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B a b a j i ' s

Kriya Yoga Journal

Editorial

A time for change

By M. G. Satchidananda

Recent events in the political, financial, economic and natural environments have led many to call for "change" and others to fear it. Politicians and voters fight over it. We have entered a period in history which is unlike any in the memory of few living persons. Or so says the media, which bombards us every day with news of the latest crisis or disaster.

It is important to take a step back

from all of the drama into which the media seeks to draw us. Change is unavoidable, and while the pace of change has accelerated in recent years due to the rapid development of technology, it is important to keep one's balance and not get carried away by all of the fear mongering. The media has its own interests. It wants to keep you consuming it, and the easiest way to do this is to excite your vital, by hyping the

news. Most of what passes for news today is not news at all, but rather commentary, speculation, judgment and sensationalism. One must use one's discernment to separate the news from all the rest. One thing is certain: "this too shall pass." Yoga is all about cultivating balance, or *sattva*, or "being." All of our practices, whether they are asanas, breathing, meditation, mantras, or devotion, lead us to acquire the quintessential and mysterious *presence*. In this issue of the Journal we will focus on what we all must do to keep our balance in these changing times. □

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Anatomy of desire: Creating emotional balance through spiritual self awareness

By M. G. Satchidananda

Have you ever wondered why your desires are so compelling? Why you can suddenly feel irritated, even angry when unexpected obstacles prevent you from getting what you want? Have you wondered why subsequent frustration can make you depressed when you are tired, but aggressive when you are feeling strong? Have you noticed how your thoughts depend upon your feelings? Do you find yourself fretting over the small stuff in the business of life? Do you notice yourself complaining repeatedly for little or no reason? What makes you get excited? What makes you feel bored, full of inertia?

If you want to be a master of your life you must understand why and how desires and the subsequent feelings and emotions arise within you. You are responsible for the desires that arise within you! And you are also responsible for how you respond to them. But understanding the “anatomy of desire” is only the first step. After understanding comes the necessary work of transforming your human nature so that you can develop spiritual and emotional well being.

Who are you? The Anatomy of the subtle body

Developing emotional well being begins with the fundamental question: “Who Am I?” People suffer because they identify with their physical body, passing emotions and thoughts. After some spiritual introspection one realizes that one cannot be something which is here one moment, and gone the next. One's body, emotions and thoughts are continuously changing. One can only be what always is, what never changes.

What part of you always is? What part of you never changes? The enlightened ones, the spiritually realized tell us that Who you really are is The Witness Conscious within, the inner Seer to your life's drama. It is experienced behind the thought “I am.” Not “I am this or that” but simply “I am.” Indeed, it is the formless, timeless core of being, your soul, the spiritual body if you will. It is the secret psychic being, the divine element within you. It also becomes your guide, which knows the truth, the good, the true delight and beauty of existence when you are consciously your soul, and when mind, life and the body take their true place as its instruments.

The soul, the psychic being, moves through this world using the four vehicles known as the physical body, the vital body, the mental body, and the intellectual body. According to yoga, the anatomy of the human being is not limited to our physical body, but is actually composed of several concentric bodies, or sheaths of energy-consciousness, from gross to subtle levels.

1. The *physical* body: the material, visible part of the human being, including the body consciousness at the cellular level which acts without any mental will of our own or even against that will;

2. The *vital* body: the field of human nature which is made up of desires, sensations, feelings, passions, energies of action, will of desire, possessive and other related instincts, anger, fear, greed, lust, sorrow, joy, hatred, repulsions, pride, small likings and disliking, preferences, etc. The mental and the vital are mixed up on the surface of the consciousness but they are separate forces in themselves.

3. The *mental* body sense-mind; that part which has to do with cognition, perception through the senses, the reactions of thoughts to things, the putting out of mental forces for realization of an idea; the expression of ideas through speech.

4. The *intellectual* body: reasoning-mind; that which analyzes, synthesizes and constructs ideas from signs, indications and gathered data; mind is a subordinate power of Intelligence. Mind takes its stand in the standpoint of division, actually forgetful of the oneness behind, though able to return to it by the illumination which occurs when the individual transcends himself or herself, and becomes conscious of the Ultimate Truth and Reality underlying all names and forms.

5. The *spiritual* body: the eternal true being or Self of the individual; the spiritual consciousness is that in which we enter into the awareness of Self, the Spirit, the soul, and is able to see in all things their essential reality and the play of forces and phenomena as proceeding from essential Reality.

