



B a b a j i ' s

Kriya Yoga Journal

Editorial

Is God still in the world?

By M. G. Satchidananda

Catastrophic events like the recent earthquake in Nepal, plane crashes, religious and political terrorism, all, which kill thousands of innocent people, can shake our belief in God. It seems every day bad things happen to good people, making us wonder, "how could an omnipotent, benevolent God not prevent such tragedies?" or "why does God allow people to suffer so much?" or "why does God not make himself known

in the world?" An unexpected health crisis has the potential to crush one's belief or faith in God, when it involves a loved one, not to mention, the serious injury or accidental death of a child, a friend or family member. It is easy to resort to anger, despair and cynicism. Those who do not believe in God find justification for their belief that "There is no God in the world."

The answers to life's suffering nor-

mally given by religion's ministers, priests and rabbis are generally unsatisfying: "God works in mysterious ways." "We cannot know why God allows such tragic events to occur." Unfortunately, there are those religious persons who believe that tragic events occur to those who do not share their particular religious beliefs, or that they are God's punishment for sinners, or unbelievers. Others, crushed by the sorrows and pitfalls of life, may turn away from religion. Even those who were not religious may just give up seeking spiritual truth or solace.

Through the practice of study of Yoga, however, you may acquire the energy and wisdom to find enlightened answers to these fundamental, existential questions. There are several Yogic paths that reveal God in the world.

1. Bhakti Yoga, the yoga of love and devotion is the easiest and most direct vehicle. One of the most famous theological sayings of the Yoga Siddhas is "Anbe Sivam," or "Love is God." Many saints in various religions have declared that "God is love," but only the Siddhas expressed it this way. So with reference to the question "Where is God in Nepal?"

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the bhakti yogi will immediately respond with the answer: "In the hearts and minds of everyone who has responded to the tragic events with love, compassion and support for those who are suffering."

2. Karma Yoga, selfless service. The Karma yogi acts, to alleviate the suffering of others. In the early stages you may think "I am doing this as service." You look for opportunities to do good, creating "good karma" which produce happiness, especially for others, and which may offset the effects of "bad karma," the harmful consequences of past actions. Actions which are performed as a service, for the happiness of others, including work and household duties, even small gestures to strangers become your yoga mat. Actions are performed skillfully and consciously but without attachment to the results. In a more advanced stage, the Karma yogi realizes "I am not the doer," "I am only an instrument", or "I am the witness." As the Witness consciousness develops you no longer feel that you are doing anything, because you no longer identify with the body and mental movements. You appreciate more and more how actions, words, and thoughts bring about consequences, or karma, and how this law can be applied to help you share happiness rather than suffering with others. With this new expanded sense of Self, you feel that the needs of others are also your own.

3. Raja Yoga or Classical Yoga as presented by Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. In deep meditation you become aware of what is aware. Consciousness itself becomes the object. You feel that "I am in everything" and "Everything is in me." Later, and gradually this realization of the Self begins to permeate your daily, waking activities. God realization comes as this stage deepens. Saints and mystics from all spiritual traditions have attempted to describe this, but words generally fail them. In fact, the more one tries to describe it, the further from it, one goes, because describing it, or even thinking about it, reduces it to a set of ideas. As "IT" transcends all names and forms, permeates everything, and is infinite and eternal, all else pales in significance. Silence rules.

4. Jnana Yoga, the cultivation of wisdom, with the help of the intellectual faculties, questioning, the study and contemplation of wisdom literature, and intuitive insights. The foremost expression of the Siddhas' wisdom is found in the Tirumandiram. It expresses the realization that the five functions of God Siva, creation, preservation, dissolution, obscuration, and grace all have as their purpose the education of individual souls in their journey from separation, imperfection and existential suffering to Oneness, perfection and bliss. Therefore, seemingly tragic events are a means to the edification of souls. They obligate us to seek truth beyond the dualities such as pleasure and pain, gain and loss, liking and disliking. We grow in wisdom and learn to find the strength and courage to face such events, with equanimity to let go of egoistic reactions of fear, attachment and aversion.

5. Tantric or Kriya Yoga, the worship and cultivation of the vision that nothing but indestructible energy ex-

ists, everywhere, and that by concentrating on it, and by transforming and sublimating it within ourselves through the practice of Kundalini Yoga, we come to know the Lord as our Self. Consequently, even destructive events are viewed as necessary to the growth of the embodied soul, in its journey from one life to another. While its embodied forms must necessarily dissolve, subject to the laws of physics, karma, time, and ignorance of one's true identity, Kriya Yogis and Tantrics awaken the chakras and their potential power and consciousness. The awakened Kundalini Shakti reveals to the mystic yogi the Truth beyond intellectual understanding.

