

INTRODUCTION

"Life is short, Time is fleeting. Awake, Arise & Realize the Self"

Satguru Kriya Babaji Nagaraj

What is the Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga?

The Grace of Babaji's Kriya Yoga is designed to deepen our understanding of the principles, practices and the process of Yoga. As sincere practitioners of Yoga, we need continuing support on our path towards purification and perfection. We require a structure to continually widen our perspective of our practice and of our lives. Our practice of Yoga is often rebuffed or criticized by those closest to us due to misunderstanding and fear. It is important as yogis that we understand that we practice Babaji's Kriya Yoga not only for our own benefit, but for the benefit of our families, our friends and for the benefit of the world at large.

The techniques of Babaji's Kriya Yoga awakens our *kundalini shakti* (potential spiritual and evolutionary energy within each of us), moving us beyond our normal range of consciousness. Once our kundalini is ignited and awakened, we must recognize and understand it as a living presence and intelligence coursing through our being. The daily practice of Yoga keeps the embers of *shakti* burning, until there is a constant and brilliant flame. The shakti supports our *sadhana* (yogic practice). It encourages us; rather, it *pushes us* to practice and endeavors to clear away the obstacles that create resistance. The enlivened shakti connects us with our own hearts first, then with each other, and finally with Babaji Himself. The grace of shakti flows through all that is done by any person surrendered to his own spiritual evolution. The shakti becomes the substratum - foundation - guiding principle of all activity.

This, we humbly offer as a self-help book, these lessons to help yourself to grace. The teachings within will help you understand the call of grace and its role in your life. They will help you to understand how to attune to it, receive it and channel it. Grace is a force of nature, like the elements, earth, water, fire, air and space and just like the elements is always present, whether we acknowledge it or not. Grace is available to anyone who is prepared, who is open to receiving its



instructions with faith and excitement, and who does not look upon it as an ordinary thing.

With grace, these lessons will also be a self-study guide. Self-study is integral to the effectiveness of Yoga. Your growth requires careful examination of your motivations and actions, not just your ability to sit still and silent. These teachings will help you to see what you must change about yourself in order to live a more peaceful, balanced, kind and compassionate life.

The course of lessons introduces the *right use of will*, which benefits you personally, but in addition, connects you with the grace of a *Higher Will*, which expands your consciousness in a way that benefits your family, friends and the world at large. All that you do, you do as much for others as you do for yourself.

The teachings are specifically drawn from the books dictated by Babaji in 1952 and 1953, and recently republished under the title of ‘The Voice of Babaji: A Trilogy on Kriya Yoga,’ from the works of the 18 Siddhas and the Siddha Yoga tradition of Shaiva Siddhanta, from Vedanta and from the writings of South Indian mystics, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and Swami Ramalinga. The total of the teachings herein are reflections of our tradition of Babaji’s Kriya Yoga.

We invite you to join us in this adventure of Self-exploration and discovery.

Write us with your questions, your comments, and your truth. Make this a correspondence course. Write us at: thegracecourse@babaji.ca

Durga Ahlund and Marshall Govindan



Lesson I

Living a Graceful Life

Grace is a difficult concept to define and understand, even though all spiritual traditions accept it as the Truth. In our tradition, grace refers to all that you receive, which helps you to evolve and come closer to the Divine. Ultimately, it is grace that allows you to experience Oneness. Grace often takes the form of fortuitous occurrences that you may or may not recognize as blessings. It may manifest “in disguise,” cloaked in suffering, as a result of some loss. It could be experienced as a spiritual experience, inner light, a vision, ecstasies or the descent of great peace or healing. Grace comes spontaneously and so we attribute it to some force or entity outside of ourselves, usually the Divine form to which we are most devoted or allied with.

Notes:

In Kriya Yoga, we define Grace as infinite force and power in the form of **action** (*kriya shakti*), **will** (*iccha shakti*), and **wisdom** (*jñana shakti*) underlying the whole of the manifested world, which is constantly at work uplifting humanity from its ever-present predicaments. Grace has always been and will always be available to the world. The intent of Grace is not to make human life easy or rosy, but to maintain the balance required to keep life evolving, so that at some point, it will blossom, ripen, and perfect itself. Grace can never be given in the same way for everyone, but it is designed for and available to each one of us.