Each of these five bodies interacts with one another continuously. However, we usually ignore their action as our consciousness is absorbed in their play. Being able to discern and distinguish the functioning of each of them develops gradually through the practice of meditation and awareness training in daily life.

Egoism: a case of mistaken identity with the vehicles of your gross and subtle anatomy

But the above first four “bodies” are only vehicles for our soul or spiritual body. Furthermore, they are continuously changing. While repetition of emotions or thoughts or even physical sensations creates the illusion of permanence, in fact there is nothing permanent about anything related to these bodies. Like the snail, whose nervous system is so undeveloped, that it does not notice for several seconds that an obstacle has been removed from its path, so the human brain fails to notice the fundamental background behind all phenomena, which is conscious energy, and consequently



Anatomy of desire *continued*

we falsely identify with what we are not. This limitation is egoism: the habit of identifying with physical sensations, emotions, feelings and thoughts simply because they often repeat themselves, creating the illusion of permanence. And therefore, if I am the body, the emotions, and the mind, then whatever I do to make them feel pleasure or to avoid pain becomes a primary source of motivation. Actions, words and thoughts, when often repeated form habits, and consequently, we develop habitual likes and dislikes. So, when we feel the impulse of a desire, for example, to engage in any particular activity, for example eating ice cream, or to feel a particular emotion or even to dwell on certain memories, it is done with the sense of "I am" this feeling, this memory or this action. We hear the mind echoing the desire impulse with statements like: "I need to do this," "I think" or "I'm depressed."

Recognizing the Vital Body, the seat of desires and emotions

We are fundamentally animals, but with an evolved nervous system, which enables us to conceive of perfection, recognize our imperfections and devise strategies and apply willpower to bridge the two. But like all other animals we do have a vital body, which is the seat of our emotions and desires. Desire is the basic manifestation of the vital body. The vital body, more subtle than the physical, but grosser than the mental body, enlivens us with its energy. It constantly penetrates and influences, even corrupts the functioning of all other parts of our being. The vital is that part of our complex human nature that contains in itself all the effective potency for action. All our dynamic urges, bubbling enthusiasm and the intensity of passion have their seat here.

One is conscious of the vital body whenever ones feels apathy, sadness, fear, pride, anger, lust, courage, or even a desire for love or acceptance by others. There are literally dozens of distinct variations for each of these emotions. They all arise essentially out of a need by the ego to be loved or to control. All of these many types of emotions become desires when instead of detaching from them, instead of recognizing the fundamental disturbance they create to our well being, we indulge them in fantasy or act to realize them. In contrast to what manifests in ordinary human nature, it is instructive to reflect upon what the great 20th century sage, Ramana Maharshi said, when asked to describe his state of enlightenment: "Now nothing can disturb me anymore." If the mood of the vital becomes disturbed, it may lead to serious consequences in (1.) causeless sorrow or grievance; (2.) complaining; (3.) the slightest hindrance to what one wants engenders a sense of rancor, impatience and injured innocence; (4.) a proneness to psychological aggressiveness; (5.) obstacles in the path to realizing a desire disturb one's composure; (6.) expectation of praise from others; (7.) making "mountains out of molehills"; (8.) morbid pleasures,

perverse fascination for the sorrow and suffering of others; (9.) recalling those weaknesses of nature which one have already been rejected; (10.) turning spiritual life into a dry desert, depriving it of its sweetness and inherent bliss; (11.) resistance towards the spiritual aspirations and efforts to purify oneself of habitual desires. While on the positive side, it constantly seeks delight in life's experiences, it has no power of discrimination.

Life seen from the perspective of the vital

Here are some typical experiences involving the vital body:

1. A split second after hearing your spouse complain about something you forgot to do, your vital body feels guilty and defensive;

2. At the airport you hear an announcement that your flight has been cancelled and a moment later your vital is feeling anxiety. At the same time, you intellectual body is saying "what am I going to do? "And then "I need to call so and so."

3. Physical hunger pangs and weakness provoke the vital feelings of impatience and nervousness.

4. Remembering the death of a loved one, you feel depressed, and then look for something to eat as compensation, and you find yourself wondering about life after death.

5. Watching the news on television, you hear someone make inflammatory comments about your favorite politician, and as your mind begins to debate what they said, your vital releases feelings of frustration.