Who is God? Who Am I?

How anyone answers all of the above questions depends upon their personal conception of God, and these vary tremendously, from person to person. Is there a God, who sits as a Judge? One who punishes us for sins? How can a Supreme Being who love us unconditionally, not protect us from such tragedies? Our conception of God or Supreme Being, will change, or evolve through stages, as each person develops spiritually. It may shift from something that is "out there" to "what is "inside me." It is instructive to analyze how you think about God, and what you identify with, as you progress on the spiritual path. Theologians have categorized religion's several progressive conceptions of God. Each religion or cultural group assumes that their conception of God is the only correct one. It is evident that one's conception of God is limited by one's education, understanding of nature, personal experience, imagination, desires and fears. These limit our spiritual growth. The human situation is projected upon one's conception of God. How we answer the above questions will depend upon which of the following conceptions of God and personal identity you hold.

Stage 1: God is the Protector. I am the physical body. I make sacrifices to God and spirits for protection from malevolent forces and events which threaten me physically.

Stage 2: God is All powerful. God is the giver of laws, political and religious authority. I am the mind and personality. I respect the laws and am punished if I do not.

Stage 3: God is Stillness: "Be Still and know that I am God." I witness.

Stage 4: God is Wise and all knowing. God loves me. I am intuitive. I listen

Stage 5: God is my co-creator. I create

Stage 6: God is a wonder. I am effulgent self awareness

Stage 7: God is Absolute Being Consciousness and Bliss. "I am" I am nothing special.

(For a full exposition of the above, read Kriya Yoga Insights Along the Path, Part 3, chapter 7, "How do we know whether we are progressing spiritually?" Also found in the Kriya Yoga Journal, Fall 2007, Volume 14, no. 3 at www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/articles.htm

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The perspective of the Yoga Siddhas

According to the Yoga Siddhas, as expressed in their literary works, including the Tirumandiram, “the world, when viewed from superconsciousness, is perfect and that God Siva has purposefully created each thing and its opposite: good and bad, beauty and deformity, light and darkness, joy and sorrow, life and death. It is these sets of opposites, of joys and sorrows, which provide the means for the growth and maturation of the soul that makes us seek beyond the world of duality, that purify and evolve each soul and bring it to Siva’s holy feet. From the enlightened summit reached by the siddhas, all is seen as necessary and good, all is seen as God Himself.” (Tirumandiram, volume 10, page 3470).

The individual soul is an effulgent being, a body of light, and referred to as the bliss body, the anandamaya kosha. It is created, evolves as a seemingly separate being and ultimately merges in undifferentiated union and oneness or identity with God Siva. The monistic theistic view of the Siddhas is that the soul is, temporarily different from God because of its individuality, but not in essence, because it is limited. It is not Omnipotent or Omnipresent at its inception. But it is not imperfect. The various sheaths and faculties of mind and perception, which are not the soul, but surround it, are even more limited, and are subject to the stains of anava (ignorance of one’s true identity), karma (consequences of past actions, words and thoughts, habits) and maya (delusion). The cycles of birth and death, samsara, have as their purpose the removal of these stains.

But then “Why did God create?” This question arises from the limited the second chakra perspective governed by the rules of logic. But the answer exists in the in the sixth chakra consciousness of divine vision. Trying to imagine an adequate reason for creation with our limited ordinary faculty of reason is like trying to comprehend the ocean one handful at a time. It is simply the nature of God to create, along with his other four powers of preservation, dissolution, concealing grace and revealing grace. There is really no need for a reason. Worlds are created as naturally as we create thoughts and feelings. It is a fact that lies beyond reason. His power to create is part of the Perfection of the Source of Life But according to the cosmic law of karma (also created by Him) each soul, not God, is responsible for its actions and thus its differences and inequalities. These inequalities are part of the ongoing creation in which some souls are young, with much to experience, and others are old, mature and nearing merger with the Lord.

In contrast, Abrahamic theologians saw a world in which there was good and evil, and were unwilling to make their god responsible for both. All that is evil, false and ugly is produced by Satan. The use of the word “creation,” may lead one to believe that God is creating something out of nothing. This is the Judaic-Christian view. But the Vedic and Agamic view is that creation is an emanation from Himself, where emanation refers to flowing, issuing, or proceeding from the essence, which is

God. God is therefore both immanent within his creation, and transcendent, or unaffected by it. This also contrasts with one dominating school Saiva Siddhantha among south Indian Hindus, and known as of “pluralistic realism,” that a perfect God could not have created souls nor the world, with all of their imperfections, and that therefore they remain eternally separate. In this view, creation is analogous to a potter’s fashioning of a pot on a spinning wheel. God fashions already existing matter into various forms. God is the potter, or “efficient cause,” the wheel is the “instrumental cause,” considered God’s power, or Shakti, and the clay is the eternally existing “material cause,” which produces a pot, the effect of these three causes.

