



B a b a j i ' s

Kriya Yoga Journal

Editorial

The result of sacrifice is bliss

By M. G. Satchidananda

As I celebrated my 65th birthday this week I have been reflecting upon my life and how far I have progressed towards my goals. While I have now become officially retired in the eyes of the Canadian, Quebec and US governments, and will start to receive their pension and benefits, "retirement" has never been one of these goals. There has really only

been one goal, ever since I met my teacher, Yogi Ramaiah, in 1970, and that has been "complete surrender." My understanding of this goal has, however, greatly evolved over the years. During the eighteen years I was with Yogi Ramaiah, "complete surrender" involved surrendering my ego to the sadhana discipline and to fulfilling the karma yoga duties

and tasks given by him. My love for the practice of Kriya Yoga was the easy part, and helped me to act in the spirit of "selfless service," or karma yoga. Being sent to live and work in many places, including Chicago, Washington, D.C., India, Sri Lanka, Australia, and Montreal, changing careers and jobs, learning new languages, organizing centers and Kriya Yoga activities was often very challenging. Yogi Ramaiah's preferred approach to "complete surrender," which he referred to as "ego crushing," also involved his intentional efforts to create often painful situations in which his close students, including myself, had to confront their ego's preferences and try to round off their rough edges.

After leaving Yogi Ramaiah's organization, "complete surrender" meant doing what was required to fulfill Babaji's guidance in a myriad of assignments, from writing books, organizing their publication and distribution, giving public lectures and yoga classes, initiation seminars, and supporting many students, while continuing to support myself in a career. After retiring from corporate Canada nearly 20 years ago, "complete surrender" also included the challenges of developing an ashram

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Babaji's Kriya Yoga is a gift and a blessing

By Durga Ahlund

Babaji's Kriya Yoga is the Yoga of Awareness

Since I was a child I have been asking the questions, "who am I?... and, where in the body does my I-ness exist?" The Siddhas of this Kriya Yoga Tradition answer this question. They tell us the body is a vehicle, which brings Divine conscious energy to earth; within the body there is a mystic center, a sacred passageway back to the Infinite and that liberation from all the rounds of suffering is only available within it. So it is a truly great gift to be born in a human body. Babajis Kriya Yoga encourages all of us to question our self and the purpose of our existence. It gives us effective methods to discover who we are and where in the body "I-ness" exists.

Babaji's Kriya Yoga is an authentic lineage of a modern synthesis of classical Yoga and Tantra, which provides us the means of developing our potential power and consciousness. Through the techniques of asana, pranayama, dhyana, mantra and bhakti we can come to experience moments of "I-ness." The

practices help us to strengthen the physical body and the mind, while clearly distinguishing our true Self from our vital body, the seat of our desires and emotions. We learn to understand that free will gives us the choice to either express and identify with our normal, restless, and judgmental, fluctuating state of ego consciousness or with the calm, silent, reflective consciousness of true Self. That is why the right lifestyle, emotional balance and strong concentration must be gradually developed if we are to express who we truly are.

The discipline, practice, or sadhana of Babaji's Kriya Yoga, involves not only realizing, "Who AM I?", but also takes us on the difficult journey of uncovering "what we are not." Getting a true indication of what we not, i.e., our habits and tendencies, emotions, desires and limiting thoughts is challenging to our ego, the little "me." The first step is to witness with calm de-

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in Quebec, and giving more than 1,500 initiation seminars in more than 20 countries, and returning repeatedly to most of these places every year to support the initiates.

After leaving Yogi Ramaiah's organization, I also realized at some point that Yogi Ramaiah's "ego crushing," was not nearly as effective as what I refer to as "surrendering the perspective of the ego, (I am the body, I am my emotions, I am my memories, thoughts and experiences) to the perspective of the soul, the pure Witness Consciousness. While translating and writing a commentary on the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali, and editing the translation of the poems of the eighteen Yoga Siddhas by our Order's team of scholars, I noticed that nowhere in any of these Classical writings of Yoga and Tantra was "ego crushing" indicated as a recommended approach.

Self offering to the Divine

The other approach to "complete surrender" which Yogi Ramaiah emphasized, "self offering to the Divine," has proven to be essential to whatever progress I have made. "Not my will, but Thy Will be done," summarizes this approach, and has been my daily prayer since taking up the path of Yoga. I have learned to express it in various ways. Also, as a prayer: "Let me speak and act only as You would want me to speak and act," and "Grant that I may do as well as I can the best thing to do." I know that the Lord loves me, and because He loves me, in spite of my limitations, when I listen to Him, I hear his wisdom, and his guidance. I have learned that the more I give myself to the Divine, the more He is with me, totally, constantly, at every minute, in all of my situations, all of my needs, and that there is no aspiration which does not receive an immediate answer, with a sense of

complete, constant intimacy. Yogi Ramaiah often expressed this with the words "Take one step towards Babaji, and he takes ten steps towards you." He walks with me, he sleeps with me, he thinks with me, and when I love He is the love that I have. When I forget Him, when I forget to give him anything, I feel as though I have allowed some barrier or obstacle to be put between us, and so wasted the opportunity to share in His unconditional bliss. Aspiration for the Divine is now my sole interest.