6. After looking at your watch and hearing your mind say "I am late," your vital releases impulses of impatience and pushes you to move faster.

7. At a social gathering you feel excited and happy as you talk to others. Your own vital body is exchanging and sharing many such feelings with those with whom you are talking. This exchange causes you to talk more, drink more, and to suspend at least temporarily the mood of depression you have been feeling for many days. You are feeding off of the vital feelings of others.

8. Your roommate is bored and depressed. You feel depressed too. Consequently, you spend many hours watching television, which in turn stimulates a whole range of vital impulses as you empathize with the emotions expressed dramatically by television actors, and relieve your boredom.

In the above examples we can observe that sometimes the vital body initiates a chain reaction involving the physical, mental and intellectual (example 7 and 8) but sometimes, it is the intellect, which initiates the reaction of the other bodies, including the vital (example 5). Most often, it is the mental body which initiates the chain reaction (examples 1, 2, and 6). Either you see, hear, smell, taste or hear something, or you do so in your imagination, for example, you fantasize what

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will happen on your date this weekend, and then begin to feel excitement, trepidation, lust, or fear. Notice that the physical body can provoke a reaction in the vital (example number 3) or the reverse may occur (example 4). By tracing the chain reaction back to its source, we can determine whether there is a habitual reaction, which is causing us to react the way we do to life's happenings, and if so, heal that source of suffering. Becoming aware of the interplay of the five bodies is the first step of what is referred to as "self-study" and "purification of desires," which we will turn to in a later section, but first let's discuss how society has organized itself to protect its members from the potential damage of the uncontrolled vital passions.

Suppression, expression and starving of the Vital Body's Desires

Because of the vital body's lack of discrimination, to curb its impulses and appetites, as soon as humans began to organize themselves socially, rules, laws and moral codes were adopted. And ever since, humans have had to suppress their feelings in order to adjust to the social norms of their times. Today, an army of psychologists and therapists supports individuals who seek to heal the consequences of such suppression. We are encouraged today to express our emotions in talk therapy and innumerable other approaches of modern psychology. Expression of emotions is considered to be superior to suppression, at least in adjusting our behavior to the norms of society. But only up to a point. Beyond that point, vital impulses have become medical conditions in the Western, material culture, and its high priests, psychiatrists, (which in the original sense of the term meant "physicians of the soul, the psyche,") have relied heavily upon prescription medicine to control our emotional roller coaster, and tendencies to self destruction. They have largely failed to fulfill their larger mandate: to heal our psyche, or soul's suffering. The vast majority of us are suffering from neuroses, and never before in human history have so many been trying to control their desires with prescription medication. Alcohol and recreational drugs remain the over the counter mood altering agents of choice, followed by television and other forms of mass media entertainment.

Among religious or spiritual adepts who have sought to liberate themselves completely from the vital body's tyrannical movements, in monasteries or hermitages, starvation of the vital has been the ruling strategy. Until or unless an individual goes on a long retreat, one has no idea of what that involves or of how dominant a role the vital and all its servant desires has in one's life.

Introduce yourself to this traditional spiritual approach. Turn off the television, unplug the phone and computer, observe silence, fast and avoid your usual forms of distraction for several days at home, or preferably somewhere far away. The vital will constant-

ly tempt you with restless longing for distraction and when resisted throw you into the inertia of dry boredom. But this approach can be powerfully transformational.

Spiritual aspirants learn to channel their vital energy through meditation into a new Witness perspective of life. They learn to slow down, cultivate calm, and if they persist, to purify their self of desire and habitual behaviors. It is a long process, and few have the perseverance or even the inclination to leave the world behind for as little as a few days or weeks.

Mastery of the Vital Desires

Today, while human nature presents to us with the same challenges and resistance to change, we no longer have to isolate ourselves from the world in order to master the desires of the vital body. All of the knowledge, techniques and spiritual wisdom needed to spiritually purify ourselves of egoism and desire has been published or is even available on the internet. But most of us are still influenced by organized religion, which unfortunately still tries to control us by inciting fear of damnation or karmic retribution. Religion focuses on external forms: personalities, symbols, belief systems, ceremonies, architecture etc. The spirit is formless. So how can it be communicated? How can it be realized? One must turn within and learn to silence the roar of the vital and mental. The spiritual is not to be attained. It lies within us 24/7. It is in bliss all of the time. But we ignore it because of the distractions created by the vital and its servant desires. Spirituality has nothing to do with attaining; it has everything to do with letting go of what we are not, and being Who we truly are.