The Siddha’s view of creation and its relationship with its creation is that the soul is like a wave which emanates from the ocean, evolves and then merges back into its source, the ocean, God. What is created is the individuality of the soul, endowed with the powers of iccha (desire-love), kriya (action-will) and jnana (awareness-wisdom) and ultimately merges when the malas or stains of ignorance, karma and delusion are removed, and all sense of separation dissolves. God Siva created and is creating constantly, preserving, and reabsorbing all things, emanating from Himself the individual soul of man, all the worlds and their contents. He is both the material and the efficient cause. His creation is like fruit emerging from a tree or sparks from a fire. This view combines theism, the belief in the reality of the God and the soul, with monism, the belief that there is only One, and that everything only appears to be separate because of the power of illusion, or maya. It is known as monistic theism, and is common to both the Tamil Yoga Siddhas and Kashmir Shaivism. (For more on this subject read “Monistic Theism in the Tirumandiram and Kashmir Shaivism” in our publication “The Yoga of Tirumular: Essays on the Tirumandiram, chapter 10; or available as an Ebook here: http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/bookstore.htm#yoga_tirumular_monograph

“Jiva (the individual soul) is becoming Shiva,” is the great saying of the Siddhas which encapsulates the Siddhas view. It affirms the reality of the Lord, the soul, and the world through which the soul must pass through repeatedly. It is in contrast to the non-dualist perspectives found in some schools of Vedanta and Buddhism, in which the world and its suffering are not an illusion, but the Divine itself. The world and the soul are but various forms of Siva Himself. Yet He also transcends His creation and is not limited nor affected by it. (Tirumandiram, volume 10, pages 3464-3465)

What is grace? What does it have to do with karma?

The concept of grace is found throughout the teachings of the Siddhas, as well as in many world religions. It reflects the widespread recognition that our prayers are answered by a source of benevolence, independent of

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The steady inner gaze upon Shakti

By M. G. Satchidananda

"You are dreaming with your eyes open," say the Siddhas, and this is why you suffer. Allowing yourself to identify with the movements of your mind whether they are thoughts, sense impressions or emotions, will constantly carry you away from awareness of your true Self. The scientific art of Yoga with its many techniques provides a remedy. However, without a profound understanding of how to access potential energy within oneself, a student of Yoga may fail to practice them with the degree of concentration which is necessary.

Given the state of mind of the average person, swinging between absorption in *tamas* (inertia) and *rajas* (activity) the first purpose of Yoga practice must be to develop *sattva* (calmness). All Yogic techniques serve this purpose. However, calmness is only a pre-requisite, a door way, to Self-realization and the awakening of *kundalini*, one's potential power and consciousness whose purpose is transformation of human nature with all of its defects into a divine nature, *Siddha*, perfection, in ways both great and small.

Shiva-Shakti: Conscious Energy

That from which everything originates is Shiva-Shakti, or "conscious-energy" according to Yoga. These two terms

represent the Being and Power of that which is beyond names and forms, space and time, and which is both imminent in all creation, but untouched by it, as the Eternal Witness. All creation emanates from it according to Saiva Siddhantha, the monistic theistic teachings of the Yoga Siddhas. Every thing not only emanates from It, but is sustained for a time in It, and then dissolves into It. Shiva-Shakti is the ground of your individual being, the embodied *Jiva*, or individualized consciousness, surrounded by the conscious- energy sheaths, or *koshas*, in the physical, vital, mental and intellectual dimensions of your existence. Shakti, the universal intelligent life force manifesting in humans is referred to as *prana*, or vital energy, in body and mind. You can awaken our great divine potential, known as "Kundalini Shakti", by worshipping it as the inner Goddess who guides and empowers you at all levels. The practice of *Shambhavi mudra* focuses awareness inwardly upon It, and with aspiration for the True, the Good, the Beautiful, becomes a sacred Yogic discipline. You may also personify the powers of the Goddess, cultivating love for their forms and qualities with devotion, or *bhakti*.