Om Namah Shivayah

The Siddhas have expressed "complete surrender" as "Om Namah Shivayah" which means "the result of sacrifice is bliss." I understand this to mean: when one let's go of the ego's perspective, with its desires, preferences and aversions, liking and disliking, and simply becomes the Witness, unconditional joy appears. Being Present, sat, brings Awareness, chit, brings bliss, ananda. . During the past twelve years of marriage to Durga, who is truly a divine companion, "complete surrender" has also become a joy, as I have learned from her how easy it is to live without preferences! At times, it is even humorous, when we both try to decide what to do together, and neither of us has a preference! Somewhere along our paths we learned that it is only the ego that has preferences, and that when there are no preferences, the doorway to infinite possibility is wide open.

I have learned at various stages of my life that the five fold path of Babaji's Kriya Yoga, when practiced with karma yoga and jnana (wisdom) yoga, in a spirit of service and self offering brings one close to the goal of "complete surrender," and that unconditional joy is its result. □



tachment all the things with which our ego identifies. Typically, we ignore or justify them. We try to hide some parts, the dark bits. We even project some of them onto others, with judgments. The techniques of BKY help us to slowly, recognize, understand, eliminate or forgive the conditioning and influence of our past experiences that cause us to continue to suffer. Then, as we deepen our practice they help us to “see” clearly...to witness harmoniously and experience with new eyes, each of the moments that make up our life. Throughout their practice, we must choose to remain awake, witnessing the influences of our past conditioning and exercising our will, to transform it.

Kriya Yoga has the potential of Self-realization. It takes a humble and devotional nature to maintain the persistence, power and steadiness needed to continue a deep and daily sadhana of asana, pranayama, meditation and mantra. When devotion, humility and compassion are strong, the practices yield the greatest spiritual benefits of heightened awareness, peace and bliss. Alone, these spiritual qualities can open the all-important, subtle, spiritual channel, the sushumna nadi. To open this central channel safely, the knots of the heart must be released. One must “let go” of deep-seated fears, desires, anger, preferences and attachments. If the source of one’s motivation is egotistical, for example, to be admired by others, or to develop some power or ability in performing complex asana, only personal power is strengthened; consciousness will remain narrow and one will remain subject to past conditioning. The force of potential energy and consciousness, Kundalini shakti is not of the ego; it is a force of non-ego, and when the ego manipulates it, only the ego enlarges.

The whole system of Babaji’s Kriya Yoga is a total hygiene for the well-being of the practitioner and points the sincere aspirant toward a state of continuous awareness and transformation of their human nature. Why limit oneself with expectations for quick short-term results? Rejuvenation of the physical body, especially the brain and nervous system takes time, but the process also energizes the subtle body. When prana is increased and balanced and the senses are revitalized through pranayama and meditations, the physical body becomes rejuvenated, more energized, too. But more is required of the sincere aspirant.

Not only are we asked to practice the various techniques but also to make the corresponding changes in our lifestyle and in our emotional and mental bodies. The yogic teachings of self-discipline, the yamas and niyamas are critically important to understand, contemplate, meditate on and live by throughout our lifetime: non-harming, compassion, truthfulness,

non-stealing, modesty, moderation, detachment, simplicity, greed-lessness, charity and kindness, purity, contentment, self-study, intense practice and a willingness to celebrate the sacred.

We begin our practice with **Kriya Hatha Yoga**. Aside from the beneficial effects of the practices of the postures in general on our physical health, the correct practice of Babaji’s Kriya Hatha Yoga, the 18 postures has many important effects for our emotional, mental and spiritual

development. Their practice release blockages in the subtle channels and awakens dormant spiritual and psychic faculties. Tensions in the body contract and block subtle channels and directly create restlessness and inertia in the vital life force energy (prana) and its counterpart, the mind. Conversely, as the physical body relaxes through aligning the bones and musculature in selected asana and by coordinating movements with the breath, tensions in the gross body release, prana flows freely through the subtle channels and the mind begins to empty itself. Bandhas (muscular locks) and mudras (gestures which circulate en-

ergy) play an important role in centralizing, stimulating and balancing the increased flow of life force energy. The relaxation following each asana affects healing and a widening of consciousness.

If we practices asana regularly as a means of nurturing our whole being, with our mind passive, ego subdued and concentrated long enough in the posture for it to become truly effective, shifts in consciousness will occur. We will come to experience our energy body. Exploring the body, we will find tactile sensation, miniscule flickering of energy or waves of energy, ebbing and flowing through lines in the body from the navel down through the legs, and up and out through the arms and up through the crown of the head, all responding to the life force energy (prana) that animates them. As we tune into the prana, our mind becomes calm and one-pointed, and then we experience silence - an expression of our higher consciousness. We are taught to observe and direct prana flowing in our asana practice and in our pranayamas and we learn to concentrate and contemplate it, in one of our meditations. Through these practices, we learn how to “know and understand” through sensation and through the essence of feeling.