A descent of Grace can occur quite unexpectedly and dramatically, as an epiphany or miracle, or as perfect equanimity in the midst of chaos or fearlessness that allows you to see the nature of things as they are. However, most of us only notice some kind of grace working in our lives, after we have made an effort to discipline ourselves, subordinated our selfishness, work for the benefit of others and experience pure gratitude, love and devotion. Practices such as meditation, mantra, chanting, experiencing true devotional prayers prepare the subtle body channels to accept the Grace, which is ever flowing. Self-discipline that involves awareness of our actions and reactions as well as an orientation towards an Ideal



way of being and acting, whether it is divine, humanistic or philosophic, also prepares the way. From any Ideal, we can draw Grace in the form of strength to progress.

Grace of the Lord gives the necessary inner force to dispel skepticism, doubt, and fear. It gives us the aspiration to sincerely begin the process of physical, mental and even more subtle purification, which slowly releases us from egoism and stagnation and allows us to obtain the fruits of our practice. We often go through long periods where there is seemingly little progress despite all of “our efforts.” Seeking the Grace of the Divine helps us to reach beyond “our efforts” into new levels of awareness or experience. Yogic practices of self-study and of course prayer and devotion to the Lord can stimulate grace. No true progress can be made without grace. Divine Grace is the natural order of the cosmos, but the right self-effort toward progress will bless our every earnest effort with the appropriate fruition.

“Intense practice, self-study & surrender to the Lord constitute Kriya Yoga”

Patañjali, Yoga Sutras, II.1

Surrender

Although surrender is a term that connotes weakness to many of us, in reality surrender takes great strength. Surrender to the Lord means to offer your self-will to Divine Will. Surrender egoism. As you begin to let go of self-centeredness, you begin to see and regard others, without distinction, as the Lord, manifest. Surrender to the Lord means that you serve all creatures with love, seeing the Lord in all. The Siddhas say, “Why do you try to find thy God in deities and temples, when you have kept the visible God standing outside, hungry and naked?” Indeed, love and surrender to the Lord should be expressed as love for the world and its people.

Babaji gives us his instructions for surrender. He says, “You must first remember your Divinity, second express your Divinity and thirdly, enjoy your Divinity. You must not discard His Living Presence in other forms.” He says to practice his Yoga you must “love all and serve all.” Surrender to the Will of the



Lord and install grace in your life.

Vedanta philosophy states that divine grace has three distinct phases. The first is God, the second is the Guru, the third, is the Real Self within. God is grace-bestowing and is the very nature of God. God and His Grace are inseparable and identical. The difference is only verbal. Grace is delivered through the *shakti*, the power within oneself and within the Guru.

The Guru is the second phase of divine grace because a person will not meet his Guru until he has practiced unselfish devotion to God. Grace draws the aspirant to the Guru, who will begin and guide us on our inner journey. The Great Ones can bestow the transformative shakti at their discretion, when the aspirant is ripe for it.

Transformational grace is due to self-effort, either in this birth or in a previous incarnation. It is thus clear that the disciple meets his *Satguru* (one who has perfected Self-knowledge) by the Grace of God, which he has deserved by his devotion to God in previous incarnations. Having thus met the Satguru, he must make further progress towards his goal by practicing devotion to the Satguru as God, Incarnate.

The discovery of the “Self” is the third phase of Grace. The Satguru is, in reality, the “Dweller in the Heart,” as the real Self. Babaji is the Satguru (Guru, God, Self) of this Kriya tradition. He is not merely a teacher of metaphysical truths, but is also the dynamic Spiritual Power, known as Divine Grace, as God and as the Real Self.

From this explanation, it follows, that you should meditate on the Satguru, as the real Self, the energy of Infinite Consciousness, as a means of activating the latent powers of the real Self. The aspiring soul ascends to meet the Divine Grace, which is actually already permanently seated in the Heart.



“My Grace shall be poured incessantly, but you must be wide-awake.
You must be ever on the alert & listen & ponder over
the slightest hint that may be dropped” – *Kriya Babaji*

Divine Grace can be experienced by us all

Babaji tells us, that Divine Grace can be experienced even while leading an ordinary householder's life. You do not have to live an ascetic's life to receive Grace. You must aspire sincerely for the truth and your aspiration must not be tainted by strong egoism. To be receptive to a divine influence you must consistently choose truth and right action over falsehood. Your life, your thoughts, your speech and actions should conform to truth.