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whether we are deserving. With karma, we get what we deserve. With grace we receive what is uplifting and edifying to our soul, in response to its call. Just as every action, word or thought has by the law of karma a necessary consequence or reaction, there is a higher law which enables the individual soul (the *jiva*) to communicate with the Supreme Soul of the universe (*Ishvara*). The *Siddha Tirumular* gives a form to this grace: *Nataraja*, the Lord of the Dance:

In the splendorous temple (of *Chidambaram*)
He danced,
For the two *rishis* (*Patanjali* and *Vyagrapada* to witness)
He danced,
Form, Formless and as Cosmic Form,
Within the Divine Grace of *Sakti*
He danced,
He the *siddhas*, the *anandas*,
As Form of Grace
He stood and danced."
- *Tirumandiram verse 2790*

How can the Lord cause souls to be born into a life of suffering? *Tirumular* answers this question:

In His Grace was I born;
In His Grace I grew up;
In His Grace I rested in death;
In His Grace I was in obfuscation;

In His Grace I tasted of ambrosial bliss;
In His Grace, *Nandi*, my heart entered.
- *Tirumandiram verse 1800*

So, the Lord gives souls a body to work out their karma; he supports them so that they can experience the results of their action, and so learn wisdom from them; he gives them rest through destruction of the body; he gives obscurity which obliges them to seek beyond the veil to realize their true nature as consciousness (*cit*) and eventually bliss, resulting from equanimity with regards to karma; finally he gives them release from the bondage of delusion that I am the body, I am the desires, in liberation. Thus all of His acts are expressions of His Grace.

Is Divine Grace accessible to all? Yes, but only those who have prepared themselves know of its availability and aspire for it. The Mother has said: "The Grace is equally for all. But each one receives it according to his sincerity."

God loves and is guiding each and everyone of us

Yoga provides us various vehicles to discover this. The teachings of the Yoga Siddhas provide reassurance that God loves us, and that God's grace is constantly flowing down upon us. We become aware of it and His guidance, when we consciously turn towards Him, seeking it. Even the tragic events of the world provide to us the opportunity to express "Anbe Sivam" "Love is God." □



Steady Gaze: Shambhavi Mudra

Turning the eyes towards some point in the body is often a part of many of the techniques of Yoga, and is known as "Drishti Yoga" or the Yoga of seeing. These include asanas, pranayama, meditation, mantras, even bhakti yoga. However, when the eyes are turned towards some point in the body or the outer world, while focusing your awareness within, to the prana from which all forms originate, it is known as Shambhavi Mudra, or "steady gaze", and the effect is much more potential. This requires you to concentrate inwardly on the pure light of consciousness, Shiva. The physical body, the external world, thoughts and feelings become the background, and the "Self-Illuminating Manifestness," or svarupa, comes to the foreground. The Siddha Tirumular tells us:

"And the Holy Master, Parama guru (supreme guru)
As Para constant pervades interminably all
In that immanent state
Extends His Self-Illuminating Manifestness (svarupa)
When Jiva the Final Turiya ("fourth") State attains..
- Tirumandiram 2835

And in the very last lines of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, verse IV.34:

"svarupa pratishtha va citisakti iti" : the power of pure consciousness settles in its own pure Nature" where

*sva*rupa = own pure nature, Self-illuminating manifestness;

*citi*sakti = power of pure consciousness;

*prati*sththa = steadfastness; settles in

va = thus

In Shambhavi mudra, you enter into a state of inner stillness, and communion with the light of consciousness, wherein sensations, thoughts and emotions pass by leaving no trace of themselves. Instead of dwelling on such movements, you fix your attention on that which is immovable, their source. For example, when walking, you may gaze off into the distance, or keep your gaze fixed downwards, three feet, or one meter, ahead of your feet. As Jesus said: "Be passersby." Gospel of Thomas, verse 42. The world is thus seen in a truthful perspective, one that is very temporary, even ephemeral, and That which transcends the world becomes accessible immediately in the here and now. You do not seek any new experience. You seek the Seer Itself, the Eternal Witness, and its creative force, Shakti and its human agent, prana.

This requires pratyahara: that you withdraw your attention from outer sources of distraction or interest. It requires great concentration, dharana, given the tendencies (vasanas) and the habits (samskaras) of the mind and vital to wander into endless desires and emotional movements. It requires that you have purified yourself of habit-driven desires and attachments through the process of tattva shuddhi, or "letting go," detached awareness, and discrimination. Desire is a power of imagination. To control desire, practice methods of visualization, concentration, and mantras to develop imagination as a force for

spiritual development. Meditation on abstract truths using the intellect and reason will also help you control the force of desire and various emotions in the vital body.

