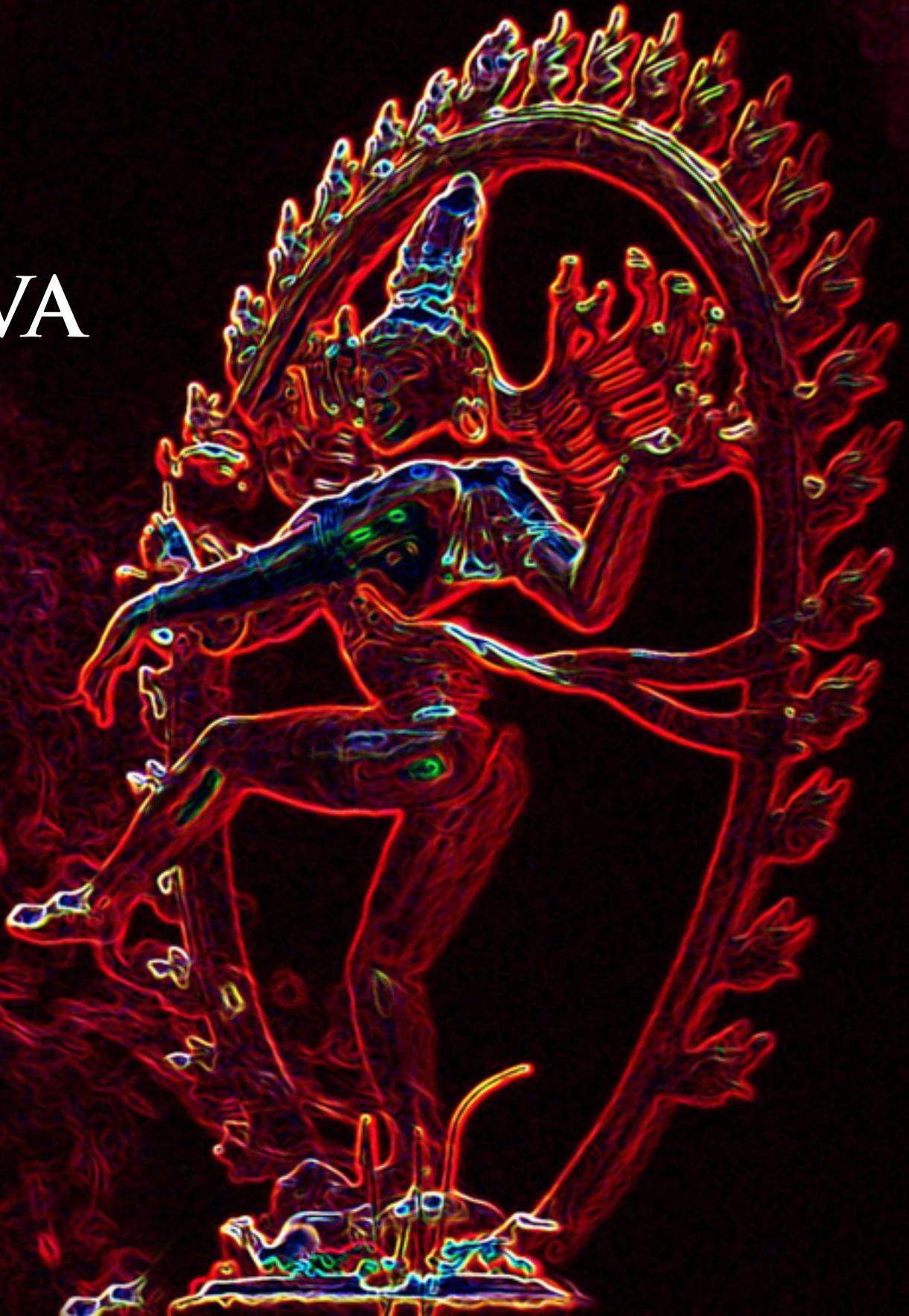


RISHICULTURE YOGA



October 2012

SHIVA



RISHICULTURE YOGA



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RISHICULTURE YOGA



EDITOR'S NOTE

Newsletter or Magazine?

Historically, this publication has been referred to as a newsletter but with the recent changes in its scope and design, is it still a newsletter or has it evolved into something else?

At its root the word magazine refers to a collection of written articles. It is believed that the word originates from the plural of the Arabic word 'makhzan' which means storehouse. Magazine is used figuratively to mean a 'storehouse of information'.

A newsletter is defined as a written report, a regularly distributed publication generally about one main topic and limited in its number of pages. Bulletins and leaflets are types of newsletters.

Newsletter or Magazine? Let me know what you think by posting your opinion on this publication's collaborative space at www.RishiCultureYoga.net.

Enjoy this issue and I look forward to collaborating with you.

Jennifer Dany Aubé
Managing Editor and Designer
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STRIKING SPARKS... MAKING FIRE

by Ammaji, Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani, India

Tejas, fire, is the root of Tapasya, which basically means to “burn away all that is not real, so that the real may emerge”. Fire is the ultimate purifier, the ultimate test of sincerity and purity. “Trial by fire” is a common expression in English. In Sanskrit this is the exact meaning of the phrase “Agni Pariksha”.

Sita had to “enter fire” to prove to Lord Rama that she was pure, undefiled by Ravana even though she lived as his captive for nearly three years. Indian villagers are often tested for their innocence of a crime, or the veracity of their statements, by burning a piece of camphor in their palm. If they can endure this, they have proved themselves.

Agni, the God of Fire, was chief amongst the Vedic gods. He was worshipped and adorned, implored and invoked in so many hymns. Fire was also an important metaphor in Vedic lore.

One must cast one’s mind back thousands of years to the time before “fire” could be summoned so easily and cheaply with a matchstick. Fire was not easy to attain. Every household had to keep the fire (Homa) burning continuously, if it went out, it was a disaster. Fire was necessary not only for heat, warmth and light, but for cooking and ritualistic worship.

The word “home” has probably sprung from the Sanskrit word “Homa”

If one traveled, one carried a very important item on one’s person, fire sticks. These sticks, bestowed by

one’s Guru or father, were used to create fire, and consist of an Aranim Kritva (lower stick) and a Cottara Aranira (upper stick).

The flat lower stick has a small groove cut in the centre, into which the upper stick fits. To create the fire, the upper stick must literally be drilled into the lower stick with exactly the right speed and pressure. The upper stick moves a full circle to the left, stops for an instant, and then returns for a full



circle to the right. This action is repeated continuously and heat builds up. The process must not stop, otherwise the point of friction will defuse and ignition will not occur.

Abhyasa, (repetition) or constant action is the key to creating fire. Incessant, unrelieved friction and intensity of unbroken effort will produce the sparks which create fire.

Once the wood begins to warm up, one must continue to rotate the upper stick to the point of ignition. The fire is then taken with a piece of cotton and transferred to twigs. No longer a spark, the full blown fire is ready to obey the will of the Master who called it forth.

A beautiful passage from Svetasvatara Upanishad (1-14) makes the process of making fire into a wonderful metaphor for the process of enlightenment.

Svadeham aranim kritva, pranavam cottara aranim Dhyana nirmathanaabhyasat, devam pashyen nigudhavat. “Make your whole being the lower fire stick, and the Aum (the Pranava) the upper fire stick. Ignite the fire within by the power of the Adhyaan, your meditation, and touch the hidden source.”

As with so many of the Upanishads, the power of the Pranava AUM is extolled. In modern times this sacred syllable has been vulgarized by cheap, ignorant usage. One sees “AUM” written on T-Shirts, commercial products and muttered mindlessly by priests in the temple.

It is good to step back and contemplate the power of the wonderful spiritual tool go used it properly, mindfully, skillfully. Consistently wit focused mind. The AUM Pranava has the power to produce the inner time which will transform the dull, Tamasic, inert nature, and light up the darkness within.

**AUM Tadpurushaaya Vidvamahe
Mahadevaaya Dheemahi
Tanno Rudra Prachodayaat.**

ओं तद्पुरुषाय विद्वामहे
महादेवाय धीमहि
तन्नो रुद्र प्रचोदयात्

**Let us meditate and focus upon (Dheemahi)
the supreme (Maha) lord (Devaaya). Let us ask
Shiva (Rudra) to provide us inspiration and guidance
(Prachodayaat) in our spiritual journey.**

PSYCHOSOMATIC MECHANISMS OF YOGA

Yogacharya Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, India

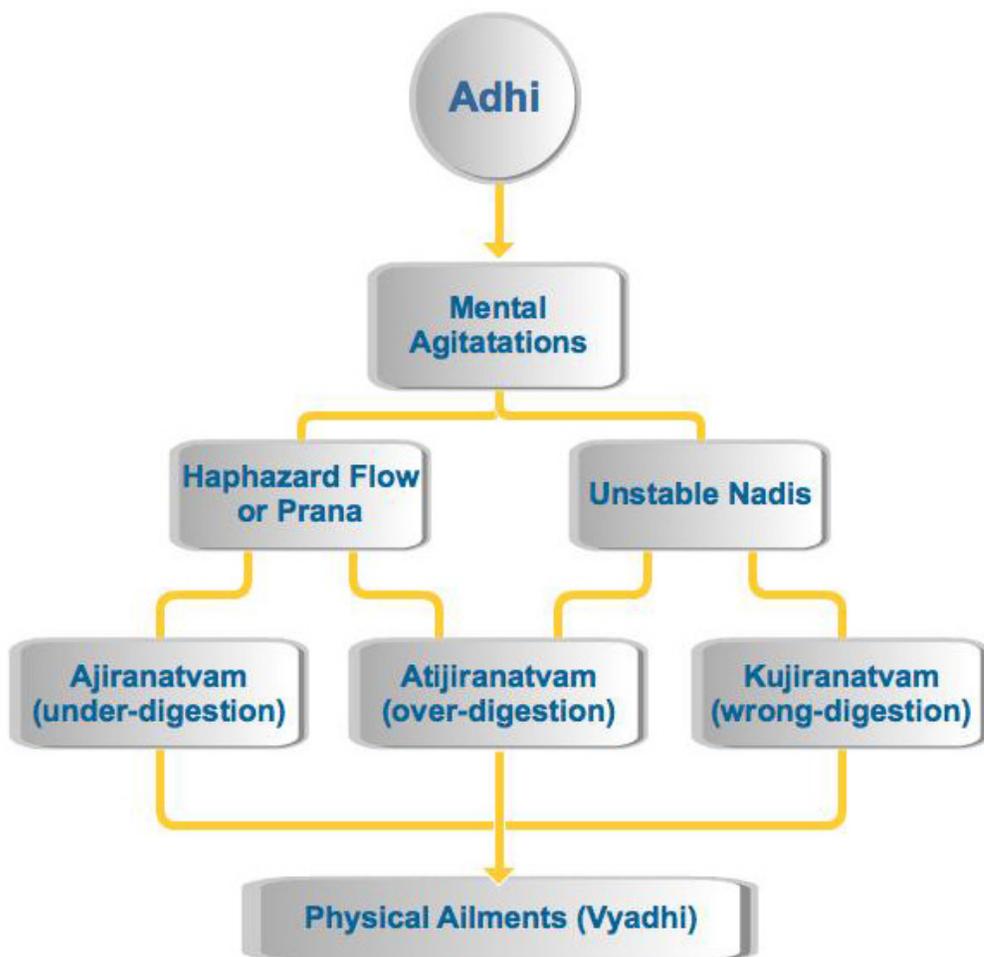
Yoga is the original mind-body medicine that has enabled individuals to attain and maintain sukha sthanam, a dynamic sense of physical, mental and spiritual well being. Bhagavad-Gita defines Yoga as samatvam meaning thereby that Yoga is equanimity at all levels, a state wherein physical homeostasis and mental equanimity occur in a balanced and healthy harmony.

Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj, the visionary

“Yoga Chikitsa is virtually as old as Yoga itself, indeed, the ‘return of mind that feels separated from the Universe in which it exists’ represents the first Yoga therapy. Yoga Chikitsa could be termed as “man’s first attempt at unitive understanding of mind-emotions-physical distress and is the oldest wholistic concept and therapy in the world.”

founder of Ananda Ashram at the International Centre for Yoga Education and Research (ICYER) in Pondicherry and one of the foremost authorities on Yoga in the past century, has explained the concept of Yoga Chikitsa (Yoga as a therapy) in the following lucid manner.