Kriya Kundalini Pranayama is a gift and a true blessing. We can feel the effects of the pranayama almost immediately, as the mind is calmed. As the inhalation and exhalation become regulated the gross prana begins to affect the subtle pranas. The result is a calm sense of detachment. Each kriya pranayama is practiced

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with awareness. With each breath we direct the subtle prana through the subtle channels, taking the mind into a state of equipoise. This resting state of equipoise and clarity leads us into potent meditations. And we also begin to take out into our life activities, a calmer, conscious perspective. The Kriya Kundalini Pranayamas balance the two major influences on the nature of the mind, the ida (feminine) and pingala (masculine) nadis and consequently, opens sushumna. The particular breathing pattern increases energy, a sense of youthfulness, mental clarity and contentment. The more you practice, the more refined the energies become and more you come to understand, as your breathing moves you into a unitary state of awareness and prana.

The dhyanas (meditations) build upon one other, throughout the week. We start with a technique to uncover what is disturbing the mind and we create an opening for subconscious patterns to arise and come clearly into view. Bringing awareness to what lies in the subconscious is the first step toward healing and “letting go” of negative influences. The dhyanas offer us a means to work on self-control, to promote our health and well-being, as well as the well-being of others. Once we have calmed the mind, the other various meditation techniques begin to develop strong concentration and utilize visualization to open and widen the channel between the perceiving self and the objects of perception.

Inside each of us, is an empty, unlimited space full of consciousness, free from the clutter of thought, where only the sense of *I Am*, abides. It is from the perspective of this space that we concentrate, see, visualize and meditate. The eyes act as shutters, allowing us to interact with the world outside through a field of awareness. As we develop these visualization techniques we come in direct contact with that field of awareness. There is a direct connection between sight, vision and our inner being, *I Am*.

Pure vision is mirror-like; it reflects, without color, without the shading of memory, judgment or preference. Whenever we see purely, we feel an intimate connection with whatever we gaze upon. But this state of consciousness is most difficult to live in because thoughts, memories, preferences, aversions invariably arise in consciousness. Thoughts, both conscious and subconscious distort awareness.

The high text of Vedanta and monistic thought, The Yoga Vashista says, “Consciousness plus thoughts is the mind. Consciousness minus thoughts is the Self.” When the mind is empty of thoughts a palpable stream of consciousness can be felt to flow through the eyes, connect-

ing the place from which you “see,” to the object you are looking at. It is like seeing from the space of “who you are.”

The Meditation techniques or Dhyana Kriyas of Babaji's Kriya Yoga generate an energetic flow that expresses itself along a conduit of perception that links the perceiving mind with the world, which is both visualized with the eyes closed and seen with the eyes open. Concentrating one's gaze and actively visualizing, strengthens brain waves and raises consciousness and can reveal one's intimate connection to the soul.

We learn to experience the soul-connection through the medium of the senses: sight, sound, taste,

touch and smell. We focus the eyes and our attention, concentrate the mind and visualize through the senses, not to fantasize or daydream, but instead to align all the parts of our being toward the soul, so that we come out of the fiction and fantasy of the past and future. We learn to directly experience the present moment. We experience that vision itself, is connected directly, and intimately related to our deeper Self. We begin to “see” differently with more clarity, insight, discernment and detachment in all life activities.

Practicing the *bija* mantras taught during the second initiation helps us to develop new insights and inspiration. The regular repetition of mantras is known as japa. This practice is very soothing to the mind. It brings calmness and healing. As we

direct our mental energy into the mantras, the desire and emotion filled movements of the vital body easily dissolve. The mind becomes quiet and purified. Consequently, the voice of our soul, the psychic being, our intuition, feeds our intellect with wisdom and understanding. We turn towards it for guidance. We listen and we hear it. Mantras can be extremely energizing. Instead of dissipating our mental energy in worries and a thousand trivial thoughts, they help us to conserve it, and then, at the proper time, with intuitive guidance to apply it to the everyday problems of life. They bring forth a feeling of being supported by Universal Energy, by Mother Nature Herself.

As we advance in our practices with devotion to our own highest Self and develop faith and trust in the techniques, we feel connected, inspired and intuitively guided. We begin to heal the conflicts or divisions between our inner and outer selves. We experience their integration, their union, their yoga, joining in this journey, inseparable, interdependent, moving together with everything in our life.

Blessed are those who study Babaji's Kriya Yoga and take it to heart. □



Tantra: the path of the 18 Siddhas (Part 2)

By Nityananda

A practical and short definition of Tantra is: the effort of concentrating in the higher chakras, in the top of the head, the vital energy that is accumulated in the lower chakras. By doing so, it is this energy by itself that activates the most elevated states of consciousness, associated with the higher chakras.