The practice of Shambhavi mudra is usually performed, at least initially, with eyes open, or half open, turned upwards towards a point between the eyebrows, where a light may be visualized. This is how it is described in tradition texts such as Hatha Yoga Pradipika and the Siva Sutras. But it has a much greater potential when it is not limited to the eyebrow center. Maintain a calm, steady gaze and inner stillness, while gazing towards the centers associated with the sahasrara, or ajna chakras, or the tip of the nose, while sitting or standing. It can also be done with the eyes partially open, or fully closed. What is important is to maintain the center of your mind on the prana within. You can alternately focus upon a particular sense organ or object of sense, for example the ear, or sound, but remain focused on the power, the energy which animates the sense organ, and which is the vehicle of the sensation. Just as a machine or appliance runs on electrical energy, so do your senses operate as instruments of prana, which itself is a part of universal Shakti, conscious energy.

As a truly tantric practice, in Shambhavi mudra, you do not seek to close the sense organ, but unite its activity with the source of its power. The word tantra means web or energetic teachings. It refers to the web of energy supporting all things in the universe. It also refers to the teachings that unite Shiva and Shakti, consciousness with energy, the spiritual with the material, heaven and earth, the eternal with the temporal, the infinite with the finite. The practitioner of tantra uses energetic methods involving prana to commune with the object of worship or awareness. The tantric regards all life as sacred embodiments of the Divine. Every thing emanates from cosmic intelligence, Shiva, through the creative power of Shakti. Neither Shiva nor Shakti are things or objects, and are the source of all things, and therefore you can only approach them by entering into a state of communion with them, wherein you transcend the duality of subject and object. The great saying of the Siddhas, "the Jiva (individualized embodied consciousness) is becoming Shiva (universal consciousness)" affirms both the reality of embodied existence and its ultimate state of perfection. It also affirms the process or path between them! We are all a work in progress, moulded by how we respond to life's experience. Shambhavi mudra can be an efficient vehicle in traversing this mystical path, from imperfection to perfection, when applied skilfully, first with particular external forms, and parts on one's physical or subtle anatomy, and ultimately when gazing upon all forms, both material and subtle.

A variety of applications of Shambhavi Mudra

Shambhavi mudra may be applied in many ways:

1. Practice it on the five subtle senses, the jnana in-

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Inner gaze *continued*

driyas: (a) focus on the power of seeing, not the seer, not the object seen; (b) focus on the power of hearing, not on oneself as the listener nor the sounds heard; (c) focus on the power of touching, not the skin, not the object felt; (d) focus on the power of tasting, not the tongue, not the food or drink nor its taste; (e) focus on the power of smelling, not the nose nor the object smelled. Sensory impressions come and go like clouds in the sky. Be like the sky. Focus on the prana, that which empowers the five senses.

2. Practice it when you focus on the prana, the energy which empowers the action of the motor organs, the karma indriyas: (a) the power which animates your hands; (b) the power which animates your feet and legs; (c) the power which animates your voice; (d) the power which moves your organs of excretion; and (e) the power animates your organs of procreation.

3. Practice it when gazing upon on an external object: a candle flame, a flower, a yantra or mandala, a Shiva lingam, a picture of one's favorite form of the Divine, known as one's Ishta-Devata. But if one is walking or moving about, any and every external object may be gazed upon while practicing inner awareness of the light of consciousness.

4. Practice it while following the sound of one's mantra back to its source and identifying with the powers and the qualities expressed by the mantra. Concentrate on That from which the mantra arises while listening to its sound.

5. Practice it while communicating with others, by focusing on the energy flowing between oneself and the other. Aspire to saturate it with love, goodwill, and equanimity. See the Presence of the Divine, alone with Whom we have a permanent relationship.

6. Practice it while focusing the gaze on the image of your Ishta devata or guru, and imbibing the energy, love, beauty and peace that lies behind it.

7. Practice it while focusing the gaze on the chakras, or other parts of one's subtle anatomy: the ida, pingala and sushumna nadis. Energy follows consciousness, so when you direct your eyes towards a chakra, energy flows into the chakra and awakens it.

8. Practice it while contemplating the objects which represent the five elements: (a) earth, for example a stone or mountain; (b) water, for example, a lake, river or the ocean; (c) fire, a candle flame or campfire; (d) air, for example the sky, clouds, and (e) space, for example the space between objects, or the space between yourself and external objects. This can also be done with eyes closed by visualizing them. While doing so, merge your

consciousness with the object of contemplation, becoming one with it.