What is usually lacking among most spiritual aspirants is the realization that only by controlling and mastering from moment to moment, in the midst of the busy events of their lives, the impulses of vital desires and mental fantasies, can we ever reach spiritual, emotional well being. Ignorance of this due not only to organized religion, as cited above, but also to the "spiritual materialism" of our times, wherein spirituality is confused with visionary or psychic experiences, powers, channeling disembodied entities or other sensational states, as well as becoming "special" or having "special experiences." But *it is only when you are ready to be no one special and to experience nothing special* you are in fact beginning to walk on the spiritual path. Because as long as you are special, you are apart from everyone else. And when you become one with everything in the spiritual dimension, you are no longer separate, no longer special. It is only the ego that is interested in specialness. And, consequently, it is not by finding someone "special," however evolved spiritually they may, that you are going to heal your own vital neuroses.

In a mature, integral spiritual approach, we seek to

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convert the vital by quieting its movements, becoming more conscious of its play, using enlightened reason to curb it, and finally by turning its dynamism towards the realization of the True, the Good and the Beautiful. Having glimpsed these distant peaks, which metaphorically speaking lie on the horizon of our soul's perspective of eternity, one cultivates an ardent aspiration for the conversion of the vital into a pure and perfect instrument of the Spirit. Having established a foundation of patience, perseverance and indomitable will not to give up, the spiritual aspirant proceeds through the following stages of self-discipline or *sadhana*:

1. Observe carefully your inner field of experience, noticing the appearance of impulses, feelings and emotions, and with insight identify what the vital is seeking to achieve by the suggested action or reaction; observe and discern the desire, fear, pride, depression, possessiveness, greed, despair, need to control, etc. in all its nakedness, without disguise.

2. Keeps as one's mantra "Not to manifest it in action;" taking the firm resolve that *not until one regains ones composure of mind and heart and regains one's inner liberty completely, he or she will not act out the suggested dictate of the impulsive vital*. Repeat: "I shall not do it." Even a partial success will pave the road to eventual victory.

3. Build up the Witness consciousness, bringing it more and more into every event and circumstances. Cultivating calm detachment, cease to identify with the thoughts, emotions, desires, impulses which generally absorb your consciousness causing you to "dream with your eyes open."

4. Reason with the vital, keeping your goal of spiritual Self-realization, and emotional well being in view. Tell it: "You are throwing away Self-mastery and Bliss for a transitory passion, a vain and cheap pleasure or satisfaction in the vanishing present moment." "Why make a mountain out of a mole hill?"

5. Use your willpower starting with small challenges to your emotional equilibrium, and gradually progressing as you develop strength. To develop your willpower: (a) develop clear discrimination, the ability to detect and recognize the desires and impulses of the vital; (b) become convinced of the necessity for developing a spiritual life, by study of spiritual classical literature and deep reflection on the truths expressed therein; (c) enshrine within your heart a constant and intense love for the Divine, in whatever form you hold dearest, or as Truth, Goodness or Consciousness itself; (d) awaken a constant aspiration for progress and perfection in mastering the vital.

6. First in meditation, and then in daily life, go beyond the mind to the psychic, or soul level of your being, and invoke its power and light to convert the vital movements. To do so, witness the mind, then transcend it, and finally silence it. The vital always attempts to make the thinking mind its servant, so you must rise above the mind into the perspective of pure

Witness consciousness, and from there calm the tumult of the vital movements. With a silent mind a higher intelligence will begin to act through you with clear directions and wonderful power.

7. Evoke the luminous life force which lies deep within you, making it replace the desire filled surface movements of the vital on the surface of the mind. It is a radiant Divine Power, full of peace, strength and bliss. Make this higher force active in the daily habitual field of action and reaction.

8. Not the last step, but one which must accompany all of them: send a steady and sincere prayer from your heart to the Divine, appealing for the action of its Grace to subdue and neutralize the vital impulse which is troubling you at that moment. Nothing can resist the force of such Grace, and if the prayer is sincerely expressed, one can never doubt its efficacy. No resistance of the vital can long withstand this force.

Why the vital must be transformed?