The transmutation of sexual energy into spiritual energy is one of the key points emphasized by the Siddhas in their writings. Among them stands out the texts of the Siddha Boganathar, who is said to be the founder of Taoism, a discipline which specializes in the transmutation of this energy.

To be able to transmute this energy successfully we must take in account the different components of our subtle anatomy, presents in the so called vital body, the energetic body that supports and sustains our physical body, and which is also the seat of our desires and emotions. These components are the nadis or energy channels and the chakras or centers of energy and consciousness. Both must be purified and activated through various yogic practices including asanas, pranayama, mantras and particular meditation techniques.

The energetic system of the vital body can be compared with an electric circuit, with its different electric cables (nadis) and batteries (chakras), through which our life force, known as prana, circulates. The less purified the cables and the batteries are, the more resistance they will offer to the passing of the energy, so the circuit will be overheated, and will only tolerate reduced voltages of electricity; it won't stand high levels of energy. A whole range of desires and emotions leave a residue in our subtle anatomy, which accumulates and creates energetic blockages in the nadis and chakras.

An unusual inner experience, motivated by a transmission of energy (what some call "Shaktipat") or by an intensive but unbalanced practice, can result in a great discharge of electricity in the circuit. But if it is not ready to withstand this voltage, there will be a spark, a short circuit that could damage some of its components. Some people value these as "spiritual experiences" because of their sometimes dramatic, or sensational effects. . But such experiences have no intrinsic value; nor do they last. They are really indications of our lack of preparation. So, our work as students of Yoga is to set up an inner electric circuit that could withstand, in a steady a progressive way, higher and higher levels of energy – higher and higher levels of consciousness. This means a long term, constant and sustained effort, not a search for dramatic, energetic, or spiritual experiences.

The Siddhas of South India emphasize in their works the required spiritual work with the chakras, the nadis and with the Kundalini, which they describe as our potential power and consciousness, dormant in the first chakra, coincident with the perineum in men and just inside the vagina in women.

Kriyas (techniques) of Yoga

In Babaji's Kriya Yoga we have the fundamental practice of the 18 asanas to purify the nadis and to gradually activate the chakras. Yogis such as Swami Satyananda Saraswati point out the importance of activating the chakras in a gradual and progressive way, as their sudden opening may overwhelm the practitioner with desires and uncontrollable emotions, when deep seated habitual desires and emotions, are activated too quickly. Consequently, some practitioners

To avoid such problems, we practice the first meditation technique, Shuddhi Dhyana Kriya, to cleanse the subconscious mind, where undesirable habits and tendencies (samskaras and vasanas) are stored. Also, in the third initiation, we learn some advanced meditation techniques to complete this purification, like the Divine Openings meditations and others. The repetition of mantras can also be effective for this purification of the subconscious.

Other essential techniques to activate the chakras and transmute the vital/sexual energy are:

- Bandahs or muscular locks – the Siddha Tirumular speaks about these practices in his work "Tirumandiram"; several texts of Yoga like "Hatha Yoga Pradipika" emphasize also these techniques.

- The pranayamas Brahmacharya Ojas Matreika Pranayama and Kriya Kundalini Pranayama.

In the third initiation we also learn kriyas or specific techniques to activate the chakras and to purify their contents, through meditations, mantras and asanas.

The Light and Grace of the Divine

The concept of "Grace", the descent of divine energy and consciousness, is very present in the tradition of the Siddhas (called Saiva Siddhantam of the South of India). Shiva, the Divine itself, the Absolute, is a term that means "auspiciousness" or "goodness". In the Tirumandiram, Tirumular mentions five actions of Shiva, the Godhead: creation, preservation, destruction, obscuration and grace, and all these actions are considered acts of grace and love by the Lord for the souls, enabling them to consciously reunite with it in beatitude..

In response to the efforts by the yogi to prepare and purify himself or herself for reuniting ("yoga") with the Divine, and through the yogi's continuous call and surrender of the egoistic perspective to that of the soul, our Witness-consciousness, Grace descends, as supporting strength and inner guidance.

This yogic effort includes the accumulation of vital energy in the higher centers of consciousness or chakras. This is attained not only with yogic techniques, but also with sustained devotion and aspiration, and with a right and ethical behavior. All these allow the vision of the divine Light. This light of consciousness is constantly men-

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Tantra continued

tioned in the Tirumandiram and in other poems of the Siddhas:

"If one concentrates on the form of light, there is illumination;

If one melts in the light, He will become one with you"
- *Tirumandiram, verse 2681*

"Like the drops of water that will not adhere to the leaf of the lotus

such is the desire of the world
Push it away leave it and
worship and adore o dancing snake
the feet of the dazzling
blazing brilliant white light
shining everywhere"

- *Siddha Pambatti*

"O praise the Light of the Lamp, the jewel of the skies,
the great light of reflection, the jewel in the eye!
O praise the Light with rays which have transgressed
the trinity of time

and hold it firm within your heart and mind!"