9. Practice it while contemplating the fire of Kundalini, our potential power. Because it supports us at all levels, it is associated with the root chakra, whose element is the earth. It is like the fire in the center of the earth. It is awakened by tapas, the practices which purify and strengthen us, including asanas, pranayama, good diet, as well as the yamas, the social restraints. Focus on the fire which animates these practices; on the heat of resistance which your efforts encounter, especially with regards to desires, habits and attachments; on the power of fire to transform your nature, and you exercise your willpower.

10. Practice it while contemplating the full moon, focusing on the blissful, cooling energy, the light of consciousness, which gives us so much delight and which calms our minds. It is because of this effect that the moon is associated with the crown chakra, the soft palate, samadhi, nirvana, and the secretion of amrit or nectar from that chakra, and the consequent awakening of our



highest faculties. Contemplate on how it manifests, beyond all efforts, as love and peace.

11. Practice it while contemplating the inner alchemy wherein the Kundalini fire from the lower chakras, arises in the ida nadi, and is transformed by the descending cooling energy in the pingala nadi, "the moon," the crown chakra, and becomes the sun, the light of consciousness, uniting in the sushumna nadi. The union of Shiva and Shakti.

12. Practice it while contemplating how the downward moving energy during inhalation balances the upward moving energy during exhalation, and results in the stillness of effortless suspension, and the inner glow of consciousness.

13. Practice it while contemplating the source of energetic movements and sensations during the practice of each asana. □



Transforming the body by descent of truth consciousness

By Nityananda

*"To preserve the body, open the lid,
The lid is opened by Hatha-Yoga;
The human body considered as an appearance is the gateway;*

By reversing the many-bonded body make it the truth and achieve victory."

- The Yoga of Boganathar, volume 1, "Samadhi Diksai-10", verse 5 by Siddha Boganathar

Sri Aurobindo, a modern Siddha, also speaks about a lid located in the top of the head:

"Above the Mind there is not only the Infinite in itself but infinite sea of peace, joy, light, power etc.-above the head. The golden lid - Hiranmaya patra -intervenes between that which is above Mind and what is below. Once one can break that lid those elements can come down at any time one wills, and for that, quietude is necessary. - Evening talks, A. B. Purani).

The deep practice of Hatha Yoga is not limited to the performance of asanas, Yoga postures, but goes beyond that. Hatha Yoga includes asanas and bandahs, muscular locks, with the goal of cleaning the nadis or energy channels, activating the chakras and finally directing and concentrating the vital energy in the top of the head. This is the final goal of these practices, with the aim of opening the higher chakras with that vital energy. The yogi Sivananda, in fact, calls "Hatha Yoga" to what others would consider that is a practice of "Kundalini Yoga", as he describes it in his book "Kundalini Yoga."

The practice of pranayam is also fundamental in this process of awakening and concentrating the energy in the top of the head. The Siddhas insist a lot in this; Bogar also speaks about this in the precedent verses of this poem:

"Release the meditative energy from the basic muladhara and direct the breath

*Through the plentiful, enchanted four circles
To the circle where the syllable ya is connected with
and where ordered breathing has interiorized."*

- The Yoga of Boganathar, volume 1, "Samadhi Diksai-10", verse 1 by Siddha Boganathar

The "four circles" are the four chakras up above the first one. Through the practice of pranayam the breath becomes balanced and quieted, and by itself becomes concentrated in the sixth chakra located between the eyebrows. The prana has become interiorised in ajna chakra, which is related to the syllable "ya".

In other Yogas, concentration in the crown chakra would be done with the final goal of departing the world of samsara, the never-ending cycle of reincarnations. But the goal of Siddhantam of the Siddhas is another. Concentrated there, the aim is the descent of divine grace, which will make possible the transformation of all the sheaths or bodies of the yogi, including the physical one... transforming "the copper into gold," so the "jiva (individual) becomes Shiva (Divine)." The crown chakra, sahasrara,

once the lid is open, becomes the point where the higher energies descend. This is mentioned by Sri Aurobindo in his writings:

"The highest organised centre of our embodied being and of its action in the body is the supreme mental centre figured by the yogic symbol of the thousand-petalled lotus, sahasrara, and it is at its top and summit that there is the direct communication with the supramental levels. It is then possible to adopt a different and a more direct method (...) and to receive all by a sort of descent from above, a descent of which we become not only spiritually but physically conscious." (The Synthesis of Yoga, p. 805-Sri Aurobindo).

As a yogi, you cannot create by yourself this alchemical transformation; it is the descent of the Divine Itself which does it. You must consummate your aspiration for the Divine, by the complete concentration of your energy in that higher point, until "the lid is open." With the lid is open, you must consummate complete surrender, by absolute mental silence and undivided receptivity towards the descending grace. The attainment of such realization may require a lifetime or more until these are complete and affective.