Aspiration is what your soul feels. Desire is what your ego feels. Your soul aspires for the "True, the Good, the Beautiful" which lies at the heart of the spiritual dimension of our being, and potentially in every relationship, every experience, if you can see things from its perspective. The soul aspires to see the One amidst the many. The soul aspires to free itself from ego-born suffering: "I need," "I want," "Poor me," "I am afraid." Your soul aspires to reunite with the fundamental Reality underlying everything which the mind makes separate and divided. The perspective of the ego is a dead end. And the vital is the ego's most powerful servant. Until the vital switches its allegiance, and fully collaborates in the aspiration to realize the "True, the Good, and the Beautiful," and "The One," it will continue to provide unceasing desires, obstacles and great suffering, as described above. That is what our human nature is programmed to do. As Sri Aurobindo put it, "We need a revolution against our human nature." We can see not only the need for radical change, but also the potential for change. To manifest it however, one must discern the impulses and movements of desire, not indulge them in our imagination and not allow them to manifest in action. Whether the desire involves attraction or aversion, greed, lust, boredom or fear, whether you are getting what you want or what you don't want, all desires are a trap of the ego, and bring certain suffering. They all contract your identity back into "the little me" who is missing something, and who is consequently suffering.

Lasting happiness cannot be found in things which do not last. It is found only when we enjoy every moment from the perspective of our soul, which finds delight through continual awareness, as the Pure Witness Consciousness. Only then can our soul, the psychic begin to lead us and begin to bring down a

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Depression and other mental/emotional stumbling blocks

By Durga Ahlund

Over the years, we have received questions of concern about the effects of the Kriya practices. These sometimes concern the increasing amount of depression and anxiety, which seem to accompany an intense practice of Kriya sadhana.

What is first important to understand is that sadness and fear are found to some degree in the subconscious of most of us. Practicing any form of self study or meditation will bring them to light, just as dust is inevitably found, whenever you look under your bed. Whenever you go below the surface of your mind, or stop distracting yourself, what has been suppressed or ignored becomes much more apparent. It is the inner light of your soul, the witness consciousness, which renders them visible.

Be reassured too, that with effort on one's part, cheerfulness and contentment can replace such feeling or phobias. However, it is a process that takes time and persistence. It is all part of the process of purification. And it is part of the process in which we ask the question, "Who am I, who is thinking these thoughts?"

In sadhana, we encourage the thoughts and feelings from the subconscious to surface. We want to discover the pain and neurosis from this life, past lives, and perhaps even from the collective suffering of our ancestors? But, also uncomfortable mind stuff comes to the surface from the habitual tendencies of egoism and desire. The source of our emotional problems often stem from the fact that we live in a world, which encourages us to strive to be successful, powerful, and "happy." It overwhelms us with possibility and stimulation. We each must ask the question, "am I using Yoga as just another way to be stimulated and to strive to

achieve success, power and happiness?"

Striving can be a Mental Stumbling Block

Throughout the world people are striving; striving to fulfill desires, to implement ideas, or to avoid unpleasantness. To "strive" is generally considered to be a "good" thing. However, striving is a quality of the ego, not the soul. It sends a repetitive message to the mind of what is just out of reach, making it next to impossible for the mind to be content and satisfied with what it does have. In such a state of striving, the ego has the mind doing everything it can to get the next thing that is just out of reach. Striving conditions the mind to accept stress-overload and resist restorative rest. Striving, conditions the stressed mind to resonate with whatever is stressful, out in the ethers. And there is so much fear, anger, depression, darkness out there. It floods the mind and impoverishes the soul. Stress in body and mind becomes a pattern. We have to change our patterns of being.

Yoga is a practice of non-striving. And the goal is really not happiness, which is a transitory vital reaction to sensory input. The goal is purification of the mind and emotions and perfection of the soul. Yoga leads to a sense of wholeness, and richness of the experience of every moment?

How to Stop Disturbing Thoughts

Kriya Yoga says the key to spiritual progress is to observe whatever disrupts the peace of the mind. It teaches us to detach from, or, to do what is necessary to be free from disturbing thoughts and feelings! Sometimes what is necessary is to dive right into the mess, but as the witness, observing it from all sides. And sometimes we need to experience an emotion or thought fully, delving in the fullness of the sadness or the fear.

Certainly, only by being willing to look deeply at repetitive thoughts and emotions can we discover what needs to change within our self. Taking the time to discover the source of our thoughts is Yoga.

The Siddhas tell us not to suppress negative thoughts or feelings, nor to judge them. What we resist...persists; don't we all agree? Yes, and yet, sometimes, one really must reject or at least ignore, the nonsense that passes through the mind.