Begin today, to live in truth by saying only that which is true, kind, and necessary. Begin this moment to consecrate, to make your life sacred in your mind and heart, with the attitude of perfect openness to Truth and rejection of falsehood. Let your every human action from now on be judged by its truth or falseness. Give up all lies and exaggeration to taste a divine life. Grace is the force of love that enables your life to become sacred.

Emotions of jealousy, selfishness, fear and anger are afflictions that close the door to the flow of grace. To permanently eliminate such emotions you must first eliminate stored emotional pain. Stored emotional pain is caused by any experience that was not digested and released throughout life. Subconscious suffering will continue to distort receptive centers, so to speak, so that they cannot receive clearly. Emotional pain can make, you feel “unworthy,” or judge others unworthy. Either way, your unworthiness or your judgment of others will block the door to grace. It is important that you feel worthy of receiving Divine influences; it is equally important that you feel others are worthy of receiving it. A clear conscience is a prerequisite for the flow of grace, according to Babaji, and in addition, the recognition that what you receive is a consequence of and inspired by, grace.



Aspiration, sheer will, and keen interest

Aspiration, sheer will, and keen interest will take you to the door of grace. Mental and subtle body purification is the key to opening it. A keen interest in the practices of purification and in progress will build a fire within you. This fire is not only allegorical, but felt physically as warmth and seen as light in the subtle body. If you are conscious enough to offer your negativity, selfishness, meanness, smallness, and inertia as sacrifices to the fire, it will intensify. Grace will swiftly deliver the intense, joy and pain of dynamic progress.

Grace is experienced in *wonder*. Wonder is the essence of a spiritual life. The vitality of consciousness is in everything around us, animate and inanimate. If you can have this awareness, plus an intention to increase your esthetic sensitivity, then each esthetic experience you have, will bring you closer to the wonder of the pulsation of Grace that permeates all things and experiences. If you practice penetrating the state of wonder inherent in the things pleasing in life, you will learn to discern that same sense of wonder, when confronted with the foulest of things, or in times of great pain and trouble.

In truth, can't the whole of your life, all the events and situations and all your reactions to them, be seen as the unfolding drama of grace? Isn't it possible that it is all just a cosmic manifestation staged by the creative genius of Consciousness?



Suggested Practice:

- Pay attention to the sun rising or setting and the moon as it moves through its cycle and the stars in each night's sky. Be watchful of the birds and animals that grace your days. Notice what they are doing and how they are behaving. Imagine what messages they might be bringing to you from Mother Nature Herself.
- Meditate on Grace every day for the next fifteen to thirty days.
- Meditate on "*LOKANANDA SAMADHI SUKHAM*" – "The bliss of the world is the bliss of *samadhi*." When you embrace the world, the world embraces you.
- Reflect on your life and list the times you were at cross-roads.
Did some intuition lead you onto the right road?
- Note the times of crisis when you felt apprehension about the future.
Did you place the situation in the hands of a greater source? What happened?
- Note the times when you suffered some loss.
Did you later reap a greater gain, which was related to that loss?
- Note when you believe you began your spiritual journey.
What changes have occurred in your life since you began?
Do you consider them to be an act of grace?
- Create a Spiritual Journal. **Journal daily!**
Record only the facts. Do not include any interpretations, explanations, excuses or judgments. Do not use your journal as a diary to record your daydreams or imaginings. Record every lie or exaggeration you speak, as such.



Living a rightly fashioned life

“The most consummately beautiful thing in the universe is the rightly fashioned life of a good person. That kind of life is not an accident. It is, beyond all doubts, due to the grace and mercy of a *Satguru*. It is a highly creative work of art. A person's life must first and foremost be a beautiful creation. Life's greatest achievement is the continual re-making of one's self, so that at last one may know how to live an everlasting life. When we encounter such a rare individual, we cannot help noticing his moral beauty. It is an exceptional and striking phenomenon, one never forgets. This form of beauty is far more impressive than the beauty of nature. It gives to those who possess its divine gifts a strange, inexplicable and incomprehensible power. It increases the strength of the intellect much more than science, art and religious rites. Moral beauty is the basis of civilization. Are you awake, my child, do you feel all this boring?” – “Babaji's Gospel of Happiness (Kriya Yoga) is not for the favored few. It is not a strange or occult practice to gain extraordinary powers. His is a rational path, a practical sadhana (spiritual practices), to a fuller, more joyful, more blessed life, which is accessible to one and all.”