To achieve this Yogic integration at all levels of our being, it is essential that we take into consideration the all encompassing multi dimensional aspects of Yoga that include the following: a healthy life nourishing diet, a healthy and natural environment, a wholistic lifestyle, adequate bodywork through Asanas, Mudras and Kriyas, invigorating breath work through the use of Pranayama and the production of a healthy thought process through the higher practices of Jnana Yoga and Raja Yoga.



PSYCHOSOMATIC DISORDERS

The Nirvana Prakarana of the Laghu Yoga Vashishta, one of the ancient Yoga Texts describes in detail the origin and destruction of mental and bodily diseases. Sage Vashishta teaches Lord Rama that there are two major classifications of disease. Those that are caused by the mind are primary (adhija vyadhi, the psychosomatic, stress disorders) while those that afflict the body directly are secondary (anadhija vyadhi, infectious disease, accidents etc). The primary disease has two sub divisions. These are the samanya (ordinary physical diseases) and the Sara (the essential disorder of rebirth that may only be destroyed by atma

jnana or knowledge of the Divine Self). Samanya diseases are the ones that affect us physically and may be destroyed by the correction of the mind-body disharmony. It is in these psychosomatic disorders that the actual practical application of Yoga practices as a mode of therapy can be very useful.

From the Yogic viewpoint of disease it can be seen that psychosomatic, stress related disorders appear to progress through four distinct phases. These can be understood as follows:

Psychic Phase: This phase is marked by mild but persistent psychological and behavioural symptoms of stress like irritability, disturbed sleep and other minor symptoms. This phase can be correlated with vijnanamaya and manomaya koshas. Yoga as a mind body therapy is very effective in this phase.

Psychosomatic Phase: If the stress continues there is an increase in symptoms, along with the appearance of generalized physiological symptoms such as occasional hypertension and tremors. This phase can be correlated with manomaya and pranamaya koshas. Yoga as a mind body therapy is very effective in this phase.

Somatic Phase: This phase is marked by disturbed function of organs, particularly the target, or involved organ. At this stage one begins to identify the diseased state. This phase can be correlated with pranamaya and annamaya koshas. Yoga as a therapy is less effective in this phase and may need to be used in conjunction with other methods of treatment.

Organic Phase: This phase is marked by full manifestation of the diseased state, with pathological changes such as an ulcerated stomach or chronic hypertension,

becoming manifest in their totality with their resultant complications. This phase can be correlated with the annamaya kosha as the disease has become fixed in the physical body. Yoga as a therapy has a palliative and quality of life improving effect in this phase. It also has positive emotional and psychological effects even in terminal and end of life situations.

POTENTIALITIES:

Extensive research on Yoga being done all over the world has shown promise with regard to various disorders and diseases that seem to be amiable to Yoga therapy (www.iayt.org, www.icyer.com, www.svyasa.org). These include psychosomatic, stress disorders such as bronchial asthma, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, irritable bowel syndrome, gastro intestinal ulcer diseases, atherosclerosis, seizure disorder and headache. It also includes physical disorders such as heart disease, lung disease, and mental retardation. Psychiatric disorders such as anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, depression and substance abuse can also be managed along with other therapies. Musculoskeletal disorders such as lumbago, spondylosis, sciatica and carpal tunnel syndrome can be tackled effectively with Yoga practices that offer a lot of hope in metabolic disorders such as thyroid and other endocrine disorders, immune disorders, obesity and the modern metabolic syndrome.

It is well established that stress weakens our immune system. Scientific research in recent times has showed that the physiological, psychological and biochemical effects of Yoga are of an anti-stress nature. Mechanisms postulated included the restoration of autonomic balance as well as an improvement in restorative, regenerative and rehabilitative

capacities of the individual. A healthy inner sense of wellbeing produced by a life of Yoga percolates down through the different levels of our existence from the higher to the lower producing health and wellbeing of a holistic nature.

Streeter et al (Med Hypotheses 2012;78: 571-9) recently proposed a theory to explain the benefits of Yoga practices in diverse, frequently comorbid medical conditions based on the concept that Yoga practices reduce allostatic load in stress response systems such that optimal homeostasis is restored.

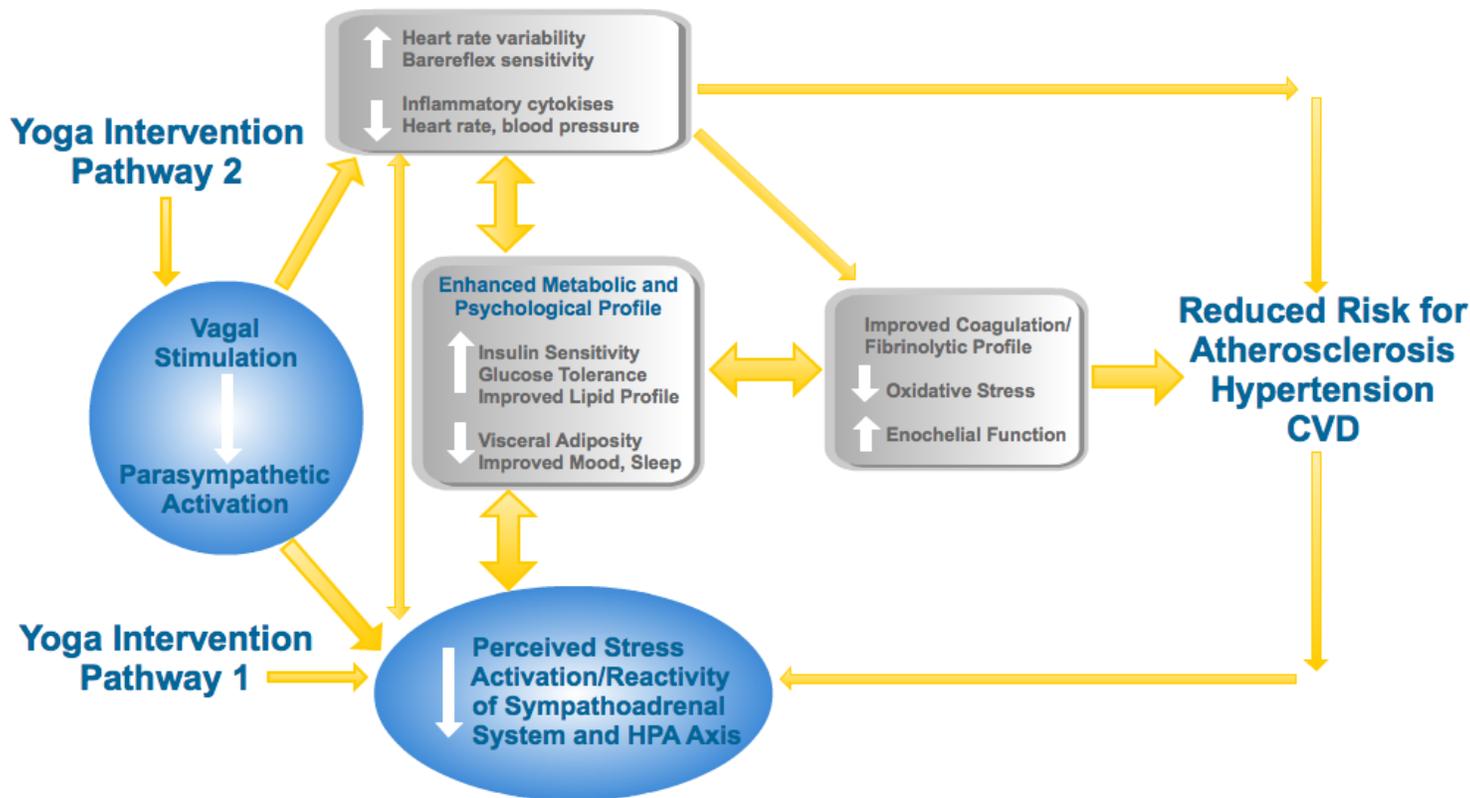
They hypothesized that stress induces an:

- Imbalance of the ANS with decreased parasympathetic and increased sympathetic activity,
- Under activity of the gamma amino-butyric acid (GABA) system, the primary inhibitory neurotransmitter system, and
- Increased allostatic load.

They further hypothesized that Yoga-based practices

- Correct underactivity of the parasympathetic nervous system and GABA systems in part through stimulation of the vagus nerves, the main peripheral pathway of the parasympathetic nervous system, and
- Reduce allostatic load.
- According to the theory proposed by Streeter and colleagues, the decreased parasympathetic nervous system and GABAergic activity that underlies stress-related disorders can be corrected by Yoga practices resulting in amelioration of disease symptoms. HRV testing has a great role to play in our understanding intrinsic mechanisms behind such potential effects of Yoga.

Innes et al had earlier (J Am Board



Fam Pract 2005; ,18: 491-519) also postulated two interconnected pathways (see above) by which Yoga reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases through the mechanisms of parasympathetic activation coupled with decreased reactivity of sympathoadrenal system and HPA axis.

PSYCHOSOMATIC MECHANISMS OF YOGA

Yoga understands the influence of the mind on the body as well as that of the body on the mind. This is the principle of adhi-vyadhi elucidated in the Yoga Vasishtha more than 5000 years ago! It is interesting that modern medicine has only realised this connection in the last hundred years whereas Yogic of India were teaching and practising it for thousands of years. No wonder Yoga may be considered as the original

mind-body medicine.

We are what we think, yet we also start to think that which we do. Yogic concepts and techniques enable the development of right attitudes towards life and enable us to correct the numerous internal and external imbalances we suffer due to our wrong lifestyle/genetic potential. Yoga enables us to take responsibility for our own health and happiness and as Swami Gitananda Giri would say, "If you want to be healthy do healthy things, if you want to be happy do happy things".

The following are just a few of the mechanisms through which Yoga can be said to work as an integrated mind-body medicine:

- Cleanses the accumulated toxins through various shuddhi kriyas and generates a sense of relaxed lightness through jathis and vyayama type activities. Free flow

in all bodily passages prevents the many infections that may occur when pathogens stagnate therein.

- Adoption of a Yogic lifestyle with proper nourishing diet, creates positive antioxidant enhancement thus neutralizing free radicals while enabling a rejuvenative storehouse of nutrients packed with life energy to work on anabolic, reparative and healing processes .
- Steadies the entire body through different physical postures held in a steady and comfortable manner without strain. Physical balance and a sense of ease with oneself enhance mental / emotional balance and enable all physiological processes to occur in a healthy manner.
- Improves control over autonomic respiratory mechanisms through breathing patterns that generate energy and enhance emotional

stability. The mind and emotions are related to our breathing pattern and rate and hence the slowing down of the breathing process influences autonomic functioning, metabolic processes as well as emotional responses.

- Integrates body movements with the breath thus creating psychosomatic harmony. In Yoga the physical body is related to annamaya kosha (our anatomical existence) and the mind to manomaya kosha (our psychological existence). As the pranayama kosha (our physiological existence sustained by the energy of the breath) lies in between them, the breath is the key to psychosomatic harmony.
- Focuses the mind positively on activities being done, thus enhancing energy flow and resultant healthy circulation to the different body parts and internal organs. Where the mind goes, there the prana flows!
- Creates a calm internal environment through contemplative practices that in turn enable normalization of homeostatic mechanisms. Yoga is all about balance or samatvam at all levels of being. Mental balance produces physical balance and vice versa too.
- Relaxes the body-emotion-mind complex through physical and mental techniques that enhance our pain threshold and coping ability in responding to external and internal stressors. This enhances the quality of life as seen in so many terminal cases where other therapies are not able to offer any solace.
- Enhances self confidence and internal healing capacities through the cultivation of right attitudes towards life and moral-ethical living through yama-niyama and various Yogic psychological principles.

Faith, self confidence and inner strength are most essential if at all we wish for healing, repair, rejuvenation and re-invigoration.

- Yoga works towards restoration of normalcy in all systems of the human body with special emphasis on the psycho-neuro-immuno-endocrine axis. In addition to its preventive and restorative capabilities, Yoga also aims at promoting positive health that will help us to tide over health challenges that occur during our lifetime. This concept of positive health is one of Yoga's unique contributions to modern healthcare as Yoga has both a preventive as well as promotive role in the healthcare of our masses. It is also inexpensive and can be used in tandem with other systems of medicine in an integrated manner to benefit patients.