- *Siddha Idai Kadar*

"To those who have known
that the Truth is plain Light,
what is the use of royal grants?"

- *Siddha Kudambai*

The Siddha Tirumular also mentions the hearing of the Nada, the primordial vibration underlying everything, and referred to as AUM, or OM, as result of this concentration of vital energy in the higher chakras. The yogic discipline or sadhana brings about the union of Bindu and Nada – the union of the vital/sexual seed energy with the Om, the union of the individualized consciousness with the universal consciousness, first manifesting as AUM .

In Classical Yoga, as expounded in the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali, the goal is the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the merging of the individualized consciousness into the absolute, pure consciousness, with the result of Moksha or liberation of the individual from the compulsory cycle of reincarnation.

In the wisdom teachings of the Siddhas, known as Saiva Siddhantam, the goal of the Soruba Samadhi, includes the descent of Divinity into all five planes of existence, an integral transformation of our human nature into a Divine Being. Rather than seeking to escape from this world of suffering the Siddhas, sought perfection, "siddhi," the full expression of our Divine potential, with the perfect union of Shiva an Shakti in the human being, the transmutation of matter (which is energy, after all)

in the perfect expression of the Divine consciousness.

To this attainment, the divine Light is, now, the divine principle intermediate between the Absolute and the creation, participating in both. This principle would be the transmuting agent of this process, being able to act even on the physical body:

"If concentrating on the light and chanting clearly
With a melting light, (He will) make the body
A golden one by the alchemic pill of Sivaya Nama"
- *Tirumandiram, verse 2709*

A Siddha of the 19th century, Ramalinga spoke about all this in his many poems, where he invokes the Divine in its aspect of "divine Light of Grace" (Arul Perun Jyoti), so It could descent and transmute the physical body into an immortal body of light. He himself attained this final yogic realization; nevertheless his message didn't have much receptivity in his contemporaries.

But this descent of the divine Grace in the form of light belongs to advanced phases of the sadhana, once all the requisites mentioned above have been accomplished.

To these previous requisites we must add a total surrender to the Divine. An aspect emphasized by modern Siddhas like Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Their Integral Yoga, which also points to a total transformation, including the physical, starts and ends with this complete surrender to the Divine, in its dynamic and energetic aspect: the Divine Mother.



Kanadukathan BKY Ashram, photo by
M. Govindan ©

The role of the guru

The Siddhas stress also the role of the guru who prescribes a sadhana, a specific spiritual practice for the disciple to follow, and with Divine grace completes the process of spiritual realization, the union with the Divine. This is made possible when the disciple follows the prescribed sadhana and surrenders egoism. The guru is that which comes through the Self-realized teacher: the teachings, which in turn reveal Truth, Love, Beauty, Wisdom. The guru is

therefore a necessary doorway to the Divine, the Absolute according to the teachings of the Siddhas.

The spiritual approach of the Siddhas is direct, practical and realist, beyond theological speculation. The student will advance on the path as long as he dedicates himself to the prescribed yogic practice, with faith and devotion to the sadhan, the guru and to the Divine. The happiness of the student will be proportional to his or her self-discipline, or sadhana.

The Siddhas declare also that the divine Grace is always being poured upon us, like rain, but through yogic sadhana we learn to become vessels, able to receive and collect it, without any fissures. Shiva, the Divine, is the quintessence, the endless source of this Grace. □



Stages on the path to self-realization in the Tirumandiram

By Shivam S. Christiansen

Every serious seeker has asked himself at some point whether he or she will ever reach self-realization – doubts being familiar and necessary companions on the spiritual journey. There are so many of them: Am I worthy? What about the things I have done in the past? Do I practice the right techniques? Do I practice them in the right way? And if those questions never occur? This could perhaps simply mean, that the ego doesn't like these questions.

The good message is that perfect and compassionate beings like the Siddhas have given us guidelines and advice. One of the greatest of them is Tirumular, the author of the Tirumandiram, (Tamil: திருமந்திரம்) a Tamil poetic and scientific work that is said to be written around 200 A.D., which consists of over 3000 verses in 9 Tandirams (parts).

As the saint says in Mandiram 47, the inner attitude is most important and for a person on the spiritual path it is not necessary to live as a monk or a nun.

Contemplating the Lord, the householder is no less than the ascetic;

Those that keep him in their hearts will parttake in His knowledge;

To those that know this not, there can be no bliss;

Like the kite that knows not the fruit of the tree where it lives.

- Mandiram 47

How sexuality can be transformed from an obstacle to a tool of self-realization by transmutation of sexual energy is explained in the 3rd tandiram in a section called pariyanga-yoga (Mandirams 825 to 844).