– *Kriya Babaji, 'Voice of Babaji'*

Once you begin to practice Kriya Yoga and the spiritual journey truly starts, your inner and outer guidance will be to live in a graceful yogic way, in a way necessary to develop self-discipline, awareness, perfection, and liberation.

“Life is on the verge of becoming wonderful. But you must learn how to live it. When you learn, then it will be something.”

– *The Mother, Aurobindo Ashram*

A spiritual life is a graceful life if it involves simple living and high thinking. From a yogic perspective, a spiritual life is not demonstrated in what you do, but



in the way you do it and with what consciousness.

Babaji tells us, “observe without reacting and remember the Divine when you do act.” He says that there are no superior or inferior actions when actions are done consciously. The consciousness one expresses in an action taken is more important than the act itself. The most seemingly useless acts can be the most productive, if they are performed with awareness. Awareness defines an action as superior.

But what is this Awareness?

Conscious Awareness is an advanced spiritual consciousness that shines through your eyes, but draws from the witnessing of your higher mind. It is pure intelligence. It is the consciousness of Kundalini, that potential and consciousness, which abides within each of us.

Awareness is the selfless and ego-less witnessing of the actions of the body, the mind and the senses. Awareness is the alert, observation and reflection that engage the heart, as the whole being directs attention toward one thing.

Every action in life can be performed consciously or unconsciously. Most actions or reactions are rather unconscious. One can think, eat, talk, and even agree and disagree with such little awareness. How many times have *asana*, *pranayama*, meditation and *mantra* been performed mechanically or in a dreamy state? Awareness in actions requires alertness, attention, observation and reflection. A truly conscious action has engaged the whole being, as witness to it, without regard of personal gain or loss, and without a need to demonstrate talent or prowess.

Awareness is not just concentration. The mind can become absorbed in beautiful music by listening deeply, or become at-one with a work of art, a scientific equation, or while writing, reading or dancing. The mind can become totally absorbed for a specific length of time, but when the music stops, or the mind is attracted through the senses to something else, consciousness changes.

Awareness is different; consciousness doesn't change with each new attraction. Conscious awareness is the present-moment realization that your mind is absorbed in something and at the same time knows what you are feeling;



it remains present when your mind becomes distracted. Awareness opens all the doors to you and your world. It is simultaneously conscious of what you are absorbed in, what you are feeling, and what is happening around you. A truly conscious action engages the higher mind and will of the Witnessing Self, which views all in its luminous selflessness. Selflessness means being without memory of the past, neither the nice nor the painful.

Awareness shows up as *wonder*. Wonder is the essence of awareness and grace. Wonder is the inner reflection of the vitality of consciousness in everything around you, animate and inanimate. It is contentless joy.

If you can maintain awareness and have the intention to increase your esthetic sensitivity, each esthetic experience you have will bring you closer to the pulsation of life that permeates all things and experiences.

Awareness brings *wonder* in all the unfolding events in the drama of life. It allows you to accept the possibility of the presence of an inherent intelligence pulsating through all things, both pleasing and painful. Life appears as an unfolding manifestation of grace staged by the creative genius of Consciousness.

Let everything be as it is

From the yogic perspective, everything is just as it is. Living a graceful life means *accepting everything just as it is*. Accept everything just as it is and there is no reason to agree or to disagree about anything. There is no reason to feel passionately about anything at all.

This teaching requires contemplation, as “accepting everything as it is” can seem too much like apathy, laziness, resignation or powerlessness. But, if you wish to open yourself to significant change, you must develop awareness, dispassion and discernment and that requires you first, to accept what is.

The idea of passion is more attractive, as it engages and makes you feel alive, for a while. It lifts you high; it also drags you under. And passion is always attached to a specific result. While the ego will submit to passion, it rarely opens you to the kind of change you need to make; it normally just excites and contracts the mind out of desire and fear so that you suffer, in the midst of what is.



It is dispassion and discernment (insight) that invites you to show up for life, just as it is. Dispassion creates the calm, mental steadiness, which liberates you from anxiety, tension and suffering. Dispassion and discernment provide the patience, to wait and see what happens next. The wisdom of dispassion and the intelligence of discernment will change what needs to be changed, rightly and quite naturally, in order and at the proper time.

To live a rightly fashioned life of a good person, you must be willing to show up for life's karma, just as it is. There is a direct relationship between what you do and what happens in your life. It is important for you to believe in karma, cause and result. The consequence of any good intention and good action will result in something positive for you. The consequence of any bad intention and misdeed will result in something unpleasant coming to you. The result will be affected by the relative strength or weakness of your intent and the action. Consequences of karmic seeds may not necessarily sprout immediately, but they will ripen eventually.

