheism also came early. At age 13. It was the factual inconsistencies of the Old Testament that pushed me into it. With the intellectual resources I had at the time, I could only take the biblical text to the letter. I did not know that each sentence has multiple layers of meaning and can be read in many different ways.

Around the same time, I became aware of Euclidean geometry, which provided one of the most delightful intellectual experiences of my life. Demonstrating theorems, provided exclusively with logic, constituted, for me, the acme of the True, the Good and the Beautiful.

I was already well planted in atheism when I had, at the age of 14, my first mystical experience. Looking the starry sky on a lovely summer night, I felt myself sinking into an endless chasm. Behind the pulsating mass of stars, I noticed Something too big, Something that no longer allowed itself to be imprisoned by a name, Some-

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# Managing anger continued

you get angry or not, and that it also determines the degree to which you feel and manifest it. Other determining factors include such things as whether you are hungry, fatigued or physically uncomfortable.

As with many problems, prevention is more efficient than remedy. Here's how to prevent anger by nurturing the mind with meditation.

- 1. Practice moment to moment attention in daily life. For example, scanning your body for its sensation during routine activities such as walking, sitting, driving your car; being a witness to the appearance and passing of thoughts, emotions and sensations. Practicing continuous awareness will also minimize the risk of errors due inattention.
- 2. Cultivate wholesome thoughts. Let go of negative thoughts. Regularly study wisdom or inspirational literature. Compose auto-suggestions which are the opposite to your negative thoughts or habits of mind and repeat them every day for at least a month whenever you are in a deeply relaxed state. These will replace the habit of reacting angrily. For example, repeat: "When the unexpected happens, I enjoy witnessing the stream of sensations, emotions and thoughts which arise before responding and do only in ways that are only beneficial to all concerned." Or, "when I feel frustration toward myself, or disturbed by others, I remember to forgive."
- **3.** Practice non-attachment by cultivating simplicity, reflecting upon the impermanence of your possessions, relationships, even such intangibles as your reputation.
- 4. Meditate on transcending mental liking and disliking. Meditate on your true and only source of security and well-being, the Self, asking the question "Who feels

angry?" "Who Am I?"

- **5.** Meditate on the practice observing all of the social restraints, the yamas: being truthful, avoid harming others, greedlessness, chastity, and not taking what does not belong to you. See the Ebook: "Opposite Doing: the 5 Yogic Keys to Good Relationships" for an extensive discussion of these:http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/ english/bookstore.htm#opposite\_doing\_ebook
- **6.** Study your reactive patterns with curiosity. What makes you angry? What pushes your buttons? Identify those that have been present for a long time. Are you holding any grudges? Grudges are attachments to anger, and they hurt only those who continue to hold them. Record these in a meditation journal. Observe how they repeat themselves in daily life.
- 7. Practice forgiveness. It is not sufficient to merely say or think "I forgive you." Forgiveness usually comes only after a long struggle. Do it to free yourself of the destructive effect of anger and hatred. Distinguish the person from their words and actions. Realize our unity. Practice repeating "Let it go," during meditation and in daily life.

Karl Marx called anger the revolutionary emotion. By experiencing it skillfully, you can make wholesome changes in yourself and in society. The key to doing it skillfully is not to allow it to become hostility, which is dangerous. Today, form an intention, a sankalpa, that you will cease to identify with anger, and that you will no longer allow anger to determine your actions, words or thoughts. Do so with a positive auto-suggestion. Meditate deeply on the meaning of forgiveness and practice it in daily life towards yourself and others.



# Acharya Ganapati continued

thing before which all my explanations seemed insufficient.

The impact of this experience lasted a week. To recompile the belief system, I appealed to the most foolish of the "arguments": if the existence of God explains the existence of the world, what explains the existence of God? Jung called these mental stratagems a "regressive reconstitution of the persona." Unable to integrate the unveiling, we put before it a filter reducer. And we exchanged the pure diamond of the experience by the pebble of the interpretation.

I had to wait another 14 years, until a new opportunity, with the same force, would appear again. In these 14 years, I have expanded my scientific knowledge, at the price of an ever increasing veil of the spiritual light.

But I did not stand still: I practiced judo and karate, reaching the black belt; I took painting classes; I studied Chemical Engineering at the University of São Paulo; and, strongly influenced by Marxist literature, I became involved in the student movement and joined a clandestine party that fought against the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship. The time were bleak. Friends of my were arrested, tortured and killed by the political police. I even had to hide a few times myself.

At that time, I came to know of the existence of Babaji, through the Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramahansa Yogananda. I opened the book with a casual smile. And I came across what I thought was a succession of absurdities, because the supernatural seemed to hint behind each paragraph. However, it was exactly the most miraculous of the chapters, the one in which Yogananda introduced Babaji, that captured my attention with force. While the rational mind said that this was sheer nonsense, another instance of my consciousness felt the silent, gentle touch that, in time, would awaken it from its torpor. I put the book back in the bookcase, but a seed had been planted inside me.