In Mandiram 2807 Tirumular according to the commentary of T.N. Ganapathy says that “in whatever form the *jīva* enjoys pleasure (including the enjoyment of a woman), there resides the primal sparkling light in that enjoyment”:

In the sexual enjoyment of the sweet maiden

Is the pleasant primal sparkling light;

He is beyond the comprehension of Brahma and Viṣṇu;

The light merged with the highest path.

- Mandiram 2807

Mandiram 895 in the 4th tandiram speaks of some important topics of the Tirumandiram:

Amalan's [Shiva's] Agamas expound pati, paśu and paśam;

Tirodayi is amalan (god); She confers bliss;

Amalan's words cure āṇava, māyā and karma;

In amalan's realm takes place the divine dance.

- Mandiram 895

The Agamas (Sanskrit अगम) are ancient scriptures, that “deal with the philosophy and spiritual knowledge behind the worship of the deity, the yoga and mental discipline required for this worship, and the specifics of worship offered to the deity” (wikipedia). Tirodayi is a form

of *śakti* that stands for the obscuration, one of the five functions of the Lord. Pati is *Śiva* and *paśu* the soul. *Pāśam* or *pāśa* stands for that which keeps the soul apart from god, the malas or blemishes *āṇava*, *māyā* and *karma*, that keep the soul in the circle of birth and death. *Āṇava* is the ego-sense that causes ignorance of who one really is, the sense of individuality and separation from god. It is also called *mūla mala* (root mala). *Māyā* is delusion that brings the soul to accumulate karma, the consequences of past thoughts, words and actions. According to mandiram 90 there are two types of *māyā*: *śuddha-māyā*, that is pure and *ashuddha-māyā* that is impure. Another mala that is mentioned in the verse above is the concealing energy of the Lord, *tirodhāna-śakti*, that is only removed by the grace of god (*anugraha śakti*). According to S.N. Kandaswamy in his commentary on mandiram 2160 it is stimulating the other malas to ripen. Karma consists of the consequences of one's thoughts, words and actions: prarabdha karma being experienced in the actual lifetime, *āgāmya karma* that is being accumulated newly and sanchita karma, the total amount of karma (the “balance” of the karma “account”). The fifth mala is *māyēya*, the products of *māyā*. In the process of yoga the malas are being burnt in the fire of tapas through constant detachment (*vairāgya*).

The soul's level of consciousness depends on whether it is totally in the grip of *āṇava* (kevala state), involved with the world (sakala state) or fully released of the malas (śuddha state). In the 2nd Tandiram Tirumular explains the different kinds of souls according to which of the malas they have already mastered. When the soul is bound by all three malas it is called sakala. When it is bound by *āṇava* and karma it is called *pralayākala* and when it is bound by *āṇava* alone it is called *vijñanakala*. One special category of sakalas are *sādkakas*, who contrary to full sakalas drowned in daily life are striving hard to free themselves from the malas and become *jīvan-muktas*.

Blessed with Śivahood, they conquer the five malas;
Meritorious, fully realized souls are they; mukti, end, is their sojourn;

Birth they cut asunder, freeing from paśu and paśa,
After they seek and understand the interesting tattvas

- Mandiram 497

What is the difference between the kevala state and the state of a *vijñanakala*, when in both states the soul is only accompanied by *āṇava*? In the kevala state the soul is in complete darkness, “its powers of volition (*iccha śakti*), action (*kriya śakti*) and cognition (*jñāna śakti*) are dormant” (S.N. Kandaswamy p. 2445). Then the other malas are added like “dirt is used to wash dirt out of clothes”. That means in an act of grace it is given a body

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Acharya Shivadas

I grew up just like everyone, as a child trying to find himself through the eyes of others, preoccupied with the cultivation of an interesting social life. I quickly understood that it wasn't the type of happiness I was looking for, and this realization caused a great disarray, because I had no reference to find the answers to my questions. Thus, I got into marijuana and became an adept of it... this mistake lead me into a few nebulous years.



Acharya Shivadas

One day, when I was 15, during a family gathering, an older cousin explained to me that he could heal with his hands. After some long conversations and being constantly after him for two years to learn this, this was a revelation that changed my teenage life. Everything was now possible: paradise was also on Earth.

At 19, Yoga came knocking on my door. I met my first teacher, Mrs. Evelyn Cruchandeau, who was able to light the spark that brought me to Yoga. I realized that becoming "free" had a whole different meaning, Aside from my private lessons twice a week, I was also learning to practice alone every day and to challenge myself: for example, doing the headstand everyday (my body felt the shock of falling against the corner of my bed many times).

As a consequence, in 2001, at the age of 20, I decided to abandon everything and to go live in the Reunion Island. My goal was to learn and practice Yoga more intensely in a place where I had dreamed of living for a long time. My life seemed perfect for a man of 20 years old. I was surfing everyday and always going back home to practice Yoga. I was living on my savings, which allowed

me to keep doing this for 2 years.

This is how I discovered Kriya Yoga. I was looking for some books to keep me company in this journey, when I found "Kriya Yoga" by Paramahansa Hariharananda. (At that moment, I didn't know that this book was going to be "the real journey" of my life.)