Honor karma and have faith in it but also move beyond it. Karma often comes to us, so that we might heal something that needs healing. Change comes with healing or comes once you have learned the lesson meant for you. Try to see karma as a useful aspect of your spiritual discipline and as a means of breaking free from your conditioning.

Accepting everything as it is, creates the calmness and equanimity necessary for you to learn a lesson or to broaden your perspective. Calmness and equanimity empowers you to make change when necessary and to see the connection between the events in your life and with others. Acceptance is necessary if you are to have the inner power to truly change anything.

Think about how often you try to change things that you need not bother with. If you were truly living a graceful yogic lifestyle, you would not try! Why do you care what others think, what they do, how they see you or whether they are right or wrong about anything?

These things simply do not matter. It is all just a dance. Why change the dance? Why fight it? It is truly yogic to neither agree nor disagree and to resist nothing. Can you do that? The Truth is that nothing very serious is happening.



The True Self is unencumbered, it is steady, and it is very light. It is only your ego that takes everything so seriously. Your true nature is to watch and observe change happen.

If you look directly at your life situations, examine each event honestly and integrate it with the outcome, you will see that they were all just obstacles on your path. Everything is in flux and life is just what you have chosen to live through.

Transformation comes after healing and healing is why we were born. We have only to be aware and present in life to heal all of our wounds. Calmness and equanimity creates a state of presence in which learning and healing arises spontaneously.

I think, therefore I am - Rene Descartes

As yogis, we must attain the discernment to observe our thoughts and actions as something separate and distinct from *who we are*. Normally, we are unaware of what we are thinking but when we become aware, we wrongly identify thoughts, even the most negative, with the consciousness of our being. We think we are our thoughts.

The philosophical conclusion, *I think, therefore I am* suggests one exists because he thinks. But in what form? Descartes defines "*thought*" as "*what happens in me such that I am immediately conscious of it, insofar as I am conscious of it*". The mind that understands, has memory and thinks, is unceasing, but does it exist?

I am exists, but in what form?

The ego understands through inference. Your mind is directed toward someone or something or some event and thinks it understands what it sees. The ego's voice expresses itself as "me" and "mine," "I am," "I want," "I don't want," "I think," "I doubt." The ego sees separation and can't leave anything just as it is. It has an opinion about everything. It approves, disapproves, it is pleased or is displeased.

Self-righteous indignation is purely ego-centric; the ego passionately judging



and wanting to right the wrongs of other egos! The ego will think it is right, even when it is behaving in the same way, that only moments earlier, it had judged as wrong. The ego keeps us separate; that is its function. The ego feels and causes the grating and friction within our self, and between others.

The true “I am” is free of ego-sense; it experience the other as an expression of itself. It observes all friction between people as nothing more than an affliction, as poisons in the mind. And what are these afflictions? Desire, aversion, delusion, jealousy and pride, all are afflictions of egoism.

Opinions prevent us from allowing everything to be just as it is. Opinions come from the ego and are most often only a source of grating, friction, and conflict between people and within us. Unless we are truly pure beings expressing wisdom, opinions have no real value. The Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram says that our opinions are always dangerous and most often are absolutely worthless. Opinions are rarely true. They are usually a combination of true and false. Each opinion has an equally legitimate opposite opinion. Opinions are not necessary in order to make good choices. Important decisions will always be intuitively obvious at the time they need to be made.

Suggested Practice:

- Take a strong opinion you have and think about it. How does it make you feel? Do you feel agitated and contracted or expanded and peaceful? Notice if your opinion begins to make you feel superior or inferior. When you share your opinion with different people, notice if your opinion changes at all. Notice if you begin to want to defend your opinion, or justify it. Reflect if this opinion is reflected in your actions, or if it is not. How does that make you feel?
- Try taking the opposing viewpoint. Think as if your opinion had completely reversed. How does this make you feel? Journal your feelings and insights.

Opinions create an unsteady state of mind. This unsteadiness distorts whatever clarity you might otherwise have or be given. Is it not your ignorance,



which has really created your opinions? The wise know opinions are of no use. For the next thirty days, try to keep your opinions to yourself.