Sri Aurobindo states in his writings that the only thing that can transform nature and the physical body and divinize them is the Supramental consciousness or Truth-consciousness, far above from the higher mental levels of the actual human being. This Truth-consciousness doesn't allow any falseness; it is the Truth of being. It is interesting that Bogar also speaks in these verses about "making it (the body) the truth."

The transformation and divinization of the yogi is the supreme union of Shiva and Shakti, of consciousness and energy, until there is no difference between both of them. Creation becomes one with the creator.

*"Being engrossed in the Absolute in concentration,
It has become possible to descend manifesting grace;
The universe and the five senses commingle together
Has become the form of the one with twisted matted hair
and wisdom"*

- The Yoga of the 18 Siddhas: An Anthology. Sundaranandar, Meyjnanaccurukkam-16, verse 15.

The universe and the five senses are then inseparable from Shiva, the supreme consciousness (the one with twisted matted hair and wisdom).

And the physical body, in the conception of the Siddhas, is more than a limitation or delusion for the soul; it is a door for accessing to that ineffable state of realization: "The human body considered as an appearance is the gateway."

These verses of the Siddha Boganathar tell us in a concise and amazing way the path of the Siddhas - the process of raising the energy, and the descent of the transforming grace from the Divine, even into the physical body, for supreme yogic realization. □



Kriya Yoga - The journey home

By Bhumika Pandya, in India

The entire process of life and death and activities performed in-between makes me think about one very simple thing. 'We are born only with our body and nothing else, and when we die, we don't even take along our bodies, then what is the real reason, the real purpose behind being here?'

I have always believed that there is something more to life than practicing mundane activities. There has to be some catch in this play of life and death! Something, which can bring out the real purpose of life. My search for an answer led me to reading books on various Yogis of India, knowing their yogic techniques with the help of which they conquered even death! Research conducted on these Yogis by the best of international universities further infused in me the faith in their techniques. Further exploration introduced me to Christ and his abundant love which is available for everyone, if only we are

various organizations before. Yet, somehow, I failed to practice them on daily basis. Dedication was missing, which made me think if the same will happen this time as well. But Kriya Yoga was a different experience. After the first initiation, not a day has passed without practicing the Kriyas. In fact, when I deeply ponder, I realize that it is not me practicing the Kriyas. Rather, the practice has absorbed me into it. The Kriya has made me one with itself. Just as the way we breathe but we don't realize the activity of breathing, in the same way the Sadhana just happens, without me realizing it to be taking place. It is so natural and effortless. Such a bliss! While practicing Kriyas has been a grace, many other things changed in time.

Kriya Yoga introduced me to some truths of life. We fail to realize that everything is temporary. Hence we get involved in the drama of life, forgetting ourselves. This

leads to pain and misery. Kriya Yoga taught me to be in the TRUE state of awareness, Sat-Chit-Ananda. It also taught me to sincerely fulfill all duties and responsibilities, while being detached from it. Regularly remembering these facts helped me remain more aware and more peaceful, irrespective of the situation.

The benefits gained out of first initiation made me curious about what the second initiation has in store for me. The second initiation

had an amplifying effect on my spiritual progress. It took me deeper into knowing my Real Self. It made me aware of my energies. So subtle, yet so strong! Such is the beauty of energies! Experiencing the wonders of the second initiation, I threw myself onto the feet of Babaji. Complete surrender. The ultimate 'Swaha' of the 'self' to know the 'Self'. The result- sweet God- intoxication which encompasses me every minute, every second of the day.

If we have an eye for it, wondrous experience awaits us every moment. Shiva awaits us every moment. Reminding us, calling us through our very own breath - Va-Shi, to become one with him, to dissolve into nothingness. Opportunity awaits everyone. Only if we choose to act upon it.

By connecting with Him, we connect with our Highest/True Selves. It is time to become one with Him in the ocean of happiness. □



attuned to receive it. Devotion and fervor to realize the real purpose of life introduced me to Babaji's Kriya Yoga.

The first initiation introduced me to very advanced yet simple-to-practice Kriyas. The only contribution required- total sincerity and discipline in practicing Kriyas regularly since the result is exactly proportional to how much is practiced. Acharyas are live examples of how one can transform his/ her life through Kriya Yoga. The energy, positivity, determination and act of unconditional service to all true seekers, are, but, very few of the qualities that can be captured about the Acharyas. Acharya Satyanandaji, the perfect guide to Babaji's Kriya Yoga, is an inspiring example of the abundant possibility of transformation and spiritual development through Kriya Yoga. Getting initiated from him assured me that I am on the right path.