Devouring this book with all of my soul, I felt that I was fully consistent with what it was teaching, so I was looking for someone to satisfy my thirst which I could not explain, and get initiated into Kriya Yoga. During this period, I entered a school of Chronobiological Yoga and participated in their training for a period of 3 years.

One year later, my teacher at Reunion suggested that I go to India to take classes. At this time, I wasn't attracted by India at all. However, the idea of re-discovering Yoga seemed like something essential to my training. Therefore, we went to a small school in South India, Vijnana Kala Vedi, which has now closed its doors. I was receiving private lessons in the morning and attending group classes during the day. I was also initiated into kalaripayattu. The Indian way of teaching was something new to me, as a young westerner. I remember my first class with this teacher of a certain age, asking me to sit in sidhasana to receive his teachings. However, a few months earlier, my knee had dislocated from taking this pose without warming up. So it was impossible for me to meet his expectations. I explained this to him, but he retorted that he would not teach me anything until I sit in sidhasana. Thus, I attended this lesson while sweating profusely, sitting in a wobbly half-lotus. With the help of this teacher, after 15 days I was comfortable. At the end of our meeting, he authorized me to teach to his class.

Like a bee searching for honey, I participated in all sorts of trainings which inspired me and lead me to where I am now: Reiki, magnetism, Yoga, etc. I was feel-

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Tirumandiram *continued*

and lots of opportunities to learn, to reach the higher state of a *vijñānakala* where it has knowledge of god and eventually to get rid even of the root mala, *āṇava*.

Due to unaltered malas five in the avasthas

Enter the souls, endowed with endless body and organs of māyā

Caught in the circle of birth and death and struck

By the harsh deeds and experience their fruits

- Mandiram 2610

The cleansing takes place in the samadhi state when *jīva*, the soul, and *Śiva* meet and become one, symbolized in the chin mudra, the thumb standing for *Śiva* and the index finger for the soul.

Samadhi is also called the turiya state, the forth state

of consciousness. The other states (*avasthas*) are *jāgrat*, the waking state, *svapna* (dreaming state) and *susupti* (state of sound sleep). Tirumular even tells about a fifth state called *turiyātīta* (the transcendent state beyond *turiya*) which is not mentioned in the vedas.

Tirumular describes the final disappearing of *āṇava* beautifully in mandiram 2820:

I sought "Thou" as different from "I" and

Discovered that "I" and "Thou" are not two;

This wisdom bestowed by the gnostic Chief;

(And) "I" lost the thought of "I-ness".

Note: the quotations have been taken from: "English Translation of the Tirumandiram", published in January 2010 by Babaji's Kriya Yoga Publications, Inc.



News and Notes

Pilgrimage to Badrinath in the Himalayas, September 27 to October 14, 2013. Join us for a life changing, unforgettable pilgrimage to the place where Babaji attained soruba samadhi, the ultimate state of enlightenment. Travelling by bus from New Delhi, we will visit Rishikesh, Rudraprayaga, Joshimutt, Badrinath, and Haridwar. We will have group practice of Babaji's Kriya Yoga at least twice a day in all of these places. Visit the new ashram in construction at Badrinath, where we will have a mantra yagna. See the details at <http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/Pilgrimages-himalayas.htm>.

Second level initiations will be given by M.G. Satchidananda in Quebec October 25-27, 2013; and in Japan August 30-September 1, 2013.

Third level initiations will be offered with M. Govindan Satchidananda; in Quebec July 12 to 21, 2013 and July 11-20, 2014; Estonia, August 14-21, 2014 and Dole France, August 25 to September 1, 2014. Attain the goal of Self-realization with powerful kriyas to awaken the chakras and to go into the breathless state of samadhi.

Silence retreats at the Quebec ashram are scheduled: August 30 to September 8, December 26 to 31, 2013.

For details go to <http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pdfs/event/s/Silence-Retreat-2013.pdf>.

Kirtan weekends are scheduled at the Quebec ashram; August 3 to 4, October 5 to 6, November 30 to December 1, 2013. For details go to <http://www.babajiskriyayoga.net/english/pdfs/events/Kirtan-at-Ashram-2013.pdf>.

Reset and Renew at the Quebec Ashram: live a unique spiritual experience at the Quebec Ashram. You may spend a few days, a few weeks or even a few months with guidance in your Sadhana (spiritual practices

from the Kriya Yoga Acharya who is residing at the Ashram full time (Dayananda).

Daily schedule:

7 a.m. to 9 a.m.: practice session: asanas, pranayama, mantras, walking meditation.

10 a.m. Breakfast and Karma Yoga

3 pm to 5 pm. Practice session

6 pm Dinner and Karma Yoga

8 pm to 9 p.m.: Discussion about practice

Enrollment in advance is required.

Two days and two nights minimum.

With lodging and food including: \$65 per day; without food: \$30 per day.