Relax into your heart and do good deeds

Effort to surrender the ego creates room for grace in life. Without effort to weaken the influence of the ego, the ego will follow its own selfish impulses of desire, as well as those of fear and pride, and continue to create a chain of pleasurable and painful actions and reactions. It takes real effort to awaken the guidance of grace.

To awaken grace, purify the subconscious, awaken the kundalini energy, and inquire into your true nature. It takes constant effort to listen to and follow the little promptings of the inner voice in the stillness of the soul and to ignore the blaring trumpets of the ego: desire, fear, and pride.

Work on yourself; study your self and purify the ego. No one else can do that for you. Be that as it may, purification requires that you accept that the Divine knows everything; that indeed, the Divine does everything. Know this as an unmistakable truth and you will draw grace to you, as intuitive guidance given precisely when you need it.

This enigmatic grace can begin a dynamic powerful progress, which may only be appreciated by those with intense aspiration and courage. The process can be painful for grace drives the worst things in your personalities into your conscious awareness. However, the pure awareness that descends from grace and occurs in mental silence can also burn them out, if you choose to be done with them. It is always your choice.

Progress means that you must catch yourself each time you make a mistake and judge someone else, or when you take a miss-step and react unconsciously, or whenever you make an egoistic movement out of pride and arrogance. You must be unrelenting in your self-observations so that you recognize each error as it arises in you, or immediately after. You must see each of these for the impulse, behavior, action, or reaction it is and not make excuses for it, blame others or hide it from your self. Then, in contemplation or meditation, you must relate the incorrect behavior to an ideal, holding both behavior and ideal firmly in your



awareness. The ideal can suggest another perspective, a more conscious way of doing something, a purer way of thinking, and a more detached way of responding. The light of that awareness, of taking an action, seeing it correctly as it is and then comparing it to a purer model of action, is a means of transformation.

Suggested Practice:

Take time to pause here for the day. Choose a particular situation, which recently caused you pain and suffering. Write about it in your journal. Ask yourself if this is a recurring situation in various forms. What about it caused you to suffer? How could you have reacted differently, more correctly?

This process should be done consistently, whenever something is not right. You know something is not right by the uneasiness you feel inside. If something doesn't feel right, examine it and say, how would Babaji (God, Guru, Self) have wanted me to handle this? This is the way to progress.

We have many things in our nature that we passionately hold onto, which can cause both ourselves and others harm. Pride and self-aggrandizement, deception and pretension, gossip, fault-finding and judgment, anger, hate, resentment and jealousy affect us as much as they do others. All these natural ego-driven instincts make us a victim. These attitudes distress both body and mind. It is our own attitudes that cause the conflict within ourselves.

No one else can do anything to cause you distress, if you have the right attitude! You are free, once you let go of the things in your nature that cause you pain and suffering. The Siddhas tell us to “be supremely free and supremely independent and not affected by anything!” Be in peace. Inner peace has the power to annul any obstacle.”



“The physical discomforts or the unkind treatment by others should not ruffle the serenity of your mind. Let there exist no trace of melancholy in your presence. The ups & downs in life are the order of nature. They chasten your character & smooth its angularities, leading it ultimately to perfection.”

– *Kriya Babaji, The Voice of Babaji*

Our nature is complex. We are a mixture of contradictions, of good and bad, true and false, noble and ignoble.

It is useful to bring your faults and falsehoods, your lies, your cravings and aversions out into awareness, but you should also examine your good and truthful side, your nobility, too. In fact, you should give most of your attention to your nobility, so that it can be nourished and will expand and ultimately transform the rest. Nobility of the mind is goodness, sweetness and gentleness of disposition.

Silence will nourish your nobility. Set aside a day or at least some hours every week to be in silence. Resist the urge to speak at all during those precious hours. Meditation can nourish your goodness. Just open your heart in meditation and invite the light to enter. Your nature can be transformed through the attention you give to change in your daily life and in the silence of meditation. In meditation, falseness is often revealed.

And you must learn to listen truly. Not only must you concentrate your attention on what is being revealed, but you must also have the courage and will to understand it correctly.

Babaji says, *“even the worst sinner can be tomorrow’s saint.”*

“If one cannot change his nature, it is not worth the trouble of doing Yoga, for Yoga is done precisely in order to change the nature, otherwise it has no meaning.” – *Sri Aurobindo*



So what must change?