I have learnt very beneficial Yogic techniques from



Questions and Answers

An important resource in managing doubts

By M. G. Satchidananda

One of the great obstacles to the practice of Kriya, "action with awareness," or maintaining "continuous awareness," in daily life, Patanjali tells us in Yoga Sutra verse 1.30 are "doubts." To manage a doubt, you need to start by expressing it in the form of a question. Write it down, then begin searching for an answer, for example using the fourth meditation technique, Arupa Dhyana Kriya, or the seventh meditation technique, Babaji Samyama Kriya, both taught during the first initiation. Acharyas and other initiates of Babaji's Kriya Yoga may also be able to answer your questions. Another handy source of answers is the articles in the back issue of the Kriya Yoga Journal whose titles are listed on our website here:

www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/articles.htm

A quick review of their titles will generally enable you to find the subject matter of your doubt and question. Here is a sample of questions or areas of doubt you may have, and which Journal articles to look into for answers:

How to overcome or control difficult emotions and desires? Why am I not happy? See:

Winter 2009: *"Anatomy of Desire: Creating Emotional Balance through spiritual Self-awareness"*

Winter 2013: *"Fear and Mastery of the Vital Body"*

Am I making progress on the path of Kriya Yoga and in my spiritual development? See:

Fall 2007: *"How do we know whether we are progressing spiritually?"*

Why don't I get a clear answer to my questions during meditation? See:

Winter 2015: *"Babaji Samyama Kriya requires Opening and Receptivity"*

Why am I not able to let go of obsessive fantasies, worries and attachments? See:

Spring 2014: *"Blockages and the Heart"*

How can the practice of Kriya Yoga help me with fear and anxieties? See:

Winter 2013: *"Fear and Mastery of the Vital Body"*

How to inner guidance effectively? How to choose the right course of action? See:

Summer 2012: *"Our Psychic Opening to the Divine"*

What is my responsibility with regards to the global environmental crises? See:

Fall 2010: *"Yoga, Consumerism and the Sixth mass extinction"*

How can Yoga help me to succeed in work, career and finances? See:

Summer 2010: *"Do what you Love and the money will follow."*

How can meditation help me to overcome difficulties in daily life? See:

Fall 2007 and Winter 2008: *"The Art of Meditation"*

What is devotion, bhakti yoga? Is it necessary? How can I develop it? See:

Fall 2007: *"What is devotion and is it necessary?"*

Why am I suffering? What are the consequences of egoism? What are my values and priorities? See:

Spring and Summer 2007: *"Why do we practice Yoga?"*

Winter 2005: *"Why is there so much suffering in the World?"*

Spring 2002: *"Liking and Disliking: the Disease of the Mind"*

How do I surrender egoism to the perspective of the soul, the Eternal Witness? How can I distinguish desires from aspiration? See:

Winter and Spring 2006: *"Aspiration, Rejection and Surrender"*

How can I settle my karmic debts and stop creating more karma through the practice of Kriya Yoga? See:

Spring 2005: *"Karma: Cause or Consequence?" Parts 1 and 2*

What is karma yoga, and could it benefit me? See:

Winter 1994-95: *"Receiving the Grace of our Satguru Kriya Babaji Nagaraj" part 2*

How can I create a supportive environment to the practice of Yoga at home? See:

Autumn 2002: *"A Man's home is his ashram?"*

How can I develop a relationship with Babaji and receive his Grace? See:

Fall 1994 and Winter 1994-95: *"Receiving the Grace of our Satguru Kriya Babaji Nagaraj"*

Winter and Spring 2006: *"Aspiration, rejection and surrender."*

Who Am I? Is there a God? See:

Fall 2007: *"How do we know whether we are progressing spiritually?"*



News and Notes

Second level initiations will be given by M.G. Satchidananda in Quebec, June 19-21, and October 23-25, 2015.

Third level initiations will be offered with M. Govindan Satchidananda in Quebec July 10-19, 2015. Attain the goal of Self-realization with powerful kriyas to awaken the chakras and to go into the breathless state of samadhi.

Teacher Training in Kriya Hatha Yoga: June 26 to July 7, 2015 in French in Quebec.

We need your help! Our registered educational charity, Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas, needs your contributions to complete the construction of the ashram in Badrinath. See the latest progress report and photos here: www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/News-Notes.htm#badrinath_construction. We also need your help fulfill the Order's planned

2015 program of sponsored activities. Make your contribution online and see details of our Annual report and plans here: www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/kriya-yoga-contribution.htm

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