NEED FOR COORDINATION

The need of the modern age is to have an integrated approach towards therapy and to utilize Yoga therapy in coordination and collaboration with other systems of medicine such as Allopathy, Ayurveda, Siddha and Naturopathy. Physiotherapy and Chiropractic practices may be used with the Yoga if needed. Advice on diet and lifestyle is very important irrespective of the mode of therapy that is employed for a particular patient.

A WORD OF CAUTION

A word of caution is also required. Though Yoga and Yoga therapy are very useful in bringing about a state of total health it is not a miracle cure for all problems. It needs a lot of discrimination on the part of both the therapist as well as the patient. It may not be useful in emergency conditions

and there is a strong need to consult a qualified medical doctor where in doubt. Each patient is different and so the therapy has to be molded to suit the individual needs rather than relying on a specific therapy plan for patients suffering the same medical condition. A very true problem is that there is a different approach of the different schools of Yoga to the same condition. It is better to follow any one system that one is conversant with, rather than trying to mix systems in a "Yogic Cocktail". One must also be vigilant as there is a strong presence of numerous quacks pretending to be Yoga therapists and this leads to a bad name for Yoga therapy as well as Yoga in general.

CONCLUSION

The dedicated practice of Yoga as a way of life is no doubt a panacea for problems related to psychosomatic, stress related physical, emotional and mental disorders and helps us regain our birthright of health and happiness. It is only when we are healthy and happy that we can fulfill our destiny. With the adoption of a proper attitude and lifestyle through the Yogic way of life, we can rise above our own circumstances and our life can blossom as a time of variety, creativity, and fulfillment. Yoga helps us regain the ease we had lost through dis-ease (as implied by sthira sukham asanam-PYS). It also produces mental equanimity (samatvam yoga uchyate-BG) where the opposites cease to affect (tato dwandwa anabhighatha-PYS). This enables us to move from a state of illness and disease to one of health and well being that ultimate allows us to move from the lower animal nature to the higher human nature and finally the highest Divine Nature that is our birthright.

POLARITY: THOUGHTS ON MIGRATION, MAGNETITE AND MEDITATION

by *Yogacharya Dr Alan Davis, UK*

Having recently retired from full-time General Practice in England, it was wonderful to have the opportunity to make a long-overdue return to Ananda Ashram. Dr Ananda and Ammaji (and indeed all the others who contributed to teaching there) devoted endless wisdom, compassion and energy and helped propel me further along the yoga path.

Since retiring I have also developed an enthusiasm for bird-watching, and was excited by some of the exotic species spotted in and near the ashram: the beautiful and delicate purple sunbirds which hovered around the flowers next to the dining area; the sea eagles which cruised imperiously up and down the coast; the spectacular flameback woodpecker in the nearby grounds of Quiet; and the white-throated kingfisher which frequently oversaw our karma yoga duties in the garden. But even studying everyday species is a great lesson in humility, for all birds have their own beauty and quirks of behaviour which remind us that humankind is not the be-all and end-all of evolution. Bird-watching also requires patience – they do not simply turn up on demand to satisfy our need for instant gratification.

Anyone developing an interest in ornithology must sooner or later marvel at the phenomenon of migration: bar-tailed godwits are known to undertake annual flights of over 10,000 kilometres; flocks of barnacle geese or starlings are awesome natural sights; domesticated homing pigeons return to their habitat from any random point. The

mechanism of this has been the focus of much study, and several factors are involved including visual cues from the sun and stars, genetic influences, and behaviour learned from parents.

However the main element appears to be the minute deposits of magnetite in the brains, nerves and beaks of many birds. This is a highly magnetic compound (ferrous ferric oxide, Fe₃O₄) which occurs naturally in lodestone, from which the first magnets were developed. Birds thus have an inbuilt natural compass which aligns them with the earth's magnetic field. This "magnetoception" has been observed in fruit flies, bees, turtles and sharks. Magnetite has also been discovered in certain strains of bacteria and fish, and – interestingly – in humans, concentrated particularly around the sphenoid and ethmoid sinuses within the skull.

The relevance to yoga starts to become apparent. In Lesson 47 of Step-by-Step Swamiji's teaching is that "Yoga or Union cannot take place without there being polarity... Loma- Viloma is a Yogic way of expressing a more complicated Sanskrit term 'Dhruvabhisaranashila' which actually is more scientifically associated with the description of the polarity of this planet earth." Without some form of polarity, whether north-south or positive-negative, there can be no flow of energy. Swamiji instructs us to practise higher kriyas and prakriyas (Lesson 48) in a north-facing or head-to-the-north manner, and there appears to be a sound basis for this. We should not overlook the significance of magnetite

being concentrated in our sinuses – exposed to our airways when we practice pranayama, and close to the ajna chakra.

However modern man's subtle energies have fallen into disuse or been subsumed under the mass of electro-magnetic interference from radio transmitters, computers, televisions, MRI scanners and the like. No doubt the ancient rishis were far more sensitive than we are, and were aware of these cosmic forces. Incidentally The Hatha Yoga Pradipika makes no mention of this despite certain directions as to where yoga should be practised (Chapter I, section 12): "in a small room being four cubits square, free from stones, fire and water, disturbances of all kinds, and in a country where justice is properly administered." (I am not sure how many of us can meet that last requirement today!)

Many asanas were of course named after animals, indicating the respect and accord held for the natural world. Despite our material and scientific progress it appears we have lost many subtle skills and in one sense at least our feathered friends have a great advantage over us. Sat nav yoga, anyone?

AMAZING LORD SHIVA : A POEM

by C. P. Sharma, India

One of the Trinity of godheads
Wedded to Shakti with Sati treads
Churned out poison of oceans sipped
Hence His throat is still blue stripped.

Several His qualities, many names
For dancing skill Nataraja claims
In spiritual innocence He astounds
Easily pleased, with boons abounds.

Smearred in ashes He lives in trance
From His hair pile Ganges bounce
Serpents Him as ornaments entwine
On forehead the curved moon shine.

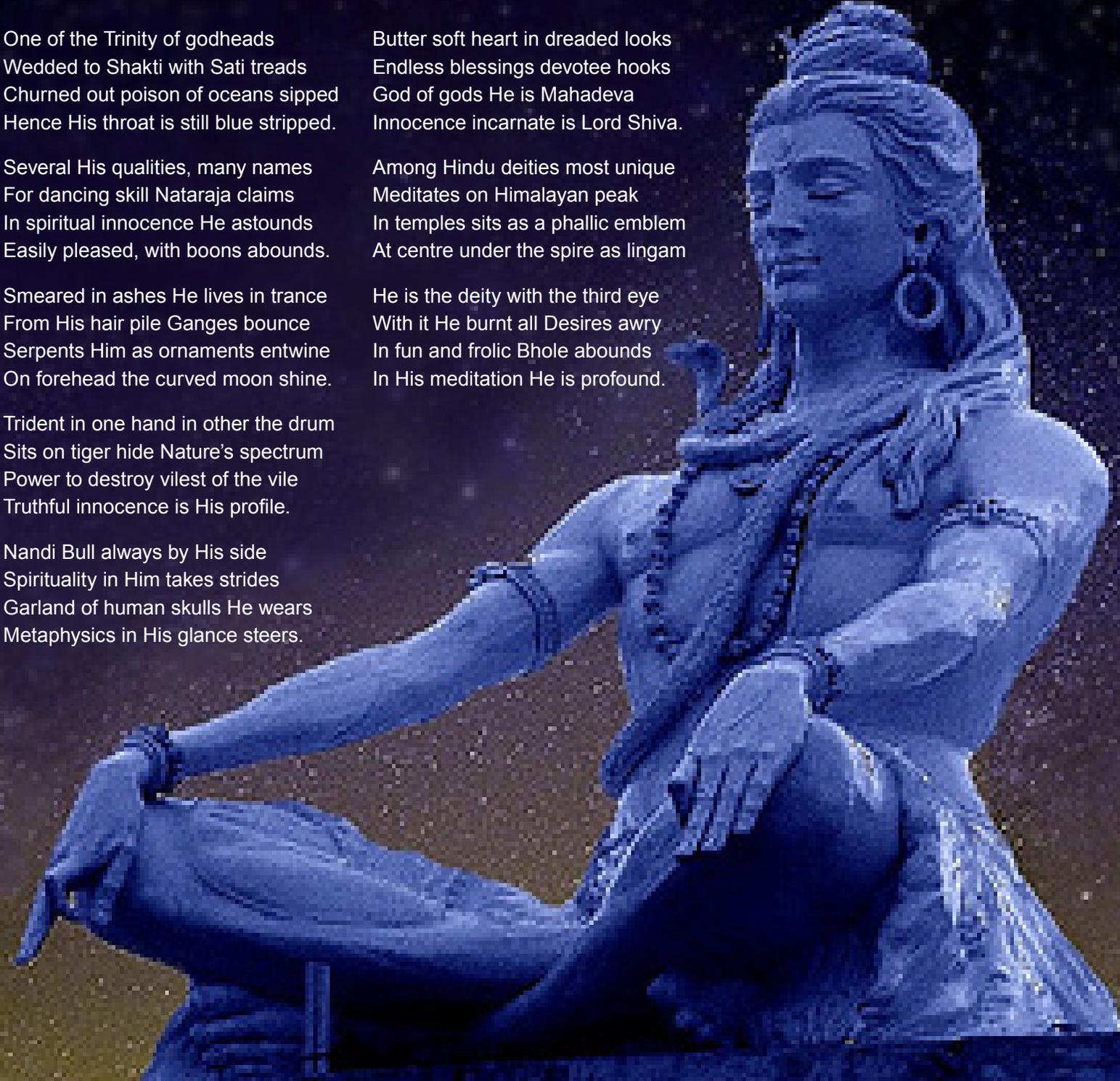
Trident in one hand in other the drum
Sits on tiger hide Nature's spectrum
Power to destroy vilest of the vile
Truthful innocence is His profile.

Nandi Bull always by His side
Spirituality in Him takes strides
Garland of human skulls He wears
Metaphysics in His glance steers.

Butter soft heart in dreaded looks
Endless blessings devotee hooks
God of gods He is Mahadeva
Innocence incarnate is Lord Shiva.

Among Hindu deities most unique
Meditates on Himalayan peak
In temples sits as a phallic emblem
At centre under the spire as lingam

He is the deity with the third eye
With it He burnt all Desires awry
In fun and frolic Bhole abounds
In His meditation He is profound.



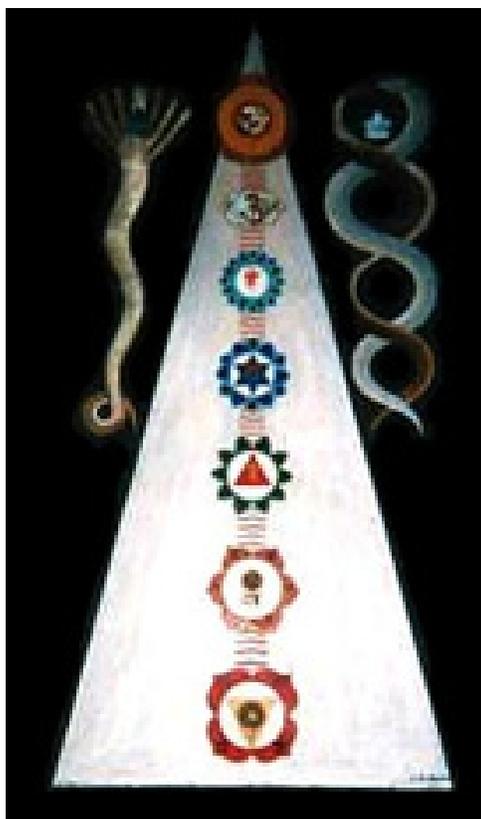
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KUNDALINI : A UNIVERSAL MOTIF

by Dr Swami Anandakapila Saraswati, Australia

The basic psychic anatomical Tantric map of humans has been eagerly espoused in the West and many people believe this is a unique and new perspective. In fact this knowledge exists in the collective unconscious world wide, probably since the inception of homo sapiens.

The seven chakras and their associated major three channels are a transcultural phenomenon that emerges throughout history in every civilization.



Let us start with the main, or central pillar, Sushumna, an etheric counterpart of the spinal column, which house a bowl of fire (the Kunda) together with a female force

(Kundalini) tending it disguised as a coiled serpent.