By the age of twenty-eight, a powerful inner impulse made me give up everything I imagined to be my life: political militancy, Marxism, my first marriage. With a radical diet, I lost many pounds. Body-therapy sessions and dance lessons awakened my body from a prolonged alienation. A vigorous creative élan brought me back to drawing, painting, and poetry. Free from marital commitment, I gave myself to various experiences of love.

In a book about the Big Bang theory, I came across a number that shattered my conscience like a brick thrown into the windowpane. I refer to the so-called Planck Temperature, of the order of  $10^{32}$  Kelvin. According to the standard model, this would be the temperature of the universe a tiny fraction of a second after the primordial instant. The idea of an infinite temperature would not have impressed me so much. Because infinity is nothing that can be represented in any way. The finite, however, can be translated into numbers. I knew that a material medium whose temperature could be associated with e  $10^{32}$  K would have to be 10 million million million million times hotter than the center of the Sun!

Like the starry night of my fourteen, this dizzying number plunged me into a mystical abyss. And the paroxysm of materiality has collapsed my materialism. Facing Planck's Temperature as a personal defeat, I witnessed my belief system sinking without salvation.

There followed a period of intense research. Seeking some kind of response, I spent the nights drawing. I started without knowing what to draw, indulging myself in the spontaneity of the gesture. Until an archetypal form appeared, indicating a way forward.

My intellectual knowledge of spiritual traditions was practically nil. And I clung to the few fragments I found. A friend advised me to read Journey to Ixtlan. I read, reread, and memorized several passages of this and other books by Carlos Castaneda -- until I felt that I could learn nothing more from them. Then I went over to other authors. The Sufi-inspired literature awakened in me an immediate sense of familiarity. I received it without difficulty, as if in some way I had known it for a long time.

It was during this intense process of discovery or rediscovery that I discovered or rediscovered the woman who would become my second wife, mother of my children and companion of all hours: Márcia. This relationship established for me the gold standard of what human love can be. Before I knew her, I thought I knew love, but I did not really know it.

Life in relationship - first with Marcia and then including my children - worked like a hammer hammering the hot iron and was one of the forces that drove my evolution. The other force was awakened by two experiences lived in the context of Holotropic Breathwork, the technique of self-knowledge and self-transformation developed by Stanislav and Christina Grof.

They were, in all respects, the two most powerful and sublime experiences I have had to date. I do not feel authorized to share them here. Suffice it to say that in the first, which occurred around my 35 years, I was flooded by Divine Love. And that the second, which occurred around the age of 42, put me before the incomparable presence of Babaji and gave me the certainty that he is my master in this life. These two experiences redirected my entire existence.

I already had a lot of bookish knowledge about the spiritual traditions. And also some practical knowledge. I started this study in the early 1980s, researching the biography of the great German astronomer Johannes Kepler (1571 - 1630). From him, always seeking to know "those who came before", I moved in the opposite direction to the time line, towards ever more ancient references: Nicholas of Cusa, Meister Eckhart and Roger Bacon; the Jewish Kabbalists, the Muslim Sufis and the Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite of the early centuries of Christianity; the Greek Neo-Platonists, the Indian Siddhas, and the prehistoric shamans. I even played with this compulsion for the past, saying that I was not inter-



# Acharya Annapurna Ma

I understand life and everything in it as a relationship between the parts and the Whole, an expression of Divine Love in its extreme compassion, giving souls the possibility of awakening from Lila, the cosmic game, to realize the Full Consciousness. For this, my soul trajectory chose Brazil as an enveloping consciousness, and a simple family as anchor. I am the third of four children



Acharya Annapurna Ma

Since I was very small, in my inner reality, I felt im-

mersed in a dimension of harmony, movement and beauty. At the age of three, I had a feverish convulsion, the sequel of which left me straining from my right eye. Since then, the adjustment of my vision has become a vector that I regard as the beginning of an action of Dharma: adjusting perspective so that all beauty and harmony - so clear in the inner world of the child - obtain equal flow and expression in the outer world.

At the age five, I accompanied my father to a beach town hospital after he fainted during a family vacations. And, in a year and a half of trips to the hospital, when he was only 40 years old, I experienced the presence of Babaji's energy in the moments before and after his death. On the last visit, while I waited for permission to see him in the hospital parking lot, I had a moment of

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# Acharya Ganapati continued

ested in anything with less than 800 years old.

My interest in shamanism led me to regularly attend an indigenous Guarani village, where I interviewed the shamans, witnessed healing ceremonies, and participated in the Nimongaraí, the naming ritual, in which I received an indigenous name.