Depressing, fearful thoughts can be a physiological response to stress on the body. Striving, stress and anxiety stimulates adrenaline to be secreted into the blood system. These cause disturbance in the mind, and every negative and destructive emotion causes conflict in the brain. This interferes with the normal tone of the muscles and keeps them in an abnormally high state of tension. This over-action of the muscles with-

Anatomy of desire *continued*

higher power and consciousness. The more we remove the influence of the vital body, the more our psychic being or soul can communicate to us its truth and guide in things both great and small. It happens here and now, during everyday situations, when we see things from this deeper perspective which permits us to see the One in the many. We begin to live in the eternal now of infinite possibility and freedom from desire. Spiritual realization becomes then not the goal, but the starting point of a complete transformation of human nature at all levels. We are a work in progress. We need not succumb to the habit patterns of our old human nature. We have the shining examples of many great souls who have shown us the way to integrate God realization and effect human perfection including Jesus, Buddha, Ramakrishna, Gandhi, Babaji, Ramalinga and Sri Aurobindo. May their example and words of wisdom guide and inspire us all as we aspire to realize our Divine potentiality. □

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Depression *continued*

out corresponding muscular activity results in a continual drain of energy from the body and mind. Insomnia, anxiety, depression and fear often ensue.

Yoga for Chronic Negative Thinking!

The opposite of depression and anxiety is contentment and presence. These are divine qualities, which arise out of a sense of deep relaxation and freedom from stress and striving. They require the mind to turn off sometimes, and not try so hard. Yoga is a means of attaining contentment and presence.

Yoga is a modality of healing, for those who suffer from chronic negative thinking; it is not a cause of it! Yoga asana are a means of systematically disconnecting the higher brain centers from the body so that the lower brain centers can carry out their duties without interference. The lower brain centers then can restore balance to the vital functions and equilibrium in the muscle tone and endocrine systems and offer the higher brain centers a chance to relax.

Yoga brings deepest relaxation to the mind. Relaxation arises in the mind when awareness is shifted away from stress and striving, away from depression or anxiety. Awareness is directed to where we bring our attention. When we bring our attention/awareness to the breath in a pranayama technique or to different parts of the body in an asana, the mind will naturally relax. Yoga, can in this way gently draw awareness away from stressful thoughts.

Once awareness is taken off stressful thoughts, the adrenal glands stop injecting adrenaline into the blood system. As adrenaline levels drop, mental conflict subsides and the whole body can relax into a lower level of activity. The mind becomes a neutral observer. Yoga takes the conscious mind away from emotionally charged thoughts and directs it in to activities that are emotionally neutral. A regular practice of Yoga can put a stop to ceaseless and futile cycles of worry, fear, sadness, guilt, neediness, anger.

Hatha Yoga teaches us to become immediately aware of *strain* in the body and *disharmony* in the mind. It teaches us that a quick correction of our posture and breathing will calm the mind and quell emotions. Doing asana, which open joints, relax muscles and strengthen and release the spine will decrease both inertia and restlessness, increase positive vital and mental energy and quiet the mind. Just loosening and lubricating the joints brings some harmony within the skeletal, muscular, nervous, glandular, and respiratory and digestive systems. Asana have the potential not only to systematically eliminate energy blockages in the body, but also to undo entanglements in the mind.

Breathing and the Mind

Negative thinking has an accompanying breathing pattern, which must be changed to shift thinking. Depressive thoughts, anxiety, fear and anger can be relieved with daily asana, pranayama and meditation.

These practices will strengthen and balance the energy in the physical and subtle nervous system and establish a pattern of deep and relaxed breathing. Relaxed breathing throughout the day will help restore or establish a resonant cord in the whole being.

Slow deep diaphragmatic ujjayi breathing helps to relax muscles and slow down an overactive stress response system. Slow, deep breathing means that not only do we breathe in fuller inhalations, but also that we have fuller exhalations. It means that we are conscious of what is happening in respiration. Fuller breaths occur when we utilize our abdominal muscles. We contract the abdominal muscles on exhalation to utilize the diaphragm to fully empty the stale and stagnant air from the lower lobes of the lungs. This contraction encourages more air to enter on inhalation inflating the lungs more fully. The undulations of deep inhalations and exhalations also gently massage the spinal column, and increase nutrition and relaxation to spine. This breathing brings tranquility to the mind.