When Kundalini awakens the quiescent cosmic fire erupts up the Sushumna, rather like a chimney fire into the heavenly crucible physically manifest as the skull Chalice.

Two subsidiary channels exist on either side of the Sushumna, the left hand tube of Lunar energy called ida, and the right hand pipe of Pingala conveying Solar force.

Through the European tradition of story telling evolved the sanitized Fairy tale of “Cinderella”: ‘Cinderella’, the lady of the ‘cinders’ obediently serves by the fireplace at the command of her two stepsisters – who, (Dr Swami Gitananda Giri maintained) in the original German, were called ‘Ida’ and ‘Pinga’. I will leave you to contemplate the rest as ‘Cinderella’ meets the prince and awakens to her full potential as “Kundalini”.

When we turn our attention to the 7 chakras the universal motif of hidden centers deep within us turns up again in folklore.

“Snow White and the Seven dwarfs” is a wonderful paradigm of “Chakra and Kundalini” – you can guess who is the ‘Sleeping beauty’ (or eventually becomes so under the good auspices of her stepmother) to be awakened by the grace of Shiva disguised as a “prince” who manages to push his way through the tamasic brambles to discover her.

The Seven Dwarfs, of course, work

busily away in subterranean depths, getting about their work; regardless of the attention or non-attention we give them.

When we examine Art, particularly of the renaissance period, this transcultural motif of “Chakra and Kundalini”, emerges disguised in Christian symbolism.

A particular artist that fascinates me is the ‘Leonardo’ of Germany, Albrecht Durer, (1471-1528). This genius was the first commercial artist in history who immediately realized the significance of the “Black Art” with the invention of the Guttenberg Press and the potential therein to distribute his engravings and woodcuts across Europe.



ALBRECHT DURER'S engraving “Adam & Eve” 1505 C.E.

Notice the central Tree Trunk (reminiscent of Sushumna) Eve to the left (Ida?) Adam to the right (Pingala) and the Serpent half way up the trunk (Kundalini awakening?) all frozen into

the moment before “awakening” of consciousness to ‘Good and Evil’.

The cluster of animals represents the medieval personality typology of the Four humors, or temperaments, aligned with the elements i.e.

The Melancholic Elk symbolizing Earth (Muladhara Chakra?)

The Phlegmatic, clumsy Ox representing Water (Swadhishthana Chakra?),

The fiery Choleric Cat (Manipura Chakra?)

The fleet Rabbit incarnating the principle Air and the restless Sanguine (Anahata Chakra?) character.

During the 1950’s, when I was studying with Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj (Mahasamadhi Dec 29th, 1993) he frequently made the analogy of Christ on the cross with the thieves to Christ’s right and left as representing Pingala , Sushumna and Ida. Pingala (Solar heating energy) and ida (Lunar cooling Energy), in his view, represented channels, which “steal” energy that could be, channeled into Sushumna (the Crux) thus achieving “Krishna (‘Christ’) Consciousness”.

I did not take this analogy seriously until I encountered Albrecht Durer’s Crucifixion depiction while working on “A Chakra & Kundalini book”. I immediately included Albrecht Durer’s portrayal in my book and commented:

“Allegorically, Sushumna is said to represent the channel of “Christ consciousness” in us all which is kept vacant, or “crucified,” by the emotions running rampant in ida and Pingala (the two thieves hanging on either side of the crucified Christ).



Albrecht Durer, generally acknowledged as the greatest of German Renaissance artists, has a magnificent portrayal of the Crucifixion, with the thieves hanging on either side of Christ. The Sun (Pingala) is above the thief on the right, while the Moon (Ida) crowns the thief hanging to the left.”

A later woodcut by Albrecht Durer carries the theme further in a way that would be instantly interpreted by a Tantric as a true substantiation. The thieves have been transformed into angels collecting the blood from the dying Christos who is in the throes of illumination with the Sun and the Moon still hovering over their respective heads.



I am not suggesting Albrecht Durer consciously understood the concept of Chakras and Kundalini however I am suggesting the pattern is ingrained into the Collective Unconscious of all humans.

From a Tantric viewpoint the angels are the transmuted channels of ida and Pingala now positively serving the Sushumna energy. Sushumna is transmitting the Kundalini to the Sahasrakra (hence the radiation from Christ’s head) while ida and Pingala recycle the Ojas or fine prana, catching the blood in chalices.

As startling as this image may be, and as unusual as you may find my interpretation, we must remember that Albrecht Durer and his contemporaries were deeply imbued with the Alchemical symbology and Neo-Platonism bursting upon the renaissance dawn of the 16th century.

My insights are sourced from Tantric Tradition and examining the original folk tales upon which the famous “Grimes” versions were based, we discover a much less ‘antiseptic’ world in which real issues of being a human incarnate are explicitly depicted.

(For wonderful insights into fairy tales peruse Professor Samuel Denis Forhr’s “Cinderella’s Gold Slipper”. Dr. Forhr is a professor of philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford and his approach is more from a Vedantic and Samkhya viewpoint.)

Cinderella’s wicked stepsisters, in the original 1800 manuscript, were punished by having their eyes pecked out by pigeons. This is the transmutation of ida and Pingala in which the lure of the outer world is ‘blinded’(forced ‘Pratyahara’ or sensory withdrawal) so that the inner alchemical work of Kundalini Shakti uniting with Shiva may take place within an interior space. ida and Pingala no longer dissipate energies

into the material 'earth' but rather extract the gold of 'realization'.

A TRANSCULTURAL ALCHEMICAL ALLEGORY

The following is an allegory which is fully in accord with the teachings of Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj in the 1950's when I was with him. At that time he employed universal archetypal interpretations drawing upon a rich tradition of myth, fairy tales, and Masonic folklore – in fact he was far ahead of his time and preceded the later work of the American, Joseph Campbell, scholar of comparative mythology.

"At the base of the spinal cord (Sushumna) is the conus medullaris: an inverted witch's hat containing a cone of astral power. Here sleeps

Shakti (Sleeping Beauty) awaiting Shiva (Prince Charming). Shiva's kiss of consciousness can release her from trance, allowing them to ascend into the medulla oblongata ('oblong cube' or Mason's "Ashlar"). They consummate within the cranial nuptial chamber, termed by anatomists "thalamus" (Greek for "bed chamber").

Shakti is a widow (Isis) a virgin (Snow White – served by the seven chakras, "dwarfed" in the unawakened).

She is the bride Cinderella (i.e., "Lady of the Cinders") whose latent alchemical fire is tended at the fireplace (Kunda), ever ready to ignite as Kundalini blazing up the chimney (Sushumna).

She is the lady of the lake, constantly bathing her hair (cauda equina) in a cistern of alchemical water

(cerebrospinal fluid), and one day she will thrust up Excalibur to be received by Arthur. This is both a reference to the ancient Vedic horse sacrifice and the secret contractions of the Yogi.

Shakti is not only a widow, a virgin, and a bride but also a wife, mother, and divorcee: humankind has forgotten the Athanor within the sacred sacrum foundation of the body temple. This microcosmic furnace extracts gold from sulphur, silver from mercury, unites (yokes) the sun and the moon, the red rose and white rose, distills the tincture from the principles, the quintessence from the elements, and gently heats the "Philosophers Egg" within the alembic of the skull, ultimately manifesting the Lapis Philosophorum."

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD AND HEALTH

Yogacharya Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, India

Yoga emphasizes the importance of not only eating the right type of food but also the right amount and with the right attitude. Importance of not eating alone, as well as preparation and serving of food with love are brought out in the Yogic scheme of right living. Guna (inherent nature) of food is taken into consideration to attain and maintain good health. Modern dietary science of diet can learn a lot from this ancient concept of classification of food according to inherent nature as it is a totally neglected aspect of modern diet. We are what we eat!

Tiruvalluvar offers sane advice on right eating when he says, "He who eats after the previous meal has been digested, needs not any medicine." This makes a lot of sense but is not followed in the modern world where common sense is not so common!

Overloading of the digestive and eliminative processes is one of the major causes behind all lifestyle disorders that are found threatening humankind today.

He also says that "life in the body becomes a pleasure if we eat food to digestive measure." The concept of Santhosha is well brought out in this statement that reiterates Mahatma Gandhi's words that, "there is enough for everyone's need but not enough for anyone's greed" When there is contentment in appeasing hunger it will percolate into all aspects of life producing happiness, harmony and health.

He also invokes the Yogic concept of Mitahara by advising that "eating medium quantity of agreeable foods produces health and wellbeing."

This is very similar to the HathaYoga tradition and the Bhagavad Gita concepts of right eating.

Tiruvalluvar has emphasized the link between overeating and disease by saying, "the one who eats on an empty stomach gets health while with the greedy glutton abides ill-health." Overeating is a direct cause of obesity that may be linked with diabetes, hypertension, musculoskeletal problems and their antecedent complications of the nervous system, heart, eyes and kidneys too.

He also warns us that "those who eat beyond the level of hunger will suffer from untold hardships." Wish we could all listen to this advice for truer words were never spoken for when health is lost all is lost.

SYMBOLISM OF THE TRISHULA

The trishula (trident) is one of the many armaments adorning the multiple arms of the manifest cosmic deities such as Shiva, Shakti and sometimes even Ganapathy. These manifestations of the universal divinity have the power to both create and destroy, to bring about evolutionary change.

The three prongs represent the three gunas, the qualities of prakriti (nature), which are Sattva (pure and noble), Rajas (passionate and agitated) and Tamas (dull and inert). The noble, the ignoble or the indifferent traits in the human character are determined by the varying proportions in which these three gunas are mixed. When they are eliminated, individuality is lost and merges with the all-pervading Reality.

The laying down of the trident indicates the transcendence of the gunas and the consequent merging of the individual with the Absolute.

The 'three spears' also represents the nadis, a complex network of pathways or channels through which prana (life energy) passes through the physical body.

The trishula's central spear represents Shushmana and the other two spears represent Ida and Pingala.

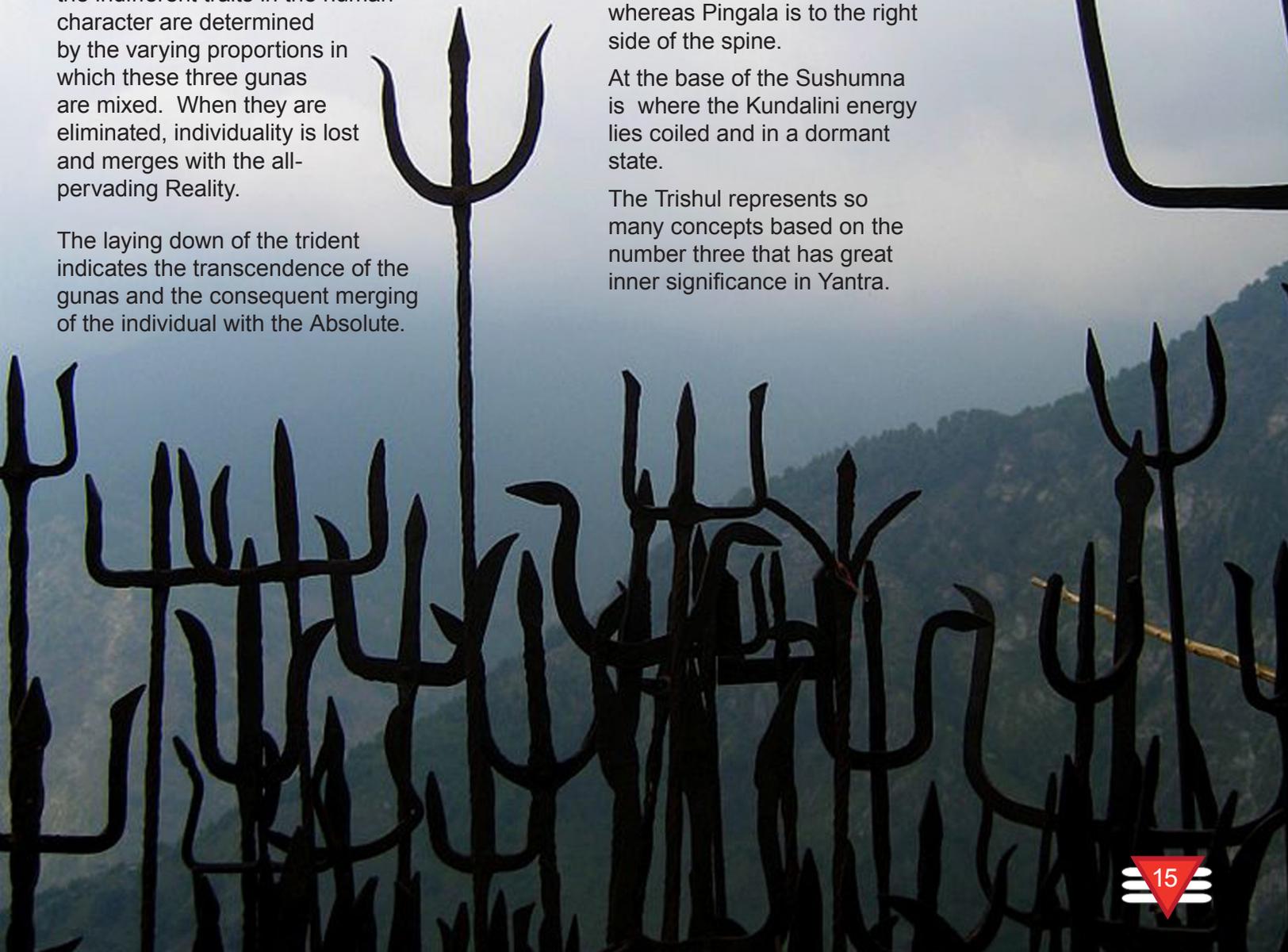
Sushumna runs along the spinal cord through the seven chakras (spinning wheels of energy).