In the mid-1990s, I was invited to take a trip to Jordan and Israel. It was a rich experience, culminating in my visit to the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. The Dome of the Rock, Qubbat al-Sakhrah in Arabic, was my fixed idea. And the trip allowed me to realize it.

I do not remember exactly when, but certainly after 1995, I began a spiritual practice that lasted for a few years. It consisted of the silent and very slow recitation of the Our Father. I began by trying to exhaust the meaning of each word intellectually, exploring all the connotations I could discover. Then I associated sensations, feelings and visualizations. I did this exercise in several ways: sitting, standing, walking. My favorite option was to do it on the way from home to work and from work to home. Many times, it took me hours to complete a single prayer. Our Father lasted my daily spiritual food until I received, in the Second Initiation in Kriya Yoga, the Root Mantra of Babaji. And, later, the Mantra of Complete Surrender.

My First and Second Initiations in Kriya Yoga, taught by Satchidananda, occurred in early 1998, about five years after I received the supernatural darshan of Babaji. In this intervening period, a highly significant dream indicated the way forward. I found myself in front of an old building, located in the center of São Paulo. And I received instruction that this was the seat of an old spiritual brotherhood, now in a new phase of its existence. It was for me to communicate, writing on the facade in "golden letters", the meaning of this noble enterprise. And the

phrase to be written was a sentence attributed in the dream to the prophet Muhammad: "Keep the Tradition that Inspiration will come".

The meaning of the dream is quite evident. And it is related to the one that has been, after all, the guideline of my life: communicating by word, spoken or written, the legacy of Tradition, thus contributing, albeit minimally, to the development of the consciousness of those I can reach.

There were many other instructional dreams. And important visual and auditory experiences as well. But I can not dwell on them here.

In writing this testimony, I realize that after 20 years since the First Initiation, having received the 144 kriyas of the Third Initiation several times, having visited the places associated with Shaiva Siddhanta in India several times, having read, studied and even translated excerpts from the literature of the siddhas, having become acharya, with the mission of transmitting to others the knowledge of this Tradition, I have not yet integrated completely Kriya Yoga into my life.

But I continued my studies on Spiritual Traditions. I gave introductory courses on Shamanism, Shivaism, Taoism, Pythagoreanism, Neoplatonism, Kabbalah, Christian Mysticism and Sufism, contextualizing each of these traditions with historical, philosophical, scientific and artistic information. I have written five books and have published hundreds of articles about them.

The vocation for communication, oral or written, has become clear to me. The question I had so often asked myself about destiny, about what I came to do in this life, was answered by the very unfolding of events. Therefore, when I was introduced to the Order of Acharyas, in Badrinath, Himalayas, I received with joyful tranquility the spiritual name Ganapati.



# Acharya Annapurna Ma continued

incredible joy: two Jaguar cubs were there, as if by a miracle, and I held them in my arms as a manifestation of strength and beauty. A day or two later, upon hearing the news that he was dead, the continuity of life was what struck me as truth. And an immense faith that everything was all right.

Childhood continued with this ingrained knowledge that change is sacred and that everything is all right, all of the time. When I was nine years old, my enthusiasm for life and the beauty of that energy attracted the lust of my mother's brother. After spending the day playing with his daughter he took me home, and made abusive advances towards me. Here I recognize the presence of Babaji and his protection. Despite the violence and discrediting of the adult world in my childhood, I was able to continue into adolescence and adulthood without rancor and without traumas. The adjustment of perspective between the inner and outer worlds became a challenge.

In adolescence, the realization of a full spiritual life was infused with the grace and generosity of Babaji, who guided the unveiling and the enjoyment of art and nature in countless experiences of immensity and harmony, inside and outside me: in dance, music, theater, in the immensity of the rivers, the seas and the skies of Brazil, in trips without a definite destination, without date of arrival, traversing my interior in an epiphany of infinite spaces in kindness, beauty and joy. I went alone or accompanied, in a flow of faith and synchronicities. The journey was continuous. And, when back to the regularity of life, that spirit was what permeated everything. My education in the social sciences and journalism was insignificant in comparison to what was happening inside me. And, at this moment, letting go of the forms was very easy.

It was in this context that I met my life partner and lived fully the manifestation of the possibility of Divine Love between two people. Being with him brought the dimension of detachment. It was simple and complex, all together at the same time. In two years, we were living together and I was pregnant with my first child.

Motherhood was like the equator line in the trajectory of my personality, and, here, I recognize the hand that traced this line: Babaji. I recognized the child and my own full incarnation as a manifestation of Love in the adhara, my heart center. Furthermore, there was the pleasurable astonishment of the recognition of Oneness in diversity through the other, which, though so close and known, was an entirely free and autonomous girl in the trajectory of her soul and personality, with her own challenges, her own questions. The kaleidoscope of life opened up in myriad images, challenges, fears, ignorance and a deep dive into the unknown.