The art of respiration is Yoga. *Swara Yoga* is an esoteric yogic science, which explains the intricate and integrated connections between mental /emotional body and vital / physical bodies. Our *Ujjayi matreika* and "Va Si" pranayama is of great mental/emotional support, as are Purna Suddhi, Hatha Suddhi, and the Asthma Pranayama to strengthen and tone the nervous system and release discordant thinking. Use them daily.

Also, noting the nostril from which you are breathing, when discordant thoughts arise is useful. If you find that you are breathing from your left nostril (*ida nadi*), then close it off and breathe 25 times only through your right nostril. This immediately shifts the swara and can shift your mental/emotional state. Then, to maintain the shift, take a walk; or a short sun bath or a shower, letting the water flow over top of your head.

Practice Yoga Asanas to Change your Emotional State

Practicing a couple of asanas will shift you mental/emotional state. A Yoga asana may be performed seated, standing, supine or prone, but the foundation must always be stable and comfortable in order to allow the body to relax and the mind to become calm. With any asana, whether the simplest exercise or most difficult pose, one must incorporate elements of awareness, balance, comfort and stillness. Forcing the body into a posture will not have the same effect! Asana can be held static or be dynamic with movement, but it has to be practiced with ease in order to create harmony within the body/mind.

As we mentioned before, the mind naturally relaxes, if attention is directed toward something other than its own thoughts. The mind can only think about one thing at a time. It cannot remain focused on "sad" or "fearful" thoughts, when it is focusing on releasing the tension out of a specific part of the body, in which

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News and Notes

Second level initiations will be given by M.G. Satchidananda in the coming months at the Quebec Ashram, April 24-26, June 19-21, and September 18-20 2009. Also in Florida March 20-22 (first-level initiation) and in Zurich, Switzerland May 8-10, and Frankfurt, Germany May 22-24, in Redlands, California June 26-28 and in Colombo, Sri Lanka January 30 to February 2, Japan October 16-18, and near Dole, France November 6-8, and Brazil December 11-13, 2009. Also by Nityananda in Spain: in Cantabria, Spain, 21-23 February, in Huelva, Spain, March 13-15, and in Buenos Aires, Argentina in March 2009, and by Rudra Shivananda near Mumbai

in February, and in California and Vancouver in the spring, and Malaysia in November 2009.

Third level initiations will be offered in Bangalore, India January 24-30, 2009, Quebec July 17-26, Barcelona, Spain: May 1-8, Frankfurt, Germany: May 22-31, 2009. Attain the goal of Self-realization with powerful kriyas to awaken the chakras and to go into the breathless state of samadhi.

280-Hour Teacher Trainings in Kriya Hatha Yoga will be offered by Durga and Satchidananda in Quebec July 1-11, 2009 and near Frankfurt, Germany, August 4-14.

For schedule, course outline and more information contact Durga. durga@babajiskriyayoga.net.

A Second Year of Lesson -- The Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga Course of Lessons: Enroll for the second year of this course. The first year and second years of the course, is now available in English, Spanish, Portuguese and in French. See info@babajiskriyayoga.net or contact info@babajiskriyayoga.net or 1-888-252-9642. Spanish speakers contact Nityananda at nityananda@babajiskriyayoga.net to receive a brochure or to enroll. This is a

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Depression *continued*

these thoughts have settled, i.e. tension in the neck, shoulders, hips, spine.

Yoga says we have to take control of the mind for whatever happens in the body is a reflection of what has already happened in the mind. And conversely, that every action that a person performs in his body is a thought being planted in the mind.

Just a couple of asanas can do the trick! Salutation Pose and Shoulderstand or Fish pose; Standing Crane and Bow; Topsy-Turvy and Half Fish; Plough and Cobra. Any of these pairs of postures can immediately stop wayward thoughts and eventually overcome doubts and fears in relation to oneself. They stimulate the flow of endorphins, stimulate the pineal gland to secrete, balance the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system and plant confident and joyful thoughts into the deep recesses of the mind. They are poses, which encourage self-development. They offer the possibility of letting go of compulsive behavior, depression and anxiety. Just remember to breathe well, remain steady and comfortable and release whatever comes up in the posture or in the relaxation that follows the posture.

Also use Yogic Relaxation!