Ida lies to the left of the spine, whereas Pingala is to the right side of the spine.

At the base of the Sushumna is where the Kundalini energy lies coiled and in a dormant state.

The Trishul represents so many concepts based on the number three that has great inner significance in Yantra.

It is related to manifestation, expression and creation and is an important link with the universal causal energies.



BRIEF HISTORY OF AGRICULTURE

by *Yogacharya Robert Servine, USA*

Ahimsa is the practice of doing as little harm as possible. Karma is the belief that every action has consequences. It is my argument that you are getting karma from the food that you choose to eat, so it is important that you know how your food is grown and what harm it is doing to you, to other people, to other species and to the planet. To better understand the current dilemma it is important to understand some of the history of agriculture.

The first farmers appeared on the scene about 12,000 years ago. Farming advanced slowly from there until recently. The way our food was produced has changed more in the last 100 years than in the entire history of agriculture. At the beginning of the 19th century tractors were introduced and by 1950 there were over 3 million out in the fields. After WW2 chemicals used for the war were converted to farm chemicals including ammonia nitrate (synthetic fertilizers) and DDT (pesticides). The tractor allowed farmers to cultivate more land, and the introduction of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides helped in even further expansions. Since then many more chemicals and procedures have been introduced to increase production.

In the 1980's genetically modified organisms were invented and are currently in over 90% of the food sold in the U.S. We have learned how to use radiation and ammonia baths,

we dose our food with chemicals and when problems arise, we simply introduce more chemicals to combat the effects of the other chemicals. It is crazy. And this whole time, since 1900 our population has increased along with our growing food supply from 1 billion people to over 7 billion people in little more than a hundred years.

The main problem with all of this is the SOIL IS A LIVING THING. It is full of micro organisms that help convert nutrients to usable forms for plants to eat. It is a symbiotic relationship and conventional agriculture is killing the soil. We are losing soil at alarming rates and without soil; we cannot survive. Living on a planet with limited resources, we cannot continue to use more than we replace. Current farm practices require 11 calories of energy to produce 1 calorie of food, it is completely reliant of fossil fuels and fossil fuel production is not going to last forever. Current estimates are that with all the worlds reserves we have 45 yrs left of fuel. In 45 years the world population will be over 9 billion people. And then there is the problem of agricultural runoff and pollution, the main cause of global warming is meat production, the huge dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico is due to run off from farms. On top of that is the loss of biodiversity and the danger to our bee population because of our insistence of using pesticides.

Our food system is in peril and our choices matter. Ignorance is no excuse and will not protect us from the consequences of our actions. Doing nothing is a choice, buying conventional foods is a choice and according to the law of karma those choices have consequences. Choose foods that are grown organically, support small farmers and make deliberate choices.

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INSPIRATIONS

**"My words are tied in one with the great mountains,
with the great rocks, with the great trees, in one
with my body and heart.
All of you see me, one with this world."**

Yokuts Prayer

**"One in the
woodpile does
not laugh at
one in the fire."**

Kamba Proverb

**"To pretend to satisfy
one's desires with worldly
goods is like using a
straw to put out a fire."**

**"...each of us is born with a
box of matches inside us but
we can't strike them all by
ourselves."**

Laura Esquivel

**"It is your turn now,
you waited, you were patient.
The time has come,
for us to polish you.
We will transform your inner pearl
into a house of fire.
You're a gold mine.
Did you know that,
hidden in the dirt of the earth?
It is your turn now,
to be placed in fire.
Let us cremate your impurities."**

Rumi

**"He envied the bark, which had
been, in the course of one lifetime,
both forest and fire. One endured;
one destroyed."**

Karen Joy Fowler

**"The longest journey of any is
the journey inward to the heart
and soul of one's very being."**

Hanoochi

**"Fire in the heart sends smoke
into the head."**

German Proverb

**"We remember though all the firelit glow
Of a great hearth's gleam and glare,
And we looked for a space at each happy face
And the love that was written there."**

Caris Brooke

**"Money is like fire. It is only good
when there's just the right amount
of it, when it's properly contained
and under your control."**

Vera Nazaria,

**"A book, too, can be a star,
a living fire to lighten the
darkness, leading out into
the expanding universe."**

Madeleine L'Engle

**"The fire you
kindle for
your enemy
often burns
yourself more
than him."**

Chinese Proverb

**"There may be a great fire
in our soul, yet no one ever
comes to warm himself at it,
and the passers-by see only
a wisp of smoke."**

Vincent van Gogh

**"There is no fire like passion,
there is no shark like hatred,
there is no snare like folly,
there is no torrent like greed."**

Siddhartha Gautama

THOUGHTS ON ADHI VYADHI

by *Yogacharya Rajudev, USA*

One evening this last winter after our regular Thursday night Yoga class the discussion turned to the yogic approach to mental health. One of the students brought up the subject of a coworker who had been going through a great deal of anxiety about potentially losing her job. Another coworker had suggested the woman take Gestalt Therapy sessions to remove her growing neurosis. So she proceeded to engage a therapist who used a process of asking her to recreate the painful experience of being fired from her job over and over again as the central tenet of the therapeutic process. Several months later the lady was fired and found she was able to leave her job in a state of apparent equanimity.

The Gestalt practice eased this woman's fear by a simple process of over familiarization. People are easily bored. By way of example think back to a moment when you felt particularly alive and fresh with delight, perhaps a time when all your senses danced with significance at deeply experiencing the fresh bloom of a flower in a shaft of early morning sunlight. Now imagine yourself trying to recreate that same intensity 30 days in a row, or even sit quietly and support the intensity of that experience for 30 minutes. Have you ever been able to experience the clarity of an event like that as profoundly in the 30th minute as it was in the first? Not very likely. In fact it is even more likely you won't even be able to accurately recall what happened during that first moment, and will be lucky if 30 minutes later you are still enjoying the residual effect of the initial reaction. If you're

like most people you will find yourself looking at the flower and wondering what the big deal was all about in the first place. Now bring that same principal into the realm of therapy and you will find that if you want to take control of the proclivity to jump whenever someone pops an empty grocery bag, sit and have someone pop a hundred bags for you. By the time they're done unless your nervous system was previously damaged you'll probably find that, as with the flower, you'll find yourself wondering how you could have ever been startled by a popping bag in the first place.

So after we discussed the apparent success of the Gestalt process another student asked what the difference would be between this contemporary approach and the yogic process of mental health, or adhi-vyadhi. My initial response that evening was that the yogi learns to become detached from the objects of the senses and thus removes himself from the cerebral noisemaker that leads one down the path to insanity. However all that is easier said than done. It is easy to tell fat people they could lose weight if they really wanted to by eating only 1 doughnut instead of 6. And it is easy to advise someone whose stomach is turning over because they have just been diagnosed with cancer that they shouldn't worry because worry is just going to aggravate the condition. As we know it is a lot easier to give good advice than to follow it. The road map to that mystical moment when we can personally put everyone's good advice into action in our own lives is most easily found through the practices of Yoga. With the construction of a

personal Yoga Sadhana the doors of opportunity open as old samskaras crumble and make room for healthy evolutionary life patterns. What could be a healthier place for someone seeking serenity and clarity of purpose than the surroundings of an ashram or some other genuine yogic environment? In the timelessness of a Yoga setting what safer laboratory could be created where the only fears might be the assault on a fragile ego by a traditional guru, or the threat to an empty wallet from a modern teacher with ambitions for a larger marketing budget?

On the other hand the unfortunate people immersed in the Western psychological process are so busy analyzing and suppressing unpleasant mental patterns, that they don't even begin to produce any real sense of internal integration or Yoga. The Western approaches can provide useful tools to erase, overcome, or sublimate unpleasant life experiences, but the root of those experiences remain deeply buried in the human psyche. A student of Yoga recognizes the fact that we create our own reality. What was the lady doing who feared losing her paycheck, but planting the seeds of her termination and then keeping the experience fresh enough in her mind until there was no possible alternative than for the karmic process to bring it to fruition? In fact at this very moment that part of her mind which fears the popping of a bag or the loss of a job is hard at work inventing something much more horrific and much more difficult to root out with one of these simple psychological processes.

The struggle against failure only produces failure. Have you ever heard of anyone healing a wound by continually picking at the scab? Let me remind you of the ancient story of the Yoga student who wanted to acquire the siddhi of being able to walk on water. He trained diligently with his teacher for years until his guru decided he had prepared his chela sufficiently for the effort. With great fanfare the entire ashram and several surrounding villages gathered on the steps of the local temple tank early one morning for the student's final exam. Just before the young man stepped out on the surface of the water his guru came down to whisper the final instructions in his ear. The teacher told him that after these many years of mastering the most difficult practices he would now be able to step out on the surface of the tank without sinking if he was careful not to think about monkeys. Needless to say, being a well-trained, but otherwise typical human being his mind began struggling to avoid thinking about monkeys, and of course failed. And at that moment he sank to the bottom of the tank. As detached observers we smile at the irony because our neophyte water walker never would have ever thought about the subject of monkeys if his guru hadn't planted the seed in his mind. But in the same way don't we make real the fear of innumerable events that will never enter our lives, but which are perhaps not so subtly suggested by the insurance industry, the media, or our friends? And in this way we live our lives in fear of the unknown until such time that the fear itself becomes more damaging to our mind and nervous system than if the imaginary event had actually occurred.

To understand the concept of adhi-vyadhi from a yogic point of view it is necessary to understand that insanity or loss of mental equipoise is the result of a dysfunctional

relationship between the mind and body. Adhi is another term used for the anamaya kosha, or physical body, and vyadhi is a diseased or dysfunctional mind caused by an unhealthy relationship to that adhi. Yogis have realized for thousands of years that consciousness operating freely without the irrational attachment to the objects of the senses will produce a mind that is healthy and filled with anandam, or cosmic joy. In the same way the body by itself when left to follow its own path without the corrupting influence of the mind will follow the life sustaining rules of its own intelligence and maintain a vibrant good health. When the body needs vitamin A for example, the hand will naturally reach out for a bundle of carrots when passing through the grocery store. When the body begins to dehydrate the feet will walk of their own accord to locate a glass of water. This concept is powerfully expressed in the classical symbology of the "Bhagavad Gita." The image of a racing chariot drawn by horses frightened and excited by the passions of battle can be paired with the modern image of Buster Keaton plunging down hill in an old Ford, a startled look of astonishment on his face as he gazes at the steering wheel which has come loose in his hand. What passed for comedy in those old movies has turned out to be an allegory of life in the 21st Century. In the "Bhagavad Gita" Krishna, representing higher consciousness, calmly controlled the racing horses of the senses thus keeping Arjuna sane, secure, and on the path to moksha. Buster Keaton had the hand of his director, Fatty Arbuckle, to shield him from the laws of physics and guide him safely to the bottom of the hill, the pretty girl, and the happy ending.