To live a noble and graceful life, eradicate selfishness, meanness and hatred. To refuse to change these behaviors is to agree to live in ignorance, suffering, and ignobility. However, many spiritual aspirants find that as they intensify their yogic practices, conflict arises within their sphere of families and friends and even within themselves. We are accused or accuse ourselves of being self-centered or selfish.

So, it is important to understand that you do not practice Yoga selfishly, but to please your higher Self, and that to please the Self, is to please God. And this is a noble life. This is why you are here. You are not here to please others. Pleasing the Self is not selfishness. Selfishness is something else. Selfishness is desiring something for yourself and understanding nothing but your needs and your perspective. It is caring for others only with regards to how their importance relates to us. A selfish person is really unable to see the worth of others. Selfishness leads to meanness and even hatred. A selfish person is not a happy person. He lives an ignoble life. Sri Aurobindo says, “replace selfishness and meanness with “self-forgetting” and self-giving.”

“Selfishness is the only sin, meanness the only vice,
and hatred the only criminality. All else can easily be turned into good, but
these three are obstinate resistors of deity.”

– *Sri Aurobindo*

The vibrations of meanness and hatred are not only obsessive, contractive and destructive, but leave you utterly at the mercy of the one you mistreat or hate. An expression of anger is an indication that you lack self-control. Hatred is attachment in the extreme and so is very difficult to detach from. Sri Aurobindo says you must replace hatred with “indifference.” Indifference suggests that you are no longer controlled by hatred. When you no longer express anger or feel the sensations of it, your actions will be more appropriate.

There are times, however, when you cannot just replace hatred with indifference. Hate can create such disequilibria in the mind that often some



“action” of release is necessary, in order to bring it back into balance. But it is possible to release such a strong emotion without affecting others. This type of emotional releasing will be addressed in a later lesson on emotions.

Virtues of the Soul

Self-giving and generosity are virtues of the soul that come from being free of desire and egoism, from having a disposition that is sweet and gentle, loving, compassionate, beautiful, smiling, happy, and courageous. These virtues come from one whose soul is awake and active and who is able to see the worth of others. Self-giving and generosity extend from love in its purest form. There is no sense that “I am giving”; there is just giving. Self-giving comes from generosity of the soul. It begins with “self-forgetting.” Normally, we are self-important. We attend to our self and our feelings as if they are something quite precious. “Self-forgetting” sounds like a negation of our self or our needs, but in truth, is a strengthening of our precious, true form and nature.

“Self-forgetting” can be developed quite easily through simple methods. When you find yourself suffering from your thoughts or wallowing in your emotions, you need only to get busy doing something else. Do something that is not connected to the object of your suffering, or to you. For instance, stop thinking about a person when you can think nothing good about him. Do this by getting occupied with someone else, or involved in some interesting work that requires concentration. It is not so difficult to become self-forgetting; it is all a matter of using the mind wisely. (In subsequent chapters we will discuss the mind and its fluctuations.)

A graceful life, how do I start?

A graceful life starts when you begin to change the smallest unit of yourself. There is no part of your nature that cannot be overcome. You will remain a creature of habit and impulse, until you choose to learn how to be released from their pull.

Kriya Yoga offers you a means to let go of habits and conditioning, imprinted in your subconscious, which cause you to act and react. It teaches you how to



observe and feel the contractive state of the ego-self as it reacts, by comparing it to the expansive state you experience when your soul responds.

Nothing is fixed in stone; everything is in perpetual change. The Higher Self, if it wills, can introduce a power, a determining power of grace that can change the course of things. Consistency of aspiration and self-effort will release the hold that negativities and old habits have on you and will open you to be led by a Higher Will. Subsequently, your life will become more graceful.

Abhyasa, constant practice, is necessary for permanent change. To become open consistently to the guidance of your Higher Self, demands intense constant practice. An intense practice is called *tapasya* in Sanskrit. *Tapasya* is the intense effort of concentration of will and energy, used to control the mind, your subtle energies and the physical body. It is spiritual practice expressed by the will, necessary to transform the aspirant for a higher purpose. It indicates keen interest and intensity. If you are only serious about transformation one hour of the day, then nothing significant will change. *Tapasya* indicates constant practice, with continuous aspiration to experience union with your highest self. Grace comes from aspiration; greater aspiration comes through Grace. (*Tapas* will be discussed at length in a later lesson).