During yogic relaxation the muscles relax and the sensory nerves momentarily cease their function. One becomes less aware of the body/mind. A sense of calm space and lightness arises when the body disconnects from the higher brain. Muscles cells, nerve cells, organ cells, blood vessels become soothed and revitalized. The higher brain is given a chance to rest as the lower brain begins to take over.

Onto Self Realization

Fortunately for us, Kriya Yoga has taught us the

importance of understanding the habits of the mind: how the mind wanders and how it operates. We are taught to concentrate deeply, to develop our will and to keep a cool head. We are given techniques to create our own mental world wherever we are, and wherever we go. Having learned these easy and effective methods we have the capability to control an unbalanced, judgmental and wandering mind. But, controlling the mind and emotions can be so difficult, that it helps to express our intention as part of our yogic tapas with a "vow" to keep a balanced mind in all conditions. Babaji in fact has asked every one of us to live up to that ideal in every second.

And fortunately, Babaji and the Siddhas have granted us a powerful suggestion to plant in the subconscious mind – "A magnanimous and immortal nature is our indwelling essence." It reminds us to recognize the glory of the Self, which illumines and transcends the mind, and all of its movements. This Source of all knowledge, bliss, power, beauty, peace and joy is the answer, to the original question we ask ourselves, "who am I, who is thinking all these things?"

Babaji's Kriya Yoga suggests that recognition within ourselves of this Omnipresent will come when we turn to Silence, when accosted by our own dark and fearful thoughts.

The Self is the metaphysical entity, within the heart of the intellectual, vital, and the physical body. Cognition of the Self by the Self becomes possible and ignites the most effective operative power only after we have dedicated ourselves to a specific and necessary period of successful psychological training and discipline. All these mental emotional stumbling blocks are Nature playing with our consciousness along the path to the Source, the inner Self. □



News and Notes *continued*

special course of self-study that will not only broaden your understanding of Yoga, but your understanding of yourself, as it opens you to insight, inspiration and new understandings of your personal karmic destiny. Enroll today in The Grace Course at www.babajiskriyayoga.net.

Passing of Barbara McDonald: We are mourning the passing of Barbara McDonald of Toronto who died December 20, after a three year battle with cancer. Barbara was initiated into Babaji's Kriya Yoga around 1993, and served as a contact person and organizer in Toronto for several years. She had most recently participated in our South India pilgrimage in January 2007. She was a retired teacher of art. She will be missed by all who knew her. Om Shanti Shanti Shanti.

Sponsored seminars in India and Sri Lanka: We are happy to announce that Acharya Satyananda has completed a tour of seven cities in India and Sri Lanka where he gave initiation to a total of over 300 new students. In Sri Lanka, 70 students participated in the Colombo beach front ashram which had been destroyed by the tsunami three years ago and whose reconstruction

has been financed by the Order of Acharyas in recent months.

Yoga Siddha Research Project:

The draft of the new edition of the Tirumandiram, with English translation and commentary, has been completed by Dr. Ganapathy and his team of scholars with editors M. Govindan Satchidananda, Durga Ahlund and Krishna Brod. It is now with the graphic artist. When published in 2009 it will include about 4,500 pages, arranged in ten volumes, including the index. It will be published on one or more DVDs and as an electronic book to make it easily accessible to everyone. In 2009 the project will evaluate, annotate and category 900+ Tamil Siddha manuscripts recently transcribed and typed in modern Tamil.

Fundraising results: With the financial crisis affecting just about everyone, we can now report that the results of our annual fundraising campaign for Babaji's Kriya Yoga Order of Acharyas, which began at the beginning of October, are far below those of previous years. We therefore request everyone to consider making a tax deductible contribution within the coming months. You may do this by cheque or by credit card at [\[jiskriyayoga.net\]\(http://jiskriyayoga.net\). See further details at the website.](http://www.baba-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

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where possible, to send to us an annual subscription payment of 12 Euros in a cheque payable to "Marshall Govindan." Send it to Jean Pierre Hesse, 60, route d'Aix les Bains, Rumilly, 74150, France (email: rudran@tiscali.fr). At the same time, please inform our subscriptions office in Canada by sending an email to info@babajiskriyayoga.net or by writing to Babaji's Kriya Yoga, 196 Mountain Road, P.O. Box 90, Eastman, Quebec, Canada J0E 1P0.

Most back issue articles of the Kriya Yoga Journal are now being added to our website: www.babajiskriyayoga.net Go check them out.

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