If you're like most people in the 21st Century you feel like your car is racing down that hill or your chariot is plunging into battle without either

Krishna or Fatty Arbuckle to make sure your ending is going to be a happy one. You have commitments you don't have time to keep, you have bills you can't afford to pay, and you have dreams and aspirations which have been subverted by the need to produce a paycheck. Fortunately for most the world's courts have told us we are no longer responsible for our own lives and destinies, but are now the innocent victims of forces beyond our control. Whether it is subliminal marketing, unscrupulous big business, or politically incorrect governments; modern man now views himself as the innocent victim of a predatory culture. Arjuna understood that he needed the wisdom of Krishna to guide him out of the maze of his lower nature. Buster Keaton hopefully had enough sense to not confuse his movie role with his real life. Modern man however foolishly depends on a capricious jury to save him from the folly of his life decisions. If we think a hefty court settlement is going to enable us to live healthier, more well balanced lives we are severely deluded. If anything the courts have crippled our inherent evolutionary natures by telling us we are simply victims of external forces and not responsible for our life decisions.

To be human is to be insane anyway. We all carry around this devilish little devise in our brains called the hypothalamus, which makes sure we're continually absorbed in either worry, insecurity, or feelings of worthlessness. And as if that weren't enough it poisons our social relationships by keeping us fixated on questions of whether or not we are going to have a sufficient amount of food, affection, space, wealth, or recognition. So the question naturally arises why were we constructed with our own personal objects of self-annihilation in the first place. However as many of you will no doubt remember the kind of parties teenagers threw when their parents

went out of town for the weekend, you will also remember the wiser parents usually hired babysitters or chaperones to look after their kids when they were gone. We were issued this hypothalamus at birth to keep our life celebration from getting out of hand, and for our own self-preservation. Without this personal chaperon we would quickly lose our common sense. We would feel invincible enough to cross the street without looking both ways for an approaching bus, complacent enough to spend the first week of good spring weather at the beach instead of planting our crops, or irresponsible enough to believe our offspring would grow up to be useful well socialized adults if left to develop through their own natures. The hypothalamus is there for our use, not our abuse. If we are invited to a buffet, are we expected to eat everything on the table? Of course not. In the same way we carry the hypothalamus to provide a useful function, but it was never intended as a place for the mind to take up permanent residence.

An expression coined by the health food industry several decades ago goes, "you are what you eat." I tell my students it is much more important to remember that you are what you think. The essence of adhi-vyadhi can be summed up by a principal Swamiji used to regularly remind his students: "if you want to be sane, you need to do sane things." The brain's cellular apparatus operates at over 200 impulses per second. This means that over 200 times every second of our lives we are challenged to be conscious. This takes practice. We're not just talking about quietly sitting for 15 minutes in the morning, or chewing each bite of food 55 times during meals. All day 24 hours a day constant vigilance is required to train the mind to remain conscious and to maintain its evolutionary journey. I think one of the reasons people enjoy small babies so much is they haven't

yet started thinking. They haven't begun the great buildup of negative samskaras, which later in life become a maze of neuroses and psychoses. The great saints of India laugh. They sit enthralled by the most simple things. If you want to return to that essential nature you need to return to that childlike state of mind. Life is not a journey on an Indian train. In life you don't have servants or porters to carry all the steamer trunks of your mental baggage. If it's true the average life span is about 78 years that seems to me an awfully long way to carry an expanding collection of fears and anxieties. I find it challenging enough to get from one side of the Dallas airport to another in 40 minutes with a single handbag. What baggage is this consciousness which fears flying to Beijing to be awed by the Forbidden City, and yet be afraid to get on the plane because the destination is the source of the SARS virus. In reality we come, and then we go. In life learn to travel light.

As we struggle for control of our own mind, the central question in any serious practice of Yoga is how to overcome the tyranny of the hypothalamus? The answer lies in the "Mahabharata." During the archery contest at Draupadi's swayamvara Arjuna won the bride because of his unwavering concentration. The object was to shoot an arrow into the eye of a wooden fish attached to the end of a long pole by aiming at the reflection of the fish in a barrel of water. Where the other contestants saw either a fish, the end of a pole or the sky with a fish suspended in it, Arjuna saw a glint in the eye of the target. In other words Arjuna had his 200 impulses per second focused on the center of the target. The other contestants thought they were concentrated because they were able to direct 25 impulses per second or possibly even 100 per second, but the prize was great and the challenge didn't reward anything less than perfection. What

then is insanity, but poor or wrong concentration? If we let joy and harmony into our minds for 3 seconds out of 10, but use the remaining 7 for worry, anxiety, and fear aren't we ultimately going to misdirect this life that began with so much promise?

In the modern world we solve problems with action. We buy self-help books, we go to lectures, and then we make grand pronouncements, and maybe take a few hatha Yoga classes. But who generally benefits other than the author or the owner of the Yoga franchise. Contrary to this contemporary approach you can't expect to change by wrestling with your problems and grappling with your insecurities. Remember the monkeys? Even as the practice of Yoga is based on right thoughts and right action the mistake that people, particularly those of a Judeo-Christian background make, is to be self-critical when they fall short of the ideal. It's like struggling to run up the face of a steep sand dune. The faster you run the quicker you slide down the face. When a yogi or yogini wishes to accomplish something they determine the path they wish to take, and then they begin. It's the power of icha shakti, the power to do. When I took my first 3-month course from Swamiji he took a sizeable period of time during the first month discussing the elements of an appropriate yogic diet. He weighed in heavily on the importance of vegetarianism. His arguments were clear and cogent, and he convinced me vegetarianism was certainly the healthiest way to live. However coming from a strong meat eating culture my mind also told me there was no way I would ever make the change. At least once a month I went to France's last monument to haute cuisine in India, Le Grand Hotel de Europe, for a fine steak dinner. After the course I flew to Nepal and continued dining on water buffalo and canned goose

from the People's Republic of China. However during that same time I continued to do my Yoga practice until at some point, I couldn't tell you when, I stopped ordering meat in the local restaurants. It was the practice of Yoga that made me a vegetarian, I didn't decide to become a vegetarian. The hamburgers weren't torn from my desperate fingers; I practiced the kriyas and prakriyas of Yoga and the desire to eat dead animals dissolved in my consciousness. It was living positively, in the way nature intended, that provoked the change. And following that same principal if we wish to be sane, we need to learn to practice sanity.

To walk the yogic path is to aspire to oneness and if so, oneness to what? Our body is like a house with all the doors and windows open. We enter, stay a bit, and we then we leave.

That which rises from your meditation fears nothing. It has always existed and always will exist. One of the central questions posed in the second chapter of the "Bhagavad Gita" is why we cause ourselves so much mental anguish in the first place. As Krishna says to Arjuna, "Never was there a time when I was not, and never shall there be a time when any of us will not be."

Transcendent consciousness immersed in the flow of universal energies feels no pain or discontent. Learn to embrace your birthright. To give oneself up to the inner life is to experience a joyous spontaneous insanity anyway. Release the mental pressures and psychological tensions. Let them go. More significantly learn to release the thoughts or thinking patterns that originally created the mental imbalance. Replace

them with an evolutionary pattern of consciousness. A commonly understood principal among fakirs and those with a high pain threshold is to expand the pain and let it diffuse through the cells of the entire body, so that pain does not collect into a single point. When we consciously embrace the universe any mental distresses we might carry become so dispersed that finding them again is like looking for a lost bag of rupees at a beggars convention.

Ultimately we don't escape from insanity: we accept sanity. Our birthright is a vibrant consciousness and a radiant joyousness. Don't wait lifetimes for the inevitable to occur, embrace it now.

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO BANISH FEAR FROM YOUR MIND

by Anonymous

There comes a time when you realize that you don't have to fear anymore. That the previously imagined impossible is within reach.

The quiet calm you have searched for is indeed inside of you. It always was and will be, and will never vacate your soul. The time it lasts may not always be what you had always hoped, but it will return.

The key is to know this and brace yourself from any way our fear may manifest. To know that you have the power to banish the fear that may come from your very mind. To pay no

heed to it's empty voice, or invisible images.

The path of change and discovery of one's self is not easy. To charge down the road of unknown fueled by faith can break a person. The challenge this road brings is easy to understand, yet, so hard to accept and practice.

Never, ever accept defeat. You will fall. You will feel broken. You will feel pain the physical body can not match. There will be days when all feels lost. Allow yourself to feel this, no matter how hard it may seem. Lay for a short

time, and feel broken.

Lost in the thoughts of misery, you will find a certain voice in your soul that is laughing.

It is laughing at all the fearful thoughts and images.

The voice beckons you to get up and never, ever, accept defeat. Hold this voice, your very inner self, close to your heart during the path of life and you will never fail.

VIBRATIONAL BREATH THERAPY

by Yoga Bhismacharya Sri Bala Ratnam, Australia

Man's rehabilitation from a serious illness is no different from man's ultimate salvation/emancipation from the cycle of births and deaths. Both culminate in attuning to the source from whence man originated, Divine/Cosmic Consciousness. The practice of the deeper aspects of Yoga (breathing, chanting and meditation) as taught by the late Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj is Yoga Therapy in its pristine purity.

Man is essentially Self Consciousness, part and parcel of Divine/Cosmic Consciousness. The Christians call it Christ Consciousness, the Hindus call it Krishna Consciousness, the Buddhists call it Buddha Consciousness, and Muslims call it Allah.

Man lives in three states of Consciousness in this worldly life, Wakeful, Dream, and Deep Sleep States of Consciousness attuned to the three Planes of Existence, Physical, Astral and Causal, in keeping with the basis of creation – the three modes of nature: Tamas, Rajas and Sattva.

These three Planes of Existence are manifestation of Prana, They are Physical, Astral, and Causal Energy Bodies, created and sustained by the cosmic vibratory energy of Pranava AUM.

These three Energy Bodies may be classified as follows:

Physical Body	physical body	Anandamaya Kosha
Astral Body	electromagnetic field	Pranamaya Kosha
	lower mind	Manomaya Kosha
	higher mind	Vijnanamaya Kosha
Causal Body	bliss body	Anandamaya Kosha

Healing in Yoga Therapy is helping a student-patient to rise above body

and conscious mind, negate ego consciousness and attune to the state of causal silence within, where renewal, repair and healing take place. This is achieved by helping the student-patient to develop physically, emotionally, mentally, intellectually, and spiritually at the five koshas/energy bodies. The healing follows naturally, within the constraints of one's karma.

All above vibratory energy bodies (including the cells in the physical body) need daily sustenance of energy and the vibratory frequency of Pranava AUM to experience a state of wellbeing and experience good physical and mental health. The energy is supplied by Mahat Yoga Pranayama, while the vibratory resonant frequency is supplied by Pranava AUM.

Mahat Yoga Pranayama regenerates and rejuvenates the physical body when done to an 81 day program, incorporating Adham, Madhyam and Adyam Pranayamas. It is done in four sessions in different ratios to generate healthy glandular and blood cells and bodily fluids. It is also done in deeper rhythms to slow down the rate of breathing, which in turn slows down the bodily processes, giving a greater duration of time for renewal, repair and healing to take place. It may be remembered in this context that the ancient secret to good physical

and mental health and longevity was breathing deeply, slowly and

rhythmically. Pranava AUM consists of chanting "Aaah" at the lower lungs, "Uuuu" at the mid lungs, and "Mmmm" at the upper lungs, and "AUM" at the complete lungs.

"Aaah" attunes to the vibratory sound of the physical body, universe, and a Wakeful State of Consciousness.

"Uuuu" attunes to the vibratory sound of the mind, cosmic mind, and a Dream State of Consciousness.

"Mmmm" attunes to the vibratory sound of self consciousness, cosmic consciousness, and a Deep Sleep State of Consciousness.

"AUM" integrates the body, mind and self-consciousness, the universe, cosmic mind and cosmic consciousness and transcends the Wakeful, Dream, and the Deep Sleep State of Consciousness and leads the student-patient to the fourth state, Turiya, beyond conceptualization. I call it the State of Causal Silence within, the abode of happiness, peace, tranquility, creativity, intuition, health, knowledge and freedom - the source of everything.

Emotional traumas and tensions of this and previous births are stored in the Chakras preventing the free flow of prana into the nerve plexuses and endocrine glands under them.