The Power of Aspiration

Persistent aspiration for grace is necessary from beginning to end. The path is difficult and at times you will fail or lack the willpower to persevere when obstacles seem insurmountable. Only sincere aspiration will see you through. Aspiration does not mean desire; instead it comes like a flame from the heart, while the mind is silent. Desire comes from thoughts in the mind. Aspiration is self-giving; desire is self-serving. Aspiration expands our sense of self, whereas desire contracts it around the object of desire.

What am I aspiring for?

What do I aspire for? Grace? What kind of aspiration is necessary to live with grace in my life?

There must be a harmonious aspiration within the whole of your being for



something more than the objects of the world. There must be a yearning for something greater, for a vast consciousness or for Universal good will.

You need aspiration to discover the weaknesses in yourself that need to be transformed. So your aspiration requires patience and persistence, mental equanimity and equal-vision towards what is. Aspire too, for a body that is strong and free of disease. And ultimately, aspire for ability to surrender and give yourself to the Divine. With these aspirations firmly planted deeply in your heart, your daily *sadhana* (practice) will become integral, dynamic and transformational.

“To grow into the fullness of the Divine is the true law of human life, and to shape his earthly existence into its image is the meaning of his evolution.”

– *Kriya Babaji, Masterkey of All Ills, Kriya*

Kriya Yoga aims at realization of the Truth of God. Babaji says, “meditation will open lands of wisdom and penetration, but reality will not dawn. You must live in realization of God in your actual life, live it in your dreams, thoughts and deeds. That is real realization, that is Kriya Yoga, and that is approaching God concretely and actually. God does not want you to be mere speculators or thinkers. He has created you to act and act in the living present.”

Kriya Yoga is, truly speaking, a graceful way of living life, a way to act in the present with harmony and with awareness of the presence of the Divine. The Gita says, “Yoga implies skill in action and consists in equanimity and a balanced life. Its emphasis, accordingly, lays in elevation and not the extinction of desire, regeneration and not renunciation of action, and it necessitates absolute faith in the Living God.”

The goals of a Kriya Yogi are to realize your Divinity, to discover Divine Love and to manifest balance, harmony, and grace in your life. The easiest way to find the Divine is in a happy heart, without shadows. Divinity is found in a kind, gentle and loving heart.



Happiness is close to light, so first, be happy. Cheerfulness and happiness are divine qualities and are much more helpful in any situation than drama. They keep the entire body in harmony. Divinity is found in a kind, gentle and loving heart.

“When you rise to that height of Divine love, you rise to such a degree that in your father, in your mother, in everybody, you see nothing, but God. When you see in the wife, no wife, but the beloved One, God, then you are in the presence of God.” – *Kriya Babaji*

Once the light of Divine Love arises in a heart, which is pure and has abandoned selfishness, sorrow, and suffering, all is beheld as existing in Cosmic Power-God-Grace and being a manifestation of the power of this Infinite Consciousness. All the multitudes of species in this universe are but the infinite names and forms of this power, caught up in their own particular mental conditioning. A pure heart accepts all that happens. It experiences neither depression nor elation, but remains ever in-gratitude and equanimity. Though appearing to be busy in all sorts of diverse activities, your actions will be directed by an inner light, love and compassion.

Harmony between people must be your aim in living a graceful life. A collective aspiration for such harmony could change the world. A collective harmonious existence must surely be possible for the Divine Consciousness. Let us individually, at least remain in harmony with those with whom we live and work.

It is God's Will that you are as you are and others are as they are, all in accordance with the nature of each of us. Yet, divergent views need not spell disharmony. Let us individually refuse to react to differences in natures or discord in relationships.

Let an overwhelming aspiration for harmony dispel any disharmony within you. Anger and disharmony will always impel you to do what you should not do. Tranquility and harmony enables you to do what should be done. A disciplined mind will create the tranquility and space needed to understand another's perspective. Differences once reconciled often create spectacular results.

To live a graceful life is a great blessing. It is not a sacrifice, but a great



privilege! Live gracefully.

Suggested Practice:

Work with the following questions daily for the next two weeks.

- Did you express love and compassion today? When and Why?
- Did you express selfishness, meanness or anger? When and Why?
How did that make you feel?
- What actions reflecting the above did you do consciously?
What actions did you do unconsciously?
- What opinions did you have today? Did you express them? How did that go?
- Did you feel a sense of an inner guidance today?
- How many hours today were you conscious of your aspiration for the Divine in some form or another?
- What, if anything, kept you from being cheerful and happy at home, at work or with your life in general?



The Grace Course