One year and two months later, my second child was born. He brought with him a battle for survival as he entered life. There was Babaji illuminating, step by step, the trajectory of his first ninety days, until his lung matured and the life could stablish with much joy and determination. Despite the negative prognoses, I was sure

he would survive. My faith was unshakable. Each time I went to the hospital, where he stayed for 21 days in the first month of life, I felt within me the expression of Divine Love in the flow of all the ills of life and saw my soul protected and saw in each and everyone the same. My son received only catheter feeding while I nursed many children in the hospital. And all were One.

Four years later, a new experience of motherhood crowned me with my own death during the birth of my third daughter. In an emergency birth procedure, the anesthetic did not go down to the lower limbs as intended, but instead, it went up into my spine and caused my heart and lungs to stop. I saw the whole scene from above, from a place of silence and calm: the anesthesiologist trying to revive me, the medical team seated apprehensively in front of my inert body. Until the doctor got up and said that there was no more time to wait and the assistant handed him the scalpel. At the moment of death, it was Babaji's voice that I heard: "It's not time to die. Now that baby has to be born". Through the pain of the cut in my belly without anesthesia, I came back into my body again, the baby was born and I came back to life.

It was only after spirituality had worked upon me so intensely that Babaji introduced himself formally. It was in a dream, with precise instructions on what to do. I had never heard of Babaji before. But it was the same loving, joyful, and gentle energy that had always been with me and now earned a name.

Only five years after meeting Babaji in this way did his Kriya Yoga arrive in my life. That was twenty years ago. I vividly remember the feeling after receiving my first First Initiation: "I was home again." It was the same feeling I had on my first trip to India, plus an immeasurable joy. It was like being reborn in brilliance within the heart. On the way back from this trip, the inspiration for learning how to cook for many people was planted inside me, and I went back to school in a gastronomic postgraduate course.

In 2012 I witnessed the birth of my first granddaughter, in 2015 at the birth of my second grandchild, and last year my third grandchild was born in my house in my absence. For me, the birth of grandchildren was the crowning of many profound insights into the dimensions of the Eternal. Babaji, now as Babaji, is still here.

In 2014, to my surprise, I received from Durga and Satchidananda the invitation to be part of the Order of Acharyas of Babaji's Kriya Yoga. I accepted this invitation from a deep place of gratitude and commitment to the energy of Babaji.

In the last four years I have travelled over great internal distances. If I am writing this text it is because the energy of Babaji nourishes and strengthens me.

Sometimes my way is full of difficulties from the point of view of this person. And magnificent from the point of view of the Whole. The energy of Babaji nourishes me independently of the oscillation in a part of my consciousness. To be aware of this is yet another of His blessings.

# **News and Notes**

Om Guru Festival in Cunha, Brazil, November 14-20, 2018 with M. G. Satchidananda and Durga Ahlund. Celebration of the 20th anniversary of our activities in Brazil. Details are here:

www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/events.htm #babaji-festival-gathering\_br

Fundraising to support the move of our Dehiwala, Sri Lanka ashram to a new location. The previous location is no longer possible due to a coastal highway which the government will build through the property. We are planning to rent a house in a suburb of Colombo, where Acharya Kriyananadamayi and other sadhaks can offer free public classes and initiation seminars in Kriya Yoga. You may make a onetime donation or a request a monthly donation via your credit card to Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas can be made at the bottom of this page on our website:

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The new Ashram in Badrinath.

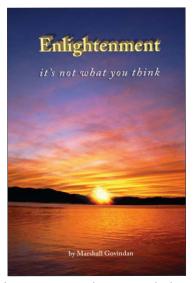
Pilgrimage to the new Badrinath Ashram with M. G. Satchidananda and Durga: September 20 to October 8, 2018. Join us for a life changing, unforgettable pilgrimage to the place where Babaji attained soruba samadhi, the ultimate state of enlightenment. Details are here:

www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/ Pilgrimages-himalayas.htm

Second level initiations will be given by M.G. Satchidananda in Quebec October 19-21, 2018.

**Third level initiations** will be offered with M. Govindan Satchidananda in Quebec July 5-14, 2018. They will also be offered in 2018 by Satyananda in Germany, by Nityananda in Spain, by Sita Siddhananda in France, by Ishvarananda in Estonia. Attain the goal of Self-realization with powerful kriyas to awaken the chakras and to go into the breathless state of samadhi.

**Enlightenment: It's Not** What You Think, our latest publication, by Marshall Govindan, reveals how you can replace the perspective of the ego - the habit of identifying with body, emotions, and thoughts - with a new perspective: the Witness, that of your soul ... pure consciousness. With compelling logic, practices for everyday life, and guided meditations, the book explains how you can free yourself from suffering,



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## News and notes continued

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