These are neutralized by Chakra Healing Meditation at the Navel Centre (Manipura Chakra) associated with the Physical Plane of Existence, at the Throat Centre (Vishuddha Chakra) associated with the Astral Plane of Existence and at the Brow Centre (Ajna Chakra) associated with the Causal Plane of Existence. It is also done at the Heart centre (Anahata Chakra) the seat of the soul.

Healing is effected by taking awareness to the organ needing healing and allowing "AUM" to vibrate and resonate there. The focus of the awareness activates the consciousness of the cells in the organ, the breathing at Mahat Yoga Pranayama energizes the cells, and the vibratory resonant frequency of "AUM" makes the cells holistic to experience a state of wellbeing so healing can take effect.

In order to facilitate this, the Psychic Passage (Shushmna Nadi) is first cleansed by moving "AUM" up the spinal column, the Physical, Astral and Causal Planes of Existence integrated at the Navel, Throat and Brow Centres, the reptilian, mammalian, and neo-cortex parts of the brain, and the Physical, Astral and Causal Energy Bodies to create a state of wellbeing.

The cosmic vibratory energy of Pranava AUM is then directed 27 times on the first day at the organ needing healing, and increased by one more chant every day for 81 days, until a total of 108 chants are reached and leveled off. The chanting of "AUM" is veered to silence and experienced for three minutes. Awareness is then taken to the Heart Centre (Anahata Chakra) the seat of the soul, and meditation is done on "AUM". This is progressively lengthened. The session is ended with an affirmation. This practice is done in the morning to set the tone for the day.

This main practice of 'Chakra Healing Meditations' is complemented with Rhythmic Breath (Savitri Pranayama) [and Meditative Walk to the same rhythm] once every two/three hours during the day or when stressed, tense, depressed or even tired. Psychic Sleep (Yoga Nidra) is done when going to sleep

or during an afternoon siesta. Both these practices create a state of wellbeing and enhance the process of healing.

Additional practices to cater for specific conditions, including traumas locked in the nervous system etc (which we learnt at the Ashram) are introduced, if and when necessary. Fortunately we have learnt the deeper versions of all practices and they are most effective. But the main practice always remains only 'Chakra Healing Meditations'. Brief feedback from my consultant physician, Dr Kuan Chin from Melbourne, who has attended my 81 day program, a dedicated student of mine and who was surprised that three heart attacks last year could not affect my almost ninety year old heart, may help you to appreciate the unique character and "healthy self" quality of my discipline better: "Remember, you are doing this for the good Lord, not for mankind..... if you know my meaning... and the few you have shown the way will open the floodgates when the Divine time is at hand.... People like me do it day in, day out. I see the face of the Lord again and again. Fear and despondence is not what I encounter now, but rather an understanding of the workings of the Divine and man's choice to veer or follow God".



108 NAMES OF SHIVA

1	Aashutosh	Fulfiller of One's Wishes Instantly	37	Lingadhyaksha	Presiding Lord of Lingas
2	Aja	Unborn	38	Lingaraja	Lord of Lingas
3	Akshayaguna	Of Limitless Attributes	39	Lokakriti	Creator of the Three Worlds
4	Anagha	Faultless	40	Lokankara	Creator of the Worlds
5	Anantadrishti	Of Infinite Vision	41	Mahabuddhi	Of Great Intellect
6	Augadh	Carefree Reveller	42	Mahadeva	Great God
7	Avyayaprabhu	Imperishable Lord	43	Mahadhyuti	Great Brilliance
8	Bhairav	The Terrible	44	Mahakala	Lord of Time
9	Bhalanetra	With Eye in the Forehead	45	Mahamaya	Of Great Illusions
10	Bhooteshwara	Lord of Baser Beings	46	Mahamritunjaya	Great Victor of Death
11	Bhudeva	Go of Earth	47	Mahanidhi	Great Storehouse
12	Bhutapala	Protector of the Ghosts	48	Mahashakti	Of Great Strength
13	Chandramowli	With Moon for Crest Jewel	49	Mahesha	Grand Lord
14	Chandrapida	With Mon for Diadem	50	Nagabhushana	Having Serpents for Ornaments
15	Dayakara	Compassionate	51	Nataraja	King of Dance
16	Devadeva	Lord of the Gods	52	Nilakantha	Blue-Necked
17	Dhanadeepa	Lord of Wealth	53	Nityasundara	Ever Beautiful
18	Dhyanaadhara	Object of Meditation	54	Nrityapriya	Lover of Dance
19	Dhyutidhara	Having Brilliance	55	Omkara	Creator of AUM
20	Durjaya	Difficult to be Conquered	56	Paramaya	Wielder of the Great Maya
21	Durjaneeya	Difficult to be Known	57	Paramjyoti	Greatest Splendour
22	Ganeshwara	Lord of Ganas	58	Pashupati	Lord of the Animals
23	Girijapati	Spouse of Girija	59	Pinakin	Bow in Hand
24	Gunagrahin	Acceptor of Gunas	60	Pranava	Mystic Syllable AUM
25	Hara	Remover of Sins	61	Priyabhakta	Favourite of the Devotees
26	Jagadish	Lord of the Universe	62	Priyadarshana	Of Loving Vision
27	Jaradhishtama	Redeemer from Afflictions	63	Pushkara	Nourisher
28	Jatin	Having Matted Hair	64	Pushpalochana	Flowery-Eyed
29	Kailashadhipati	Lord of Kailash	65	Ravilochana	Having Sun as the Eye
30	Kantha	Brilliant	66	Rudra	The Terrible
31	Kapalin	Necklace of Skulls	67	Sadachara	Of Noble Conduct
32	Kapardin	Having Matted Hair	68	Sadashiva	Eternal
33	Khatvagin	Missile Khatvagin in Hand	69	Sanatana	Eternal
34	Kamalakshana	Lotus-Eyed	70	Sarva	All-In-All
35	Kundalin	Having Earrings	71	Sarvacharya	Preceptor of All
36	Lalataksha	Eye in the Forehead	72	Sarvatapana	Scorcher of All

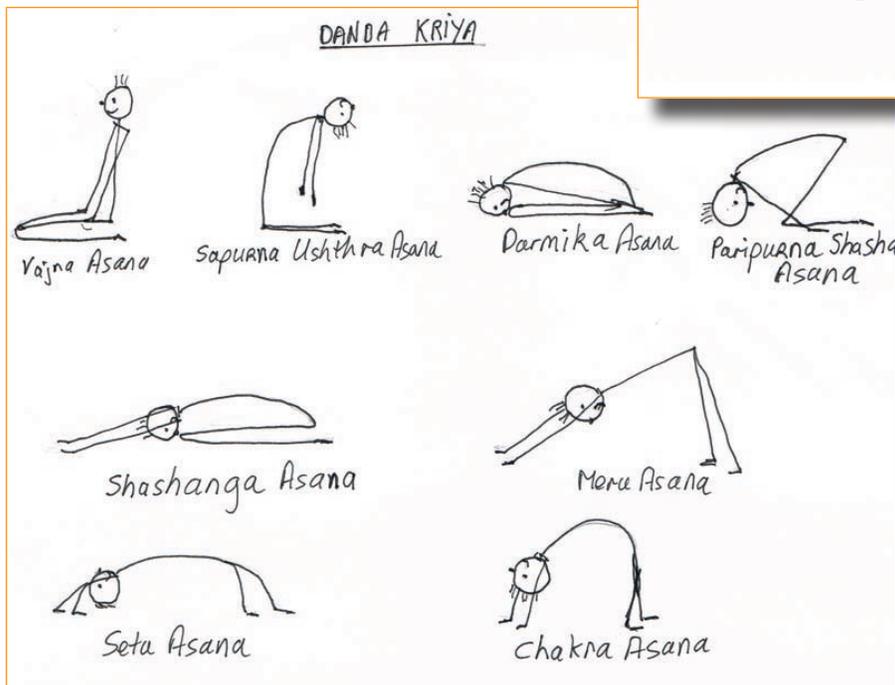
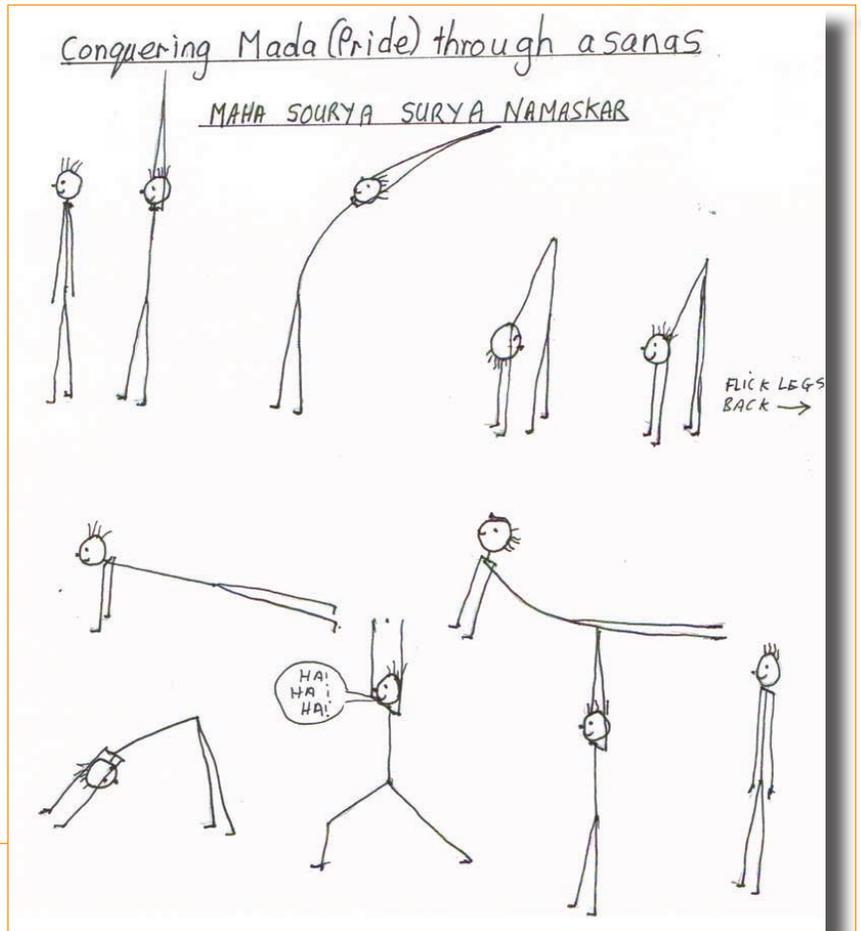
73	Sarvavasa	Abode of All
74	Sarvayoni	Source of Everything
75	Sarveshwara	Lord of All
76	Shambhu	Giver of Prosperity
77	Shankara	Giver of Happiness
78	Shiva	Pure
79	Shrikanttha	Of Glorious Neck
80	Shrivatsala	Darling of the Goddess of Glory
81	Shrutiprakasha	Illuminator of the Vedas
82	Shuddhavigraha	Of Pure Body
83	Skandaguru	Preceptor of Skanda
84	Shoolin	Having a Trident
85	Suragana	Having Gods as Attendants
86	Sukhada	Bestower of Happiness
87	Suprita	Well Pleased
88	Vajrahasta	Having Thunderbolt in Hand
89	Suresha	Lord of the Gods
90	Trilochana	Three-Eyed
91	Tripurari	Enemy of Tripura
92	Trishoolin	Holder of Trishul
93	Umapati	Consort of Uma
94	Unnatakirti	Of Lofty Fame
95	Vachaspati	Lord of Speech
96	Tejastejas	Splendour of Splendours
97	Vamadeva	Lovely Lord
98	Varada	Granter of Boons
99	Vedakarta	Leader of the Nether World
100	Veerabhadra	Originator of the Vedas
101	Vishalaksha	Wide-Eyed
102	Vishoka	Free from Sorrow
103	Vishvesha	Lord of the Universe
104	Vishwadipti	Light of the Universe
105	Vishwambha- reshwara	Lord of the Earth
106	Vrishavahana	With Bull as Vehicle
107	Vyalin	Clasped by Serpents
108	Yogiraj	The Greatest Ascetic

SHAT RIPUS (PART 5)

by Yogacharini Gowri (Wendy Snape), Australia

The six ripus, (destroyers of the human spirit) are Kama (desire), Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), Moha (illusion), Mada (pride), Maatsurya (malice, jealousy).