Contact:

Dayanada@babajiskriyayoga.net

European Gathering of initiates and Acharyas May 24-26, 2013. Fifty three Kriya Yoga initiates, including all 13 Acharyas attended the European Satsang May 24-26, 2013.

Tirumandiram: A second edition, in five volumes is now available for order at our Ecommerce

New Acharya from Austria: Brahmananda Bernd Gehringer was initiated in 2001 in Vienna into the

tradition of Babaji's Kriya Yoga and in a special ceremony on May 19, 2013 into the Order of Acharyas near Frankfurt, Germany. On account of Babaji's

graceful guidance, Brahmananda's living conditions progressed during this 12 year period. He felt a call of Dharma which included yogic sadhana, becoming a teacher of Babaji's Kriya Hatha Yoga, participating in several Indian pilgrimages and then the training as an Acharya. He became freed of many karmic obstacles, including his business. With the practical experience as a former company owner and graduate engineer of shoe technology he meanwhile has reduced his conventional working quota to a minimum in order to dedicate his life to the practice and teaching of Babaji and Yoga. Brahmananda lives in Attersee in Upper Austria and



Brahmananda

Continued on Page 11



53 persons attended the European Gathering in May 2013.



Profile *continued*

ing good, yet completely disoriented. I was lacking the essential part but didn't know what it was, until I met Thierry Morfin during a Yoga seminar in Reunion. Thierry was a Kriyaban, I could feel it in his presence. He was calm and seemed to be observing the world while remaining present. With his help, I obtained the contact details of the person that was going to have the biggest influence in my life of Yogi. Thank you again, Turyananda!

I went back to France and met Satchidananda to receive Initiation into Kriya Yoga. I was 23 years old and filled with joy. I felt like I was on the right path, because I believed in the teaching. From that day, I have never stopped practicing Kriya Kundalini Pranayama.

The following year, I was inspired to participate in the teacher training of the Sivananda school. This was a good intuition, because this is where I met my wife, Lalitha Swarupa. This magnificent creature who was dancing for Shiva could not go unnoticed in my heart. We are now sharing our Kriya Yoga sadhana, and with her help, I became vegetarian.

Everything happened so fast! After attending the Second Level Initiation, I traveled to Martinique to find Swarupa. The following year, we had the opportunity to rent a beautiful space to open a small school of Bharatanatyam dance and Yoga. Everything was for the best in the best of worlds. Then, we received the Third Level Initiation in France, in 2007, and Satchidananda advised me to follow some training in healthcare. So I received training in energetic manual therapy for a period of over 4 years. What a delight it is to contribute to a person's relief of pain. Only now can I understand the meaning of this good advice.

In 2008, Swarupa and I decided to travel to Badrinath, to practice tapas for 8 days and experiment the 144 Kriyas in this extraordinary place. This experience was surprising and unexpected. Later, we also participated in the teacher training with Durga in Germany; I learned a lot from her sensitivity and experience.

In 2010, during the Maha Kumba Melha, Satchidananda

invited me to enter the Order of Acharyas, and at that moment I felt like I was a ripe fruit. Looking back, I think I was merely a bud!

For the last 7 years, I have given over 350 Yoga classes every year. My goal is to give what I would have enjoyed receiving when I discovered Yoga: the possibility for a continuous attendance of Yoga classes at the lowest cost. Most people who practice Yoga part-time are looking for "partial relaxation", which leads to a "pseudo-awareness" where we still maintain the habits that cause suffering.

Yoga has become a tool of well-being, which already gives a level of recognition in the minds of the people. However, I believe that Well-being is only a means for understanding, rather than a goal. Only constant practice can give the possibility to experience a real transformation, even for people who are not initiated. I wish that this experience inspires them to look further, as explorers of consciousness, and one day receive Initiation into Babaji's Kriya Yoga.

One day, a student asked me: "Isn't it limiting to practice only Kriya Yoga?" Each form of Yoga has its goal, and the methods taught in each of these Yogas serve its own purpose. Some people practice to be stronger, more flexible, calmer, or even leaner (we have to face it).

We teach that Kriya Yoga is the scientific art which unites the self with absolute reality. This is the ultimate goal of Yoga, and again, the method serves its purpose! It is an unlimited practice to blend one's consciousness with the whole, to become merely an instrument in this great play that is life.

I am just a newborn child in my career of Kriyaban! Kriya Yoga is the treasure of humanity; it is a birthright for sincere seekers of the Divine. This treasure has no end, and I feel like I haven't yet opened the cover! The more we practice, the more we surrender, the more space and luminosity we create within. One thing that I am certain about is that the only limitation is the one that we concede to our ego. Thank you Sat Guru Deva for expanding our consciousness despite our vices and imperfections. □

News and notes *continued*

organizes there regularly Kriya Hatha Yoga classes, Workshops and Satsang. In the service of the Order of Acharyas he holds initiation seminars in the German-speaking area.

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