This is the fifth group of asanas, mudras, kriyas and pranayamas to help overcome Mada (pride).



A YOGA AND MARTIAL ARTS PERSPECTIVE ON AHIMSA (PART 2)



Peace in oneself
Peace in the world

by *Yogacharya Christoph Eberhard, Belgium*

Once upon a time there was a mighty warrior who knew of a famous Master who lived alone in the mountains. The warrior, a mighty swordsman, decided to try to find this Master to challenge him to a duel and test his skills. After many days of travelling through the forests and the mountains he finally reached the Master's hut. He saw an old man standing there and enquired if he was the famous Master. As a reply the Master asked him who he was.

"I am a great Samurai, a great warrior, undefeated in combat, the greatest swordsman the world has ever seen."

What? You are a Samurai? Have you seen what you look like? You look ridiculous. And what's this thing pending on your side? Is that supposed to be a sword? Hahaha... In response, the Samurai, furious, drew his sword intending to lower it on the Master's head and cut him in two. The Master stayed calm, raised his finger and said: "Here open the gates of hell."

Although in a rage, the Samurai was somehow struck by this reaction, held back his blow and withdrew the sword in its sheath. "Here open the doors of heaven." said the Master.

This story reveals many teachings on Ahimsa. Most obviously, the story seems to tell us that violence is bad and non-violence is good. If we let our aggressive instincts take over, we pave the road to hell. What else is hell than a state characterized by ongoing intense violence, a place where there is no space for conscious action?

Ahimsa starts when we become aware of the violence of our

actions and pull back our 'sword'. Symbolically the sword can be a punch we are about to throw, aggressive words we are about to shout, a mean look or negative thought.

The gates of heaven open when we replace unconscious actions with conscious actions; when we introduce some space between perceived stimuli and our reactions.

Still having many things to learn, the Samurai had already attained a certain level of awareness. Indeed, he was able to become aware of the situation although he was initially carried away by his animal instincts. We see already here, that if external restraint is necessary to start to tread the path of Ahimsa ... it calls for consciousness. And in order to move on the path of Ahimsa ever increasing awareness is needed.

At the beginning stages, our understanding and practice of Ahimsa can only be developed if we have a measure to evaluate our actions. We must start by putting the maxim "Do not harm." into action into a quite straightforward way to start with, if we really want to be able to understand ahimsa. Let us illustrate this point through what seems to be an eternal question of aspirants : should one kill mosquitoes?

Is not killing mosquitoes also against Ahimsa, as if we do not kill them, they harm us? Isn't there some justification to harm what may harm us? Well, I guess we need some common sense here. Of course, we should not allow others (animals or xc) to destroy ourselves under the pretext of Ahimsa. But at an initial level, it may

be nice to contemplate the idea of not killing the mosquitoes that are biting us.

Normally justifying our killing of mosquitoes is just a rationalization, a legitimation of our instinctive reaction. How many of us kill a mosquito consciously? Are we not just hitting at it when we feel it, without further thought, just because it bothers us? Do we really evaluate each time to what extent the mosquito is a threat to us, to what extent we may be able to give him some of our blood or not etc? Similarly in a first phase, we may also just allow people to scold us unjustly. We may thus learn that it is actually possible to be the one who disarms in a given situation and that this attitude may actually permit to pacify many situations that would stay "toxic" if we kept on trying to find the one to blame or to prove our respective points. It may also teach us that – sometimes at least – criticism is justified and that we may have invited it in one way or another. But it may also little by little dawn on us that such a "non-violent" attitude is not always the solution. So the Yama, the restraint of Ahimsa, if we take it seriously, little by little makes us aware of the paradoxes of Ahimsa, of its interference with other Yamas and Niyamas. And we may come to a point where we consciously decide that killing a mosquito or punching somebody in a given circumstance is right .

(to be continued in next issue)

UNION OF SHIVA & SHAKTI : A POEM

by Jnanadev, Saint and Poet (1275-1296)

I offer obeisance to the God and Goddess,
The limitless primal parents of the universe.

They are not entirely the same,
Nor are they not the same.
We cannot say exactly what they are.

How sweet is their union!
The whole world is too small to contain them,
Yet they live happily in the smallest particle.

These two are the only ones
Who dwell in this home called the universe.
When the Master of the house sleeps,
The Mistress stays awake,
And performs the functions of both.

When He awakes, the whole
house disappears,
And nothing at all is left.

Two lutes: one note.
Two flowers: one fragrance.
Two lamps: one light.

Two lips: one word.
Two eyes: one sight.
These two: one universe.

In unity there is little to behold;
So She, the mother of abundance,
Brought forth the world as play.

He takes the role of Witness
Out of love of watching Her.
But when Her appearance is withdrawn,
The role of Witness is abandoned as well.

Through Her,
He assumes the form of the universe;
Without Her,
He is left naked.

If night and day were to approach the
Sun,
Both would disappear.
In the same way, their duality would
vanish
If their essential Unity were seen.

In fact, the duality of Shiva and Shakti
Cannot exist in that primal unitive state
From which AUM emanates.

They are like a stream of knowledge
From which a knower cannot drink
Unless he gives up himself.

Is the sound of AUM divided into three
Simply because it contains three letters?
Or is the letter 'N' divided into three
because of the three lines by which it is
formed?

So long as Unity is undisturbed,
And a graceful pleasure is thereby
derived,
Why should not the water find delight
In the floral fragrance of its own rippled
surface?

It is in this manner I bow
To the inseparable Shiva and Shakti.

A man returns to himself
When he awakens from sleep;
Likewise, I have perceived the God and
Goddess
By waking from my ego.

When salt dissolves,
It becomes one with the ocean;
When my ego dissolved,
I became one with Shiva and Shakti.



SYMBOLISM OF SHIVA

Trident (trishula) represents the three gunas (creation, preservation, dissolution).

Drum (damaru) symbolizes sound which represents the words of the Vedas, the holy scriptures given by the Lord to guide us through life.

Rosary (aksamala) of rudraksha beads represents Shiva's mastery of the spiritual sciences.

Venomous cobras, a symbol of death, adorns Shiva's frame in all possible manner of embellishment. Shiva is the conqueror of death.

Coiled serpents represent cycles of time. Shiva is the master of time and is Himself timeless.

Serpents on neck represents the ego which once mastered can be worn as an ornament.

Nandi, a bull, is Shiva's vehicle.

The bull represents the animal instincts, and reflects Shiva's mastery over it.

Abhaya Mudra symbolizes protection, peace, and the dispelling of fear.

The gesture is made with the right hand raised to shoulder height, arm bent, and palm facing outward.



Tigers are ferocious animals that mercilessly devour their prey, akin to the emotion of desire which consumes human beings.

Shiva, having killed the tiger and wearing its skin as an apparel represents His complete mastery over desire.

Mount Kailash, the Himalayas, is Shiva's abode.

A crown of long matted hair from which flows the holy river Ganga. This represents the flow of scriptural teachings passing wisdom from one generation to the next. It also represents the flowing nectar of bliss (samadhi).

The crescent moon is worn as a diadem and represents time. Since the measurement of time depends upon the waxing and waning moon, by wearing it as a diadem, Shiva is showing us that even time is only an ornament for Him.

The three eyes of Shiva represent the sun, the moon and fire, the three sources of light, life and heat.

The third eye is on the forehead between the eyebrows and represents supreme knowledge and wisdom. It is a symbol for the destruction of ignorance and darkness.

HAPPY
DIWALI
HANUKKHA
CHRISTMAS
HOLIDAYS

**“There is not
enough darkness
in all the world to
put out the light of
even one candle.”**



YOGA AS THERAPY

November 23rd & 24th, 2012



PROF AVNI SALI, MBBS, PhD, FRACS, FACS, FACNEM

Director - National Institute of Integrative Medicine (www.niim.com.au)
President - International Council of Integrative Medicine (www.icimedicine.com)
Doyen of Alternative Medicine, will give a talk on how
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YOGACHARYA DR ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI (INDIA) MBBS, ADY, DSM, PGDFH, PGDY, FIAY

Dr Ananda is Chairman of the International Centre for Yoga Education and Research at Ananda Ashram, Pondicherry, India (www.icyer.com).
He is also Chairman of Yoganjali Natyalayam, the premiere institute of Yoga and Carnatic Music and Bharatanatyam in Pondicherry (www.rishiculture.org).



ANTONIO SAUSYS (USA)

(BA Psychology, MA Body-Oriented Psychotherapy) is a somatic health practitioner and yoga instructor specializing in one-on-one yoga therapy for people with chronic and acute medical conditions as well as emotional imbalance.

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November 21 (9.30 am – 1.30 pm)

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November 25 (10 am – 4 pm)

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Forum on 'Yoga as Cancer Therapy'

'Chakra Healing Meditations' - a new concept in Yoga Therapy to

Heal at the physical plane of existence

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Vibrational Breath Therapist Bernadette Hearn on benhearn@bigpond.com; 0419 541 479 or visit www.vbt.com.au for more information

Organising Secretary: Mary Pullin on meeshka.vbt@gmail.com

Registration: Vibrational Breath Therapy Secretary – Vibrational Breath Therapist Bernadette Hearn on benhearn@bigpond.com; 0419 541 479



YOUR HELP IS WANTED

Be inspired by the principle of Saraswati to contribute to the next Newsletter.

**The next issue
is dedicated to
Trimurti.**

All sincere contributions will be considered for publication.

Deadline: January 21

ARTICLES and ARTWORK URGENTLY NEEDED for NEXT NEWSLETTER

The Magazine is very much a collaborative endeavour. Consider putting some of your thoughts on paper (those aha moments), tell a story or write a poem to share with the rest of the Yoga family. If you received your Yoga training while Swamiji was alive, please share your stories with those of us whom did not have that privilege.

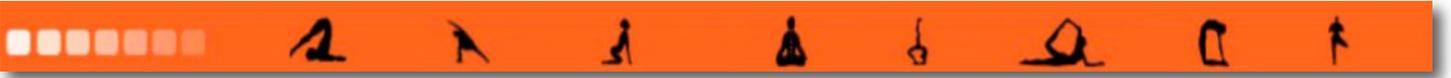
Artwork from budding artists, creative photography, photos from Ashram visits or that are meaningful to you are most welcome.

DEADLINE: January 21 Submit to: jendany@yahoo.com

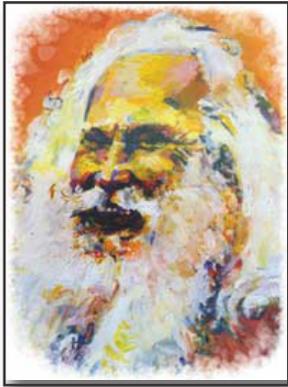
Send me an email confirming your interest in submitting content.

I can help with editing if it is required.

RISHICULTURE YOGA

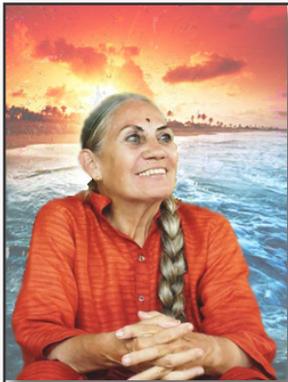


ABOUT SWAMI GITANANDA



Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri was one of the most potent and effective forces in the field of ashtanga yoga worldwide. Trained in modern allopathic medicine, he combined the ancient traditional spiritual sciences with a modern scientific temperament. His hundreds of thousands of students around the world were attracted to his clear, rational, scientific expositions of ancient philosophical and spiritual concepts. A practical man to the core, the technology of yoga which he transmitted to his students has proven an effective method of attaining perfect health, well being, personality and intellectual development.

Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj was the purveyor of a vast, scientific, rational and systematic body of yoga knowledge. He embodied in himself the Bengali tantric tradition of his life-long guru Sri Kakananda Swamigal with the Shiva Yoga and ritualistic expertise of the line of gurus of Sri Kambliswamy Madam, as imparted to him by his predecessor Sri Shankaragiri Swamigal.



The vast living and vibrant knowledge which he imparted so freely to hundreds of thousands of students included a complete and rational system of Hatha Yoga practices which provided a base for the higher techniques. For those who prepared themselves properly, he offered a complete system of jnana yoga techniques to purify, steady and cultivate the mind, and free it of hang-ups and false concepts and conditions.

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[Biography of Ammaji, Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani](#)

[Biography of Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani](#)

